

THE FRIDAY BULLETIN

The Weekly Muslim Update



A Publication of the Jama Mosque Nairobi

Sheikh Khalifa posts best KCSE results in its history



AISHA MUTHONI HANEEF
A (84 POINTS)



ABDULGHAFUR ISSA TIMAMY
A (83 POINTS)

Coast-based academic powerhouse, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Secondary School, has posted its strongest performance yet in the 2025 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations, highlighting the rising academic excellence among Muslim schools in the region. The results, released last Friday by Education Cabinet Secretary Migos Ogamba, showed a marked improvement for the school, which raised its mean score from 9.1 in 2024 to 9.6 in 2025 — the best since 2015. The school achieved 17 'A's and 50 'A-' grades, with most students scoring B+ and above.

In a remarkable feat, all 212 candidates who sat the exams qualified for direct university entry, attaining grades of C+ and above, achieving a 100 per cent transition rate. Leading the pack were Naima Adan Mohammed who attained A of 83 points and Aisha Muthoni Haneef, who also scored A of 84 points.

Speaking on the achievement, Sheikh Rishard Rajab Ramadhan thanked Allah and praised the collaborative effort that led to the milestone. "We had set a double target of achieving a mean score of 9.5 and a 100 per cent university transition rate, and I am proud to say we surpassed both," he said, attributing the success to robust leadership by the Board of Trustees, dedicated management, supportive parents, committed teachers, and the hard work of the students. The school, ranked 24th nationally, has consistently performed well in the KCSE, frequently emerging the KCSE top performer in Mombasa County taking either position one or two. "It was a wonderful moment.

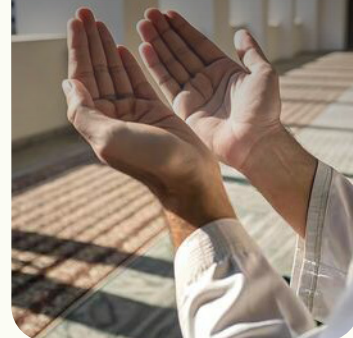
The results surpassed our performance over the past two years. We thank Allah for this success," Sheikh Rishard added.

Other top-performing Muslim students from across the country also made headlines. In addition to Sheikh Khalifa's achievers, Han-nah Abdillatif of Light Academy Mombasa and Hussein Karima Shiraz of Memon Academy, Mombasa, each scored 84 points.

The school's top performers included Abdulghafur Issa Timamy and Abdillah Mohammed, who both earned grade A with 83 points, alongside Mohamed Aziz, Raniyya Abdalla Issa, and Fauzia Farouk, who also secured A grades. Other notable Muslim achievers hailed from Shimo la Tewa Boys High School, Kapsabet Boys High School, Meru School, Memon Academy, and Arabuko Forest Secondary School in Kilifi County. Several candidates earned A- grades, including students from Lafey Boys Secondary School in Mandera County, Abuhureira Academy in Mombasa, Mwangaza High School, and Garissa Progressive High School, demonstrating that excellence was widespread across regions and institutions. Other Muslim schools in Mombasa, such as Memon High School, Quba Academy, and Istiqama Academy, also posted commendable results. Nationally, 993,226 candidates sat for the 2025 KCSE, with over 270,000 attaining C+ and above, qualifying them for direct entry into universities.

The results underscore the growing academic strength of Muslim institutions in Kenya and their commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders.

In Today's Issue



1 How to earn Allah's mercy & live with purpose

The mercy of Allah is ever present. It is you who must learn how to tap into that mercy and learn to live your life in a way that will make you deserving of that mercy.

2 Politicians urged to Shun Religion and Ethnicity in Politics

Political leaders have been urged to shun the politics of religion and ethnicity to maintain the nation's cherished peace and unity.

3 Discover, Learn, and Play – The Islamic Way!

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Muslim Girls' School tops 2025 KCSE, underscoring power of girls' education

Ghanima El-Marzuq Girls Secondary School has emerged as the top-performing Muslim girls' school in the 2025 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations, results released on Friday last week, offering a powerful testament to the impact of empowering girls through education.

The school recorded an impressive mean score of 9.32 points, a significant rise from 7.42 in 2024, outperforming several long-established institutions across the county. In a remarkable milestone, all 59 candidates who sat the 2025 examinations attained grades of C+ and above, qualifying for direct university entry and achieving a 100 per cent transition rate.

Education stakeholders have lauded the results as clear evidence that when girls are given the right support and learning

environment, they excel academically and challenge long-held stereotypes about gender and educational attainment.

The achievement is particularly notable given the socio-economic background of many of the candidates. A significant number of students come from underprivileged households, with several being orphans who depend on well-wishers for school fees, learning materials and basic necessities.

Speaking after the release of the results, school principal Barika Salim attributed the success to discipline, teamwork and the unwavering determination of both students and teachers.

"Our students refused to be defined or limited by their backgrounds. Through discipline, unity and commitment from both learners and teachers, they achieved this



Nadya Nadil who scored an A

remarkable success," she said.

Ghanima El-Marzuq Girls Secondary School is sponsored by Direct Aid Kenya, whose support has played a critical role in enabling vulnerable Muslim girls to access quality education and pursue academic excellence.

