IEBC warns over 2027 election claims

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UDA blasts Uhuru over leadership

The ruling UDA yesterday launched a scathing attack on former President Uhuru Kenyatta, accusing him of refusing to accept President William Ruto's victory and deliberately working to undermine the Kenya Kwanza administration.

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Politics On July 16, Ol Kalou will provide that answer — and Kenya will be listening very carefully

Ruto-Gachagua power gauge

Candidates for the Ol Kalou parliamentary by-election submitted their nomination papers to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission at PCEA Hall in Ol Kalou yesterday and Wednesday, formalising a three-way race that has drawn in Kenya's most powerful political actors and recast a constituency by-election as a proxy war for the soul of Mt Kenya politics.

The IEBC scheduled the two-day clearance exercise on May 25 and 26, 2026, calling on all aspirants to ensure they met constitutional and statutory requirements before presenting their papers. Three candidates now stand cleared and ready for the campaign trail: Samuel Muchina Nyagah of President William Ruto's United Democratic Alliance, Sammy Kamau Ngotho of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party, and Engineer Wilson Kigwa, the flag bearer of former President Uhuru Kenyatta's Jubilee Party.

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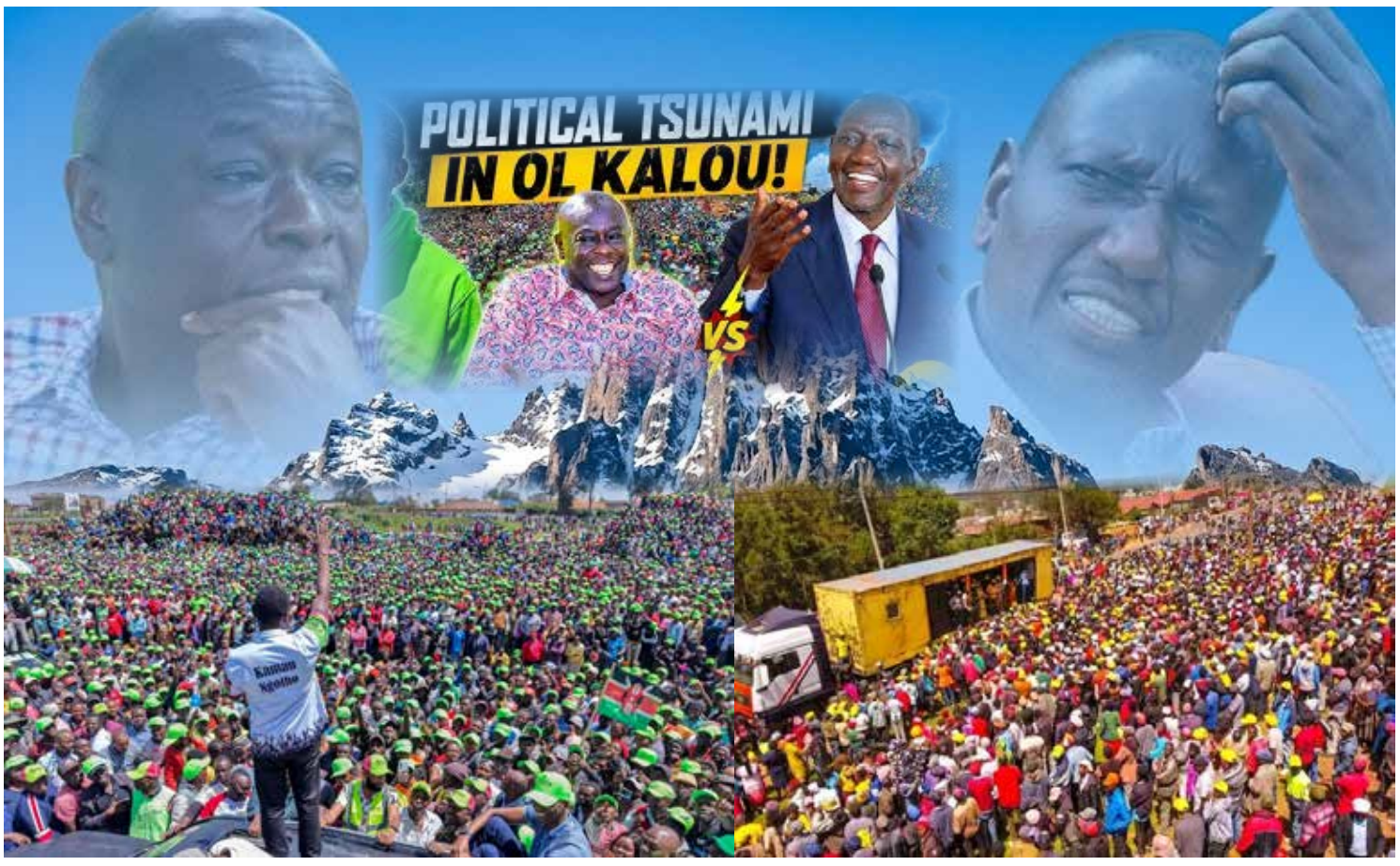

