

October 28

Standard Newspaper | Cyrus Ombati | 28th October 2014

Police piece evidence on killing of road contractor in disputed Karen land

Police are trying to establish whether the killing of a road contractor in his Ngong home is linked to the controversial Sh8 billion Karen land. Nicholas Njeru of Kinare Road Construction Company had been awarded a tender to build roads within the contested land. His friends and family are demanding to know whether his killing on Thursday last week is linked to the contentious property.

[Read More](#)

October 27

Standard Newspaper | James Hogan | 27th October 2014

State in talks with banks to cut mortgage rates, spur housing

“Affordable home ownership is still a pipe dream for most Kenyans,” according to HassConsult, a Nairobi-based real-estate consultancy. “The high land prices and high cost of infrastructure coupled with the developers’ need to make profits keep most homes out of reach for most Kenyans.”

[Read More](#)

Nation Newspaper | Vincent Achuka | 27th October 2014

Charity Ngilu snubs House team probe on Karen land

Deed plans for the controversial 134-acre Karen land were issued to buyers in 2011 before being cancelled almost immediately, a Parliamentary committee heard on Monday. They were reissued again this year before the matter went public, a buyer told the Lands committee on Monday. Lands Cabinet Secretary Charity Ngilu was expected to appear before the House team investigating the transactions but she did not turn up. [Read More](#)

October 25

Nation Newspaper | 25th October 2014

The deadly business of gangs at centre of urban land grabbing

According to police sources, he was among the kingpins of vicious land-grabbing gangs – some fashioning themselves as “self-help” groups – in Nairobi’s Eastlands that invade private property, sub-divide it and sell it off. Those who buy the land are given “share certificates” to prove ownership as the sellers seek to change the records at the Land ministry and City Hall. [Read More](#)

October 29

Star Newspaper | Mathews Ndanyi | 29th October 2014

New spatial plan to unlock Iten real estate

Elgeyo Marakwet County will carry out fresh physical planning of Iten town, its headquarters, with a view to wooing investors in housing and hospitality sectors. The town’s population is increasing rapidly, creating a housing crisis that has forced Governor Alex Tolgos and his staff to commute from the neighbouring Uasin Gishu County. [Read More](#)

Trans Nzoia in plan to woo real estate investors

Trans Nzoia Governor Patrick Khaemba has said the county is at advanced stages to avail requisite trade aids to woo investors into Kitale town. Khaemba said he has discussed with Kenya Power and the Rural Electrification Authority, which are set to boost electricity connections as one way to attract businesses. [Read More](#)

<http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-191240/home-prices-rise-lag-impact-high-interest-rates>

Home prices rise on lag impact of high interest rates - See more at: <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-191240/home-prices-rise-lag-impact-high-interest-rates#sthash.JSebDr0y.dpuf>

Wednesday, October 29, 2014 - 11:00 -- BY RICHARD MUNGAI - See more at: <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-191240/home-prices-rise-lag-impact-high-interest-rates#sthash.JSebDr0y.dpuf>

ASKING prices for properties accelerated in the third quarter driven by a slowdown in new constructions, occasioned by lag effects of high interest rates of 2011 and 2012.

The Hass Property Index shows asking prices for apartments, detached houses and semi-detached houses moved up significantly between July and September – up by 3.6 per cent, 3.2 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively.

- See more at: <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-191240/home-prices-rise-lag-impact-high-interest-rates#sthash.JSebDr0y.dpuf>

Daily Nation, Tuesday, October 28, 2014

Landowners in five counties to be paid Sh5bn for new railway

The payments, which will benefit landowners in Mombasa, Kwale and Taita-Taveta, will be made starting from next week. Landowners from Makueni and Kajiado counties will also be paid.

Daily Nation, Wednesday, October 29th 2014

Builder finds treasure trove in quarry

Mr Muriithi says he will be shipping in three Single Gang Stone Saw machines, the devices which he uses to cut different types of natural stones into various decor products for buildings. Currently, Mt Kenya Region and Nairobi provide him with a reliable market. However, he says, after buying three new machines, he will start exporting to China where he has been scouting new markets. If successful, he says, it will be a big win for both Nyeri County and himself.

As for wall and floor clubbing tiles, Ms Wangui says, they have long life and require minimal maintenance. The water-tight nature of precast eliminates moisture absorption.

The Star, Thursday 30th October 2014

A strong-willed Wanjiku succeeds in roofing venture

Wednesday, October 29, 2014 - 11:00 -- BY MERCY GAKII



PICTURE-PERFECT: A sample of the materials supplied by Rexe Roofing Products. Photo/Courtesy

Leaving a secure job to start up a business is one of the boldest moves to make, but it's what distinguishes entrepreneurs – the courage to risk.

That's what would probably define Irene Wanjiku, 31, who quit her job at a construction firm in November 2011 to set up her own after identifying gaps in supply of quality roofing materials. She joined hands with two other people willing to risk their capital on her.

When they started Rexe Roofing Products three years ago, it had its fair share of tough times, but understanding who the homeowner is eases off some pressure. She says the typical Kenyan homeowner does not just want a roof over their heads; they want something they can be proud of. They want to be happy when home.

"The homebuilding industry is a great challenge to start-ups like mine, especially because homes are close to Kenyans' hearts," Wanjiku said in an interview.

"The first assignment for a developer is to build and establish confidence and trust, since homebuyers want a house to live in, but also one that will last long enough to host their children. You cannot play games with personal dreams."

Wanjiku had worked with her previous employer for seven years. Today, she is determined to start supply affordable roofing materials across East Africa.

"I was working for the construction industry then and realised a gap in the supply of quality roofing products. The few that were available were very expensive and still not the best quality," she says.