New 100-bed dormitory boosts learning at Mumias Muslim Boys School

As schools enter the second week following official reopening, students at Mumias Muslim Boys Secondary School have a renewed reason to smile after the commissioning and handover of a new 100-bed dormitory, a major boost to learning and welfare at the institution.

The dormitory, which is expected to significantly improve accommodation and enhance the overall learning environment, was constructed through the support of the Commissioner for Revenue Allocation, Hadija Nganyi, in collaboration with well-wishers and the Busia Sugar Company.

Speaking during the handover, Nganyi said the project, estimated to have cost about Sh1 million, was made possible

through collective support from her friends and partners who shared a common goal of improving learning conditions for students.

"This project would not be here without the generosity of many hands. Together with other well-wishers, we worked through hardship, and now our students can smile," Nganyi told The Friday Bulletin.

Busia Sugar Company Managing Director Ali Taib said the firm remains committed to giving back to the community as part of its corporate social responsibility.

"Our main agenda as a company is to build the community. We have renovated several schools in Matungu and a dispensary in Mumias East which serves the wider community," Taib said.

School principal Asman Osieko, accom-

panied by teachers and parents, lauded Nganyi and all partners involved in the construction of the dormitory, terming the facility a major milestone for the school.

Osieko pledged that the improved infrastructure would translate into better academic performance, saying the school administration, parents and students would work together to deliver good results as a sign of appreciation.

"Because of this facility, and together with my students and support from parents, we will make our well-wishers proud by providing good results," he said.

The new dormitory is expected to ease congestion, improve student comfort and contribute to improved academic outcomes at the school.

Governor Wavinya urges Politicians to shun religion and ethnicity in politics

Political leaders have been urged to shun the politics of religion and ethnicity to maintain the nation's cherished peace and unity. The Governor of Machakos, Wavinya Ndeti, has warned politicians against dividing Kenyans along ethnic and religious backgrounds and promoting hatred, tribalism, and conflict, which she said threaten the peace and unity of the country.

Speaking over the weekend in Machakos, Wavinya called on politicians to ensure their utterances promote unity and sustain the enviable peace God has bestowed on the nation. "God has granted our country immense favours of peace and unity, and it is important for us all to thank Him by protecting this favour," she said.

Underscoring the call for peace and unity, Governor Wavinya warned that leaders who seek to divide Kenyans along tribal or religious lines are not true leaders. She emphasized the need for all Kenyans to stay united and coexist in harmony, re-

gardless of their religious or ethnic backgrounds, and to focus on national development rather than political animosity.

"Leaders need to have good ideals and be lovers of peace, not dividing people on religion or ethnic backgrounds because all of us are Kenyans and we should live like brothers and sisters," Governor Wavinya said. The Governor urged Kenyans to protect the prevailing peace between Muslims and Christians in the country, calling it a blessing from Almighty God. "I want to urge all Kenyans, both Muslims and Christians, to guard their comments and ensure that they eschew inflammatory comments, which will jeopardise our peace."

She added: "We are one people and God did not create us to fight among ourselves. When you speak to your brother, ensure that whatever comes out is peaceful. Ensure that whatever comes out unites and shows love."

Wavinya noted that the injection of religious rhetoric into political discourse

threatens to unravel the social fabric, fracturing communities along religious lines and eroding the foundation of unity upon which the over 50 million population stands. "Anything related to religion, tribe, and race are triggers of conflict," the Governor said, urging politicians to tone down inflammatory statements, engage in peaceful dialogue, and prioritize the country's social fabric and economy over early electioneering or personal attacks.

She further stressed that politicians should not divide Kenyans along political, ethnic, or religious lines and sow seeds of hatred in pursuit of "selfish narrow interests" and instead should shun inciteful ethnic and religious remarks that can divide the nation and lead to violence.

Wavinya also pointed out that, for the most part, the Christian, Muslim communities, and people of other faith groups have lived in peace since they were abruptly joined together when the nation attained independence in 1963.

How to earn Allah's mercy and live with purpose

By Latiefa Achmat

I was speaking to a young man and through the conversation I heard him say, "I don't make du'aa' anymore." I asked him, "Why not?" and he replied, "I made du'aa' for some things and I never got them so I just gave up!"

I asked him if he was happy in his life, he said, "Not really." Then I asked him if he felt he needed the mercy of Allah in his life, and at that he replied very enthusiastically, "Of course I do!"

Think About It!

Now this made me think very deeply about some things in life. Is it right that we (mankind in general) go on expecting things from our Creator while we sit down passively, mostly just observing life and hardly doing anything for anyone else unless it somehow fits in with our scheme of things? Is it right if a kid wants something from his mum and dad but he is doing and saying things they do not like, going out without their permission, dressing in an unacceptable way, not pulling his weight around the house, and so on, then he just come right out and ask for money, or new clothes, or whatever, and then grumble when they refuse, and perhaps adding how unfair life is and how very unreasonable they are?

Let's look at it another way.

Imagine you had someone you called your friend but this person spoke badly about you behind your back and only came hanging around when he wanted something—then one day he comes to you and asks a big favor. Most likely you would tell him to forget it and simply ignore him if he started complaining.

So we all acknowledge that on the human level life is a matter of give-and-take; it's a matter of rights and responsibilities.

What about your relation with your Creator?

