



### A Colossus Departs: Remembering The Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga

Death, that unwelcome guest who arrives without invitation, has once again reminded us of life's fragile impermanence. It steals from us those we hold dear, those whose presence we believed would endure just a little longer, those whose wisdom we thought we might yet draw upon in the days ahead. The Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga has departed from us, leaving behind a nation still processing the void

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P. 8. Archbishop Njoroge of the Foursquare Gospel Church in Mweiga, Nyeri County paid a glowing tribute to the late Raila Odinga



### News >> When The Nation Wept: The Luo Funeral Rites For Raila Laid Bare

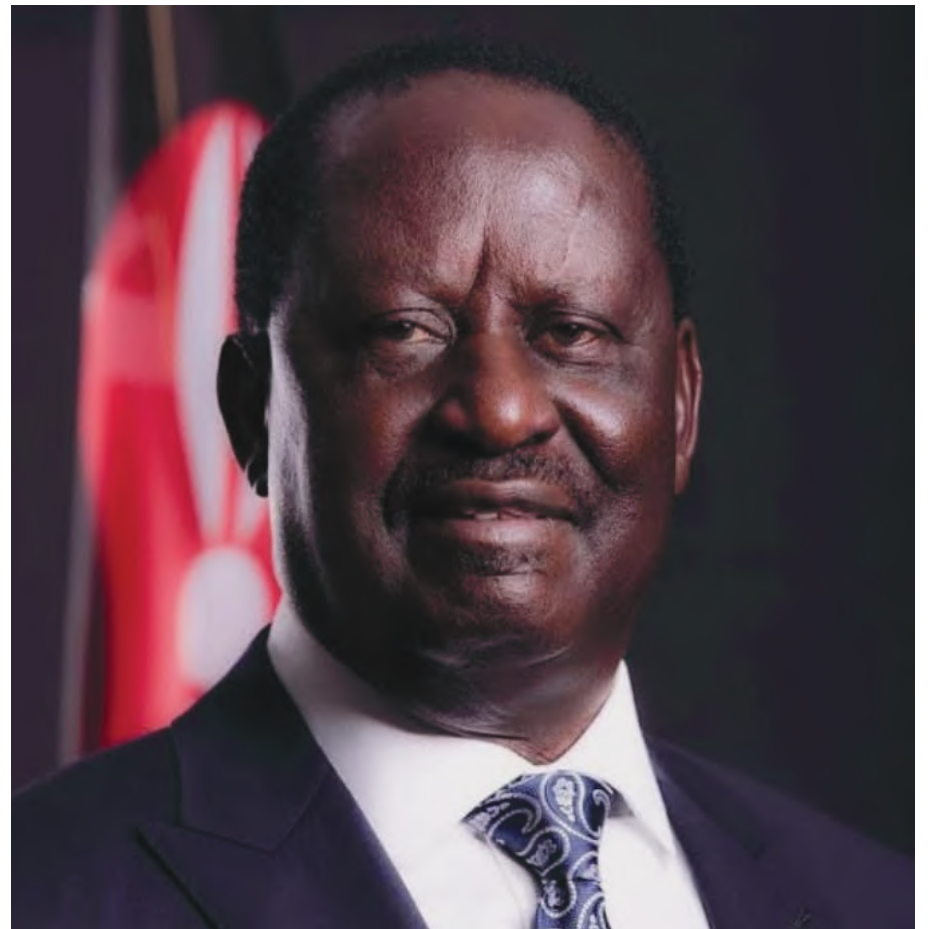
P. 12. As dawn broke over Bondo yesterday, a heavy stillness settled across the town. The silence of loss rose like a wave; an outpouring of grief that swept beyond the town and touched the nation.

# A Nation Stands Still

⚡ Raila Odinga was buried yesterday in a ceremony that led the country to stand still.

The political doyen was interred in a family graveyard at Opodo Farm in Bondo, Siaya County.

Scores of mourners, led by President William Ruto who had the opportunity to address the final send-off gathering at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology grounds described Raila's demise as not only their personal loss but a nation's shared grief.



Raila Odinga

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# Ida Odinga's Stirring Call For Unity: A Nation's Tribute To Raila

By: David Kimani  
 @themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

Raila Odinga, Kenya's former Prime Minister and a towering figure in the country's political landscape, passed away in Mumbai, India, while undergoing treatment. His death marked the end of an era defined by resilience, sacrifice, and an unwavering pursuit of justice. Ida's tribute was not only a personal farewell but a poignant reminder of the ideals Raila championed throughout his life.

"I know we have leaders here," Ida said, her voice steady yet tender. "Let's fulfill Raila's dream. He wanted Kenya to be like Singapore, South Korea, and Malaysia — countries that were once at our level but have since surged ahead. We must focus on unity and development".

In a moment steeped in emotion and national reflection, Mama Ida Odinga delivered a powerful tribute to her late husband, Raila Odinga, urging Kenyans to embrace unity and renew their commitment to national development. Speaking during the funeral service held at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University in Bondo, Ida's words resonated far beyond the solemn gathering, echoing a call for collective purpose and healing.

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Her words struck a chord with many, drawing attention to the need for visionary leadership and a shared national agenda. Ida emphasized that Raila's legacy should not be confined to political memory but serve as a blueprint for Kenya's future. She urged leaders across the political divide to rise above partisan interests and work together to uplift the nation.

The tribute also offered a deeply personal glimpse into their 52-year marriage — a partnership forged in the crucible of political struggle and sustained by mutual respect and love. Ida recounted their journey from the early 1970s, through Raila's multiple detentions, and the turbulent years of opposition politics. Despite the hardships, she described Raila as a devoted husband, a loving father, and a patriot whose belief in a better Kenya never wavered.

"For over five decades, you weren't just



Mama Ida Odinga

my husband — you were my partner, my confidant, my greatest supporter," she said. "I had dreamed of retiring together, of growing old hand in hand, sharing quiet sunsets and dreams fulfilled".

Ida's tribute was more than a eulogy; it was a rallying cry. She reminded Kenyans that Raila's vision extended beyond elections and political rallies — it was about transforming Kenya into a nation where justice, equity, and opportunity are not just ideals but realities. She called on citizens to honor Raila's memory by committing to civic responsibility, na-

tional cohesion, and economic progress.

The ceremony, attended by dignitaries, family, and thousands of mourners, was a testament to Raila's enduring influence. From his role in the push for multi-party democracy to his leadership in constitutional reform, Raila's imprint on Kenya's political evolution is indelible. Yet, as Ida underscored, his greatest dream was not personal power but a united, prosperous Kenya.

As the nation mourns, Ida's words offer a path forward — one rooted in unity, shared purpose, and the courage to

dream big. Her tribute reminds us that legacies are not just inherited; they are lived, built upon, and carried forward by those who remain.

In honoring Raila Odinga, Kenya is called to look inward and upward — to reflect on its journey, confront its challenges, and embrace the promise of a future shaped by unity and national focus.

"Farewell, my love," Ida concluded. "You are forever in my heart. May your dream for Kenya live on in all of us"

Editor's Desk




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# Kalonzo Musyoka Vows To Complete Raila Odinga's Journey To 'Canaan' In 2027

By: David Kinyanjui  
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## Worth Noting:

- Raila Odinga, Kenya's former Prime Minister and a towering figure in the country's opposition politics, passed away in October 2025 while undergoing treatment in India. His death marked the end of an era defined by resilience, reform, and relentless pursuit of electoral justice. For Kalonzo Musyoka, Raila's passing was not just the loss of a political ally but the departure of a brother-in-arms in the long struggle for Kenya's democratic rebirth.
- "I want to talk to Raila, because I'll never get this chance again," Kalonzo said, addressing the crowd and the spirit of his departed comrade. "You know, we called you Joshua. We never got to Canaan. There were indeed crocodiles across the River Jordan. But I vow to lead Kenyans across that river in 2027."

In a moment charged with emotion and political symbolism, Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka has pledged to carry forward the legacy of the late Raila Odinga by completing the journey to "Canaan" — a metaphor for Kenya's promised land of justice, equity, and democratic transformation. Speaking during Raila's state funeral service at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology in Bondo, Kalonzo cast the moment as both a generational shift and a solemn covenant to fulfill the dreams of a man he described as "a President who won but was never declared".

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The metaphor of "Canaan" has long been associated with Raila Odinga's political journey. During the 2017 campaigns, Raila was dubbed "Joshua," the biblical figure who led the Israelites to the Promised Land after Moses. The imagery captured the aspirations of millions of Kenyans who saw in Raila a leader capable of delivering them from the "Egypt" of corruption, tribalism, and electoral injustice.

However, the journey was fraught with setbacks — disputed elections, political detentions, and systemic resistance. Raila never ascended to the presidency despite multiple attempts, leading many to describe him as "the President who won but was never declared". Kalonzo's vow to complete this journey is both a tribute and a political declaration: the mission is not over, and the torch has been passed.

Kalonzo's speech signaled a generational transition in Kenya's opposition politics. With Raila's departure, the mantle of leadership is now in the hands of those who stood beside him — leaders like Kalonzo, Martha Karua, and Eugene Wamalwa.



Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Kalonzo emphasized that the ideals Raila fought for — electoral integrity, inclusive governance, and national unity — must now be institutionalized.

"This is not just about Raila," Kalonzo said. "It's about the millions of Kenyans who believed in his dream. It's about the youth who marched, the mothers who prayed, and the patriots who never gave up. We owe it to them to finish what he started".

Kalonzo's vow has already begun to reshape Kenya's political landscape. Analysts predict that the 2027 elections will be defined by Raila's legacy and the battle to fulfill his vision. Kalonzo is expected to rally opposition forces under a unified banner, potentially reviving the Azimio coalition or forming a new alliance rooted in Raila's ideals.