She had about Sh1.6 million in personal savings, hardly enough for the capital-intensive venture. She needed Sh5 million to import her first consignment and had to top up the deficit with soft loans from family and friends.

She says a number of customers liked the products when she explained what she would import and some went ahead to trust her enough to place orders by making deposits. Some paid up to half of the cost of the materials upfront, giving her a much needed break. And Wanjiku did not disappoint.

"To get clients, I would drive to areas that are booming with construction activity, talk about my products and persist until I would get positive responses," she recalls.

"I also sent numerous emails to architects who were working on high-end projects, explaining what I could offer. They would respond with enthusiasm and orders started coming in."

A male dominated construction industry did not make it any easier for her – she had to constantly fight a perception that she couldn't deliver an equally good job as men. Even some of her employees at times made remarks to the effect that she would not handle the job well being a woman.

Rexe Roofing products has served high profile clients such as the Karen hub, Aberdare Hills Golf Resort, Telkom Kenya, Mount Kenya Wildlife Estate and Mount Kenya Holiday Homes. Cross-border, she supplied Acacia Shopping Mall in Uganda.

Wanjiku says the firm now has an annual turnover of about Sh80 million and employs 13 people on permanent basis and another 20 who assemble the roofings.

In her journey, she has learnt that keeping good mentors – people who have also succeeded in their areas of expertise – is indispensable, and attends seminars to update herself on industry trends from successful companies.

She draws some inspiration from industry leaders like Tabitha Karanja of Keroche Breweries and Sue Muraya of Suraya Property Group, who she says taught her that one can start a business without necessarily raising all the capital, instead using proceeds from pre-sales and debt.

Rexe Roofing is expanding its product offering to include water harvesting gutters to complement the roofs, enabling homeowners to harvest water.

“We also plan to open a manufacturing plant locally, and have even purchased land towards that long term dream. The partners who we work with from factories abroad are ready to partner with us through knowledge transfer to enable us to take off,” Wanjiku said.

Rexe also plans to offer ceiling materials and other products that will make it a one-stop-shop for roofing materials.

- See more at: <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-191237/strong-willed-wanjiku-succeeds-roofing-venture#sthash.93jvb2il.dpuf>

Kenya to host county investment conference

[Business Hub](#) October 28th 2014

By Zachary Ochuodho @Zachuodho

Kenya plans to host a two-day investment and trade conference next month. East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism Cabinet secretary Phyllis Kandie said the conference will be used as a platform to showcase Kenya’s investment opportunities by both national and county governments, and the private sector.

The conference, to be held on November 19 and 20 at Kenyatta International Convention Centre, is organised by the ministry in collaboration with the Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI), Kenya Private Sector Alliance (Kepsa) and Export Promotion Council (EPC).

The government’s strategy to market the country as an investment destination has started bearing fruits, Kandie said, adding that the country’s foreign direct investment in 2013, for instance, grew by almost 100 per cent to reach Sh46 billion (\$514 million).

The objective of the conference is to encourage both local and international investors to exploit opportunities in the country as well as promote export products.

“The conference targets to bring together all the 47 county governments, private sector and project promoters to exhibit various investment projects to investors and export products to potential buyers,” said Kandie.

KNCCI chairman Kiprono Kittony said he had no doubt the contribution added by trade into the Gross Domestic Product will increase. He said Kenya liberalised its economy by removing all obstacles that previously hampered the free flow of trade and private investment such as exchange controls, import and export licensing, as well as restrictions on remittance of profits and dividends.

Dr Laila Macharia of Kepsa urged local investors to ensure they take up investment opportunities created in the country through the numerous projects such as Lapsset, Konza City, the Galana-Kulalu

irrigation project, the Standard Gauge Railway and the 5,000 MW power initiative. At least 1,000 investors are expected to attend the conference.

People Daily, 24th October 24, 2014

Making construction job specialists accountable

Boma O. with Jen Musyimi

When it comes to the implementation of construction projects, we should not leave the specialists alone! This is in the spirit of safeguarding the client. In a construction project, we have works like plumbing, electrical installations, lifts, structured cabling and so on done by specialists.

Now, these specialists usually design and supervise the works solely till completion. This arrangement sounds perfect, but I have one problem with it. The sort of problem equivalent to self-medication! It's almost like these experts are acting in isolation without any one in the consultancy team ever knowing their work.

They design the pipework, for example, and approve the payments for the contractor. See the problem? For example, the architect designs the works and then a quantity surveyor quantifies the scope and values what has been done on site. This way, there is no conflict of interest.

Specifications cannot be compromised because the quantity surveyor checks for what has been installed before it's paid. But when it comes to specialist works, the engineer is his own auditor. Often, the situation on the ground is that no one else knows what is included in his bills. Risky!

In a recent project, we discovered how the contractor had been overpaid for electrical conduits. What was in the contract was a different size from what was actually installed but the payment was based on the contract scope.

The surprising thing is that no one would have noticed this disparity had it not been for the structured cabling contractor who couldn't fit his cables through!

My suggestion is that the quantity surveyors should familiarise themselves with every work being executed by these specialists. As the financial controllers of construction projects, they are almost responsible for such disparities.

The client is king and his interest are to be safeguarded by all means. So, in view of this, let's not leave these specialists alone. Let's meddle in their affairs! **The writer is the Registrar, IQSK and MD, Anka (quantity surveyors and project managers). Email: jen@anka.co.ke**

The Standard

WHY OWNING A HOME IS A 'PIPE DREAM' FOR KENYANS

BY Winsley Masese Updated Wednesday, October 29th 2014 at 00:00 GMT +3

Read more at: <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2000139751/why-owning-a-home-is-a-pipe-dream-for-kenyans>