President William Ruto and former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

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Kenya ICT team heads to global Huawei finals

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Kenya will be represented by a team of 12 outstanding students and lecturers at the Huawei ICT Competition 2025–2026 Global Finals scheduled for June in Shenzhen, China, in what government officials say reflects the country's growing strength in digital innovation and technology talent development.

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi congratulated the team and wished them success as they prepare to compete against top global participants drawn from more than 2,000 universities and colleges across over 100 countries.

Mudavadi noted that Kenya performed strongly in the competition's earlier stages, securing three top positions and qualifying three teams from the Southern Africa Region, a result he described as a strong indicator of the country's rising ICT capabilities.

He encouraged the team to "boldly fly the Kenyan flag high" and continue advancing innovation, research and technology skills, which he said are key to Kenya's future economic transformation and global competitiveness.

The delegation will showcase its skills in various ICT disciplines as part of an international platform aimed at nurturing young tech talent and promoting digital innovation.

Mudavadi also commended Huawei Kenya for its continued partnership with the Government in supporting ICT training, digital skills development and innovation opportunities for young people across the country.

Those present during the briefing included Huawei Kenya CEO Gavin Gao, Deputy CEO for Public Affairs James Sun, JKUAT Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. Robert Kinyua, and student representatives led by Melane Minayo from JKUAT.

The team is expected to depart for China ahead of the global finals in June.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative.
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NEWS IN BRIEF

President William Ruto on Monday chaired the 4th Session of the Virtual Ad Hoc Oversight Committee of Heads of State on the African Union Institutional Reforms during which they reviewed progress in the implementation of the reform agenda amid shifting geopolitical realities and weakening multilateralism. The president noted that Africa must take greater charge of its future through stronger institutions, sustainable financing, enhanced domestic resource mobilisation, and full implementation of Agenda 2063. He said the reform process is not simply about adjusting systems, but building a more effective, self-reliant, and responsive African Union capable of delivering for the citizens of the continent.

Irrigation Secretary Joel Tanui led a sensitization meeting in Hola, Tana River County, on the proposed Bura Irrigation Scheme Investment Plan aimed at revitalizing and expanding the scheme. The meeting brought together government officials, political leaders, community representatives, clan elders and National Irrigation Authority management. Leaders were briefed on plans to onboard private investors for large-scale rice and sugarcane farming on about 150,000 acres. Investors are expected to commit nearly USD 1 billion toward modernization of irrigation infrastructure, including canals, drainage systems and mechanized farming. Tanui said the project will boost food security, expand irrigated agriculture and improve water use efficiency. Once implemented, it is expected to create jobs, stimulate agro-industrial growth, improve household incomes and reduce Kenya's food import bill.

Police in Gatanga Sub-county, Murang'a County, arrested eight suspected cattle thieves and recovered a stolen cow during a patrol operation in the Githangarani area. Officers intercepted a Probox vehicle carrying eight occupants, including the driver, and recovered the animal before arresting all the suspects. Gatanga OCPD Ahmed Hillow confirmed the vehicle used in the suspected crime was impounded. He noted that livestock theft cases have increased in the area in recent months, worrying farmers and residents. Hillow also revealed that one suspect is already facing similar stock theft charges at Kandara Law Courts and was out on bond. Residents alleged the suspects disguised themselves as avocado buyers to survey homes before stealing livestock. Police vowed to intensify patrols and investigations.