The promise to reach "Canaan" is more than rhetoric — it's a strategic positioning that appeals to Raila's vast support base, especially in Nyanza, Western Kenya, and parts of Nairobi. Kalonzo's challenge will be to consolidate this support while expanding his reach to other regions and demographics.

Central to Kalonzo's pledge is the commitment to uphold the principles Raila championed. These include:

- **Electoral Reform:** Raila was a vocal critic of Kenya's electoral system, often citing irregularities and lack of transparency. Kalonzo has promised to push for reforms that ensure free, fair, and credible elections.
- **Devolution and Inclusivity:**

Raila supported the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), which aimed to expand executive representation and strengthen devolution. Kalonzo has hinted at revisiting these proposals to foster national unity.

- **Anti-Corruption:** Raila's campaigns often targeted corruption as a national plague. Kalonzo has vowed to continue this fight, promising accountability and transparency in governance.

In a separate interview, Kalonzo shared his final interactions with Raila, revealing that in the last ten days before his death, Raila became unreachable. "We used to speak. However, for the last ten days before he died, I tried several times to call him, but he was not available," Kalonzo said, noting that he had wanted to invite Raila to the Wiper National Delegates Conference.

These reflections added a personal dimension to Kalonzo's vow, underscoring the depth of their relationship and the emotional weight of the promise to carry forward Raila's mission.

Kenyans across the country have responded to Kalonzo's pledge with a mix of hope and skepticism. For many, the idea of reaching "Canaan" remains a powerful symbol of national transformation. Social media platforms have been flooded with messages of support, with hashtags like #JourneyToCanaan2027 and #RailaLegacy trending nationwide.

However, some critics have questioned whether Kalonzo has the polit-

ical muscle and charisma to galvanize the opposition and challenge the incumbent administration. Others argue that the promise of "Canaan" must be backed by concrete policy proposals and grassroots mobilization.

As Kenya mourns the loss of one of its most iconic leaders, Kalonzo's vow offers a path forward — a continuation of a journey that began decades ago. It's a call to action for citizens, leaders, and institutions to recommit to the ideals of justice, unity, and progress.

The road to 2027 will be long and uncertain, but the destination — a better Kenya — remains worth striving for. Whether Kalonzo can lead the nation across the metaphorical River Jordan will depend not just on his leadership but on the collective will of the people.

Kalonzo Musyoka's vow to complete Raila Odinga's journey to "Canaan" is more than a political statement — it's a moral commitment to a vision that has inspired generations. As the country prepares for the next chapter, the question is not just whether Kalonzo can deliver, but whether Kenyans are ready to walk together toward the promised land.

In the words of Kalonzo: "We never got to Canaan. But in 2027, we will cross that river. For Raila. For Kenya. For the future".

# NEWS PAPER

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# Kisumu Falls Silent As Businesses Close To Honour Raila

By: Chris Mahandara

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## Worth Noting:

- The rare calm came as Raila's body arrived in the Lakeside City, aboard a Kenya Air Force aircraft, for public viewing at the Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium, Mamboleo.
- Thousands of mourners lined the streets waving flags, portraits, and twigs as security officers kept vigil at strategic points, to ensure the exercise runs smoothly.
- Many traders said they chose to keep their doors closed out of respect and to avoid potential chaos, with fears of looting lingering in the wake of massive crowds that had poured into the city.



Kisumu City fell silent for the second consecutive day as businesses, banks, and supermarkets remained shut on Saturday, in honour of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

From Oginga Odinga Street to the bustling Kibuye Market, shop shutters stayed down, streets were deserted, and the usual hum of commerce, gave way to somber hymns and chants as residents gathered to pay their final respects to the fallen statesman.

The rare calm came as Raila's body arrived in the Lakeside City, aboard a Kenya Air Force aircraft, for public viewing at the Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium, Mamboleo.

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their doors closed out of respect and to avoid potential chaos, with fears of looting lingering in the wake of massive crowds that had poured into the city.

"We decided not to open today. It's a day of mourning, and the crowd is too big to take any chances," said Beatrice Achieng, a boutique owner along Oginga Odinga Street.

Hotels and eateries that would normally brim with activity, also joined in the solemn mood.

Leading supermarket chains such as Naivas, Carrefour and Quickmart remained closed, while major banks, including KCB, Co-operative Bank, and Equity kept their branches shut.

Security agencies maintained a heavy presence across the city, with police patrols stationed around key installations, including the Kisumu Central Business District, Central Bank of

Kenya, Kibuye Market, and Kondele Roundabout, which has in the past witnessed unrest during emotionally charged political moments.

Several traders said the decision to remain closed was also driven by memories of past incidents, when large gatherings occasionally turned chaotic.

Some recounted how mobs had previously taken advantage of similar occasions to loot shops, forcing many to prioritize caution over business.

"We all respect Baba, but crowds can get unpredictable. It's better to lose a day or two of business than lose everything," said Samuel Onyango, who operates an electronics stall near the main bus park.

The lull, he said, is expected to persist for the next couple of days as residents come to terms with the death of the former PM.

However, hotel owners recorded

booming business as mourners from other parts of the country, book in for food and accommodation.

Jackson Otieno, who manages a chain of Airbnbs in the City, said bookings had peaked by Thursday, as mourners travelled from across the country.

"Almost all facilities are full. The mood in Kisumu is emotional, everyone wants to be part of history," he said.

The former PM's body touched down at Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium at 8:45am and was scheduled to be moved to Bondo by road.

However, given the overwhelming turnout, the Organising Committee, extended the time to allow all mourners to view the body, which was thereafter airlifted to his Bondo home, ahead of the final rites and burial yesterday.

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# Archbishop Njoroge Hails Raila As Kenya's Fearless Watchdog

By: Rodgers Wagura  
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Archbishop Njoroge of the Four-square Gospel Church in Mweiga, Nyeri County paid a glowing tribute to the late Raila Odinga, describing him as a fearless national watchdog who constantly kept the Church and the country alert in times of crisis.

Speaking during a church service in Mweiga, the Bishop said Raila stood out as a man who spoke the truth without fear or favour, both to the government and to the people of Kenya. He lauded Raila's unwavering courage to confront injustices, saying his voice often stirred both the Church and the nation to reflect and act.

"Raila was a truthful man to God and to the people of Kenya. He always said things as they were and never shied away from pointing out when the government was oppressing the public," Bishop Njoroge said.

The cleric also used the moment to reflect on the current state of the nation, raising alarm over what he termed a worsening social and eco-

nomie situation. He pointed out that school capitation funds have not been disbursed, hospitals are facing drug shortages, and many families are grappling with food scarcity.

"There is no money, no food, and people are suffering. Things are not on the right track," he noted, urging the government to open channels of dialogue with citizens to find solutions to pressing problems.

Bishop Njoroge identified corruption as the backbone of the country's challenges, stressing that every leader must take personal responsibility to fight the vice instead of shifting blame. "Every leader should be responsible in his capacity to fight corruption and not just point fingers at others," he said.

He further challenged the Church not to take partisan positions but to stand firm and speak truth to power. "The Church must remain the moral compass of society, pointing out the real problems and ensuring leaders are held accountable," he concluded.

The bishop's message combined a heartfelt tribute to Raila's legacy with a passionate call for national reflection and responsible leadership.



Archbishop Erastus Njoroge addressing the congregation at a past event. Photo/Courtesy.

# Joho, Oparanya, Mbadi, Moe, Junet Vow To Remain In Ruto's Broad-Based Government

By: Phidel Kizito  
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Top Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) figures serving in President William Ruto's administration have vowed to remain in the broad-based government, saying it was the late Raila Odinga's wish for the party to work with the current regime.

The ODM-affiliated Cabinet Secretaries including Mining CS Hassan Joho, Cooperatives and MSMEs CS Wycliffe Oparanya, Treasury CS John Mbadi, Energy CS Opiyo Wandayi, and EAC CS Beatrice Askul made the pledge during Odinga's burial in Bondo, insisting that it was Raila himself who had directed them to join President Ruto's administration as part of his broader vision for national unity and inclusivity.

"Raila showed us before he died that he wanted us to be in government as a community and as a party,

we will support the broad-based government," Treasury CS Mbadi stated.

Joho echoed the sentiment, stating, "I have never betrayed Raila and I cannot be anywhere where Raila has not taken me. I was taken to the government of William Ruto by Raila Odinga that is where I shall stay."

Wandayi, Oparanya, and Askul also reaffirmed their allegiance to the administration, with Askul revealing that Raila had personally instructed her to continue supporting the government's agenda.

Earlier ODM Chairperson and Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga revealed that the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga's final wish was for his party to remain in the broad-based government alongside President William Ruto.

Wanga said the ODM leader, in his last public engagement, made a conscious decision to align the opposition party with the ruling coalition in the spirit of national unity.

The statements come amid months of internal tension within ODM over



the proposed partnership with President Ruto's United Democratic Alliance (UDA).

The debate has exposed deep ideological rifts: while some senior members back the move as a step toward political stability and inclusivity, a youthful faction led by Embakasi East MP Babu Owino has denounced

it as a betrayal of ODM's reformist legacy.

Raila's passing now leaves ODM at a political crossroads balancing his legacy of opposition-driven reform with a pragmatic approach to governance.

Odinga, 80, died of cardiac arrest while receiving treatment in Kochi,

India.

His death marks the end of an era for Kenya's opposition politics and ushers in an uncertain phase for ODM, which must now decide whether to sustain its independence or embrace collaboration under the broad-based government framework.

