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COUNTY FOCUS

Three Counties, One People

The Voice of Meru, Isiolo & Tharaka Nithi

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Political giants to face off in 2027

Linturi, Munya, Kathuri and Kawira to square it off in Meru while Njoka, Kareke, Mwindu and Murugara battle in T/Nithi



Governor Kawira Mwangaza



Former Agriculture CS Mithika Linturi



PNU leader and former CS Peter Munya



Meru Senator and Deputy Speaker of the Senate
Kathuri Murungi

Story on page 2...



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As Kawira fights for her political survival in courts, Munya, Linturi, and Kathuri prepare to unseat her

...from page 1

By Rugendo Antony

As the political landscape in Meru heats up ahead of the 2027 gubernatorial elections, the stage is set for an extraordinary showdown between four prominent leaders: the impeached Governor Kawira Mwangaza, former Governor Peter Munya, former Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi, and Senator Kathuri Murungi. Each of these candidates is bringing a unique blend of experience, ambition, and determination to a race that promises to captivate voters and observers alike

Mwangaza's Political Fate Hangs in the Balance

At the heart of the contest is Mwangaza, whose political destiny teeters on the brink of uncertainty as legal battles concerning her recent impeachment unfold.

Depending on the outcome of court rulings, Mwangaza could either reclaim her seat or face significant political setbacks.

Political analyst Prof Gitile Naituli provides valuable insights into the unfolding political drama, stating that if Mwangaza's impeachment is upheld, Munya would likely emerge as the frontrunner. Conversely, he emphasizes that if she prevails in court, her chances of retaining her position would significantly improve.

"She has mastered the art of endearing herself to the masses. Therefore, dislodging her through the ballot is difficult," Prof. Naituli underscores.

According to politician Mike Makarina, Mwangaza will survive the impeachment at the courts and defend her seat in 2027.

Mwangaza has proven adept at winning the hearts of the electorate through grassroots mobilization and community-oriented initiatives.

With her ongoing "Okolea" relief program, she's attempting to bolster her image as a compassionate leader dedicated to sustainable change.

But while Mwangaza enjoys good support among the masses, she faces the uphill task of clearing her name in the courts and delivering tangible development ahead of the 2027 elections.

The embattled governor's recent public



Senator Kathuri Murungi (right) chats with former Meru County Governor Peter Munya at a past event

appearances portray a self-assured candidate ready to tackle her opponents head-on.

"I have heard Munya call me names for donating boots and mattresses to the needy. He is so selfish and is only known for going to the people empty-handed. I'm not here to showboat but to empower the community," Mwangaza told off her political rival in a recent political campaign.

She further dismissed both Munya and Linturi as failed leaders, asserting that they had nothing to show for their past leadership roles.

Munya's Confidence and Growing Campaign Network

On the other side of the political spectrum stands former Governor Peter Munya, who, despite his previous tenure, is rallying support under the PNU banner.

Munya is adamant that Meru has suffered under Mwangaza's leadership and has taken it upon himself to restore the region's glory.

"Since I left in 2017, there has been no much work done by the governors. What happened to the work we started in 2013? The resources increased, but nothing is happening in Meru," Munya stated, brimming with confidence as he commenced his 2027 campaign early in August.

Munya's extensive grassroots strategy includes opening PNU branch offices across the county to galvanize support.

He boldly claims to enjoy a staggering "70 percent approval rating" and is positioning himself as the candidate best suited to resolve the issues currently plaguing Meru.

His challenge, however, lies in overcoming varied perceptions. Munya accuses Mwangaza of running down the county saying her relief programme dubbed Okolea does not offer sustainable solutions.

"We assisted Kawira Mwangaza in winning the election because we believed she would be a better leader. However, she has failed. We want to fix the problems she has created," he asserted, underlining

his critiques of Mwangaza's governance.

Linturi's Resilience and Growing Alliances

Fresh off a commendable second-place finish in the previous elections, Mithika Linturi is equally confident about his political prospects for 2027.

He, too, has declared Mwangaza a failed governor, stating, "My eyes are fixed on the ball. If anyone thinks that I will not win the Meru governor seat in 2027, they are dreaming."

Linturi is working to amass support by aligning with former MCAs as part of his campaign crew, exemplifying the power of alliances in Meru's political landscape.

Confident in his late entry into the previous elections, Linturi emphasized the strategic advantage he now possesses.

"I view my dismissal from the cabinet as a blessing in disguise. This is because it will give me sufficient time to look for votes. In 2022, I joined the race three months to the election and became number two. I now have three more months to prepare. In every cloud, there is a silver lining," he explained, projecting an optimistic vision for his campaign.

Linturi has ramped up visibility through aggressive marketing strategies, such as partnering with boda boda riders and billboard advertisements, seeking to make his presence felt across all corners of Meru.

Kathuri: The Unclear Contender

Senator Kathuri Murungi, on the other hand, remains a somewhat enigmatic figure in this political puzzle.

While his "Gakobia oversight" strategy and Kamashinani foundation activities suggest aspirations for higher office, he has yet to make a definitive announcement about his intentions for the 2027 race.

Political commentators speculate that Murungi could emerge as a formidable contender should he choose to enter the fray.

Prof. Naituli notes that while it's not typically easy for a new entrant to break into Meru's political scene, Murungi's existing connections and influence in

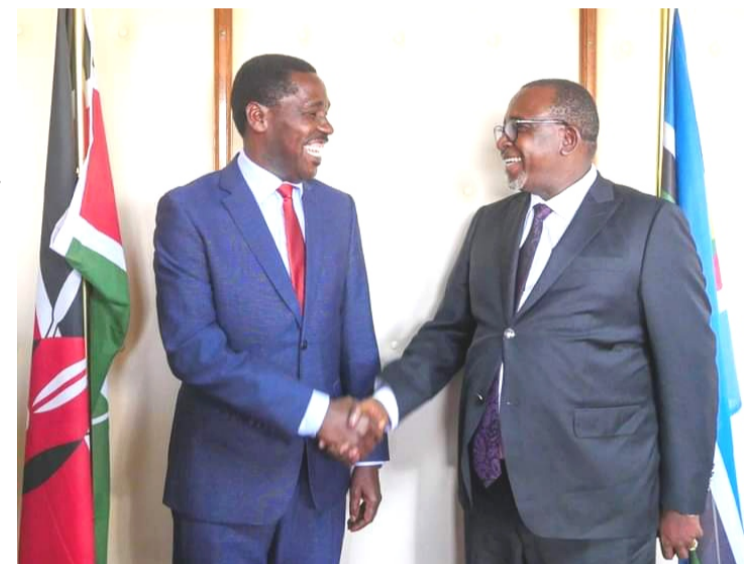
the region could grant him the traction needed to become a serious competitor.

"Since Munya and Linturi come from the same region, they will split the vote and give Mwangaza an easy win. On the other hand, if Kathuri Murungi vies, he would give the two a run for their money," Prof Naituli says

As political temperatures rise, Meru is poised for an unprecedented electoral showdown and voters will be faced with a crucial choice in 2027.