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba presided over the launch of the Teacher Wellness and Engagement Research Report based on a survey conducted by the Kenya National Union of Teachers and Knightwise Human Capital. The report emphasized the importance of teachers in shaping learners and safeguarding investments made in the education sector. It noted that the education system can only thrive if teachers are financially, physically and mentally well. The government reaffirmed its commitment to improving teachers' welfare through measures such as increasing teacher recruitment to reduce workloads, supporting career progression and enhancing the working environment. According to the government, a record 100,000 teachers have been employed over the last three years to strengthen education delivery across the country.

Meru governor Isaac Mutuma has urged miraa farmers to join cooperative societies to improve bargaining power, access better markets and enhance earnings from the crop. Speaking at Kathatene Methodist Church in Igembe North, the governor said cooperatives would also support value addition initiatives targeting miraa products. He expressed optimism that the county and national governments would address long-standing challenges affecting the sector. Kathuri Murungi who was also present said the Senate had passed the second reading of a Bill seeking to remove miraa from drugs regulated by National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Leaders also cited market closures, cartels and poor management as key setbacks affecting miraa farmers' incomes.

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Fuel The government said it is now exploring ethanol production as part of a broader plan to reduce reliance petroleum

Kenya eyes ethanol to cut fuel costs

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Government officials and sugar sector stakeholders during yesterday's forum.

Kenya is positioning sugarcane ethanol as a key solution to rising fuel prices and a strategy for revitalizing the country's struggling sugar industry, following lessons from Brazil's successful biofuel programme.

The new direction emerged yesterday during the 68th International Sugar Organization Seminar in Diani, where Deputy President Kithure Kindiki and Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe outlined plans to expand the use of sugarcane beyond conventional sugar production.

The government said it is now exploring ethanol production as part of a broader plan to reduce reliance on imported petroleum, stabilize fuel prices and create new economic opportunities for farmers.

Presentations during the conference highlighted Brazil's decades-long success in using ethanol-blended fuel to lower gasoline costs, reduce dependence on crude oil imports and strengthen its sugarcane economy. According to data shared at the seminar, Brazil has replaced more than four billion barrels of gasoline with ethanol over the past 50 years.

Speaking at the event, Kindiki announced that the government intends to review the Sugar Act and related regulations to formally integrate ethanol production into Kenya's legal and economic framework.

He said the government will work with the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) to develop fuel blending regulations and establish policies to support the emerging biofuel industry.

The move signals a major shift in Kenya's energy and agricultural strategy, with sugarcane increasingly being viewed as an industrial and energy crop rather than solely a source of table sugar.

Kagwe said Kenya must broaden its focus within the sugar sector and tap into opportunities such as ethanol production, electricity cogeneration and industrial alcohol manufacturing.

"We are now thinking seriously about ethanol from sugar because of the global instability in fuel prices," Kagwe said.

In remarks that underscored the scale of the proposed transformation, the CS suggested that sugar may eventually become a secondary product from sugarcane processing.

"We want sugar to become a by-product in Kenya, not the only product," he said.

Kenya is now studying Brazil's integrated sugarcane industry model, where ethanol production, bioenergy and value addition have significantly boosted the sector's profitability and sustainability.

The government said reforms introduced under the Sugar Act 2024 are already laying the foundation for modernization of the sugar industry through investment in ethanol processing plants and other value-addition initiatives.

Officials also linked the planned ethanol expansion to climate action and energy security, arguing that locally produced biofuel could help reduce carbon emissions and lower dependence on imported fuel.

The sugar industry currently supports more than six million Kenyans directly and indirectly, particularly in western Kenya where many communities rely on cane farming as their primary source of income.

With global fuel prices remaining volatile and countries increasingly shifting toward cleaner energy alternatives, Kenya's planned entry into large-scale ethanol production could redefine the future of both its energy sector and sugar economy.