Is it right that we enjoy the bounty of this marvelous creation and, even though everything was created for the benefit of man, we go ahead and make use of things for our own benefit and comfort without thinking of others? Is it right to fail to give others their rights and expect our rights, and often fail to take care of the creation that Allah provided for us? How often do you use things that you know will pollute the environment—the same environment that Allah created for you?

We are dropping litter, using chemicals, and generally tapping into the wasteful and excessive way of life in the modern world, without really thinking seriously about our responsibility to yourself, those around us, the world, and our Creator. Then when we get sick because of the polluted and chemical-filled environment, you turn in desperation to the Lord of all asking for help and healing. Then as soon as we are well again, you go back to the old habits of misusing, if not de-

stroying, the environment.

How Merciful Allah is!

Even though you keep making the same mistakes; even though you misuse yourself, others, and the world around you, He still comes to your aid! He, the Almighty, gives you enough opportunity to change, to see the errors of your ways and to make a fresh start. Have you ever noticed how your body heals as does the environment? So where is your place in all this? A person can drink alcohol and abuse his body until he gets liver disease—and then blame fate! Likewise a person could neglect the rights of his family and even abuse them when he is in the prime of his life and filled with strength, but when he gets old and is left alone and feeling lonely, he curses life and complains how difficult life is! Do you find that you sometimes do things like this? Have you ever passed by a river that is polluted and said how awful it is that "mankind" destroys nature? But then haven't you ever tipped chemicals down the sink that end up in the river system, and somewhere along the line, contributed to this awful state of pollution?

Be Responsible

What I want to say is that you have to be willing to take your responsibilities seriously. The first step is to realize that Allah has called upon mankind to be the caretakers of this world.

Allah the Almighty said: "You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin what is good, and forbid what is wrong and you believe in Allah..." (Surah Al-Imran 3:110). We have to understand that the nature of this life is not just to make money and live a comfortable life of ease. We have to be willing to give: to give to those around us, our family and friends and our communities; to participate in the voice of society that calls for justice; to speak out against violations against mankind and the earth.

When toxic waste is dumped, what do you do? Logging companies are allowed to destroy one of the last remaining rainforests on earth, what do you do about that? What is your stance when people are abused and oppressed? If your answer is "nothing." Then you should think again.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever, among you, sees something abominable should rectify it with his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do so, then he should do it with his tongue; and if he has not strength enough to

do it, (even) then he should (hate it) in his heart, and that is the least of Faith. (Muslim)

Purpose of Creation

Allah created us to worship Him, and a part of that worship is to keep within His boundaries—the rules He has provided us with, knowing full well that whatever He has ordered us to keep away from is in fact bad for us. So imagine a person who is selfish, stubborn, and harsh. He couldn't care less about the effects of dumping their factory's toxic waste into any place convenient (for them).

His sole goal of life is to make more and more money and gathering up material wealth. He doesn't really care whose head he steps on to get up the social ladder, and basically he doesn't really care about anyone except himself. If such a person prays to the Creator of all—should he expect his du'aa' to be answered? Listen to what the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said about this: "Allah the Almighty is good and accepts only that which is good. Allah has commanded the Faithful to do that which He commanded the Messengers, as He Almighty has said:

"O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness." (Al-Mu'minun 23:51) And Allah the Almighty has said, "O you who have believed, eat from the good [i.e., lawful] things which We have provided.." (Al-Baqarah 2:172)

Then he mentioned the case of a man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty and who spreads out his hands to the sky saying: O Lord! O Lord! While his food is unlawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful, and he is nourished unlawfully, so how can he be answered?" (Muslim)

From the Holy Qur'an Ayah of the week

Theme: Taqwa brings provision.

...And whoever fears Allah,
He will make for him a
way out, and will provide
for him from where he
does not expect..."

Surah At-Talaq (65:2-3)



Struggling to have a baby? read this

By Nichola Taylor

That time of month comes again and, with it, brings disappointment and a deep sorrow. I've experienced this for five years before my daughter was born. Many women struggling to have a baby will understand immediately what I mean.

It took me five years to have my daughter. With it came heartache, grief, frustration, a lot of tears and many tests, pokes and prods for both my husband and myself.

Not being able to get pregnant is a very hard test to go through. It leaves you shattered and broken at times. What is worse is when everyone around you seems to be pregnant.

Some don't want to even tell you in case you give them the "evil eye". Others seem to rub salt into the wound, 'they only have to look at their husband and they are pregnant!' Oh yes, I have heard so many cold, piercing comments like that.

My daughter finally came after 5 years of trying and just as we were about to undergo treatment. We were ecstatic and over the moon. It was the biggest proof that when Allah says "be" it simply happens! SubhanAllah.

After the birth of our daughter, our plan was to wait a few months and then try again as it took so long for us to get our first baby.

We soon realized though, that we are not in control of our lives, as we might like to think, and I was diagnosed with breast cancer. So after the treatment and a wait of 3 years to make sure there was no recurrence, we were given the go ahead to try again. We are back to square one again because it simply isn't happening and time is not on our side like before, as I am older.

However, what is on our side is the experience of last time. What we have learned from it and how we learned to handle the heartbreak of having a period every month. And it is exactly this advice I would like to share with sisters who are struggling to have a baby, whether it is their first or second.

1- First and foremost, never stop making dua.

