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News Highlights >>>

- Raila Odinga One Month On
- Boost for County Referral Hospital
- World Food Day Revives Kendu Bay Show
- Taking Inclusive Education, a Notch Higher



REMEMBERING HOMA BAY'S BEST FRIEND, RT. HON RAILA AMOLO ODINGA: A LEGACY OF LOVE AND DEDICATION

By H.E. Gladys Wanga

As we gather our thoughts and feelings about the life of Rt. Hon Raila Amolo Odinga, we find ourselves one month after the heart-wrenching news of his passing. It still feels surreal to think of a world without him, as we lay him to rest among his ancestors at Nyamira Kangó Ka Jaramogi. Raila Odinga was not just a revered leader; he was a profound son of this nation whose journey was filled with extraordinary triumphs and deep valleys of struggle, all driven by an unwavering love for his people.

The weight of his absence is particularly felt in Homa Bay County, a place he cherished deeply, and which also embraced him as its own. From the moment he first came to us, breaking away from political comforts, he introduced himself not just as a leader but as someone who genuinely cared.

After the onset of devolution, Odinga's devotion to Homa Bay grew even stronger. He was there for us, stepping in during our moments of uncertainty, becoming a confidant and mentor to many. His guidance was invaluable, particularly to those of us who sought clarity during trying times. For me, he became a father figure, filling a void left by my own father's early passing.

When I ventured into politics as the Women Representative for Homa Bay, I carried the weight of my challenges, facing daunting opposition. Yet, it was Baba's warmth and support that embraced me; he genuinely believed in my potential, helping me find my voice through the Raila Odinga Academy of Leadership. His unwavering belief in my abilities transformed me into a confident leader ready to serve my community.

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Jakom's commitment to his ideals never wavered, even when facing obstacles. He passionately advocated for the devolution of governance in Kenya, fostering hope for a brighter future for all. His vision extended beyond politics, encompassing a broader dream for unity and reconciliation, particularly in times when the nation grappled with division.

He also embodied unity within the ODM party, ensuring it became a symbol of hope and connection across diverse regions of our country. I will forever treasure the honour of being nominated by him as the first female Chairperson of ODM, a role that speaks to his belief in inclusivity and empowerment in our political landscape.

Baba's life was a journey of resilience, marked by personal sacrifices in the name of democracy and freedom. His ability to stand tall, even in the face of adversity, inspired countless others

to carry hope in their hearts. For Odinga, Kenya was not just another political entity; it was home, a place where he placed the interests of the people above his own.

In this time of mourning, we must cherish Baba's legacy, holding close the values he stood for: social justice, rule of law, democracy, inclusivity, and equity. As I continue with my role as governor of Homa Bay and as national chairperson of his party, I promise to honour his memory by fostering the kind of leadership that reflects his unwavering dedication to the people he loved so dearly.

Let's unite in our efforts to fulfil the dreams he envisioned for Kenya, ensuring that his legacy inspires us to create a brighter future together. Thank you for sharing in this remembrance, and may we continue to celebrate the remarkable life of a truly beloved leader.

H. E Gladys Wanga is the Governor of Homa Bay County and the National Chairperson of the ODM Party

HOMA BAY HOSTS RAILA ODINGA'S MEMORIAL SERVICE, REMEMBERS HIS UNWAVERING SUPPORT TO THE COUNTY'S CAUSE

By Lawrence Magware

In a heartfelt tribute held at the Raila Odinga Stadium, Homa Bay County hosted an Ecumenical Memorial Service to honour the legacy of the late Raila Odinga, a revered political figure in Kenya. This gathering served as a vital opportunity for the residents of Homa Bay, a significant bastion of support throughout Odinga's political journey, to celebrate and reflect on the remarkable life of a leader who played a pivotal role in shaping the nation's democracy and advancing the process of devolution—initiatives that laid the groundwork for a more equitable Kenya.