# A Nation Stands Still

Raila Odinga was buried yesterday in a ceremony that led the country to stand still.

The political doyen was interred in a family graveyard at Opodo Farm in Bondo, Siaya County.

Scores of mourners, led by President William Ruto who had the opportunity to address the final sendoff gathering at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga

University of Science and Technology grounds described Raila's demise as not only their personal loss but a nation's shared grief.

They differently observed that Raila was not just their comrade in the struggle for democracy, justice and a better Kenya but was a brother, a friend, and an ally in some of the most defining moments of the coun-

try's history.

They noted how for decades or years, they had walked side by side through seasons of hope, hardship, triumph and transformation.

Further, they disclosed how his courage, conviction and unwavering love for his motherland has over the years inspired generations and shaped the course of the nation's democracy.

His voice, some noted, carried the heartbeat of the country and his actions spoke louder than any words could ever disclose.

The speakers who also included members of his immediate and extended family lamented how they will miss his wit, his wisdom, his strength, and his unmatched spirit, noting that though his voice has fall-

en silent, his legacy will echo through his family, his supporters, and the millions whose lives he touched with his ideals, sacrifices and vision remaining woven into the fabric of the Kenya's story.

## Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures



# A Nation Stands Still



# A Nation Stands Still



#FareTheeWell

Celebrating  
**RAILA  
AMOLO  
ODINGA.**

“ I would rather have an imperfect country struggling to mend its ways than a collapsed one. ”

# When The Nation Wept: The Luo Funeral Rites For Raila Laid Bare

By: Calvin Otieno  
 @themtkenyatimes

As dawn broke over Bondo yesterday, a heavy stillness settled across the town. The silence of loss rose like a wave; an outpouring of grief that swept beyond the town and touched the nation.

The day that marked the burial of former Prime Minister Raila Amollo Odinga, patriot, statesman, and son of Kenya's first Vice President, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, the late Raila Odinga's passing, had stirred a sorrow that transcended politics.

For many, his death marked not just the loss of a leader, but the close of an era. And as the nation mourned, the Luo community carried out the ancient rites that guide a soul's passage from the world of the living to that of the ancestors.

Among the Luo, the funeral, or *liel*, is a sacred ceremony that affirms death not as an end, but as a transition. Every stage in the process, holds profound spiritual meaning, ensuring that the departed is properly ushered into the afterlife and the living remain in harmony with ancestral spirits.

The rights are both communal and symbolic, reinforcing the bond between kinship, memory, and identity.

The journey begins with *Kelo Yuak*, the formal announcement of death. In Luo tradition, this duty falls to a chosen family member who delivers the news with gravity and care, symbolically opening the homestead to mourning.

It is an act that signals the start of the communal grieving process. Once this is done, relatives, neighbors, and friends converge upon the home to comfort the bereaved and begin the rituals of mourning.

The gathering embodies the Luo belief that grief, like joy, must be shared among the living.

Following the announcement, a family council known as *Anyuola* convenes to deliberate on the burial arrangements. This council, composed of senior family members and clan elders, decides where and how the deceased will be laid to rest.

For the Odinga family, the decision that Raila would be buried beside his father at the ancestral home in Kang'o Kajaramogi carried deep symbolic weight. It reaffirmed the unbroken chain of lineage, returning the son to his father's soil in both physical and spiritual continuity.

The next ritual is *Kunyo*, the digging of the grave. Traditionally, the first



Raila Odinga Jr beside the casket bearing the body of his father yesterday.

strike of soil where the grave will be dug is turned by a close male relative, often the eldest brother, signifying respect and connection.

Thereafter, young men from the community complete the task. The act is solemn and accompanied by quiet reflection, it is both a physical preparation and a spiritual one, acknowledging that the ground itself becomes a bridge between the living and the departed.

In earlier generations, before mortuaries existed, burial followed soon after death. The body would be watched over by family and friends through *Budho*, an overnight vigil marked by dirges, storytelling, and the lighting of bonfires. Today, even with modern preservation, the *Budho* continues as a space for collective mourning and remembrance.

When the body returns home, in an act referred to as *golo*, which is a procession to the home. This ceremony, filled with wails, chants such as the now famous '*jowi*', and songs, is one of the most visible expressions of Luo grief.

Mourners line the roads leading to the homestead, waving green leaves known as *oboke* as symbols of mourning. The arrival of the body at the homestead is both a spiritual and emotional moment, marking the reunion of the departed with the land of their origin.

It is followed by the viewing of the body, a practice that allows the community to confront and accept the reality of death and to find closure through the act of collective witness.

The burial ceremony itself, *Iko*, forms the climax of the *liel*. It is the final rite through which the body is committed to the earth, performed with solemnity and reverence.

The rituals vary depending on the age, gender, and status of the deceased. For a man of Raila Odinga's stature, the ceremony blended state honors with deep cultural traditions. Prayers, songs, and blessings were offered as family, leaders, and citizens gathered to bid farewell.

The blending of modern rites and ancestral customs, reflected the evolution of Luo funerary practices, anchored in faith yet guided by the timeless call of tradition.

After the burial, a cleansing ritual known as *tero buru* may be performed, if the family opts to. In this rite, bulls are driven around the homestead and the grave to chase away the spirit of death and cleanse the land.

It symbolizes the restoration of balance within the family and the community, marking the end of mourning and the renewal of life. In the days that follow, close relatives remain at the homestead to continue mourning, before performing *yueyo liel*, the cleaning and decorating of the gravesite. This final act ensures that the departed rests in peace and that the family finds closure.

Despite its solemnity, a Luo funeral is also a communal celebration of life. The homestead fills with song, dance, and abundant food, as people gather to honor the memory of the departed.

The atmosphere continuously shifts between sorrow and gratitude, a reflection of the Luo belief that even in death, life continues in spirit. Friends and neighbors contribute food, livestock, and labor, turning mourning into an act of unity and generosity.

Raila Odinga himself had long championed modesty in funerals, cautioning against extravagance that burdens families. His call for simplicity and dignity in death now stands as a fitting reflection of the life he led.

As the Luo community performed the final rites at his home at Opoda Farm, during the final mass at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology and all through to his final resting place at Kang'o ka Jaramogi, their songs, prayers, and rituals told a story larger than one man's passing.

They spoke of continuity, heritage, and the enduring strength of a people who, even in grief, affirm the sacred bond between the living and their ancestors. In the soft glow of vigil fires and the echo of mourners' songs, Raila Amollo Odinga's spirit found its way home, his legacy forever woven into the fabric of the land and the hearts of his people.

As the nation laid to rest a modern-day icon of change and enhanced democratic space, hero and champion of human rights, who endured great personal sacrifices in his quest for a better nation, the legacy of Raila Odinga endures, not silenced by death, but magnified by it.

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- Among the Luo, the funeral, or *liel*, is a sacred ceremony that affirms death not as an end, but as a transition. Every stage in the process, holds profound spiritual meaning, ensuring that the departed is properly ushered into the afterlife and the living remain in harmony with ancestral spirits.
- The rights are both communal and symbolic, reinforcing the bond between kinship, memory, and identity.
- The journey begins with *Kelo Yuak*, the formal announcement of death. In Luo tradition, this duty falls to a chosen family member who delivers the news with gravity and care, symbolically opening the homestead to mourning.

# Ruto Reveals Pact With Raila To Transform Kenya Into First World Country

By: Christine Muchira  
@themtkenyatimes

The late Raila Odinga and I had agreed do whatever it takes to move Kenya from a third-world status to a first-world nation, President William Ruto has revealed.

Speaking during the State funeral service of the former Prime Minister, the late Raila Odinga at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST), Ruto disclosed that he visited him to finalise on the roadmap that would lift Kenya to a first world status.

“In the last three months, Raila and I spent time together. We talked, we reflected, and we agreed that we must lift Kenya from a third-world status to a first-world nation,” President Ruto said.

During their visit the President disclosed that they discussed diverse issues of development ranging from infrastructure, energy, industrialisation among others.

The President noted that Raila un-

derscored the need for investing in more energy noting that Kenya cannot move forward without enough energy. “Raila proposed that we should at least generate another 10, 000 megawatts. Let me say this because there is no other moment for me to say this when he is here with us.” President Ruto revealed.

“We also agreed that we must extend the Standard Gauge Railway from Naivasha through Siaya to Malaba.

Similarly, President Ruto and the late PM discussed on extending the dual carriage way from Rironi through Nakuru through Eldoret to Malaba, as well as through Kericho to Kisumu to Malaba to prepare Kenya for the future.

“We also agreed to extend the dual carriage way from Rironi through Nakuru through Eldoret to Malaba, and through Kericho to Kisumu to Malaba. We discussed how to build a new airport and how we are going to expand our infrastructure.” He added.

Ruto thanked former President Uhuru Kenyatta for his role in fostering unity and supporting national development.

“I came to your office and explained



President William Ruto

what the Prime Minister and I had discussed a shared dream for our nation,” he said. “Raila believed in thinking big and breaking away from the ordi-

nary. That courage to dream is what will lift Kenya to greatness.”

The late Odinga died on Wednesday in India while receiving treatment at

the age of 80.

He has been laid to rest at the Kang’oka Jaramogi in Bondo, Siaya County.



## Never Send Any One Empty Handed...End At Least A Ray Of Smile



Gives confidence and hope to lead life well  
It calms troubled mind Fills the heart with light

Love, kindness is all they need  
Need not give costly gifts or presents  
Never leave any one empty handed  
Let green memories linger in mind.... For ever

Never send anyone empty handed  
A ray of sunshine doesn't cost anything  
It spreads happiness and pleasure  
Reduces weight in heart

It lights up some one life

Brinda. D  
GRADUATE TEACHER,  
GOVT HIGH SCHOOL,  
MELPATTAMPAKKAM  
CUDDALORE, Tamilnadu India  
creativewritersmag@gmail.com

## Our Environment, Our Life



We can live life in a better way.