Gachagua defends Uhuru, warns Ruto

DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua enjoys a light moment with former President Uhuru Kenyatta in Kirinyaga | Courtesy

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua has defended retired President Uhuru Kenyatta's right to speak on national matters, while squarely blaming the Kenya Kwanza government for the country's failures.

Speaking at the funeral of Full Gospel Church Bishop David Macharia's wife, Reverend Catherine Macharia, in Nakuru County yesterday, Gachagua turned on President Ruto's allies for attacking Kenyatta. "Don't blame Uhuru Kenyatta for your failures. Leave Uhuru Kenyatta to be. He is retired but not tired," he said.

The former deputy president dismissed Kenya Kwanza's attempts to pin governance failures on his predecessor. "Is it Uhuru making the government fail? Is Uhuru making SHA fail? Did Uhuru kill the Gen Zs?" he posed.

Gachagua also warned politicians against tribal incitement, invoking the spectre of post-election violence. "We don't want what happened in 2007 to repeat. We don't want drums of war," he said, calling for calm and national cohesion.

He further demanded swift investigations into the murders of several clergymen, including PCEA Reverend Julius Ngari Ndumia and Catholic priest Father John Ndegwa Maina.

Meanwhile, DCP's Ol Kalou by-election candidate Sammy Kamau Ngotho filed his nomination papers with the IEBC ahead of the July 16 poll.

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Suspects in court over KSh14 billion Sacco scandal

Some of the suspects

BY DCI
@themtkenyatimes

Detectives from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) headquarters Investigations Bureau have today brought before court nineteen individuals linked to a sophisticated fraud scheme that saw a Sacco lose over KSh14 billion.

The matter came to light after the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority submitted a formal request to the DCI, urging an inquiry into serious allegations of financial misconduct and embezzlement by Sacco officials.

An immediate investigation unveiled a web of deceit, where Sacco officials acted in concert, blatantly violating their fiduciary duties. They manipulated financial records, irregularly transferred members' funds, unlawfully disbursed loans, and failed to account for significant amounts entrusted to their care.

Two interconnected fraudulent schemes were identified. The first saw a decade-long manipulation of loan disbursement figures from 2012 to 2021, leading to fictitious loans totalling an astonishing KSh13,483,350,322.

> **Two interconnected fraudulent schemes were identified. The first saw a decade-long manipulation of loan disbursement figures from 2012 to 2021, leading to fictitious loans totalling an astonishing KSh13,483,350,322.**

The second scheme involved the illegitimate formation and operation of an Investment Cooperative Society Limited. This was a facade that allowed officials to divert Sacco funds, misappropriating KSh750,766,304 under the guise of land acquisition and investment opportunities in Kitengela.

The suspects, comprising former and current officials of the Sacco, include Christopher Kahuno, Samuel Ndungu, John Kimani, James Kamau, Patrick Kimando, Francis Kamau, Benson Mwangi, Paul Wathika, Geoffrey Kamau, Duncan Chege, Francis Wachiuru, George Mwihia, Daniel Lee, Joseph Gachunga, Boniface Muthama, Rosemary Njeri, Edward Duncan, Lucy Njambi, and James Mutaiga.

They now face a barrage of charges, including conspiracy to defraud, stealing by directors or officers, fraudulent false accounting, obtaining credit by false pretences, failure to maintain proper books of accounts, and operating non-core investment businesses without statutory approval, among other offences.

Appearing before the Milimani Law Courts yesterday, all the suspects pleaded not guilty to the charges and were granted a bond of KSh200,000 with one surety each. The case is set for mention on June 22, 2026.

To report incidents, you can call DCI on 0800 722 203 (toll-free) or WhatsApp 0709 570 000 to report anonymously.

IEBC warns over 2027 election claims

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Erastus Edung Ethekon

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has issued a strong warning to political actors making claims that they intend to manipulate the 2027 General Election, terming such statements reckless, baseless and capable of undermining public confidence in the electoral process.