Raila Odinga passed away on October 15, with his burial taking place just four days later on October 19. This expedited time-line was in accordance with his own wishes, deviating from the extensive farewells typically afforded to a





figure of his prominence. Consequently, only his home county of Siaya, alongside Kisumu and Nairobi, had the distinct honour of hosting his body for public viewing and conducting funeral services. To ensure his memory resonated across the nation, the ODM Party Central Committee organized inter-county memorial services, with Homa Bay proudly hosting the inaugural event.

The service provided a significant platform for the late Prime Minister's supporters, numbering in the thousands, to come together in unity, expressing their love, admiration, and gratitude for a man whose work profoundly influenced their lives and the political landscape of Kenya. The emotional atmosphere was palpable, embodying the shared sense of loss and celebration of his enduring impact.

Attendees included a prominent political lineup led by the newly appointed ODM party leader, Senator Dr Oburu Oginga, who spoke movingly about Odinga's legacy. Host Governor Gladys Wanga extended a warm welcome to a diverse array of distinguished attendees, including Governor Dr Ochilo Ayacko of Migori, National Assembly Leader of Minority Hon. Junet Mohammed, and Deputy Governor Dr Matthews Owili of Kisumu. The event also drew numerous dignitaries such as Hon. Peter Kaluma, Hon. Sam Atandi, Hon. Peter Masara, Hon. Dr Lilian Gogo, Hon. Joyce Osogo Bensuda, Hon. Dr Eve Obara, Hon. Fatusa Full Network, Hon. Walter Owino, and Hon. Boyd Were, the

ODM candidate for Kasipul, highlighting the broad political spectrum united by Odinga's vision.

Members of the County Assemblies of Homa Bay, Kisumu, Siaya and Migori, local clergy, community leaders, and various stakeholders also attended, showcasing the deep-rooted connections that Raila Odinga had tirelessly cultivated throughout his expansive career. This collective gathering not only honoured his immense contributions to the nation but also reaffirmed the bonds of solidarity within the party and the broader community, signaling a commitment to continue his fight for social justice and political reform in Kenya.





HEALTHCARE: HOMA BAY COUNTY TEACHING AND REFERRAL HOSPITAL CONTINUES TO EXPAND

TRANSFORMATION OF THE REFERRAL HOSPITAL CONTINUES WITH UNVEILING OF ADVANCED SURGICAL EQUIPMENT

By Abnery Pajero

The County Government of Homa Bay has taken a major step forward in elevating specialized healthcare by commissioning a new Laparoscopy Tower and an Endo-Cardiothoracic Endoscopic System at the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital. The launch was presided over by Governor Gladys Wanga, who reaffirmed that transforming healthcare delivery remains at the heart of her administration's agenda.

The newly installed laparoscopy tower introduces highly advanced, minimally invasive (keyhole) surgical care to the county. Surgeons can now perform delicate operations such as appendix and gallbladder removal, treatment for hernias, and common gynecological procedures using small incisions guided by high-definition cameras. This new capability will allow patients to heal faster, avoid complicated recoveries, and significantly reduce the cost and burden of referrals to distant facilities.

Alongside this, the commissioning of an endo-cardiothoracic system marks an important

leap in the hospital's ability to manage critical conditions affecting the lungs, heart, and chest cavity. The equipment supports precise diagnosis and intervention for challenges such as chest trauma, pleural effusion, and collapsed lungs, ensuring that lifesaving care is now available much closer. The move is expected to greatly reduce referrals to other facilities and hospital stays.

Speaking during the launch, Governor Wanga noted that every resident of Homa Bay deserves access to high-quality care, emphasizing that no family should be forced to travel long distances in search of specialized treatment. She described the investment as both a medical advancement and a major relief for families across the region.

“ With a traditional operation, your quality of life often decreases. But with a laparoscopy procedure, you can go home the same day, and your quality of life is preserved. This is the kind of service we are providing here today,” ~ said Governor Wanga.