Trees give oxygen, it is a precious gift,  
Let's plant more trees and lead a happy life.  
Save each and every drop of water,  
Because every drop counts,  
For a good future, without any doubt

There's no second planet like Earth,  
If we don't save it, who will give us  
Let's take the responsibility and act rightly  
Save the planet, for our bright future

Our environment is our life,  
Giving us air, water, and food to all  
Let's keep it clean and fresh each day,  
If there is no pollution,

Varsha.  
8A  
Govt High school Melpattampakkam  
Cuddalore district  
Tamil Nadu India

## My Dog



He is a gentle soul  
He's soft and beautiful,  
Grows like a child in our family  
We show some love

My family considers him a part of our family  
He is a beloved member,  
loved by everyone  
He brings us joy, comfort, and happiness  
He is A loyal companion, with love

My dog is my friend,  
Jumping and playing with me,  
Always day and night.  
He wags his tail, like a friendly  
He is very true to me  
Barking only at the strangers,  
But loyal to all

He eats what we give,  
He never demands more,  
Never stealing or harming,

Mugilan  
8A  
GOVT High school Melpattampakkam  
Cuddalore district  
Tamil Nadu India

## Heaven On Earth



By: Botirova Umida

Mother is an angel between two worlds, pure, immaculate, incomparable and indescribable. Even the best poets and writers are powerless to describe her. But I, as a powerless writer, have decided to describe this person with all my heart and love, since this is not yet something I can do, but I have decided to embody all mothers in the image of my own mother and write about it here.

Mother is a person who is the witness and cause of our youth, the most blooming childhood. I remember, when we were little, my mother would always put hot bread from the oven on our faces, smell it, and say that it smells like heaven, and she would pass it to us. We also cherished this precious blessing in our hands, held it, and kissed it with respect. The fragrance that I smelled from the bread at that time, I feel every time I hug my mother. In fact, isn't that the reason why we compare mothers to angels in Heaven?

Mother is a peaceful, heart-soothing place. In

fact, no luxurious place can be more precious than the one hour of rest we get at our mother's feet. No matter how old a person is or what position he holds, he always feels the need for his mother's love. He misses her every moment. If he hugs her, the world seems bright to him. In fact, we have a peaceful, heavenly place in this world that we do not understand and do not feel - the mother's embrace. In it, a person forgets all his sorrows and feels like he has entered a palace of boundless happiness.

I must also say that our mother is the person who cares for you more than anyone else in the world, even your closest friends, and who can inspire you with her trust and patience. She sacrifices everything for her child. From her youth, her dreams and goals, her hard-earned money, even her health. Who else can sacrifice so much for us?! Who?! No one! No one can be like a mother. Do you feel that the sacrifices and sufferings your mother made so that you could study, live well, and be no less than your peers are flashing through your memory. In the words of Otkir Khoshimov, life has not been kind to mothers in this matter either!

Botirova Umida, 1st year student of the Faculty of Philology and Arts, Urgench State University  
If you want to feel the beauty of the world with your heart, remember your mother.

Otkir Khoshimov

## Before You Ask God For Anything, First Thank Him For Everything



Thank You, God, for everything in my life;  
You guide me whenever I am in strife.

Thank You, God, for Your blessing;  
You hold my hand and walk beside me, caressing.

A single word or bow is not enough to thank;  
You always make me rise in my rank.

I always have You in my memory and in my heart,

And seek Your valuable guidance in every start.

You are my guide, my inseparable soul, doing me the best;  
At times, You allow me to go through Your test.

I always hear Your voice;  
You are my only choice, my reason to rejoice.

Without You, I never start my day;  
Hold me in Your arms and please let me stay.

I ask You with a thankful heart, my Lord:  
Shower me with Your love and reward.

KUMARESWARI S  
GRADUATE TEACHER -ENGLISH  
VKGHSS AYYANKALIPALAYAM  
TIRUPPUR TAMILNADU

## Every Journey Has Destination



Every journey has destination,  
The way we choose is what matters.  
Pass the nooks and corners with no hesitation,  
Drive your vehicle like a batter.  
Follow the traffic rules sincerely,  
As life too has many rules to follow.  
You are not participating in a rally,  
For our life has a big hollow  
To be filled with only good things daily.  
Every hump should be passed away,  
Respect each and every signal.  
Overtake carefully, respecting the passers.  
Our life is a beautiful journey -  
Follow all the rules for a happy ending.  
- A. Suseela

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# TRIBUTE

## India Gave Raila Military Honours, Modi Personally Ordered Airlift: Mudavadi

By: Irene M wangi  
@themkenyatimes

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi has paid glowing tribute to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, revealing that the Indian leader personally ordered the military airlift of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga's body to Mumbai with full state honours.

Mudavadi described the move as an exceptional gesture as a historic mark of respect for one of Africa's most influential statesmen.

Speaking during a solemn state funeral service, Mudavadi said he was entrusted, with the full consent of the Odinga family and on the direct instruction of President William Ruto, to lead the government delegation that travelled to India hours after Raila's passing on October 15.

"Your Excellency and Mama Aida, let me say thank you for giving me a unique opportunity...to do one last honor, and that was the honor to lead a delegation on the afternoon of the 15th of October, just a few hours after his passing, to India, so that we can join those who are there and come back with the remains of Raila Amolo Odinga. It is an honor, a very moving moment," he said.

Mudavadi recounted that upon ar-

rival in India aboard Kenya Airways flight KQ202, the delegation was received at a restricted military terminal where they were informed that Prime Minister Modi had intervened personally to fast-track military protocols.

"At the military stand...the Prime Minister of India had actually said that the Government of India grants all the respect, military respect possible within the shortest time possible to Raila," Mudavadi said.

"The Government of India gave a military aircraft from Kochi to bring Raila to Mumbai where we got him, and he was escorted by the military of India."

He eulogized Odinga as a man whose political resilience, intellectual brilliance and simplicity in communicating the hopes of ordinary citizens made him a towering figure in Kenya's democratic journey.

"Mr. President, today Raila is here. He would have loved a crowd like this...But today, Raila speaks to us in silence, total silence. This silence is loud. It speaks to the nation," he said.

"He stood for a lot of things. His spirit is unbreakable. Raila suffered. He had a checkered career. But one



thing, Raila never allowed history to hold him prisoner," Mudavadi added.

Mudavadi described deeply emotional scenes as Raila's body was draped in the Kenyan flag in the presence of his daughter Winnie, other family members, close associates, and Kenya's High Commissioner to India.

The Former Prime Minister lauded the historic gesture was made by the national carrier, Kenya Airways on the journey back home highlighting the special flight number RAO-001 which was a final tribute to Raila

Amolo Odinga.

"We landed, brought by the national carrier Kenya Airways and I thank Kenya Airways for heeding your instructions...The plane landed at 9.30 on 16th of October switching from KQ-203 to RAO-001. That was the title of the flight," Mudavadi announced.

Mudavadi said that although Raila had spent his life energising massive political crowds with his fiery speeches, it was now his silence that spoke most profoundly.

### Worth Noting:

• Speaking during a solemn state funeral service, Mudavadi said he was entrusted, with the full consent of the Odinga family and on the direct instruction of President William Ruto, to lead the government delegation that travelled to India hours after Raila's passing on October 15.

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# Erkin Vohidov – A Masterful Writer And Translator



By: Choriyeva Oynur  
@themkenyatimes

This article discusses the life, creative path, and literary significance of the People's Poet of Uzbekistan, Erkin Vohidov. It highlights his childhood, the stages of his artistic formation, and his most famous works, along with their themes and meanings. The study also analyzes how national pride, patriotism, humanism, and the ideals of goodness are expressed in his poetry. Furthermore, the article reveals Erkin Vohidov's contribution to Uzbek literature and culture, as well as his role in nurturing the spiritual values of the younger generation.

**Keywords:** Erkin Vohidov's poems, life, creativity, translations, achievements, awards, legacy for youth.

## Introduction

Erkin Vohidov (1936–2016) was a People's Poet of Uzbekistan, a recipient of the title "Hero of Uzbekistan" and the "Order for Great Services." His childhood coincided with the difficult years of World War II, yet he managed to live a prolific and meaningful creative life. Vohidov was not only a talented poet but also a skilled translator who introduced Uzbek readers to the masterpieces of world literature. He authored numerous poems, epics, and plays. Moreover, he was a courageous intellectual who glorified freedom and peace, and who dared to proudly declare "O'zbekim" ("My Uzbek") during the Soviet era.

Vohidov translated the works of many prominent foreign writers, including Alexander Tvardovsky, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Muhammad Iqbal, Rasul Gamzatov, and Sergei Yesenin. Among his most remarkable translations are Yesenin's lyrical works and Goethe's "Faust."

## Main Part

Erkin Vohidov was born on December 28, 1936, in the Oltiariq district of Fergana region, in a teacher's family. His childhood was full of hardships—he lost both parents at an early age and grew up as an orphan. He later recalled:

> "While my father was at the front, my mother worked as a clerk in the village council. Life was very difficult. I remember chewing corn stalks until my tongue bled, eating oilcake with other children, and how my mother slapped me in sorrow and cried all evening..."

His uncle in Tashkent took care of him and raised him. From a young age, Vohidov was interested in literature and poetry. He was greatly inspired by gatherings at their home with poets such as Chustiy, the singers Shojalilov brothers, Ma'rufkhaja Bahodirov, and the great scholar and translator Alikhon Sog'uni. Those poetic and intellectual discussions left a deep mark on his mind.