In a press statement, the Commission said it had taken "grave concern" over recent utterances suggesting the use of extra-legal mechanisms to influence the outcome of the 2027 presidential election.

IEBC said the remarks circulating in the political space are not only misleading but also dangerous, as they risk distorting public perception of Kenya's democratic system and eroding trust in electoral institutions.

The Commission stressed that the statements appear calculated to instill fear among voters and should be disregarded by the public.

"These utterances are unacceptable, reckless and entirely baseless. They are intended to mislead the public and undermine confidence in the integrity of the electoral system," the IEBC said.

IEBC further urged political leaders to refrain from making unverified claims about electoral manipulation, warning that such narratives threaten national stability and democratic gains achieved over the years.

The Commission also clarified the legal and constitutional framework governing elections, noting that the Electoral Code of Conduct under Article 84 of the Constitution and Section 110 of the Elections Act is not currently operational.

According to IEBC, the Code applies during an active electoral period, and no election period has been declared for the 2027 General Election. It further noted that no official publication or formal declaration of the 2027 polls has been made.

Citing a Supreme Court decision in the Sabina Chege Petition No. 23 (E026) of 2022, the Commission reaffirmed its legal mandate and jurisdiction over electoral conduct once elections are officially declared.

IEBC emphasized that the responsibility of conducting and supervising elections in Kenya lies solely with the Commission under Article 88 of the Constitution and cannot be delegated or usurped by any individual or political entity.

The electoral body also dismissed claims suggesting it is weak or vulnerable to external influence, describing such assertions as false, misleading and disrespectful to the institution.

"Such claims undermine the constitutional role of the IEBC in safeguarding the sovereign will of the people," the Commission stated.

At the same time, IEBC said it remains committed to engaging relevant authorities for appropriate action against individuals spreading misinformation or attempting to undermine electoral integrity.

The Commission called on political leaders to focus on constructive engagement and preparation for the upcoming electoral process instead of engaging in what it termed "premature and irresponsible utterances."

> **In a press statement, the Commission said it had taken "grave concern" over recent utterances suggesting the use of extra-legal mechanisms to influence the outcome of the 2027 presidential election.**

IEBC also used the opportunity to encourage eligible Kenyans to participate in the ongoing Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise, which is being conducted at constituency offices, Huduma Centres and the IEBC Customer Care Centre at Anniversary Towers in Nairobi.

The electoral body urged citizens to take responsibility in strengthening democracy by ensuring they are registered and ready to participate in the 2027 General Election.

"The strength of Kenya's democracy depends on active citizen participation and respect for constitutional institutions," the Commission said.

IEBC reaffirmed its commitment to delivering a free, fair and credible election in accordance with Kenyan law and international best practice, assuring stakeholders of its independence and impartiality.

Chairperson Erastus Edung Ethekon, said the Commission remains focused on building public confidence and ensuring transparency in all electoral processes ahead of 2027.

The statement comes amid rising political rhetoric and competing narratives over the preparedness and integrity of the electoral system, with IEBC now seeking to reassure the public while warning against actions that could inflame tensions.

Politics The seat fell vacant under the weight of grief. Three-term MP David Njuguna Kiaraho died on March 29, 2026, at the age of 62

Ol Kalou candidates file nomination papers as July 16 poll takes shape

The submission of papers to the IEBC this week has transformed what began as a local by-election into the most closely watched political contest in the Mt Kenya region since the 2022 general election

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Candidates for the Ol Kalou parliamentary by-election submitted their nomination papers to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission at PCEA Hall in Ol Kalou yesterday and Wednesday, formalising a three-way race that has drawn in Kenya's most powerful political actors and recast a constituency by-election as a proxy war for the soul of Mt Kenya politics.

The IEBC scheduled the two-day clearance exercise on May 25 and 26, 2026, calling on all aspirants to ensure they met constitutional and statutory requirements before presenting their papers. Three candidates now stand cleared and ready for the campaign trail: Samuel Muchina Nyagah of President William Ruto's United Democratic Alliance, Sammy Kamau Ngotho of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party, and Engineer Wilson Kigwa, the flag bearer of former President Uhuru Kenyatta's Jubilee Party.