It remains to be seen who among the four political bigwigs will survive the murky political waters, make it to the ballot and win the hearts of the electorate.

According to Prof Naituli the race will be a tight competition among the four politicians.



Former CSs Mithika Linturi and Peter Munya shake hands when the latter was handing over the Agriculture docket in 2022

He notes that Munya and Linturi may likely split the vote, potentially giving Mwangaza an easier path to victory. However, if Kathuri Murungi enters the race, he could also significantly impact the dynamics.

Prof. Naituli adds that while Linturi had strong support from the Igembe region, the higher voter turnout from the Imenti region, where Mwangaza hails from, could prove crucial in the upcoming election.

All eyes will undoubtedly be on this unfolding political drama as the 2027 election approaches.



Governor Kawira meets Linturi at a past event



Linturi and Kathuri prior to the 2022 election campaign



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Capital Sacco staff members pose for a photo as they commemorated the customer service week

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Gatimbi - 0703 766 016	Githongo - 0703 770 743	Nairobi - 0729 267 393	Kiangua - 0703 770 606	Kibirichia - 0703 766 534
Kinoro - 0703 769 039	Mitunguu - 0703 769 460	Kanyakine - 0703 770 760	Timau - 0703 766 521	Igoji - 0703 770 739

Medics raise awareness on drug ignorance, resistance in Meru



National and County Government medical staff during the antimicrobial resistance awareness in Meru town streets.

Photo/Gerald Mukembu

By Gerald Mukembu

The National and County Government of Meru has launched an awareness campaign across several streets in Meru town, focusing on the dangers of drug ignorance, poor hygiene, and inadequate nutrition that contribute to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The team, led by County Health Promotion Officer Susan Muthoni, Director of Public

Health Dr. Joshua Meme, and Dr. Lilian Kaloki, urged residents to heed doctors' instructions and adhere strictly to prescribed medications.

The medics emphasized that many lifestyles' diseases stem from patients' negligence, including not completing prescribed drug courses and failing to maintain good hygiene

and proper diets.

“Some individuals unknowingly introduce harmful chemicals into their bodies—whether through improperly spraying crops or consuming fruits that haven't met safety guidelines. Poor hygiene practices, such as failing to wash hands or fruits, can also lead to serious health risks. We must take responsibility for our health,” Kaloki stated during the public awareness walk. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), antimicrobial resistance is a global health crisis impacting human and animal health, food production, and the environment. It occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites evolve and become resistant to treatments, making infections harder to manage and increasing the risk of severe illness and death.

The primary goal of this campaign is to increase public awareness and encourage proactive measures to combat the spread of AMR. The medics want to inform residents that antimicrobial resistance can arise from both intrinsic and

extrinsic factors when microbes outsmart the medications meant to treat them.



A Meru County medical staff displays a placard containing antimicrobial awareness campaign messages



Medics take a road walk during the antimicrobial awareness campaign

Organization intensifies fight against Gender-Based Violence in Tharaka Nithi

By Christine Ngitori

As the global community observes the 16 Days of Activism, a non-governmental organization dubbed Fits for Future is ramping up its efforts to raise awareness about the significance of this important campaign.

Speaking at Kiang'onde Primary School in Chuka the Organization's Executive Director Jessi Mugambi called on residents to shun gender-based violence.

Mugambi highlighted the organization's unwavering commitment to engaging the local community in a variety of activities aimed at eradicating gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM).

“The holiday season often sees a troubling rise in FGM cases, which is unacceptable in today's society,” he stated.

Additionally, he emphasized the need to confront femicide and collaborate with government agencies and other NGOs to ensure women's safety and advance gender equality.

“In our advocacy, we are also focusing on the rights of the boy child, who is frequently overlooked in these discussions. Our aim is to ensure that the 16 Days of Activism lead to tangible changes within our community,”



Executive Director Jessi Mugambi addressing the residents. Photo/Christine Ngitori

Mugambi remarked.

Assistant County Commissioner Wilfred Odhiambo acknowledged that GBV is a pervasive issue in Tharaka Nithi, nationwide, and globally.

“Women are disproportionately affected by GBV, and it is concerning that hardly a week goes by without reports of mistreatment or

even murder of women. We must work towards creating a society where mothers and daughters can live without fear of harassment,” Odhiambo stated.

He urged the community to reject harmful cultural practices and to foster a culture of equality and mutual respect.

Odhiambo also emphasized the importance

of women's empowerment, asserting that financial independence can play a crucial role in helping women escape abusive situations.

“Women need to be empowered to live independently rather than relying solely on men for their livelihoods,” he stressed.

Beatrice Kathomi, Chief Officer for Gender, Children, and Social Services in Tharaka Nithi County, underscored the necessity of community awareness and action against GBV.

“Educating the community about GBV is essential, along with informing victims of their rights to seek help at hospitals and receive free services from the GBV desk,” Kathomi emphasized.

She also called on parents to be vigilant about their children's activities during the holidays, warning against exposing them to inappropriate content through technology.

“Children learn by imitation, and it is our duty to guide them towards positive behaviors,” Kathomi advised.

This year's campaign for the 16 Days of Activism seeks to foster a collective effort to eliminate gender-based violence and cultivate a safe, equitable society for everyone.

Yetu Sacco unveils ambitious blueprint for prosperity with bold 2025 vision



Yetu Sacco CEO Dennis Kirimi (Left) and Chairperson Mark Gitonga (Right) addressing journalist during the Sacco's Special General Meeting at Yetu Pamoja Investment Park in Nkubu. Photo/Rugendo Antony

By Rugendo Antony

In an electrifying demonstration of ambition and community spirit, Yetu Sacco has held a Special General Meeting that set the stage for an exhilarating 2025, unveiling a monumental budget of Sh1.4 billion ahead of the new year.

Led by CEO Dennis Kirimi and Chairperson



Yetu Sacco Members during the meeting

Mark Gitonga, the meeting was a celebration of the organization's unprecedented evolution with an expected 33% growth in the year 2025.

"Today, we're not just talking numbers; we're celebrating a vision -a roadmap towards creating an even more robust financial society," Kirimi proclaimed in an atmosphere that was charged with excitement and optimism.

His words were met with enthusiastic applause, reflecting the Sacco's confidence in its ability to generate a projected profit of Sh1.4 billion against expenses of Sh765 million. Plans to distribute Sh547 million in dividends further cemented the Sacco's commitment to its members.

The excitement continued as Kirimi provided updates on their new state-of-the-art headquarters, an architectural marvel with unique underground parking.

"Phase one, featuring five floors of premier office space, is complete," Kirimi noted, emphasizing the building's role in enhancing member services.

"We are not just building a head office; we are establishing a central hub for our community, one that embodies our mission," he added

A landmark announcement was the launch of the Yetu Foundation, aimed at supporting education for students from underprivileged backgrounds and other charitable activities.

"This foundation signifies our promise to

give back and improve lives," Kirimi explained, a commitment that resonated with attendees.

Chairman Mark Gitonga expressed heartfelt gratitude to the members for their unwavering support.