On his part, the Chief Officer in charge of Medical Services, Dr Kevin Osuri, lauded the transformative impact marked by the acquisition of the new equipment. “We have significantly reduced the massive backlog of cases we were facing. Some patients who were initially scheduled for surgeries next year on



normal days have now been attended to and successfully treated.” Said Dr Osuri.

These developments underscore the progress Homa Bay County continues to make in building a stronger, more responsive healthcare system.

THE STATE-OF-THE-ART FUNERAL PARLOUR AT HOMA BAY REFERRAL HOSPITAL OFFICIALLY COMMISSIONED

By Abnery Pajero

The County Government of Homa Bay has taken a significant step in transforming how families bid farewell to their loved ones with the unveiling of a modern Funeral Parlour at the County Teaching and Referral Hospital. Commissioned by Governor Gladys Wanga, the facility provides a dignified and respectful environment for grieving families during one of life’s most difficult moments.

Replacing the old, overcrowded mortuary, the new parlour prioritizes comfort, privacy, and hygiene. It features proper preservation facilities, dedicated areas for preparing the deceased, and serene spaces where families can gather, reflect, and pay their respects. Even in moments of profound grief, the facility ensures that families experience a sense of calm and order.

Governor Wanga noted that the parlour reflects the County Government’s commitment to caring for residents throughout their lives, from birth to final rites. She emphasized that every life deserves respect and that families should be able to honour their loved ones

without added stress or discomfort.

“One of the things our people spoke to us most about during our campaigns was the need for dignified final care—a proper send-off for our loved ones. While we pursue life with the services provided here, we have taken an additional step to ensure that the final journey is treated with the care it deserves. The value of this is often underestimated, but when you lose a loved one, you want their send-off to be





dignified. This parlour will provide exactly that for our people,” she said.

The facility also addresses long-standing challenges such as limited space, inadequate refrigeration, and overcrowding, which have historically compounded the difficulty of losing a loved one. In addition, students of KMTCC Homa Bay pursuing courses in mortuary science will now have a proper facility to train and practice in a professional environment. Hospital staff have welcomed the parlour, noting that it allows them to handle sensitive cases with professionalism and compassion while upholding public health standards. Residents, too, have expressed relief and gratitude, recognizing that the county now provides a space where dignity, respect, and cultural values are preserved in moments of loss.

The state-of-the-art Funeral Parlour, with 137 beds inclusive of 37 in the private wing, now stands as a testament to Homa Bay's vision of comprehensive healthcare, one that extends beyond treatment to honour the human

experience in its entirety. It ensures that every family can accord their loved ones the dignity they deserve in their final journey, reinforcing the county's commitment to compassionate, inclusive, and modern services for all.





EDUCATION: STAKEHOLDERS COLLABORATE TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN HOMA BAY AND MOMBASA COUNTIES

By Collins Ogutu

A groundbreaking research initiative aimed at fostering inclusive education for children with disabilities is making significant strides in Kenya's Homa Bay and Mombasa counties. Led by the County Government of Homa Bay, in collaboration with Sightsavers and the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), the two-year project seeks to develop practical tools and guidance to help teachers create more inclusive learning environments.

The initiative, which is part of AKF's global Schools2030 programme, launched earlier this year and is set to run until April 2026. It aims to bridge gaps in educational access and quality for children with disabilities, ensuring that they receive equitable opportunities to learn and thrive.

Recently, the project reached a key milestone with the hosting of a two-day Participatory Action Workshop. The workshop brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, County Education Departments, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), BEQI Enumerators, and partners from AKF, the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), and Sight-savers.

The primary purpose of the workshop was to validate preliminary research findings and gather collaborative input to inform the next phase of the study. Participants engaged in rich discussions, sharing insights and experiences to refine the tools and guidance being developed for teachers. This collaborative approach aims to ensure that the resulting resources are practical, contextually relevant, and effective in promoting inclusive education.