The seat fell vacant under the weight of grief. Three-term MP David Njuguna Kiaraho died on March 29, 2026, at the age of 62 while undergoing cancer treatment at the Nairobi Hospital. National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula formally declared the seat vacant on April 20, 2026, and the IEBC subsequently gazetted the by-election for July 16. Kiaraho, who had represented Ol Kalou under the Jubilee banner since 2013, leaves behind a constituency in Nyandarua County that his party is now scrambling to retain — against opponents who see his passing as the opening they have been waiting for.

The DCP candidate's journey to the nomination papers window is, in many respects, Gachagua's own story in microcosm. Sammy Ngotho is a former MCA who contested the Ol Kalou seat on a UDA ticket in the 2022 general election, finishing second to the late Kiaraho. He was subsequently appointed as a protocol officer in the office of Gachagua when the latter served as Deputy President — a posting that ended abruptly when Gachagua was impeached. His return to Ol Kalou, now under a different banner and with a different patron, carries a personal as well as a political charge.

Ngotho won the DCP primaries convincingly, garnering 12,957 votes against his closest challenger Paul Waiganjo's 4,978, in a field of nine aspirants that underscored the growing political significance of the contest in Nyandarua County. Gachagua, who had cancelled a planned trip to London to personally oversee the nominations, wasted no time in marking his man. "Congratulations, Sammy Kamau Ngotho, for winning the DCP party nominations and securing the position to be the party's parliamentary flag bearer in the forthcoming by-elections," he said when presenting Ngotho with the party certificate. "Our party, DCP, has faith in you and the people of Ol Kalou that we shall get a win in the July 16, 2026, by-elections."

Gachagua has made no secret of what this contest means beyond Nyandarua's borders. According to the DCP leader, a win for Ngotho would signal the erosion of UDA's grip on Mt Kenya — a region that Ruto swept comprehensively during the 2022 general election. He also directed a message to those who lost the primaries: "For those who did not make it, you are our true heroes — your place in the party is secure," urging them to rally behind Ngotho ahead of July 16.

On the UDA side, Samuel Muchina Nyagah secured the party ticket with 3,221 votes in a tightly contested race that attracted ten aspirants, narrowly defeating George Wambugu Kanuri who received 3,077 votes. The thin margin of his nomination victory has prompted questions about party unity heading into the main contest, with at least one defeated aspirant threatening to take his grievances to the party tribunal.

Jubilee's entry into the race has added a layer of complexity that neither UDA nor DCP initially welcomed. Engineer Wilson Kigwa now flies the party flag for a Jubilee organisation that described the contest as an opportunity to protect and advance the legacy of service and people-centred leadership associated with the late Kiaraho, who was himself a Jubilee MP. Gachagua had brushed aside requests by Jubilee to step aside and allow the party a cleaner run at retaining the seat, describing the contest instead as a "friendly match" between opposition parties. Jubilee Secretary-General Montalel Ole Kenta, for his part, assured supporters that the party's nomination process had been free, fair, and transparent, and that Kigwa would carry forward the late MP's unfinished work.

The IEBC has set strict timelines for the remainder of the process, with the campaign period running from May 25 to July 13, 2026, and nomination disputes to be resolved by June 5. People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua has also introduced a candidate, Ndirangu Martin Wambugu — popularly known as Tinga Tinga — further crowding a ballot that is already short of nothing in terms of political interest.

Analysts say the contest will provide the clearest indication yet of who commands the loyalty of the Mt Kenya electorate between Ruto and Gachagua — a question that has been debated in political circles since the impeachment, but has so far gone without a definitive answer at the ballot box.

On July 16, Ol Kalou will provide that answer — and Kenya will be listening very carefully.

President William Ruto and former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

DCP's Sammy Kamau returning paper to IEBC

UDA's Samuel Muchina Nyagah returning paper to IEBC

Tourism Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano said the performance reflects growing international confidence in Kenya as a preferred travel destination

Kenya Tourism earnings hit KSh500 billion in 2025

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's tourism sector recorded strong growth in 2025, generating nearly KSh500 billion in earnings as international arrivals rose sharply above the global average, according to the latest tourism performance report released by the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife.