Every night before I sleep, I ask Allah to send us a baby. It can become so hard and we can become so depressed that sometimes we just give up. I am reminded, though, of how Prophet Ibrahim (AS) never stopped making dua for a child and Allah accepted his dua when he least expected it.

2- Have that time to grieve when the period comes.

This may sound weird, but if you hold the emotions in, it is going to make you more and more depressed. Every time my time of the month comes, I allow myself to be sad for a couple of days to let out the emotion of heartbreak. I am then able to

pick myself up after a couple of days, focus on the blessings I have in my life and keep the hope and faith that it will happen when it is meant to happen.

3- Treat yourself.

When I am having my "sad days" I focus on myself to pull myself up. I will eat my favorite snacks, buy myself a little treat or just pamper myself with a beauty treatment, a good book and a long bath. These things pick me up, and it is what we need from time to time, to make ourselves feel better.

4- Be open with your husband.

He is going through this as well. Each of you is there to support the other one. You can also treat yourselves with a date night. This should be making you both stronger as a couple and not driving you apart.

5- Make a plan of action.

If you have been trying for a year or more (6 months if you are over 35) and nothing is happening, then you need to see a doctor and have tests. And when I say 'you' I mean the pair of you.

6- Remain patient.

It is a very difficult test that Allah is sending you. Whether you choose to go through fertility treatment or not, then you need patience. This journey is a long one, it can be emotionally draining, but having patience will eventually bring you the best reward inshaAllah.

7- Never think this is because Allah thinks you are a bad person.

Wrong! Remember there are many outstanding women in our Islamic history that didn't have children or only had one child. Lady 'Aisha had no children and she is one of our most revered role models.

Maryam was mother to just Isa and look how she is held in the highest regard. This is not because Allah hates you, it is because you are being tested and what we don't have in this world, inshaAllah we will have in the next.

8- Cherish your first child.

If you are struggling to have a second child then make sure your first child is not neglected and thank Allah for the blessing of your first child. Your first child should not pick up on the pain or heartbreak of what you are going through. On the contrary, they should feel loved, cared for, precious and cherished.

They may ask you for siblings, you can just tell them, this is Allah's will but we can make dua. Never let them feel that they are not enough.

9- Make dua for others.

When you see other people having babies, make dua to keep your heart pure and make dua for the woman and her baby. When we make dua for someone Allah will grant us the same.

10- Finally, consider other solutions.

If all attempts of having a baby naturally or by fertility treatments fail, consider adoption. It is allowed in Islam and if you can give a child a home full of love and care then you are doing a very noble and grand gesture.

Of course both you and your husband have to agree with this idea, but it is a beautiful thing to help a child who needs a loving home. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"I and the one who sponsors an orphan are like this in Paradise." Then he joined between his index and middle fingers. (Sahih Al-Bukhari (5304))

Struggling to conceive is one of the most difficult tests we can go through as a married couple. It can be a long and painful journey but we must always keep that hope and faith alive that Allah is listening and Allah will do what is right for us.

We have to find a way of making peace with what is destined for us and as difficult and painful as that may be, we have to do it with a heart full of love and faith for Allah.

The last thing I want to leave for those who are going through this difficult test is that Allah loves us deeply. If we can't have a baby in this life, then Allah is planning the best of babies for us in Paradise and they will be ours for eternity.

Remember, Allah knows what is best for us and when the time is right we will get what is best for us. Never give up on that hope.

For those of you who are going through this tremendously hard journey, I pray that Allah grants you righteous children in this world and the next.

Light of Knowledge Quiz

Among the following, which is obligatory for women?

A Daily prayers

B Eid prayer

C Jumu'ah

Answer to be revealed in the next issue

Last week's answer was choice B :
"Ashab al-A'raf"

Our spiritual journey with ethics

By Shakiel Humayun

One of the greatest recorded conversations available to man is the discourse that occurred thousands of years ago between our Creator and the angels. The angels inquired about the placement of man on earth when their Creator said to them: "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." (Surah Al Baqarah 2:30). The angels wondered, 'would such a placement create an environment of chaos and turmoil?' They asked Allah:

"Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood..." (Surah Al Baqarah 2:30). The angels demonstrated the reason for their concern, {while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?}. In their estimation, a lack of tasbeeh (declaration of Allah being free of any defect) and tahmeed (declaration of perfection and praise for Allah) would cause chaos on earth. It was clear to the angels that guidance or religion would not be the source of wars and oppression, but instead it would be the humans themselves. Religions don't kill, people kill.

Man and the Code of Ethics

But, Allah was not going to send man on earth without a set of ethics, guidance, and morals. He said: "Indeed, I know that which you do not know" (Surah Al Baqarah 2:30) and said: "And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance – there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve" (Surah Al Baqarah 2:38). It is the disregard of these ethics that brings about bloodshed and corruption on earth.

Ensuring that man has a code of ethics that is just and fair can be accomplished if the code of ethics come from a source that is All-Knowing, Perfect, and All-Merciful-our Creator. Even the great secular minds concede that ethics and rights come from our Creator. Thomas Jefferson writes in the Declaration of Independence that people "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights". One of the greatest goals of man while sent on this earth is to develop their spirituality in an ethical manner. Pursuing this goal secures life, liberty, and happiness. Allah coupled iman with taqwa, the former incorporating spirituality while the latter incorporating a set of ethics, as the premise to bring about prosperity. Allah says: "And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the

earth" (Surah Al-A'raf 7:96).