"Our Sacco is not just for farmers; it is a diverse community filled with individuals from all walks of life," he proudly stated, highlighting the organization's role in empowering many to educate their children and build homes.

As the holiday season approach, Gitonga encouraged diligent saving and wise investments, reminding members that prudent financial decisions today ensure a brighter tomorrow.

Kirimi added to the excitement by announcing plans to open a new branch in Maua next year, responding to the Sacco's growing demand.

Despite the celebrations, Gitonga reminded members of the responsibilities that come with growth. He stressed the importance of making informed decisions during the upcoming Sacco elections, urging members to choose capable



A Yetu Sacco member raises a query during the Special General Meeting



Yetu Sacco Chairperson Mark Gitonga

leaders who can navigate challenges effectively.

"Together, we stand at the brink of significant changes. Our unity and foresight will usher us into a new era," he concluded.



A new dawn for Kamwimbi farmers as Njuki launches Kavando irrigation project



Governor Njuki (left) launches the Kavando Irrigation Project. Photo/Christine Ngitori

By Christine Ngitori

In a groundbreaking initiative aimed at revitalizing agriculture and fostering self-sustainability, Governor Njuki on Tuesday launched the Kavando Irrigation Project in Igambang'ombe Constituency, heralding a promising future for local farmers.

With a hefty investment of 65 million, the project is set to transform Kamwimbi's

agricultural landscape, enabling residents to cultivate maize and a variety of crops year-round.

Governor Njuki articulated his vision of fostering food security and economic growth, driven by the region's favorable agricultural climate.

"Irrigation during the winter months provides

our farmers with a crucial competitive edge when others may struggle with low yields," he affirmed.

The governor also addressed pressing infrastructural needs highlighted by community members by pledging funds for the construction of a standard bridge in Riamikuu, improvements to Kataniro Road, and plans for a new dam in Tharia to further support agricultural needs and provide vital water resources for cattle.

In a generous gesture to bolster local farming, Governor Njuki distributed over 1,000 mango seedlings, emphasizing the importance of diversified crops for both income and food security.

He also rallied the community to register with the Sha Social Health Authority, ensuring access to comprehensive health services.

Local leaders echoed the governor's sentiments,

with Speaker of the Assembly John Mbaabu praising the Kavando project for its transformative potential.

"This initiative is a cornerstone for sustainable development; continued investment in infrastructure and agriculture means a brighter future for all," he stated.

Nominated MCA Zachary Njagi lauded the project's impact on community livelihoods, commending Governor Njuki's unwavering dedication to the welfare and progress of the region.



Governor Njuki during the commissioning of the Kavando Irrigation Project

Mitunguu Technical Training Institute is now a National Polytechnic

By Harun Mugambi

Mitunguu Technical Training Institute is among the five technical training institutes (TTIs) elevated to national polytechnics.

This, according to the government, is aimed at enhancing access to quality technical education and boosting vocational training opportunities. The decision was made during a Cabinet meeting chaired by President William Ruto at State House, Nairobi, November 14.

With this latest upgrade, the number of polytechnics in Kenya now stands at 28, following the elevation of 13 other institutions last year.



A serene environment at Mitunguu Technical Training Institute. The institute has been elevated to the status of a National Polytechnic

Occupying a 52-acre campus, Mitunguu Technical Training Institute boasts modern infrastructure and a highly qualified workforce. Since its inception, the institute has focused on equipping trainees with relevant marketable skills, technical expertise, and the necessary attitudes to meet the current demands of the labor market across various sectors, including industry, the informal sector, and self-employment. National polytechnics provide

advanced training in artisan, certificate, diploma, and higher diploma programs, playing a vital role in skills development for numerous sectors. This action aligns with the government's initiative to establish technical and vocational training institutions in every constituency, furthering

challenges and global standards. Unlike traditional TTIs, national polytechnics offer higher diploma qualifications, receive greater government funding to meet infrastructure requirements, and are overseen by councils, whereas TTIs function under Boards of Governors.

In addition to Mitunguu, the other institutions elevated to national polytechnic status include Michuki TTI, Ol'lessos TTI, Nairobi TTI, and Friends College of Research and Technology in Kaimosi.

the goal of achieving 100% transition rates from secondary schools to higher education institutions.

The emphasis on upgrading technical education and reforming the university system represents a critical advancement in Kenya's educational framework, aligning with modern



Graduates follow up the proceeding of the 1st graduation ceremony in January 2023



Mitunguu Technical Training Institute students in a civil engineering class

Government orders closure of 32 boarding schools in Meru, Isiolo, and Tharaka Nithi



Education PS Belio Kipsang

By Ellyjoy Gakii

In a bold move to prioritize student safety, the Ministry of Education has officially ordered the closure of boarding sections in 32 primary schools across Meru, Isiolo, and Tharaka Nithi. The directive comes on the heels of a sweeping compliance assessment that uncovered severe safety violations.

Education PS Dr. Belio Kipsang revealed that 348 schools nationwide were found to be operating without adherence to established safety standards, putting countless young lives at risk.

Key issues included dangerously overcrowded dormitories, inadequate fire safety measures, and unqualified staff.

Tragically, this initiative follows a devastating dormitory fire that claimed 21 young lives in Nyeri County.

In circular dated November 27, Kipsang directed regional, county and subcounty directors of education to ensure the affected schools do not reopen their boarding sections come January 6, 2025, at the onset of Term 1.

Dr. Kipsang emphasized the need for timely communication to affected families, promoting transparency and proactive planning during this transitional period.

Following the directive issued by the Ministry of Education, the following schools have been ordered to temporarily close their boarding section:

Meru County

1. Willy's Academy
2. Linya Academy
3. St. Pius Academy
4. Walter Olsein Academy
5. MCK Kiengu Academy
6. St. Mark Thathimwe
7. EAPC Imani Boarding
8. St. Dominic
9. Mwichiune Learners Academy
10. Sunshine Academy
11. Our Lady Of Mercy Karii

Tharaka Nithi County

12. Gatunga Day & Boarding
13. Kiorimba Boarding
14. Kabariange
15. Karii ka mburi
16. Kabuabua
17. MCK Kamaguna
18. Marimanti Winners
19. Kasarani Nehema Academy
20. Bridge of Mercy Nehema
21. Turima Junior Academy
22. Chuka Catholic
23. Little Flower
24. Tunyai Newstar
25. TTC Little Angels
26. Consolata Primary
27. The Kithino Learning Centre
28. Iria Ria Mbogo
29. Irunduni Higherlife
30. Makuba Mission

Isiolo County

31. Brainstar Academy
32. Upper Hill Academy

Kephis launches campaign to educate Meru based farmers on certified seeds



Kephis Director Simon Maina speaking at the press briefing

By Ann Rita Murugi

The Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (Kephis) has initiated a sensitization campaign aimed at educating farmers in Meru County on identifying certified planting seeds.

This move comes in response to a rise in cases of fraudulent seed sales in the area, leading to the arrest of two individuals for selling fake seeds and another three for operating without licenses.