The Kenya Tourism Sector Performance Report 2025 shows that the country received about 7.9 million tourists during the year, comprising 2.7 million international visitors and 5.2 million domestic travelers.

International arrivals increased by approximately nine per cent from 2.47 million visitors recorded in 2024, outperforming the global tourism growth average of four per cent.

Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano said the performance reflects growing international confidence in Kenya as a preferred travel destination.

According to the report, domestic tourism continued to play a critical role in sustaining the sector by cushioning it against external shocks and seasonal fluctuations.

Globally, the tourism industry continued its recovery in 2025 with international arrivals reaching an estimated 1.52 billion tourists, representing an increase of nearly 60 million compared to the previous year.

Africa emerged as the fastest-growing tourism region with an eight per cent growth rate, positioning Kenya to benefit from increased continental travel and regional connectivity.

The report indicates that Africa remained Kenya's leading source market, contributing 47 per cent of all international arrivals. Europe followed at 25 per cent while the Americas accounted for 14 per cent.

The United States retained its position as Kenya's top source market, followed by Uganda, Tanzania and the United Kingdom. The government also noted growing interest from emerging markets such as India and China.

Leisure travel remained the leading reason for visiting Kenya, accounting for 46 per cent of arrivals, followed by social visits at 20 per cent and business travel at 19 per cent.

Tourists in one of the Kenya's game parks.

The ministry attributed the growth to aggressive destination marketing, improved infrastructure, enhanced air connectivity, supportive government policies and diversification of tourism products.

Officials also cited the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) system as one of the measures that has improved visitor experience by simplifying travel procedures.

The government said it will continue investing in tourism competitiveness through the Magical Kenya campaign branded as the "Origin of Wonder," alongside investments in infrastructure, security, sustainability, innovation and skills development.

The ministry further acknowledged the role played by local communities, hospitality players and conservation stakeholders in supporting the industry's recovery and expansion.

Miano expressed appreciation to President William Ruto for supporting policies aimed at reviving and expanding the sector.

The government now hopes to build on the momentum to position tourism as a major driver of jobs, investment and inclusive economic growth across the country.

County "The books are expected to significantly improve access to quality learning materials in 436 ECDE centres across Tharaka Nithi County

Tharaka Nithi receives KSh3 million ECDE books donation from KLB

BY Alex Njeru
@themtkenyatimes

Tharaka Nithi County has received books worth KSh3 million from Kenya Literature Bureau in a move aimed at strengthening Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) across the county.

The donation, made under KLB's Corporate Social Responsibility programme, is part of a partnership between the county government and the publisher that was established in 2018.

Speaking during the handover ceremony, Tharaka Nithi County Chief Officer for Education, Vocational Training and Culture, Mr. Mwiti Mono, said a strong ECDE foundation is essential in shaping the future of children and the nation at large.

The consignment, comprising teacher guides and course books, was delivered by Mr. Francisco Gikundi on behalf of KLB Managing Director George Okeyo. The books are expected to improve access to quality learning materials in 436 ECDE centres across the county.

Mr. Mono noted that the county government had previously purchased books worth Ksh9 million from KLB as part of efforts to improve learning standards in ECDE centres. He added that the county also partnered with KLB in training ECDE teachers on the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to ensure learners receive quality education.

"A strong educational foundation in Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) is essential in shaping the future of every child and the nation at large." Said Mr Mono.

He said the collaboration has played a key role in enhancing teaching and learning outcomes for young learners in the county.

Tharaka Nithi County Chief Officer Education Mwiti Mono (left) receiving a donation of books from Kenya Literature Bureau official, Mr Francis Gikundi at Tharaka Nithi County headquarters in Kathwana. | *Photo:* Alex Njeru

"The books are expected to significantly improve access to quality learning materials in 436 ECDE centres across Tharaka Nithi County, thereby strengthening early childhood education and enhancing teaching and learning outcomes for young learners." Said the county official.