Developing Spirituality through Ethical Manners

Claiming to develop spirituality of the self or of others in an unethical manner is one of the biggest crimes that comes with serious consequences. Building a relationship with the Quran, reciting it, and teaching it to others are amongst the greatest forms of spiritual development. Despite this lofty position in spiritual development, among the first persons to enter the hellfire will be the one who engaged in spiritual development through the Quran, but did so in an unethical and disingenuous manner. The Prophet Muhammad mentioned such a person: "... A man who had acquired and imparted knowledge and read the Quran will be brought forward, Allah will remind him of the favors He had bestowed upon him and the man will acknowledge them. Then He will ask him: 'What did you do to express gratitude for it?' The man will reply: 'I acquired knowledge and taught it, and read the Quran for Your sake.' Allah will say to him: 'You have lied. You acquired knowledge so that people might call you a learned (man), and you read the Quran so that they might call you a reciter, and they have done so.' Command will then be issued about him, and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into Hell" (Sahih Muslim). The message is clear and profound-spiritual development is destructive if done in an unethical manner. Living in the age of entertainment and celebrity, the danger to teachers and speakers in violating the eth-

ics of imparting knowledge may exist on a level higher than ever before. Is knowledge being imparted today based upon the strategy and method practiced by the Prophet Muhammad or does it resemble the method of traveling celebrities, gurus, and motivational speakers? Since no one besides Allah knows what is in the heart of a person, and if they are being disingenuous or not, Allah has made the person himself pay special attention to these ethics: "Rather, man, against himself, will be a witness, even if he presents his excuses" (Surah Al-Qiyamah 75:14-5). The genuine, authentic, and sincere actions even if they are small can reap the greatest of rewards- simply due to ethics. The Prophet Muhammad gave us an example when he told us about this woman: "Allah had once forgiven a prostitute. She passed by a dog panting near a well. Seeing that thirst had nearly killed it, she took off her shoe, tied it to her scarf, and drew up some water for it. Allah forgave her for that." (Sahih al-Bukhari) Here is a sinful woman who gets her sins forgiven by performing a small action. She is not a celebrity, not a scholar, but simply authentic. The spiritual journey with ethics begins by being authentic to oneself and their Creator. This behavior then serves as the premise to interact with the rest of society. It is for this reason that the Prophet Muhammad mentioned that lying leads to the hellfire because it is unforeseeable that a Muslim be unauthentic to himself, his Creator, and society.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

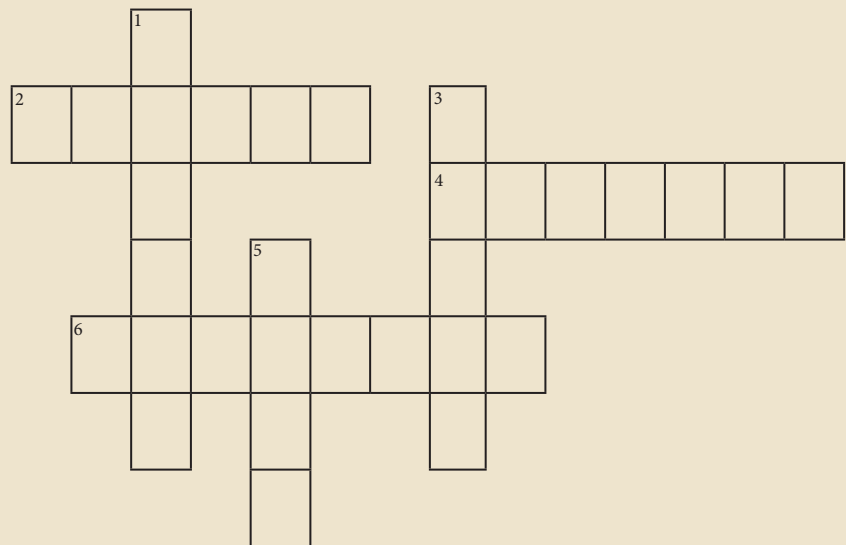
LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS

3. Ghaba
4. Waqiah
6. Hijri

DOWN

1. Jamatakhir
2. ArRaheem
4. Idris



ACROSS

2. Prophet sent to the people of Madyan.
4. Name of Allah (SWT) meaning, "The Sovereign of all creations".
6. Month considered holy in Islam but not sacred.

DOWN

1. The only fardh prayer that is non-obligatory for women.
3. Arabic term for mountain.
5. The first ten verses of this Surah is protection form Dajjal.