Simon Maina, the Director of Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection at Kephis, emphasized the importance of educating farmers so they can avoid counterfeit seeds and ensure they receive value for their investments.

"To combat fake seeds effectively, we must inform farmers about how to

distinguish authentic products," he stated.

Maina advised farmers to purchase seeds exclusively from licensed vendors known for year-round sales, rather than opportunistic sellers appearing during planting seasons.

He also noted the significance of Kephis's certification sticker on seed packages, which allows farmers to verify authenticity via a textured panel.

Proper record-keeping and reporting practices were also emphasized, encouraging farmers not to discard receipts or packet labels and ensuring seeds are stored in optimal conditions to maintain quality.

The Kephis team is actively addressing the challenges posed by impersonators in the seed market, and Maina called on farmers to report any suspicious activity.

"We are committed to ensuring that our farmers have access to quality seeds, supporting the growth of healthy crops across the region," he concluded.

Imenti North Deputy County Commissioner Odilliah Ndeti called upon stockists to maintain accurate records and ensure technology leads them toward compliance.

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Solution Sacco C.E.O Daniel Marete is joined by some hippo junior account savers at his office

financial potential. Today, with over 30,000 members, this cooperative spirit is more powerful than ever.

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cares about your success. Here, every financial goal—be it owning a home, starting a business, or funding your child's education—is not just a distant fantasy, but an achievable goal within your grasp.

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To further entice potential and existing members, Solution Sacco early this year announced a dazzling 15% dividend payout and a 12.5% rebate on members' deposits for the last fiscal year.

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financial rewards; they represent the relentless efforts of the Sacco teams and members working in unison toward common goals.

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empowerment has never been more accessible. Moreover, these profits don't just represent dividends but symbolize the success of a community working collaboratively toward a common goal.

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With total assets soaring to Ksh 9.47 billion—up from Ksh 8.3 billion in 2022—the Sacco stands as a formidable player in the financial market. As emphasized by SASRA's CEO, Peter Njuguna, Solution Sacco ongoing efforts to empower members through comprehensive savings, credit, and investment products have garnered significant acclaim.

Furthermore, through the establishment of adaptable and personable financial products, Solution Sacco enables its members to tailor their financial plans to meet their specific goals.



Solution Sacco officials in partnership with Kenya Forest carry out a tree - planting CSR activity

Whether you're planning for retirement, your child's education, or a future investment opportunity, the Sacco provides the guidance and tools to help you build a more secure financial foundation.

Thriving through Challenges

Even amid economic uncertainty, the resilience of Solution Sacco shines through. The institution's ability to adapt and thrive during challenging periods, such as the recent post-COVID-19 pandemic landscape, has captured the attention of many in the financial sector.

During the previous year, the Sacco witnessed an impressive 17% increase in member deposits, affirming the trust and loyalty of its member base. In this regard, your decision to invest isn't just

about your financial security; it also helps to solidify the collective strength of your community, creating a ripple effect of positivity and growth.

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Some Solution Sacco staff and board member present school items to a beneficiary as a way of promoting members of the society

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Members of the Sacco follow up the proceedings of a past AGM meeting

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Some of Solution Sacco staff members pose for a photo during the customer service week

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Isiolo County urged to establish rescue center for Gender Based Violence survivors amid rising concerns



NGEC Commissioner Caroline Naikena (center) alongside community women leaders during the launch of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV in Isiolo

By Harun Mugambi

As the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) gains urgency, Isiolo County leaders and activists have called on the government to take immediate action by setting up a dedicated rescue center for survivors. The demand comes amid increasing reports of violence against women and children and the pressing need for safe havens where victims can find refuge and support.

The clarion call echoed during the launch of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence at Kambi ya Juu police post grounds.

Speakers unanimously condemned the continuous challenges survivors face due to the absence of a secure facility that offers protection from their perpetrators. Advocacy organizations currently rescuing victims are incurring additional costs, as they are forced to transport survivors to safe centers in neighboring Meru County—a burden that many simply cannot bear. Winnie Masai, Executive Director of Inform Action, expressed the frustration felt by those in the field: “Every time we rescue a victim, we struggle to transfer them to Meru, where they can pursue justice safely. Many organizations lack the financial resources necessary to facilitate these moves, leaving survivors with little choice but to return to the very environments that endangered them.”

The heartbreaking reality is that many women and children subjected to violence hesitate to report their experiences. The fear of reprisals from their abusers looms large, pushing them back into silence. “The hard economic times have worsened family dynamics, leading to increased domestic tensions. Parents are shifting their frustrations onto their children, leaving these young ones vulnerable and afraid,” lamented women’s rights advocate Grace Lolim.

In a positive development, County Gender Chief Officer Nura Diba announced that the Isiolo County government has allocated Sh5 million for the establishment of a rescue center at the Isiolo Teaching and Referral Hospital. Diba believes

this facility will significantly bolster the fight against GBV by providing victims with immediate protection and support.

The commitment to tackling GBV extends beyond government efforts. Nathan Maingi, Chairperson of the National Council of Churches Kenya (NCKK) Isiolo branch, affirmed the role of religious leaders in raising awareness about the dangers and prevalence of GBV. “We will not relent until we see a tangible reduction in these crimes,” he stated.

While the government lays down plans, another challenge looms over the fight against GBV—a substantial lack of accurate data. Asha Mukhtar from Inform Action highlighted the grave implications of this absence: “What we currently have is fragmentary data. Each organization collects its own statistics, leading to confusion instead of clarity. We need centralized data to formulate effective strategies.”

The urgency of this call to action was further underscored by Sarah Fetsus, team lead of Haki ni Yetu, a consortium of civil society organizations. “Collaboration is key. We cannot end violence against women in silos,” she asserted.

The campaign kick-off was graced by Caroline Naikena, commissioner of the National Gender and Equality Commission, who reiterated the government’s dedication to eradicating GBV. Naikena emphasized the economic impact of such violence—nearly Sh60 billion is spent every year just to provide treatment and support for survivors, funds that could otherwise be allocated to development projects.

As this year’s 16 Days of Activism unfolds, under the theme “Unite to Invest,” the emphasis is on collective action and commitment from all sectors of society to eradicate violence against women and children. With the growing incidence of femicide, often perpetrated by individuals known to the victims, the urgency of a united front against these atrocities has never been more pronounced.

Ministry intensifies fight against rising drug and substance abuse



Tobacco Control Board Chairperson Naomi Shaban speaks to journalists on the sidelines of the workshop

By Peris Mugambi

The Ministry of Health has commenced a three-day workshop focused on Drug and Substance Abuse Control, which brings together stakeholders from six counties, including Kirinyaga, Embu, Tharaka Nithi, Meru, Isiolo, and Marsabit.

The workshop aims to raise awareness about the impacts of drug abuse, enhance the capacity of healthcare professionals and community health promoters, and enforce tobacco control measures.

Naomi Shaban, Chairperson of the Tobacco Control Board, highlighted the need for updated awareness regarding laws governing tobacco use and other substances, recognizing that drug marketing strategies have evolved since the regulations were established in 2007.