Under the guidance of G'ayrativ, he attended literary circles and honed his writing skills. His first poem was published at the age of 14 in the magazine *Mushtum*. His first poetry collection, "Tong Nafasi" ("The Breath of Dawn"), was published in 1961. Later, his 1987 collection "Shoir, She'r va Shuur" ("The Poet, the Poem, and Consciousness") gained wide recognition. He also wrote three plays: "The Golden Wall," "The Tragedy of Istanbul," and "The Second Talisman." The comedy "The Golden Wall" was staged in Lahore, Pakistan.

After graduating from high school with excellent marks, Vohidov studied at the Faculty of Uzbek Philology at Tashkent State University (now the National University of Uzbekistan). His university years played a key role in the development of his intellectual and creative abilities.

From 1960 to 1963, he worked as an editor at the magazine "Yosh Gvardiya" and later became its editor-in-chief (1975–1982). He also held senior positions at the G'afur G'ulom Literature and Art Publishing House and the "Yoshlik" monthly magazine. After Uzbekistan gained independence, he served as Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Relations (1995–2005), and later as Chairman of the Committee on Science, Education, Culture, and Sports (2005–2009) in the Oliy Majlis (Parliament).

Among his most beloved poems are "Tong Lavhasi" ("Dawn Scene"), "Kamtarlik Haqida" ("About Modesty"), "Sevgi" ("Love"), "Buloq" ("The Spring"), and "Ona Tuproq" ("Motherland Soil"), which stand out for their simplicity, philosophical depth, and artistic beauty. In "Kamtarlik Haqida," humility is expressed through the image of a tea-



Choriyeva Oynur

pot bowing to a cup — a profound metaphor for modesty.

> Though the teapot stands tall and proud,  
It bows gently toward the cup.  
So why should man be arrogant,  
And what's the use of vanity's trap?  
Be humble, take a modest step,  
Avoid the threshold of pride.  
That's why the cup, not the pot,  
Is kissed upon the forehead wide.

Vohidov's poetry centers on humanism, national pride, and patriotism. His works such as "Nido" ("The Cry"), "Ruhlar Isyoni" ("The Revolt of Souls"), and "Palatkada Yozilgan Doston" ("The Epic Written in a Tent") reflect his opposition to war, oppression, and injustice.

In 1983, he was awarded the Hamza State Prize of Uzbekistan SSR; in 1987, he received the title of People's Poet of Uzbekistan. He later received the "Order of Friendship" (1995) and the highest national title, "Hero of Uzbekistan" (1999). Many of his poems have been set to music by renowned artists, including Sherali Jo'rayev.

In 2020, to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, Vohidov's poem "Inson" ("Human") was turned into a multilingual song performed in Arabic, English, Italian, Kazakh, Russian, Tajik, Turkish, and Uzbek.

As a translator, Vohidov rendered into Uzbek the works of many world classics such as Alexander Blok, Friedrich Schiller, Lesya Ukrainka, Mikhail Svetlov, Muhammad Iqbal, Rasul Gamzatov, Sergey Yesenin, and Silva Kaputikyan. In 1974, he translated Goethe's "Faust" into Uzbek. His translations of Yesenin's poems are especially admired.

Below is his Uzbek translation of Yesenin's farewell poem "Goodbye,

My Friend" (1925):

> Goodbye, my dear, my heart's balm,  
Though we part, reunion awaits.  
Don't open your lips to grieve,  
For both life and death are fates.  
> Goodbye, my friend, don't break your heart,  
Don't weep, don't cry for me.  
Death exists — but so does life,  
That's the truth, eternally.

In classical Eastern literature, qasidas (odes) were often written in praise of rulers or nobles. Erkin Vohidov, however, dedicated his qasida to his homeland — the Uzbek nation. His famous poem "O'zbekim" ("My Uzbek") glorifies the rich history, culture, and pride of the Uzbek people and became an unofficial national anthem in the 1960s.

Writer O'tkir Hoshimov once said:  
> "A true artist is a faithful son of his people. Erkin Vohidov's works prove this. His 'O'zbekim' is not merely a patriotic hymn — it embodies our nation's thousand-year history, joys, and sorrows. I once visited a school where children recited it together by heart, and I felt proud that our nation has such a poet."

Vohidov himself said:

> "In those years, writing about our glorious past was not allowed — only praise for the Soviet system. But how could one call our great ancestors like Al-Khwarizmi, Beruni, and Ibn Sina 'ignorant'? That's why 'O'zbekim' touched people's hearts. Yet it was risky — even the word 'O'zbekim' was seen as nationalism. I was interrogated many times, told to replace it with 'our people,' and to add Lenin's or Moscow's names. But I refused. They promised fame and rewards if I did — still, I couldn't betray the truth."

For this poem, Vohidov was interrogated by the KGB several times in 1968. Nevertheless, his courage and artistic integrity made him one of the most respected figures in Uzbek literature.

## Conclusion

Erkin Vohidov passed away on May 30, 2016, at the age of 79. He remains one of the most beloved poets of Uzbekistan. Many institutions and places have been named in his honor. In 2018, a specialized school named after him was opened in Margilan, and in 2019, the Erkin Vohidov Memorial Museum was established there.

Numerous books have been written about his life and works, including "Erkin Vohidov's Lessons" (2016), "Till the Sun Shines Its Light" (2016), "The Magic of Words," and "Erkin Vohidov — The Free Uzbek of My People."

Erkin Vohidov stands as one of the greatest figures of modern Uzbek literature. His poetry and epics embody national spirit, humanity, and kindness, expressed with exceptional artistry. As a translator, he introduced Uzbek readers to the gems of world literature. His legacy continues to serve as a moral and spiritual guide for the younger generation.

*Choriyeva Oynur was born in Muborak district of the Republic of Uzbekistan. She is a student at the Faculty of English Philology of the Uzbekistan State World Languages University.*

# A Colossus Departs: Remembering The Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga

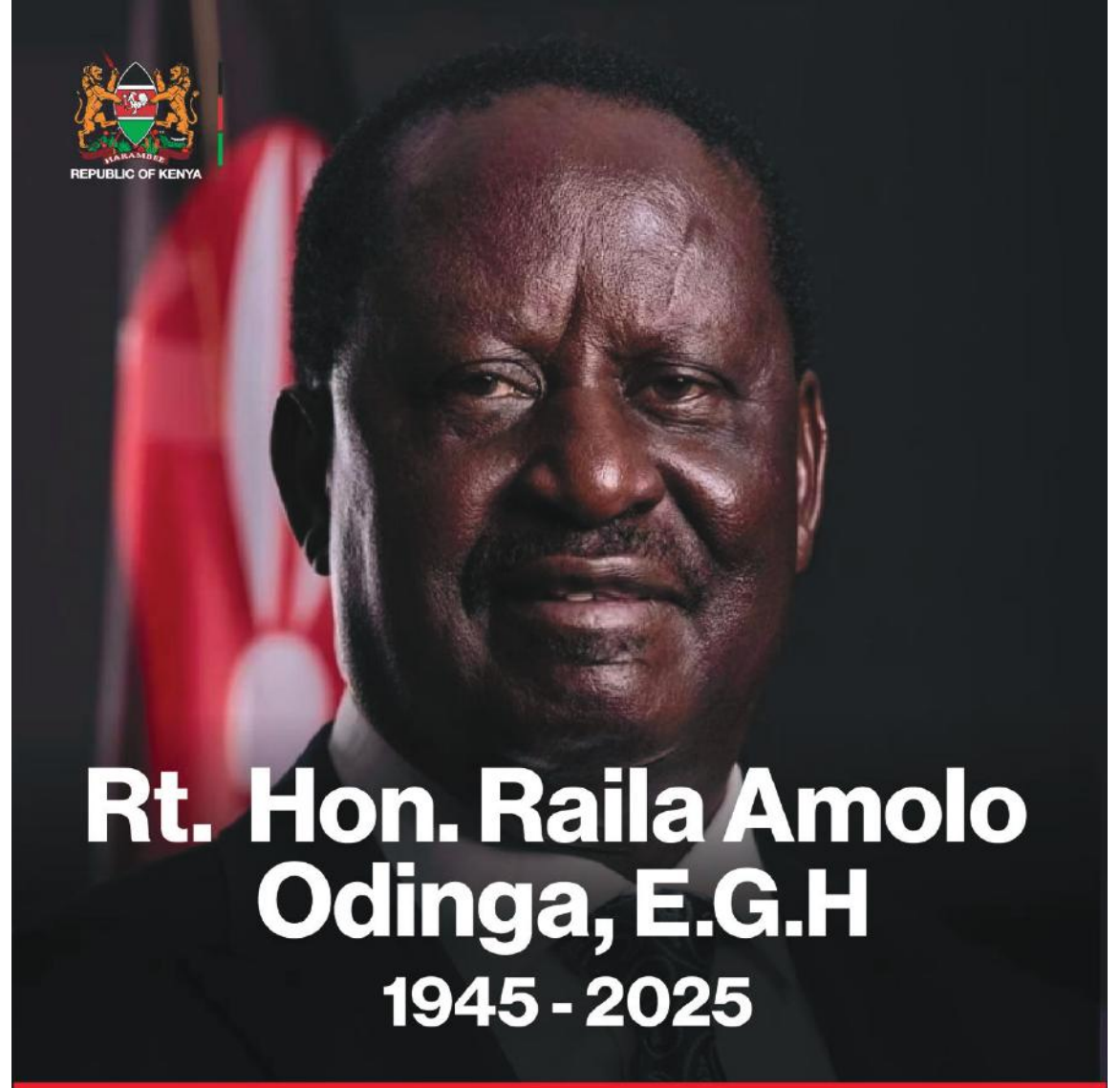


By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themkenyatimes

Death, that unwelcome guest who arrives without invitation, has once again reminded us of life's fragile impermanence. It steals from us those we hold dear, those whose presence we believed would endure just a little longer, those whose wisdom we thought we might yet draw upon in the days ahead. The Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga has departed from us, leaving behind a nation still processing the void, still grappling with disbelief, still moving through the necessary stages of grief. Many remain in denial, unable to accept that Baba as millions affectionately called him will no longer walk among us. But such is the nature of death: it takes whom it will, when it will, regardless of our protests or our needs. One day death itself shall die, scripture promises, but until that distant dawn, we the living must bear the weight of farewell and carry forward the memories of those who shaped our world.