1 Million learners report to Grade 10 as Kenya rolls out Senior education

The Government, through the Ministry of Education, has reassured parents and education stakeholders that the transition to senior secondary education under the Competency-Based Education (CBE) system is proceeding smoothly, as more than 1.13 million learners reported to Grade 10 nationwide on Monday. Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba described the rollout as a landmark moment in Kenya's education reforms, noting that the Ministry had put in place comprehensive measures to ensure a stable and orderly transition for the pioneer cohort. According to the Ministry, schools across the country opened without major disruption, with registration and orientation progressing as planned. Speaking during visits to several senior secondary schools in Nairobi and neighbouring counties, Ogamba commended school administrators, teachers, and parents for their preparedness and cooperation. He said the Ministry was closely monitoring the transition and remained fully committed to supporting learners as they

adjust to the new senior secondary phase. "This is a learner-centred reform, and we want to assure parents that every child will be supported throughout the transition," he said. To reinforce the rollout, the Ministry released billions of shillings in capitation funds to primary, junior, and senior secondary schools ahead of reopening. Officials emphasized that school fees would not be increased and reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to supplying textbooks, equipping laboratories, and expanding learning infrastructure to support the skills-based approach of CBE. The funding is expected to ease financial pressure on schools and enhance their capacity to deliver the new curriculum. The Ministry also defended the digital placement system used to assign learners to senior secondary schools and academic pathways, describing it as transparent, merit-based, and designed to promote equity. In response to concerns raised by parents, the Ministry extended the placement review deadline to allow families to seek adjustments, urging pa-

tience as the system is refined.

Despite the Ministry's reassurances, concerns have been raised by parents, teachers' unions, and education lobby groups over staffing levels, infrastructure capacity, and placement outcomes. Some parents reported frustration with placements they felt did not align with learners' preferred pathways or proximity to home, while educators cautioned that teacher shortages in certain schools could strain implementation. Nevertheless, reporting at schools across the country remained strong, with principals guiding the pioneer cohort through registration and orientation. Many school heads appealed for calm, noting that Kenya is navigating an education transition of unprecedented scale. As the academic term begins, the Ministry of Education insists the Grade 10 rollout marks a transformative step in aligning education with learner potential and skills development, saying early challenges will inform improvements as CBE continues to take root nationwide.

Kenya boosts Consular support for migrant workers in Saudi Arabia

The Kenyan government has announced new measures aimed at strengthening the protection of its citizens living and working in Saudi Arabia, amid growing concerns over the safety and welfare of migrant workers. Central to the initiative is the rollout of a 24-hour toll-free emergency hotline, 8001000352, by the Kenya Consulate in Jeddah to provide immediate consular assistance to Kenyans in distress across the Gulf state. According to the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, the hotline will operate round-the-clock, enabling citizens to seek help during emergencies such as labour disputes, arrest, abuse,

health crises, or the loss of travel documents. The move is part of broader reforms intended to enhance consular responsiveness, particularly in countries hosting large populations of Kenyan migrant workers. Saudi Arabia is home to tens of thousands of Kenyans, most of whom are employed in domestic service, construction, hospitality, and security sectors. Over the years, cases of mistreatment, unpaid wages, contract violations, and restricted movement have been reported, prompting repeated calls for stronger diplomatic engagement and faster response mechanisms from Kenyan authorities. The hotline is also expected

to support undocumented and stranded Kenyans, as well as those seeking repatriation on medical, legal, or humanitarian grounds.

Officials said the measures align with Kenya's bilateral labour agreements with Saudi Arabia, which outline worker protections including access to justice, humane working conditions, and regulated recruitment processes. The launch of the hotline comes months after Kiambu Senator Karungu wa Thang'wa highlighted the plight of a Kenyan mother from Vihiga County who had been stranded for years in Riyadh with her eight-year-old child.

The Friday Bulletin honoured at IMO Vision 100 launch

The Friday Bulletin, a publication of Jamia Mosque Nairobi has been honoured with a Certificate of Appreciation for its role in promoting community development initiatives, during the launch of Vision 100 by the International Memon Organisation (IMO) East Africa Chapter. The recognition was awarded last Friday at Memon Villa in Nairobi and acknowledged the Bulletin's consistent support in advancing Vision 100, as well as its contribution to community-focused development, faith-based initiatives and the promotion of social cohesion. Jamia TV was also recognised at the event for its role in broadcasting and amplifying Vision 100, helping the initiative reach audiences across Kenya and encouraging wider public engagement. IMO Global Deputy President Shemir Yakub formally unveiled Vision 100, describing it as a century-long development roadmap designed to create empowered, resilient and self-reliant communities. He outlined the initiative's key pillars, which

include education, healthcare, housing, economic empowerment, social welfare, cultural preservation, outreach and institutional development. "This initiative seeks to empower communities, strengthen social welfare, and ensure inclusive progress that reaches all levels of society," Shemir underscored the Vision 100 objective.

He further emphasised the importance of strategic partnerships with credible media, community organisations, government, as well as religious and community leaders, noting that such collaborations are critical in informing communities, mobilising participation and sustaining the long-term impact of Vision 100. The high-profile launch was attended by Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi and Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale, alongside senior government officials, representatives of humanitarian and religious organisations, as well as community and religious leaders. In their addresses, the Prime Cabinet Secretary and the Health Cabinet Secre-

tary commended IMO for launching Vision 100 and urged Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and religious institutions to expand efforts that strengthen social cohesion and local development. They noted that such initiatives complement government programmes and require continued collaboration. The two Cabinet Secretaries also reiterated the government's commitment to supporting initiatives that align with national development priorities and promote sustainable social and economic progress. The recognition of The Friday Bulletin at the launch highlighted the growing role of faith-based and community media as active contributors to national development. By providing accurate information, amplifying community voices and encouraging civic engagement, the Friday Bulletin continues to demonstrate how media can serve not only as a reporting platform, but also as a partner in driving change.