Meru County Commissioner Jacob Ouma stressed the importance of combating drug

abuse, noting its profound societal effects, including family breakdowns and youth disenfranchisement.

Dr. Andrew Toro, Head of Drug and Substance Abuse Control at the Ministry of Health, articulated the necessity of a multisectoral approach, asserting that reaching young people is crucial to protecting future generations from drug abuse.

The final day of the workshop will involve a public forum where community members can express their concerns, fostering a collaborative effort to combat drug abuse effectively.

Additionally, Meru University of Science and Technology is contributing to the initiative by exploring research avenues and offering educational programs on drug abuse while seeking to upgrade its healthcare facilities.

Dr. George Mungania, the Meru County Health Executive, confirmed plans to develop a rehabilitation center aimed at providing support for those struggling with addiction.



A group of participants attending the workshop

Meru Teaching and Referral Hospital saves millions with solar power initiative

By Peris Mugambi

Meru Teaching and Referral Hospital is already reaping significant benefits from a newly installed 227-kilowatt peak solar energy system, which has saved the facility approximately Sh1 million in electricity costs during its first month of operation.

This project is part of the Solar Hospital Innovation for Energy Leasing Demonstrator (SHIELD), led by Oxford University’s Associate Professor Jacob McKnight.

The initiative aims to promote sustainable and affordable energy solutions in public hospitals across Africa.

Dr. Gikunda Mungania, the Meru County Health Executive, expressed gratitude for the transformative potential of the solar project, highlighting that the hospital previously faced monthly power bills up to Sh3 million.

Professor McKnight underscored the significance of the project, stating that it not only provides reliable electricity but saves funds that can be redirected to improve healthcare services.



Oxford University Associate Professor Jacob McKnight leads the grid-connected solar power initiative at Meru Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH)

He indicated that the solar installation is gathering data on operational efficiency while exemplifying a model of green energy implementation for other health facilities.

“By showcasing the viability of solar energy, we aim to address the healthcare challenges faced by vulnerable populations,” McKnight affirmed.

The project may expand to other counties under similar leasing arrangements.

Professor Jasper Micheni, Chair of the MTRH Board, urged healthcare workers to leverage the solar power system in their daily operations to maximize savings.

CORE empowers 375 youths with business skills in Meru



Youth participate in a business skills training session organized by Community Road Empowerment (CORE)

By Duncan Mwirigi

More than 375 young individuals from underserved communities in Meru County have successfully completed a three-day training program focused on fundamental business skills.

This initiative was organized by Community Roads Empowerment (CORE), a non-governmental organization engaged in road rehabilitation projects within Meru town.

The participants, hailing from 15 different youth groups, are beneficiaries of CORE who previously underwent 40 days of hands-on training in road rehabilitation using Do nou technology. The training aims at helping the young people to establish companies centered around road construction.

Supported by the Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF) through the World Bank, CORE aims to enhance the social and economic status of its beneficiaries by guiding them to form companies and small micro-enterprises (SMEs) and assisting them in registering these enterprises at Huduma centers.

The training featured expert instruction from CORE officials, covering various critical topics such as an overview of entrepreneurship, its role in economic

development, sources of business ideas, recognizing business opportunities, and understanding the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Additionally, participants received valuable lessons on record-keeping, financial literacy, business proposals, risk management, budgeting, bookkeeping, and procurement.

During the training, CORE Coordinator Amos Biwott encouraged beneficiaries to capitalize on this rare opportunity.

"This is a unique chance to lay a strong foundation for your future. Such training is typically costly, so embrace this free learning experience," he urged.

The initial phase of CORE's project focuses on building capacity and promoting sustainable road maintenance technology while enhancing livelihood prospects for participants.

According to Paul Mboya, CORE's Safeguards Specialist, the program is designed not only to improve the road network but also to create employment opportunities for youth and foster self-reliance within the community.

"We want to empower the community to believe in its ability to thrive independently," noted project engineer George Kaluma.

Isiolo women call for action over increasing Gender Based Violence

By Harun Mugambi

In the heart of Isiolo, a surge in violence against women and girls has sparked local women's groups into action, launching grassroots initiatives aimed at halting these alarming human rights abuses.

Leading the charge is the Sacred Heart Mapenzi Women Group, a dynamic Village Savings and Loaning Association (VSLA) that's redefining its mission from merely supporting breastfeeding mothers to empowering its members financially while advocating for safe and supportive communities.

In just the past two years, this inspiring group of women, aged 30 to 55, has taken a strong stand against Gender-Based Violence, particularly targeting vulnerable casual laborers in Bulapesa, Wabera, and Burat wards. Their commitment was ignited by a heart-wrenching incident involving a fellow worker who collapsed from hunger while washing clothes in a local home.

"When we rushed her to the hospital, we discovered she hadn't eaten for days. That moment galvanized us to fight for better working conditions and welfare for all casual laborers," Chairperson Sabera Mukasa recalls.

Through awareness campaigns, the group has been enlightening the community about the broader spectrum of violence—the misconception that it only



Chairperson Sabera Mukasa of the Sacred Heart Mapenzi Women Group passionately addressing journalists about their fight against violence and advocating for women's rights in Isiolo

encompasses sexual or physical abuse.

"If someone hires a helper and doesn't provide basic sustenance, that's a violation of human rights," Mukasa emphasizes.

Record keeper Joyce Wambui highlights their mission to safeguard rights not just within homes but across businesses, ensuring respect and fair treatment for everyone.

Drawing in male allies, Stephen Muthoi urged local men to join the initiative, underscoring the often-ignored issue of male victimization. "Men can't stay silent anymore. I joined the women's group to share my voice and find support for my challenges," he said.

Kuresha Bille, a VSLA educator and advocate for human rights, champions collective action as a powerful tool for change. "The more we speak out against violence, the closer we get to a society where everyone's rights are honored," she declared, urging other groups to unite in this crucial battle.

As the festive season approaches, Waso Chief James Chuchu commended the group's efforts, reminding parents to remain vigilant about their children's safety and social interactions to prevent violations.

The women's group recently celebrated a successful year, distributing over Sh800,000 during their end-of-year event at Sacred Heart village, with aspirations to collaborate with other organizations committed to ending violence in all forms.



Kuresha Bille (right) poses with fellow members of the women's group during the shareout event held at Sacred Heart in Bulapesa Ward, Isiolo



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Four contenders are seeking to succeed Njuki in Tharaka Nithi; Njoka, Mwindu, Kareke and Murugara to battle it out in 2027

...from backpage

narrowly lost to Muthomi Njuki in the 2022 gubernatorial elections.

After receiving 58,152 votes against Njuki's 97,151, Professor Njoka is banking on the support he garnered during his previous run and his impressive track record as the Vice Chancellor of Chuka University.

Known for transforming the educational landscape of Tharaka Nithi by establishing Tharaka University and initiating various development projects aimed at enhancing local livelihoods, Njoka is leveraging his academic pedigree to appeal to the electorate.

"Prof Njoka is not just a candidate; he's a builder. He understands the nuances of development. Tharaka needs a visionary thinker!" commented Fredrick Mutembei who is Njoka's enthusiastic supporter on Twitter.