Speaking at the event, officials emphasized the importance of inclusive education in Kenya's broader educational development agenda. They highlighted the need for continued partnerships and community involvement to ensure that children with disabilities are not left behind. As the project progresses, it is expected





to contribute significantly to policy formulation and the implementation of inclusive practices across Kenyan schools. The initiative underscores the country's commitment to fulfilling its obligations under international disability rights frameworks and ensuring that every child has access to quality education.

The success of this project could serve as a model for similar initiatives across the region, reinforcing the importance of collaborative effort in creating equitable learning environments for all children.

FOOD SECURITY: HOMA BAY LEADS THE FOOD SECURITY CHARGE WITH GRAND HOSTING OF WORLD FOOD DAY

By Communication Team

HOMA BAY HOSTS THE NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS OF WORLD FOOD DAY WITH A CALL FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The Kendu Bay ASK Showground pulsated with energy as Homa Bay County hosted the two-day national celebration of World Food Day 2025, centred around the theme "Hand in Hand for Better Foods for a Better Future."

Organized by a coalition of organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IFAD, WFP, and the State Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the County

Government of Homa Bay and various partners, the event showcased groundbreaking innovations in agriculture, food systems, and climate adaptation from across the region.

On October 27th, the grounds buzzed with activity as farmers eagerly interacted with experts and exhibitors, diving into discussions about modern farming techniques, agribusiness strategies, and value addition processes. The official opening ceremony was graced by the County Secretary, with the Chairman of the Lake



Region Economic Bloc (LREB) delivering opening remarks that underscored the importance of inter-county collaboration in achieving food security.

A compelling panel discussion, skillfully moderated by agricultural experts, featured influential figures such as Hon. Sylvester K'Okoth, the Chair of the CECM Agriculture Caucus, and various CECMs from Homa Bay, Nyamira, Migori, and Bomet counties. Together, they explored innovative strategies to strengthen partnerships aimed at fostering resilient food systems.

The celebration reached its peak on October 28th, when H.E. Gladys Wanga, the Governor of Homa Bay, took centre stage alongside dignitaries and development partners for the main event. Esteemed guests included FAO Country Representative Dr Nyabenyi Tito Tipo, as well as the Country Directors from IFAD and WFP, alongside other leading figures from the State Department of Agriculture. Attendees eagerly explored vibrant exhibition booths, visited demo farms, and participated in the planting of ceremonial trees, a poignant symbol of their commitment to environmental conservation.

The day also marked the launch of the FAO "Tunza Project," officiated by Dr Nyabenyi Tito Tipo with the Danish Ambassador Stephan Schønemann, Agriterro CEO Jasper Spikker, and DAFC Deputy CEO Flemming Nør-Pedersen in attendance. This moment was followed by the signing of cooperative agreements aimed at bolstering agricultural initiatives.



A captivating documentary produced by Bio Vision Trust Africa showcased local success stories in sustainable farming, while the event was enlivened by dazzling performances from local artists, including the talented Tabby Odanga and her team, adding a splash of colour and culture to the proceedings.

Governor Gladys Wanga praised the farmers for their embrace of innovation and reiterated her administration's unwavering commitment to transforming Homa Bay into a regional food hub, with a focus on irrigation and agribusiness development. The event concluded with the presentation of awards and trophies to outstanding exhibitors and innovators, culminating in a keynote speech by the Chief Guest that emphasized the vital role of partnership-driven agricultural growth for a sustainable future.

INNOVATION TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT WORLD FOOD DAY EXHIBITIONS IN KENDU BAY

By Oketch Bernard

The Kendu Bay Showground came alive with innovation and learning as exhibitors from across the nation converged to showcase cutting-edge technologies, value addition models, and smart farming practices during the 2025 World Food Day celebrations.

From dome tents buzzing with activity to demonstration farms blooming with promise, the exhibitions formed the heartbeat of this year's event, themed "Hand in Hand for Better Foods for a Better Future."