Raila Odinga was born into political royalty on January 7, 1945, the son of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Kenya's first Vice President, yet he carved out a legacy entirely his own. His early years were marked not by privilege but by sacrifice, as he spent formative time studying engineering in East Germany during an era when ideological battles shaped the world. Upon returning to Kenya, he became not merely a politician but an industrialist, building successful business ventures including a liquid petroleum gas enterprise that demonstrated his entrepreneurial acumen. His transition from business to activism was born of necessity and conviction, as he witnessed the authoritarianism of President Daniel arap Moi's regime stifling Kenya's potential. He paid dearly for his principles, spending years in detention following the failed 1982 coup attempt in which he was implicated. Those prison years marked by isolation, uncertainty, and the psychological torture of indefinite confinement would have broken lesser men, but they forged in Raila an iron resolve that would define his political career.

As a family man, Raila found his anchor in his wife Ida, whose steadfast presence sustained him through the darkest valleys of political persecution and electoral defeat. Together they raised children who bore witness to their father's sacrifices, including a son named Fidel in honor of Fidel Castro, a testament to Raila's early ideological leanings and revolutionary spirit. His family endured the long absences, the security threats, the public scrutiny, and the emotional



**Rt. Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, E.G.H**  
**1945 - 2025**

toll of watching their patriarch repeatedly denied the presidency he sought. The Odinga household became a sanctuary where Kenya's political dramas intersected with intimate human moments, where victory rallies gave way to quiet dinners, where national burdens were temporarily set aside for the simpler joys of familial love. Ida herself became a political figure in her own right, defending her husband's health and dignity even as critics questioned his vitality. Their partnership exemplified a marriage tested by extraordinary circumstances yet remaining unbroken, a private love story playing out against the backdrop of public struggle.

Raila Odinga's contributions to Kenya's democratic evolution cannot be overstated, for he was among the vanguard who fought to dismantle Moi's one-party dictatorship in the 1990s. He stood at the forefront of the push for multiparty democracy, enduring detention and exile as the price for his defiance of autocratic rule. The historic Saba Saba protests of July 7, 1990, which he helped organize, became a watershed moment in Kenya's liberation struggle, galvanizing a generation to demand their constitu-

tional rights. Later, in 2010, he championed the new constitution that introduced devolution, strengthened the judiciary, and embedded protections for civil liberties that transformed Kenya's governance structure. His ODM party, which celebrated its 20th anniversary, became a vehicle for aspirations of millions who saw in Raila not just a politician but a symbol of resistance against the established order. Through five presidential campaigns spanning 1997 to 2022, he commanded unwavering loyalty from his base, particularly among the Luo community and progressive Kenyans who believed his vision for an equitable nation could materialize. His ability to mobilize masses, articulate grievances, and sustain hope despite repeated defeats marked him as a statesman par excellence.

Yet to speak honestly of Raila Odinga requires acknowledging the contradictions that increasingly defined his later years, the evolution from revolutionary tiger to what critics termed a domesticated political cat. His first handshake with President Moi in 2001, which secured him the Energy Ministry, signaled the beginning of a pattern: pragmatic accommodation with erstwhile adversaries

in pursuit of power and position. The 2018 handshake with Uhuru Kenyatta, orchestrated in elite secrecy without public consultation, effectively neutralized the opposition and left millions who had protested the 2017 election feeling betrayed by their champion. When Generation Z rose in 2024 to protest punitive taxation, explicitly telling him "Baba Kaa Nyumbani"—Father, stay home—they were rejecting not his history but his present, his backstage negotiations with President Ruto that resulted in the broad-based government. While young Kenyans faced police brutality in the streets, Raila was brokering deals for cabinet positions and securing presidential endorsement for his ultimately unsuccessful bid for the African Union Commission chairmanship. The tiger who once roared against injustice had learned to purr for scraps of auxiliary power, his revolutionary credentials tarnished by opportunism.

His five unsuccessful presidential

## Worth Noting:

- As a family man, Raila found his anchor in his wife Ida, whose steadfast presence sustained him through the darkest valleys of political persecution and electoral defeat. Together they raised children who bore witness to their father's sacrifices, including a son named Fidel in honor of Fidel Castro, a testament to Raila's early ideological leanings and revolutionary spirit.
- His family endured the long absences, the security threats, the public scrutiny, and the emotional toll of watching their patriarch repeatedly denied the presidency he sought.
- The Odinga household became a sanctuary where Kenya's political dramas intersected with intimate human moments, where victory rallies gave way to quiet dinners, where national burdens were temporarily set aside for the simpler joys of familial love.

# A Colossus Departs: Remembering The Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga

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campaigns 1997, 2007, 2013, 2017, and 2022 constitute both his greatest testament to perseverance and the tragic arc of unrealized ambition. Each defeat he attributed to rigging, electoral malpractice, or systemic bias, claims that resonated with his supporters even as they strained credulity with each repetition. The 2007 election dispute plunged Kenya into its worst post-independence violence, with approximately 1,300 deaths and hundreds of thousands displaced, bloodshed that demanded not just political settlement but justice that never fully materialized. His decision to boycott the 2017 election rerun after the Supreme Court nullified the initial results revealed political calculation masquerading as principle, protecting his narrative of victimhood rather than testing it at the ballot box. The pattern suggested a man increasingly concerned with preserving his political mythology rather than accepting the democratic verdict, however imperfect. His repeated claims of electoral theft, while often grounded in legitimate concerns about IEBC integrity, also served to insulate him from accountability for campaign weaknesses, strategic missteps, and his failure to build coalitions beyond his ethnic base. The presidency that eluded him became both his greatest frustration and the source of his enduring mystique.

Despite these criticisms, Raila's capacity for political forgiveness distinguished him from many contemporaries trapped in cycles of vendetta and ethnic animosity. He worked with Moi despite years of detention, governed alongside Kibaki after the violence of 2007, embraced Uhuru Kenyatta whom he had twice opposed, and ultimately partnered with William Ruto who defeated him in 2022. This ability to set aside humiliation, torture, and betrayal spoke to either extraordinary magnanimity or calculated pragmatism, perhaps some amalgamation of both. He understood that Kenya's ethnic fissures and political tribalism required bridge-building, even if those bridges sometimes led to personal accommodation rather than structural reform. His handshakes, however controversial, represented attempts to move the nation beyond paralyzing polarization, to demonstrate that political adversaries could coexist without descending into violence. Whether this approach constituted statesmanship or surrender remains contested, but it undeniably shaped Kenya's political culture, introducing the concept that opposition need not be permanent enmity. His willingness to forgive, even



Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga

## Worth Noting:

- Raila Odinga's contributions to Kenya's democratic evolution cannot be overstated, for he was among the vanguard who fought to dismantle Moi's one-party dictatorship in the 1990s.
- He stood at the forefront of the push for multiparty democracy, enduring detention and exile as the price for his defiance of autocratic rule. The historic Saba Saba protests of July 7, 1990, which he helped organize, became a watershed moment in Kenya's liberation struggle, galvanizing a generation to demand their constitutional rights.
- Later, in 2010, he championed the new constitution that introduced devolution, strengthened the judiciary, and embedded protections for civil liberties that transformed Kenya's governance structure.

when forgiveness came with political reward, offered a model of reconciliation that other conflict-ridden African nations might study, even if they should not uncritically emulate.

As an African statesman, Raila Odinga embodied a pan-African consciousness that transcended Kenya's borders, earning recognition from Addis Ababa to Pretoria. His pursuit of the African Union Commission chairmanship, though ultimately unsuccessful, reflected his continental ambitions and his belief that Kenya's democratic struggles held lessons for the broader African liberation project. Leaders across the continent, from Tanzania's Samia Suluhu Hassan to South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa, eulogized him as a champion of good governance and democracy, acknowledging his influence on regional politics. His support for liberation movements, his advocacy for African economic integration, and his vision of a united continent positioned him as heir to the pan-African tradition of Nkrumah and Nyerere. Yet this continental stature also highlighted the gap between his international reputation and his domestic reality: revered abroad as a democratic icon while increasingly viewed at home as a political operator whose revolutionary days had passed. The African spirit he imbued that defiant insistence on self-determination, that refusal to accept neocolonial impositions animated his early career but seemed to wane as pragmatism and personal ambition reoriented his priorities. His legacy in African politics remains significant, a reminder that even flawed leaders can inspire movements larger than themselves.