Kareke Mbiuki: The veteran MP

Kareke Mbiuki, the longest-serving MP in the region since his election in 2007, is determined to use his experience to clinch the gubernatorial seat.

As an insider within the United Democratic Alliance Party, Mbiuki boasts an extensive network and an understanding of the local political terrain.

His supporters highlight his historical contributions to Tharaka Nithi as evidence of his capability to lead at the county level.

"The experience Mbiuki brings to the table is essential for a seamless transition in leadership. His practical knowledge allows him to tackle issues head-on," Edwin Gitonga, a political commentator noted in a trending Twitter thread.

Susan Ngugi: The rising star

Adding a fresh perspective to the contest is Susan Ngugi, who has rapidly ascended from her previous role as an MCA to Woman Representative.

Her philanthropic initiatives, particularly through the Susan Mwindu Rescue Services, have resonated well with voters.

Ngugi aims to become the first female governor of Tharaka Nithi, following the footsteps of her counterpart, Kawira Mwangaza, the Meru County Governor.

"Ngugi represents a new wave of politics—a compassionate leader who genuinely cares for her community. She is exactly what Tharaka Nithi needs to break the mold. However she will be competing with very strong candidates and whoever uses the best strategy will win," Ellyjoy Kawira, a political pundit told County Focus



From right - Mwenda Gataya (Senator Tharaka Nithi), Patrick Munene (MP Chuka Igambang'ombe), Kareke Mbiuki (MP Maara), Governor Muthomi Njuki, Tharaka Nithi Deputy Governor Wilson Nyaga alias Muisraeli, Gitonga Murugara (MP Tharaka), Susan Mwindu (Woman Rep Tharaka Nithi)- left

Gitonga Murugara: The political powerhouse

Gitonga Murugara, another strong contender, has been elected MP twice and is a major player in this race.

He is primarily campaigning as an advocate for the development of local infrastructure and has focused on engaging with constituents on pressing issues facing Tharaka Nithi residents. He has frequently highlighted his dedication to public service through his social media platforms.

Governor Njuki's role

However, the potential candidates are not the only players in this political game. As the incumbent governor prepares his transition to the senatorial race, the significant weight of the gubernatorial seat hangs delicately in the balance.

Political analysts suggest that Governor Njuki's endorsement will be pivotal in shaping the political fate of one of these candidates.

"Njuki's influence could dictate who wins this race," remarked Peter Mwenda a local political analyst. "Any of the candidates with his backing will likely emerge the victor. He has the resources and connections that can tip the scales."

Nevertheless, Governor Njuki has publicly distanced himself from the ongoing political maneuvering, insisting he will not endorse any candidate for the governorship.

"Everyone should fight for themselves. I only have one vote. Talking to any of the contestants does not mean I favor them over the others," he emphasized during a recent press conference.



Power Players: Deputy President Kithure Kindiki (left) and Governor Muthomi Njuki-Two influential figures shaping the landscape of the 2027 Gubernatorial elections.



This declaration, however, has done little to quell speculation. Supporters and opponents alike are analyzing the nuances of his statements, suggesting that his actions will ultimately speak louder than words. Social media is abuzz with predictions about which candidate Njuki might potentially collaborate with or support behind the scenes.

The role of Deputy President Kithure Kindiki

Adding to the intrigue is the influence that Deputy President Kithure Kindiki is likely to have over this election.

As a prominent political figure, his involvement

heating up, all eyes are on these four candidates as they prepare to battle it out in what promises to be one of the most fiercely contested gubernatorial elections in recent memory. The political dynamics—which hinge on party affiliations, past records, and emerging loyalties—are bound to keep voters on their toes.

A consensus remains: whoever emerges as the victor of the 2027 gubernatorial race will undoubtedly feel the pressure of legacy, as they strive to navigate the complex landscape shaped by their predecessors and the power players of the region.

With Tharaka Nithi's future at stake, the question looms large: Who will ultimately hoist the crown? Only time will tell.



Prof Erastus Njoka (Right) and Susan Mwindu (Woman Rep Tharaka Nithi)



Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki (right) and Tharaka MP Gitonga Murugara

Christmas, New Year Greetings!

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The COUNTY FOCUS

Three Counties, One People The Voice of Meru, Isiolo & Tharaka Nithi

Time for reforms: Ensuring timely resolution of impeachment and election-related petitions

By Mwingirwa Linguli

The phrase “Justice delayed is justice denied,” often attributed to Martin Luther King Jr., encapsulates a profound truth about justice and its critical role in society. It serves as a reminder that justice must be delivered promptly for it to hold any real meaning.

Significant delays in legal processes, social interventions, or personal grievances can lead to feelings of deprivation among individuals, ultimately undermining their rights and entitlements.

In a vibrant democracy, the integrity and functionality of the electoral process are paramount. However, the current extended timelines for adjudicating impeachment and election-related petitions in Kenya seriously jeopardize the democratic principles of accountability and representation.

Citizens and public figures alike find themselves ensnared in a web of uncertainty, which erodes trust in our democratic institutions. It is imperative that the Parliament of Kenya take decisive action to reform existing laws, ensuring these petitions are resolved expeditiously – ideally within a six-month timeframe.

At its core, democracy must be responsive to the will of the people. Prolonged delays in impeachment and election petition proceedings risk distorting electoral outcomes, undermining public confidence in elected officials, and creating a governance vacuum that affects society at large.

Moreover, elected officials entangled in



Governor Kawira Mwangaza (centre) is accompanied by her lawyers during her impeachment hearing at the Senate

lengthy impeachment processes operate under a cloud of suspicion, detracting from their ability to effectively serve their constituents. It is akin to a ship anchored in a storm, unable to navigate turbulent seas.

A streamlined resolution process is not merely a procedural necessity; it is fundamental for fostering accountable governance.

Consider the case of the impeached Meru County Governor, Kawira Mwangaza. Prolonged legal battles have not only created uncertainty around her leadership but also stifled crucial governance and development initiatives in the county.

Such delays contribute to a sense of unrest among the public, complicating an already volatile political landscape.

Now is the time for both Parliament and the Judiciary to rise to the occasion and establish

clear timelines for resolving these critical cases, enhancing efficiency and upholding accountability within our legal system.

As Ecclesiastes 3:17 reminds us, “God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work.” When justice takes too long, the very fabric of democracy begins to fray.

Moreover, the protracted nature of our current procedures could lead to voter

fatigue and diminished civic engagement. When the status of elected officials remains unresolved for extended periods, disillusionment sets in among the electorate.

Psalm 82:3 urges us to “Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.” By ensuring that elections and related petitions are addressed promptly, government organs can revitalize democratic participation, empowering citizens to hold their representatives accountable in real-time.

In closing, I affirm that King's words serve as a moral and ethical call to ensure that justice is served swiftly. Justice is not merely a legal concept; it is a fundamental human right. Society has a duty to protect and uphold individual rights, necessitating active efforts to eliminate delays in justice.