IMO East Africa unveils Vision 100, pledges century-long development framework

In a landmark move that redefines the role of community-based organizations in national development, the International Memon Organization (IMO) – East Africa Chapter has officially unveiled Vision 100. This ambitious, century-long development framework aims to secure sustainable growth, dignity, and empowerment for the Memon community and its neighbors for the next 100 years.

The high-profile launch event, held at Memon Villa, was organized by Shahid Yakub, Vice President of the IMO East Africa Chapter, and graced by the Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Musalia Mudavadi, as chief guest, signaling the government's recognition of the IMO's long-term strategic planning.

In his address, Mudavadi emphasized the importance of purposeful development, strong values, and unity in building resilient communities, noting that "sustainable progress must balance economic growth with cultural preservation and social responsibility."

He assured the Memon community in

Kenya and the wider region that "the government is ready to partner with them as they implement Vision 100," adding that "Kenya's strength lies in communities that take responsibility for their future while actively contributing to national progress."

Mudavadi further urged the community to "embrace technology and artificial intelligence as cross-cutting tools that will shape all development pillars in the future."

Health Cabinet Secretary Hon. Aden Duale applauded Vision 100 for prioritizing healthcare as a pillar of development. He said the initiative "aligns with the government's Universal Health Coverage agenda, preventive healthcare, and reforms under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, aimed at expanding access to affordable and equitable health services."

IMO East Africa Vice President Shahid Yakub called on community members "to work together in empowering the less privileged." He stressed that "collective effort, compassion, and unity are key to uplifting vulnerable groups and achieving lasting community transformation."

Following the launch, the IMO will transition

into the implementation phase. This will involve deep stakeholder engagement, structured consultations, and the rollout of pilot initiatives across the eight pillars. Under the organization of Shahid Yakub and the wider IMO executive, the framework is set to evolve from a conceptual blueprint into a tangible roadmap for the next century of impact.

IMO Global Vice President Shemir Yakub highlighted the organization's commitment to long-term, intergenerational empowerment. He noted that "Vision 100 is designed to create sustainable impact by investing in leadership, education, and community-driven solutions that uplift societies while preserving cultural identity." The event was attended by several dignitaries, including SUPKEM Chairperson Hassan Ole Naado, MPs Shakeel Shabir of Kisumu East and Rahim Dawood of North Imenti, among others. It was held alongside a special dinner in honour of Mr. Aziz Memon, marking a significant milestone in IMO's commitment to leadership empowerment, community development, and sustainable progress.

Palestinian students strike as Israel bans access to West Bank teachers

At least 25,000 students in occupied East Jerusalem are taking part in a strike after Israel prevented access to teachers from the occupied West Bank.

The strike was called by the General Secretariat of Christian Educational Institutions in Jerusalem and later joined by all private schools in East Jerusalem.

It follows Israel's decision to limit the number of days on which work permits are granted to teachers from the West Bank. Under Israeli rules, Palestinians must obtain a permit from the Israeli military to cross checkpoints separating the West Bank from East Jerusalem.

Mustafa Barghouti, secretary-general of the Palestinian National Initiative party, said on Wednesday that 13 Christian schools were taking part in the strike and others were preparing to do the same.

"The reason goes deeper than just the issue of the teachers. It reflects dismay about the Israeli-imposed illegal rules," he wrote on X without elaborating.

The Times of Israel quoted Richard Zananiri, director of the private St George's School, as saying the restrictions affect more than half of the roughly 300 teachers employed across all private schools in the city.

"We are not happy that children are staying at home," Zananiri said, adding that discussions were ongoing with Israeli authorities to ensure the resumption of all activities.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa reported that the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education slammed Israel's move as a serious violation of the

right to education. According to the report, the ministry charged that Israel's actions were part of a systematic policy aimed at undermining Palestinian identity in East Jerusalem.

Israeli media also reported the closure of six schools in East Jerusalem run by the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), which Israel has repeatedly claimed, without evidence, was complicit with Hamas in the October 7, 2023, attacks on southern Israel.

In October, the International Court of Jus-

tice issued an advisory opinion saying Israel must support UN relief efforts in Gaza, including those conducted by UNRWA. The court found that Israel's allegations against UNRWA were unsubstantiated.

The court also said Israel, as the occupying power, had to ensure that the "basic needs" of the Palestinian population of Gaza were met, "including the supplies essential for survival", such as food, water, shelter, fuel and medicines.

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Israel's ban on NGOs operating in Gaza will be devastating delays

By Yousef M Aljamal

I work for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker organisation that has been present in Gaza for more than 77 years. AFSC began its work in 1948 when the United Nations asked it to organise relief efforts for Palestinian refugees who had been expelled from their land by Zionist forces.

For two years, AFSC's Gaza staff helped set up and run 10 refugee camps in al-Faluja, Bureij, Deir el-Balah, Gaza City, Jabalia, Maghazi, Nuseirat, Khan Younis and Rafah. They worked to provide food, shelter and sanitation as well as setting up educational programmes for children. In the decades that followed, AFSC's programmes have provided support for agricultural development, kindergartens, midwife training, humanitarian aid and trauma healing. Since the start of Israel's genocide in 2023, AFSC staff members in Gaza have provided more than a million meals, food parcels, fresh vegetables, hygiene kits and other essential supplies. Now, for the first time since 1948, AFSC along with dozens of other international organisations is threatened with a ban from the Israeli government that puts lifesaving humanitarian work in jeopardy. This would have a devastating effect on the people of Gaza. And it cannot come at a worse time.