The tragedy of Raila Odinga lies not

in what he accomplished, which was considerable, but in what he might have accomplished had he not compromised his principles in the twilight of his career. The man who mobilized the Saba Saba protests, who championed the 2010 constitution, who spent years in detention for democratic ideals, deserved to exit the stage with his revolutionary credentials intact. Instead, he became what he once opposed: a member of the political elite making backroom deals, prioritizing personal advancement over the collective struggle, alienating the very youth he had inspired through his earlier sacrifice. Generation Z's rejection of his leadership represented the ultimate indictment, the revolutionary betrayed by the revolution he helped birth. His failure to name a successor, to build institutional structures within ODM that could outlast his charisma, suggested a leader unable to imagine politics without himself at the center. At 80, confronting multiple health challenges including diabetes and hypertension, he should have been mentoring the next generation rather than seeking continental positions that his body and his compromised political standing made untenable. The tiger-to-cat transformation was complete, the once-fearsome predator now comfortable in the domestic arrangements of power-sharing and elite accommodation.

Raila Odinga lived fully, experiencing the heights of political influence and the depths of detention, the adulation of millions and the humiliation of repeated electoral defeat. His party's 20-year survival testifies to his ability to build enduring political structures, even as his personal presidential ambitions remained un-

fulfilled. He was detained for fighting autocracy, built businesses as an industrialist, commanded protests as an activist, governed as Prime Minister, and shaped every regime during his decades in opposition politics. His death at 80 in India, far from the Kenyan soil he fought to transform, carries its own poignancy, a leader who gave everything to his country yet died in exile pursuing medical treatment his nation could not adequately provide. The grief that has engulfed Kenya, the denial that persists among his supporters, reflects not merely the loss of a politician but the severing of a generational connection to Kenya's democratic struggle. He was flawed, compromised, opportunistic at times, yet also principled, courageous, and transformative. History will judge him not by the presidency he never won but by the democracy he helped establish, not by his late-career compromises but by his early-career sacrifices. In the end, Raila Amollo Odinga was profoundly, complicated, and irreplaceably Kenyan, a man whose life traced the contours of his nation's journey from autocracy toward democracy, with all the detours, setbacks, and partial victories that journey entailed. His passing marks the end of an era, and while death has claimed him, his influence on Kenya's political consciousness will endure long after the mourning has ceased and the tributes have faded. May his soul rest in eternal peace, and may Kenya learn from both his triumphs and his failings as it continues the democratic journey he helped begin.

*The writer is a legal researcher and lawyer*

# Military Honours For Baba, A Send-Off For The People's President

By: Ronald Owili  
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## Worth Noting:

- While eulogizing the late Odinga at the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Technology where the funeral service was held, President Ruto made the country aware of his decision to accord the fallen political icon the highest of honours.
- "I have discharged my responsibility to a friend, to a brother, to my mentor," said President Ruto.
- He added, "Many told me Raila was not president so we lower his stature a little but I told them, even if he was not president, he was the people's president and so he be given the respect befitting a president."
- At Kang'o ka Jaramogi where the late opposition leader was interred, a 17-gun salute by KDF roared in the air amid cheers from mourners.

The military honours accorded to the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga culminated into the removal of the National Flag draped on his casket, which was then folded and handed over to Mama Ida Odinga, signifying the conclusion of the national assignment which begun on Wednesday.

Following the announcement of his demise, President William Ruto issued the order and directive that the late Odinga be accorded State Funeral, with military honours and the attendant state protocols be rendered and observed.

This was to honour the late Odinga for his lifelong contribution to the country's political progress, governance and justice which have all lead to multi-party and a new constitution in 2010.

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He added, "Many told me Raila was not president so we lower his stature a little but I told them, even if he was not president, he was the people's president and so he be given the respect befitting a president."

At Kang'o ka Jaramogi where the late opposition leader was interred, a 17-gun salute by KDF roared in the air amid cheers from mourners.

"I want to thank the security which did this. The armed forces which are under instruction from the President," said Dr Oburu Odinga, Senator Siaya County.

He went on to further to ask the president to consider the KDF officers who secured the body since arriving in the country for the entire four day period for promotion.

"Your Excellency, the security which has been taking care of Raila. I would like to plead with you, they have done a great job and they have kept vigil and have been there for him all through, so You Excellency, give them a promotion. Just one grade wont be too much," he told the president.

Odinga who died on Wednesday morning while undergoing treatment in India had his remains flown by the Indian Airforce upon orders by his long time friend Prime Minister Narendra Modi, from the Kerala State to Mumbai where his body was repatriated.

The KDF as instructed by the Commander-In-Chief, took charge of security and the late premier's remains upon arrival at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA).

The heavy assignment kicked off with preparation and prayers for the

departed at the airport before being taken to Kasarani Stadium under tight security by KDF and the National Police. This follows security lapses at the airport and the National Assembly where initial viewing of the boy was planned.

On the second day of mourning, under the watchful eye of the KDF pallbearers and morticians, remains of Odinga arrived at the National Assembly on the military gun carriage, which is used for state funerals.

After lying in state, KDF again escorted Odinga's body to Nyayo Stadium for the national service and public viewing, this time with no security breaches.

Day three saw the body of Odinga airlifted from Nairobi to Kisumu aboard a KDF Cargo aircraft, the Leonardo C-27J Spartan with the

call sign ENIGMA01. Like KQ203, the flight to Kisumu also had its call sign changed from C27J.

Due to the mammoth crowd witnessed in Kisumu, KDF was forced to change logistics yet again, opting to fly the remains of Odinga aboard a military chopper to the Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium in Mamboleo. The final leg also involved airlifting of the late opposition leader from Kisumu to his Opoda farm in Siaya County.

"In deed in this part of the world, we have never seen something like this. We have never seen a dignified sendoff than what we have seen here in Bondo. Mr President, thank you very much for according Raila this kind of sendoff," said Dr Ida Odinga, the widow of the former premier.



# Studying Abroad Or Studying In Your Own Country



By: Bekchanova Mahliyo Rashid  
@themtkenyatimes

In today's globalized world, most of the people many people prefer to study abroad, some believe that studying in their own country has many advantages.

On the one hand, there are many advantages to studying abroad. Because there is high-quality education abroad, many foreign universities provide education with modern methods, experienced professors and advanced technologies. As a result, many young people study their field

in depth and become mature individuals in the future, developing both mentally and spiritually.

In addition, by studying abroad, you can learn many foreign languages. For example, English, German, French, etc. Result, you can communicate well with foreign people, and your chances of finding a highly qualified job increase. So, studying abroad also provides valuable networking opportunities. International universities often host students from around the world, allowing individuals to form global connections. These relationships can lead to job opportunities, internships, or future business collaborations. Furthermore, employers tend to view international experience as a sign of initiative and flexibility, which gives such students an advantage in the job market.

On the other hand, there are several advantages to studying in your own country. First, it is often more affordable because tuition fees and living expenses tend to be lower compared to studying abroad. Students can also stay close to their families and receive emotional and financial support.



Additionally, studying in a familiar cultural and linguistic environment helps students focus more on their education without the stress of adjusting to new customs or languages. As a result, there is a shortage of money, which is why many people study in their own country.

For instance, a student from Uzbekistan chooses to study medicine at a local university where the courses are taught in Uzbek or Russian, languages they are fluent in. Because the student does not have to learn complex

scientific terms in a foreign language, they can grasp concepts more easily and participate actively in class.

In my opinion, I prefer studying abroad than in my own country because not only is there a difference in knowledge, but your worldview also grows, you make many friends, and you develop linguistically.

In conclusion, both studying abroad and studying in your own country have their own merits and drawbacks. If a student values cultural exposure, advanced education and personal

grows studying abroad could be the better choice. However, if affordability, family support, and familiarity are priorities, studying locally might be more suitable. Ultimately, the decision depends on the student's goals, financial situation, and readiness to face new challenges.

*Bekchanova Mahliyo Rashid qizi, 1st year student of the Faculty of Philology and Arts*

# The Structure Of Viruses And Related Scientific Issues



By: Umarova Gulsevar Xasan  
@themtkenyatimes

Today, viruses are among the most pressing threats to human life. Naturally, the question arises: what are viruses, and what is their structure? The word virus comes from Latin, meaning "poison" or "sharp liquid." The outer shell of a virus is called a capsid.

In biology, a virus is a very small, cell-free particle that can only reproduce inside a living cell. Viruses cannot live independently; instead, they enter living cells, live off them, and multiply. They are infectious agents that cause various diseases.

The first virus was discovered in

1917 by the Canadian bacteriologist F. d'Herelle, who identified the bacteriophage — a virus that infects bacteria. Later, viruses were found in plants, animals, and microorganisms. These discoveries led to the emergence of a new branch of science called virology — the study of viruses.

Viruses cause a number of infectious diseases, such as influenza, rabies, yellow fever, encephalitis, rubella, AIDS, and others.

Influenza is a viral disease that is very widespread today. The virus is present in the mucus from the patient's nose, in saliva, and in the phlegm expelled during coughing. When a patient sneezes or coughs, millions of invisible droplets spread through the air, affecting others and posing a serious risk to human health.

Yellow fever is also a viral disease. Its causative agents — viruses A and B — can infect only liver cells and reproduce there.