More than 100 exhibitors, including government departments, farmer groups, youth innovators, cooperatives, and international organizations transformed the showground into a living classroom of agricultural transformation. Each tent told a story of creativity, resilience, and the power of partnership.

At the irrigation demonstration plots, farmers flocked to witness how handmade drip systems and water harvesting technologies are changing the face of dryland farming in Homa Bay. The

innovations, supported by the County Government through programs like NAVCDP, are designed to help farmers produce more with less water while conserving the environment. NAVCDP's key value chains also took centre stage.

Value addition stole the spotlight in several booths. Women and youth groups exhibited locally processed products, from banana flour and sunflower oil to tilapia crisps and cassava chips, symbolizing a shift from subsistence farming to agribusiness. "We are



moving from just producing to processing and packaging. That's where real income is," explained a member of a women's cooperative from Kabondo Kasipul.

The County Department of Agriculture's booth showcased nutritious products such as sweet potatoes, pineapples, edible oils, and natural honey, among other key value chains. The exhibit not only promoted healthy diets but also inspired farmers to embrace crop diversification.

Private sector actors, including agro-input suppliers, insurance companies, and digital innovators, demonstrated how technology is reshaping agriculture. Farmers interacted with mobile apps offering market linkages, soil testing, and climate information, proving that the future of farming is both digital and sustainable.

Learning stations were also a highlight, where farmers rotated from one booth to another to engage experts on modern practices such as organic fertilizer production, pest management, and improved livestock breeding. "I've learned more in one day than in three months of field visits," said a farmer from Rangwe, smiling as she carried new seedlings to try at home.

Governor Gladys Wanga, while touring the displays, praised the exhibitors for their creativity and commitment.

// These demonstrations remind us that agriculture is not just about the past; it's about the future. We are building an economy that feeds, empowers, and sustains our people," she said.



HOMA BAY SIGNS LANDMARK PARTNERSHIP TO BOOST BEEKEEPING AND CLIMATE ACTION

By Oketch Bernard



The County Government of Homa Bay has partnered with Smart Mechanized Agriculture and Climate Action for Humanity and Sustainability (SMASCHS), an organization founded and directed by Ms Charlene Ruto, in a major stride toward promoting climate-smart agriculture and empowering local farmers.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) took place on the sidelines of the 2025 National World Food

Day celebrations at Kendu Bay Showground, marking a new chapter in the county's efforts to diversify livelihoods through apiculture and environmental conservation.

Governor Gladys Wanga described the partnership as a game-changer for Homa Bay's agricultural transformation, noting that beekeeping holds enormous potential for income generation, food security, and climate resilience.

"Beekeeping is one of the most sustainable and profitable ventures for our farmers," said Governor Wanga. "Through this collaboration with SMASCHS, we will promote, expand, and sustain apiculture activities across Homa Bay. Our goal is to empower communities, create jobs, and conserve our environment."

The MoU aims to establish modern apiaries across all sub-counties, provide technical training to farmers, and introduce mechanized honey harvesting and value addition technologies. It will also support youth and women's groups to access modern beekeeping equipment and

link their products to regional and international markets.

"Honey is more than a product; it's a symbol of sustainability," Ms Ruto remarked. "Through this partnership, we want to turn apiculture into a key driver of economic growth, climate action, and community empowerment. We will work hand in hand with the county government to ensure Homa Bay becomes a model for sustainable bee farming in Kenya."

Governor Wanga reaffirmed that the county's focus remains on strengthening its priority value chains: coffee, cotton, edible oil, fish, and bananas, while integrating new areas like beekeeping and sweet potato value addition.

"This MoU reflects our broader vision of transforming agriculture through innovation and partnerships," she said. "We appreciate the leadership of Ms Charlene Ruto and SMASCHS in championing mechanized agriculture and climate action. Together, we are building a resilient and food-secure Homa Bay."