A continuing genocide

The mass killing in Gaza has not stopped. Despite a ceasefire, Israeli forces are carrying out ongoing raids, air strikes and large-scale demolitions across Gaza. Since the ceasefire began on October 10, these attacks have killed more than 420 Palestinians and injured more than 1,150. And it is not just the bombs. Floods in Gaza have destroyed tens of thousands of tents while badly damaged homes continue to collapse on residents. The absence of medicines and proper health-care is killing people as well; about 600 kidney disease patients have died as a result of lack of treatment.

Meanwhile, Israel continues to prevent temporary shelters, medicines and other desperately needed supplies from entering.

These actions have reinforced a long-standing Israeli policy aimed at depopulating Gaza and annexing the land. Israel's prohibitively restrictive new registration policies and efforts to prohibit or limit international aid are part of this effort. Silencing independent humanitarian voices and dismantling humanitarian infrastructure serve to create conditions on the ground that make life in Gaza impossible. Gaza cannot recover or thrive without comprehensive reconstruction that restores its health system, education sector and critical infrastructure.

Just two weeks before the ceasefire began, an Israeli air strike struck my family home, killing nine of my immediate relatives, including two of my siblings, their spouses and their children.

When I spoke to surviving family members shortly afterwards, they told me the "responsibility is light now" – a phrase they used to express that the number of people to care for is less now.

Since that phone call, I have not stopped thinking about what responsibility truly means. For me, it did not become lighter. It grew heavier. Nine children were left orphaned. With each life taken from my family, the weight of responsibility only increased – the responsibility to remember, to care for those left behind and to bear witness to what has been done.

But this responsibility is not mine alone. It belongs to every nation, institution and individual who has sat idly by while Gaza burns – and especially those nations who have sent the bombs that continue to kill and destroy.

From 1948 to 2026

I first learned about the history of AFSC from my friend Ahmad Alhaaj, who benefitted from its work when he was a young refugee in 1948.

Ahmad passed away in Gaza City in January 2024. It is heartbreaking that he lived his entire life as a refugee, recounting stories of Israel's 1948 massacres, only to spend his final days enduring a genocide. He died under siege and bombardment, ultimately losing his life because essential medicines were unavailable.

The story of Ahmad in Gaza in 2024 is tragically similar to his story in 1948. Then, he was 16 years old, a barefoot refugee following evacuation orders to Gaza from his village of al-Sawafir. What changed were the years; what did not was the condition of dispossession.

But Ahmad's story is not just about displacement. Ahmad's story is a story of love – love for his village. He lived his entire life in Gaza as a refugee in a rented house, refusing to own a home so he would never forget his village or the house his parents were forced to leave behind. For Ahmad, ownership elsewhere risked erasing memory; remaining a renter was an act of fidelity.

This same love has been embodied by many Palestinians who chose Gaza, even under fire. It is a devotion to place that defies siege, displacement and death. Ahmad's love reminds me of the dedication of my mentor and friend Refaat Alareer, who became Gaza's great storyteller, giving voice to its people and its pain. On December 6, 2023, Israel killed Refaat along with his brother, sister and nephews in a targeted strike on his apartment.

Like Ahmad, Refaat paid for this love – this unbreakable connection to land and memory – with his life.

His poem *If I Must Die* has become a testament to this love and to an enduring hope – a message that has travelled beyond Gaza



and transformed into a global story. Born of siege and resistance, the poem carries Gaza's humanity to the world, insisting on life, memory and dignity even in the face of death.

Gaza rising

In 1948, the Greater Gaza District was home to 34 villages. One of them was Ahmad's. For our grandparents, Gaza was understood as something far larger than the narrow strip it later became. Their sense of place was expansive, rooted in villages, fields and continuous geography. Our parents, however, witnessed Gaza steadily shrink. What had once been one of the largest districts in historic Palestine was reduced in 1948 to roughly 555sq km (215sq miles). It later shrank further, to about 365sq km (140sq miles) after Israel established a so-called demilitarised zone – land that was eventually annexed at the direct expense of Gaza's people.

Today, Israel occupies more than half of Gaza. It has imposed what is known as the "yellow line", which functions as a new de facto border that continues to expand, annexing new territory. Palestinians who cross it are executed. Even Fadi and Jumaa, ages 8 and 10, were not spared. Gaza is not just besieged; it is being physically erased, metre by metre, generation by generation.

The Gaza we love goes beyond lines and borders. Although the majority of Palestinians in Gaza are refugees from towns that today lie inside Israel, Gaza is the place we call home.

Today, Gaza has liberated the imaginations and consciences of people across the world. It transcends geography and the artificial lines drawn on maps – yellow or green.

Israel can ban international organisations and journalists, arrest our medical workers and bomb our poets. It can destroy lives and homes and cause suffering beyond measure. But it cannot ban our struggle for justice or our innate human desire to help one another survive. Despite the many obstacles and challenges we face, our work to support people in Gaza and across the occupied Palestinian territory will continue.

Gaza means liberty, sacrifice and love, even amid tents and rubble. And it will rise again from the ruins, as it has done throughout history.

(SOURCE AL JAZEERA)