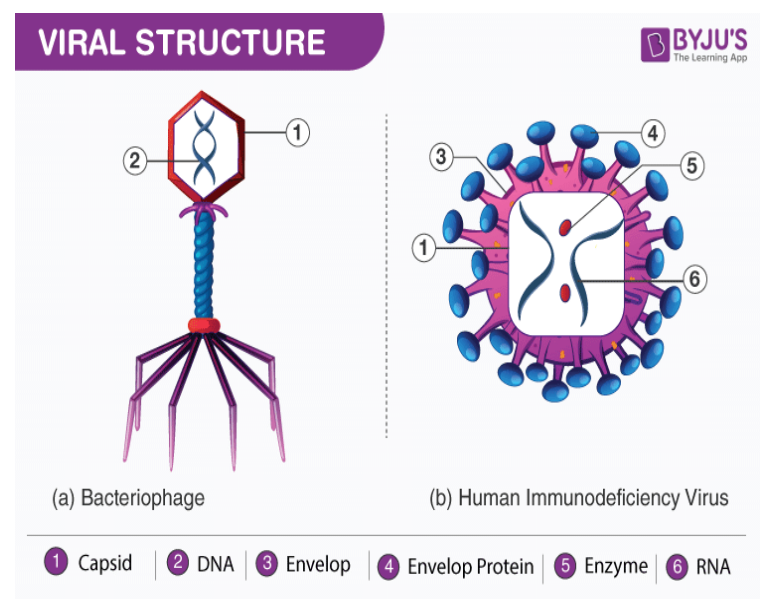
Another widespread viral disease is AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome), which is linked to the breakdown of the immune system.

This disease was first identified by the French scientist Luc Montagnier. The virus is often found in a patient's blood, lymph, and spinal fluid.

The virus mainly attacks lymphocytes — blood cells that produce antibodies protecting the body from diseases. As a result, the immune system gradually weakens, making the body more vulnerable to various infections. The development of AIDS goes through five stages. Its rapid spread is also caused by the use of non-sterile medical, cosmetic, and hairdressing tools.

Known as the "plague of the 21st century," AIDS has no effective vaccine yet. The best way to prevent it is to follow personal hygiene rules and lead a healthy lifestyle. Today, December 1 is recognized as World AIDS Day.

Viruses lack a cellular structure, and for this reason, scientists have not yet reached a consensus on whether to classify them as living organisms. The origin of viruses remains unclear. Some scientists consider them to be genetic elements that separated from cells, while others believe they



are simplified descendants of ancient cells.

The main problem associated with viruses is their rapid mutation rate, which makes it difficult to study their types and develop vaccines. Every year, many new viruses (such as COVID-19) emerge. Their origins and modes of transmission continue to be studied as a global threat.

*Umarova Gulsevar Xasan, was born in Shahrizabz district, Kashkadarya region. She is currently a first-year student at Shahrizabz State Pedagogical Institute.*

**Sports >>** \*Homa Bay governor Gladys Wanga is the latest to call for the renaming of the Talanta Stadium after former Prime Minister, the late Raila Odinga.

# SPORTS NEWS

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## 'Rename Talanta To Raila Odinga Stadium,' – Ruto Urged To Honour Former PM's Sporting Legacy



*An artistic impression of the new Talanta City Stadium*

Homa Bay governor Gladys Wanga is the latest to call for the renaming of the Talanta Stadium after former Prime Minister, the late Raila Odinga.

During the funeral service for the former PM in Bondo on Sunday, Wanga urged President William Ruto to honour Odinga's love for sports by naming the 60,000-seater stadium after him.

"Our president, we only ask one more thing from you...that magnificent 60,000-seater stadium... we ask that it be renamed Raila Odinga Talanta Stadium," Wanga said.

She also urged the president to organise a friendly between En-

glish side Arsenal and national team Harambee Stars at the venue, upon its completion next year.

"Since you are also an Arsenal fan, just like Baba was... once the stadium is complete next year, we ask you to invite Arsenal to come play a friendly against Harambee Stars as part of the Raila Odinga Memorial Cup...Manchester United fans will have to find something else to do on that day," she said.

During a special sitting in the National Assembly on Thursday, there were calls from several legislators for the stadium to be renamed after Odinga, who passed

away on Wednesday from a heart attack.

The Talanta Stadium is set for completion at the end of the year, in time for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon), which Kenya is to co-host with Uganda and Tanzania.

It is set to be the biggest stadium in the country, ahead of the Kasarani Stadium, which holds 48,000 seats.

Other than his longstanding political journey, Odinga was renowned as a sports lover, often attending various functions across the country and beyond.

His last known sports function was at the African Nations

Championships (CHAN) in August, which Kenya co-hosted with Uganda and Tanzania.

*Capital Sport*

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>>** \*Kenya's Geofry Toroitich set the fourth fastest time in the men's 42km, this year, to win the Amsterdam Marathon yesterday.

# Kenya's Toroitich Makes History With Victory At Amsterdam Marathon



Geofry Toroitich wins the Amsterdam Marathon on Sunday. PHOTO/AMSTERDAM MARATHON

Kenya's Geofry Toroitich set the fourth fastest time in the men's 42km, this year, to win the Amsterdam Marathon yesterday.

Toroitich clocked 2:03:30 — also a course record for the annual competition — to cut the tape ahead of the Ethiopian duo of Getaneh Molla (2:04:17) and Tsegaye Getachew (2:04:18) who came second and third respectively.

Also in contention in the men's race was double world record holder Joshua Cheptegei of Ugan-

da who had to make peace with a fifth-place finish after timing 2:04:50.

Meanwhile, it was an all-Ethiopian affair in the women's race as Anyalem Desta led a podium sweep for the Eastern Africans, clocking 2:17:37 in first place.

Fellow countrywomen, Bertukan Welde (2:17:56) and Mekides Shimeles (2:19:56) took second and third respectively.

### Kenyans rule in Rome

Elsewhere, at the Rome Half

Marathon, Kenyans engineered a clean podium sweep in the men and women's races.

Simon Maywa stopped the timer at 59:44 to take top honour in the men's division, finishing ahead of Vincent Kimaiyo (59:45) and Kalipus Lomwai (59:56) in what was a closely contested competition.

In the women's race, Regina Cheptoo cut the tape in 1:08:26 to take first place.

Milicent Jelimo clocked 1:08:37 to finish second as Gladys Cherop came third after timing 1:09:22.

*Capital Sport*

# SPORTS NEWS



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BREAKING NEWS



# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



## A Wonderful Leader And Role Model



By: Anila Bukhari

@themtkenyatimes

### Worth Noting:

As a young adult, married with four children, Natalie experienced homelessness, the worst trial of her life. However, she refused to let her circumstances define her. She was driven by a deep conviction that education and perseverance could break the cycle of hardship. Her relentless pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement led her to earn her college degree as a 34 year-old, a milestone that marked her transition from hardship to hope. This achievement was not just a personal victory but a beacon of possibility for others facing similar struggles.

Her academic journey culminated in her pivotal role as a leader at Edward Waters University, where she led the institution to its first-ever basketball championship.

Natalie Howard stands as a shining beacon of hope, resilience, and unwavering faith. As Ms. America's Elite Educator 2024–2025 and Ms. Royalty International Spokesmodel 2023, she exemplifies excellence not only through her titles but through her profound impact on lives around her.

Natalie Howard's story is one of extraordinary resilience and unwavering faith. Born into circumstances that many would have perceived as insurmountable, she faced the harsh realities of homelessness at a young age. Yet, rather than succumbing to despair, she chose to channel her struggles into a source of strength and purpose. Her journey from adversity to achievement is a compelling narrative of hope, determination, and the transformative power of faith.

As a young adult, married with four children, Natalie experienced homelessness, the worst trial of her life. However, she refused to let her circumstances define her. She was driven by a deep conviction that education and perseverance could break the cycle of hardship. Her relentless pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement led her to earn her college degree as a 34 year-old, a milestone that marked her transition from hardship to hope. This achievement was not just a personal victory but a beacon of possibility for others facing similar struggles.

Her academic journey culminated in her pivotal role as a leader at Edward Waters University, where she led the institution to its first-ever basketball championship. Her leadership on and off the court exemplifies her dedication to excellence and her commitment to uplifting others. She believes that sports and education are powerful tools for building character, fostering community, and inspiring youth to pursue their dreams regardless of their starting point.

With over two decades of coaching and teaching experience, Natalie has touched the lives of countless young people. Her mentorship extends beyond the classroom and sports field; she is a guiding light for youth navigating the complexities of life. She understands that every young



Natalie Howard

individual has untapped potential, and she dedicates herself to nurturing that potential through encouragement, discipline, and love. Her influence has helped shape resilient, confident, and purpose-driven young leaders.

Beyond her achievements in education and athletics, Natalie embraces her roles as a fitness model and entrepreneur. She operates a preschool basketball franchise in Atlanta, creating a nurturing environment where children learn the values of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance from an early age. Her entrepreneurial spirit is rooted in her desire to serve her community and provide opportunities for growth and development for underserved children and families.

As a devoted Pastor's wife, Natalie's faith remains at the core of her life and work. Her spiritual beliefs inspire her humanitarian efforts

and drive her passion for advocacy. She is a passionate advocate for Family Homelessness Awareness, Hunger Prevention, and Survival initiatives. Recognizing that many families face the devastating realities of homelessness and food insecurity, she actively works to raise awareness and mobilize resources to combat these issues.

Her humanitarian endeavors extend into community outreach, where she partners with local organizations to provide food, shelter, and support for vulnerable families. She believes that true leadership involves service—listening to those in need, advocating for change, and empowering others to rise above their circumstances. Her compassionate approach and unwavering commitment have earned her admiration and respect from community members, colleagues, and those she serves.

Natalie Howard's mission is clear 'to inspire others to overcome adversity and discover success through faith, perseverance, and purpose. She believes that everyone has an inherent worth and the potential to achieve greatness, regardless of their background or hardships. Her life exemplifies this belief, serving as a living testament that with faith and determination, one can transform obstacles into opportunities for growth and success.

Her story is not just about personal triumph but about elevating others—creating a ripple effect of hope, resilience, and empowerment. Through her leadership, advocacy, and unwavering faith, Natalie Howard continues to light the way for those facing their own battles, reminding us all that the human spirit, when fueled by purpose and perseverance, can overcome anything.