King's message was a call for societal change, urging individuals and leaders to take action against injustices instead of accepting them as the status quo.

His statement resonates as a rallying cry for advocates of civil rights, prompting them to advance reforms that facilitate the quicker resolution of grievances. True justice must be accessible and timely to hold any real value in our lives.

The time for reform is now. Parliament and the Judiciary play critical roles in shaping the health of our democracy through the timely resolution of impeachment and election-related petitions.

By enacting these proposed changes, these institutions will not only enhance the functionality of democratic processes but also restore public confidence in government.

An empowered citizenry – armed with the knowledge that their representatives can be swiftly held accountable – will strengthen the rule of law and uphold the principles of our democratic society.

The challenges are substantial, but the opportunity for fostering a robust and resilient democracy for future generations is equally immense, echoing the wisdom of Proverbs 21:15: “When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous, but terror to evildoers.”

Mwingirwa Linguli is the Communications Director, Methodist Church in Kenya

The unseen assault: Addressing Gender-Based Violence in the society

By Ann Rita Murugi

In the lush landscapes of Mount Kenya East region, where vibrant cultures and traditions thrive, a dark and pervasive evil lurks beneath the surface: gender-based violence (GBV). As communities grapple with economic challenges and traditional gender roles, the alarming prevalence of GBV demands urgent attention and action. It is time for us to confront this pervading issue head-on, not only for the sake of the victims but for the stability and progress of our society as a whole.

Despite significant strides towards gender equality in recent years, women in the Mount Kenya East region continue to experience violence at alarming rates. According to various local reports, intimate partner violence remains one of the most prevalent forms of GBV, often exacerbated by factors such as poverty, cultural norms, and lack of education. Women face assault, emotional abuse, and even murder, all too often in silence, burdened by stigma and the fear of repercussions.

One of the most troubling aspects of GBV in this region is its intergenerational nature. Young boys and girls, growing up in environments where violence is normalized, may internalize these destructive dynamics. A

culture of silence perpetuates this cycle, creating a society where both men and women are trapped—men feel pressured to conform to toxic masculinity, while women remain confined by fear and limited opportunities.

Engaging the local community in conversations about GBV is critical. Community leaders, educators, and local organizations must rise to the occasion, creating safe spaces for dialogue. Awareness campaigns must challenge the harmful stereotypes that enable GBV to flourish. It is essential to educate all members of society on the equality of genders, emphasizing that violence is never a solution, irrespective of the circumstances.

Moreover, to combat GBV effectively, a multifaceted approach is necessary. The legal framework surrounding domestic violence must be strengthened and enforced. Law enforcement agencies should receive training on handling GBV cases with sensitivity and urgency, ensuring that victims feel safe and supported in coming forward. Support services, including shelters, helplines, and counseling, should be readily available and accessible to those in need.



Engagement of men as allies in the fight against GBV is also crucial. By involving men in discussions about healthy relationships and consent, we can dismantle harmful norms that condone violence. Men must understand their role in nurturing a society that upholds respect and equality, breaking the cycle of violence that has persisted for far too long.

Additionally, better economic opportunities for women can be a powerful catalyst for change. Empowering women through education and vocational training not only promotes financial independence but also shifts power dynamics within communities. Women who are economically empowered are more likely to advocate for their rights and less likely to

remain in abusive situations.

However, addressing GBV is not solely the responsibility of women or marginalized groups; it requires a collective effort from all sectors of society. Government institutions, NGOs, community groups, and individuals must unite in this cause, pooling resources and expertise to create a robust support system for victims.

We must also turn our gaze inward and confront our own biases and behaviors. Each of us has a role to play in this fight, whether by challenging our own perceptions, standing up against violence when we witness it, or supporting those who have been affected.

The time for action is now. The people of Kenya have the potential to foster a culture of respect, dignity, and equality. By taking a stand against gender-based violence and working together to implement solutions, we can pave the way for a safer, healthier, and more equitable future for all. Only then can we transform our rich cultural heritage into a legacy that honors and protects every individual, free from the shadows of violence and fear.

New faces in football leadership as new officials are elected

By Gitari Dominic

In a pivotal development for local football, the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) elections held on November 14, 2024, across Meru, Isiolo, and Tharaka Nithi counties have ushered in new leadership committed to revitalizing the sport in the region.

The elections drew significant participation from stakeholders and football fans, marking an important move towards improved governance, enhanced transparency, and the revival of grassroots football initiatives.

In Meru County, former Al-Azizia FC president Benson Gitonga Kanyuru and former municipality ward representative Elias Murega Julius emerged victorious, securing the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship, respectively, with a decisive 17 votes to 3 against their opponents, Alex Muriuki and David Mutwiri.

Additionally, Nicholas Mugambi claimed the Secretary General role with 17 votes, defeating James Kirimi, who received 3 votes.

Jediel Gitonga Ntika was elected treasurer,



Benson Gitonga
(FKF Meru branch chairman)



Elias Murega Julius
(Vice - chairman)



Nicholas Mugambi
(Secretary General)



Jediel Gitonga
(Treasurer)



Elizabeth Kananu
(Woman Rep)



Collins Gakaria
(Youths Rep)



Hussein Kadir
(FKF Isiolo branch chairman)



Daniel Hibichu
(FKF Tharaka Nithi branch chairman)

garnering 14 votes against Joseph Mburu's 4. Elizabeth Kananu and Collins Gakaria emerged as the Youth and Women Representatives respectively, with Kananu receiving 17 votes versus Sophia Mwendwa's 3, while Gakaria

secured 13 votes, surpassing Kelvin Mwiti's 7.

Hussein Kadir was elected as the chairman of the FKF in Isiolo County, with Mohammed Molu set to serve as his deputy. They will lead the county's football activities for the next four years, alongside newly elected Secretary General Boniface Mwenda and representatives Mohammed Maow and Madina Dika for Youth and Women's affairs, respectively.

In Tharaka Nithi County, Daniel Hibichu was elected the federation's chairman. The remaining representatives will continue in their roles as no challengers were put forward to trigger a competitive election.

Each newly elected leader is likely to encounter a range of managerial challenges. In Meru, the focus will be on addressing issues such as improving the infrastructure for local teams, enhancing youth and women engagement, Capacity building to referees, Club officials, Coaches and other stakeholders and fostering a culture of accountability within the federation. The same awaits Isiolo's leadership, alongside the need to tackle the lack of resources and facilities while promoting inclusivity in all football programs.

Meanwhile, in Tharaka Nithi, revitalizing interest in football, Harmonizing leagues to curb the issue of players participating in Multiple teams at the same time and attracting sponsorships are essential tasks ahead, even as the leadership seek to fully win the trust of soccer lovers in the county.

As these leaders settle into their roles, the emphasis will be on overcoming these obstacles to ensure a thriving football community across all three counties.

Meet the ex-ball boy behind the mighty KeMU football team

By Gitari Dominik

In the bustling streets of Nairobi, a young dreamer, Hillary Mukasa first tasted the sweet thrill of football on the dusty pitches of Loresho Primary School.

Surrounded by his friends' cheers, Hillary's heart ignited with passion, setting him on a remarkable journey filled with ambition, challenges, and glory.

Under the warm embrace of the Nairobi sun, the community's youth converged at St. Joseph Catholic Church, united by a common love for the game. It was here that Hillary's talent caught light, as he excelled in his KCPE exams and secured a coveted spot at Kakamega High School—the heartbeat of Western Province football.

At Kakamega High, Hillary's life was transformed. Guided by the legendary Coach Chris Makokha—an academic and athletic icon—Hillary absorbed invaluable lessons that would shape his future. "Let the ball kiss the grass," Coach Makokha would say, a mantra that resonated deeply with the young athlete. Under his guidance, Hillary was immersed in a world of football prowess, learning from seasoned players and honing his skills.

However, the journey was riddled with trials. As a junior player competing against seasoned athletes, Hillary initially found himself as a ball boy for the senior squad. Yet, instead of stifling his spirit, this setback ignited an insatiable thirst for improvement. He scrutinized legendary teams, committed to intense training, and continually pushed his limits.

Every school holiday, Hillary sharpened his skills further with the Army's Water Works junior team, where discipline was paramount. It was here he learned from players who would wear the national colors, sowing the seeds of his future success.

After graduating from Moi University, the journey took another twist—Hillary transitioned from player to coach at Kenya Methodist University (KeMU).



Hillary Mukasa

This didn't dim his fiery passion for the game; instead, it propelled him to the pitch. Under the guidance of the late James Sianga, Hillary's vision as a coach began to crystallize.

His leadership skills flourished,

leading both the KeMU Queens and KeMU FC to remarkable victories, including the National University Games championship and the coveted Kenya Women Premier League title.

In a milestone moment for Kenyan football, six players from KeMU earned spots on the Harambee Stars team, proudly representing the nation in the African Women Cup of Nations. Among them, Cheris Avilia delivered a historic goal against Algeria, galvanizing the country with pride and hope.

The journey, however, was not without its challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic tested the resilience of both players and coaches alike.

But from this adversity emerged a stronger KeMU FC, earning a promotion to the FKF Division 2 League in 2021, driven by standout performances from top scorer Meshack Bwire.

Through it all, the lessons from Coach Makokha reverberated in Hillary's heart: football is not merely about victories, but the beauty of collaboration and respect.

Today, Hillary Mukasa shines as a beacon of hope for Kenyan football, weaving his story into the national fabric of the sport.

Kailemia launches women's football tournament to combat GBV in Meru

By Harun Mugambi

Meru County Woman Representative Elizabeth Kailemia has officially inaugurated the Women's Football Nyambene Edition Tournament, aimed at raising awareness about Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the region.

During the launch held at Akuune Primary School in Athiru Rujine Ward, Igembe Central, Kailemia highlighted her commitment to addressing GBV, which is notably prevalent in Meru.

A report released on July 2023 identified ranked Meru County third most affected nationally by GBV incidents at 38 percent.

"This alarming trend has deeply affected women and families in our communities," Kailemia lamented, emphasizing that GBV represents a severe violation of human rights with devastating physical and psychological impacts that transcend class and race.

"Nationally, one in three women will encounter GBV in their lifetime, and we cannot allow this grim reality to persist unchallenged," she stated.

The tournament intends to empower women to showcase their resilience and unify against violence.

Stressing that GBV is a community issue hindering development and peace, she urged everyone to join forces in combating it.

Kailemia addressed the economic toll of GBV, which adversely affects productivity and places an undue burden on healthcare and justice systems.

"The tournament is more than



Kailemia greeting players during the tournament

competition; it's a call to action," she declared. "We've lost too many women to violence; it's time to take a decisive stand."

Congratulating the MP for her initiative, Elias Murega, Chairman of the Meru County Football Kenya Federation (FKF), commended the tournament's potential as a platform for GBV advocacy.

The tournament will commence at the ward level, with winning teams progressing to the constituency level.

The ultimate victors of the Nyambene Edition will receive cash prizes, thereby incentivizing participation while delivering a strong message: "Enough is Enough – End GBV in Meru County."



A player strikes the ball during the tournament

Tharaka Nithi gearing for a bruising battle as four candidates seek to succeed Njuki

By Rugendo Antony



Tharaka MP Gitonga Murugara addresses attendees during a graduation party



Tharaka Nithi Woman Representative Susan Ngugi Mwindu



Prof Erastus Njoka



Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki

Tharaka Nithi County is bracing itself for an electrifying performance in the arena of politics as four strong candidates gear up for the 2027 gubernatorial contest.

The race is expected to be a veritable clash of titans, with individuals from various political backgrounds jostling for the position that has significant influence in the region.

Political pundits, analysts, and social media users have already begun to weigh in on the emerging dynamics, which could be shaped by the influence of Deputy President Kithure Kindiki and outgoing Governor

Muthomi Njuki.

The headline contenders making their bid for the coveted seat include Professor Erastus Njoka, Tharaka MP Gitonga Murugara, Woman Representative Susan Ngugi, and Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki.

Each candidate comes with a formidable set of credentials and a vision for the future of Tharaka Nithi, but only time will reveal who will emerge victorious in this complex and multifaceted political landscape.

Professor Njoka: The scholar turned politician
Leading the charge is Professor Erastus Njoka, who

Continued on page 13...



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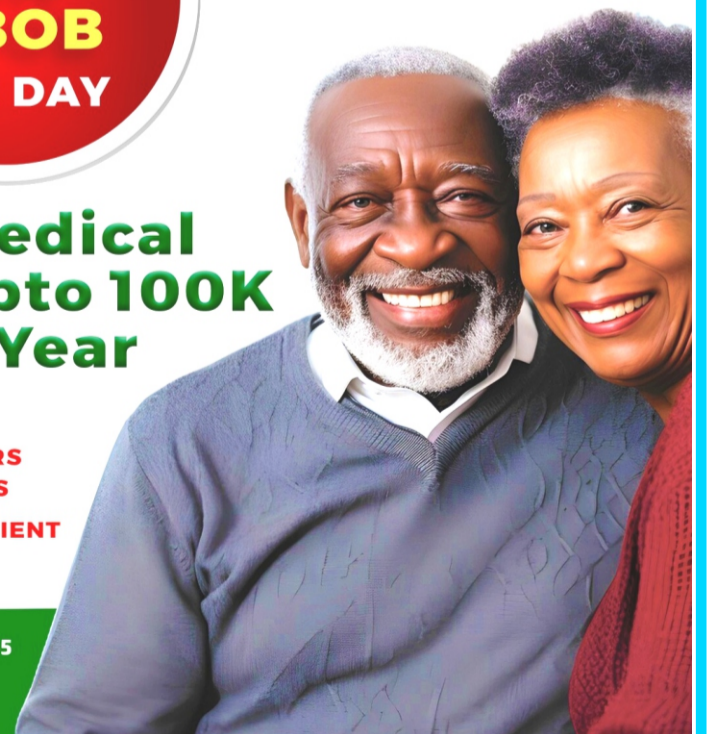
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