Mr. Gikundi lauded the long-standing partnership between the county government and KLB, assuring residents that the institution would continue supporting education programmes in the county.

He said KLB remains committed to working closely with county governments to promote access to quality educational resources and improve learning outcomes among children.

"KLB will continue to partner with the county government to strengthen education programmes and improve learning outcomes," said Gikundi

Politics Choromai would win if elections were held today with 42.1 per cent support, translating to 884 votes out of a sample size of 2,100

Choromai leads Kieni race in new Swiss poll as 2027 battle shapes up

BY WMW
@themtkenyatimes

A new opinion poll by Swiss Poll International has placed John Kariuki Choromai in the lead in the race for Kieni Constituency Member of Parliament, setting the stage for what is expected to be a closely watched contest ahead of the 2027 General Election.

According to the survey conducted across the constituency, Choromai would win if elections were held today with 42.1 per cent support, translating to 884 votes out of a sample size of 2,100. The poll carries a margin of error of ±3 per cent at a 95 per cent confidence level.

Former MP Kanini Kega followed with 29.1 per cent (610 votes), placing him second in the race. Other contenders include the incumbent, Njoroge Wainaina with 11.9 per cent (251 votes), Kelvin Kabue at 8.3 per cent (174 votes), and Newton Munene at 4.2 per cent (89 votes).

The poll also shows 2.8 per cent support for other candidates, while 1.6 per cent of respondents remain undecided.

The findings suggest that while Choromai currently enjoys a strong lead, a significant portion of the electorate is still open to persuasion, particularly with nearly 3 per cent undecided and more than 2 per cent supporting minor candidates.

Swiss Poll International noted that the contest remains dynamic, with voter preferences likely to shift as campaigns intensify, alliances form, and candidates roll out their policy agendas ahead of the 2027 polls.

Following the release of the survey results, Choromai issued a statement thanking residents of Kieni for what he termed "unwavering support," while pledging commitment to better service delivery if elected.

"I want to reiterate my assurances to you that I will dedicate myself to working for you and for the achievement of a better Kieni, a place I love dearly," he said.

He also urged supporters to begin preparing for the next election cycle, calling for unity and focus as the constituency looks ahead to the 2027 vote.

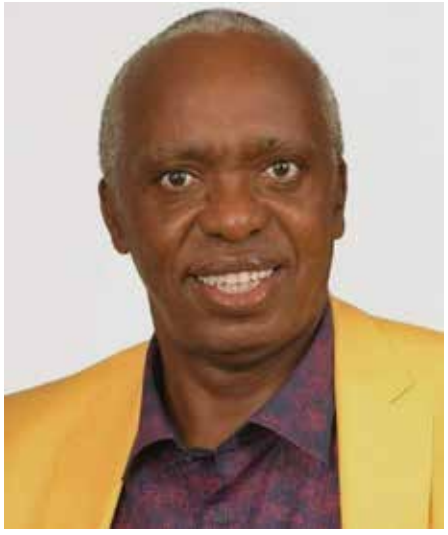
"I urge you to join me as we prepare to mark the ballots come August 2027. In everything we thank the Almighty God," he added.

Political observers note that early polls in competitive constituencies often serve as indicators of emerging political alignments, though they caution that voter behaviour in Kenya can change significantly closer to elections.

The Kieni race is expected to attract heightened political activity in the coming months as aspirants seek to consolidate support in a constituency known for its active voter participation and competitive political landscape.

Kanini Kega

John Kariuki Choromai


Njoroge Wainaina

PSC "Your responsibility is to cultivate a workplace that treats every intern with safety, respect and dignity." Stated Meja.

PSC issues strict warning over mistreatment of government interns

BY Hellen Lunalo
@themtkenyatimes

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has issued a stern warning to serving public officers against mistreating new graduate interns posted in their offices.

The Commission emphasized that any form of abuse within government institutions is a criminal offense that will carry severe consequences.

During a capacity-building workshop for Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) mentors and coaches in Naivasha yesterday, the Commission highlighted a troubling increase in intern mistreatment cases prompting the warning.

Speaking at the workshop, PSC Chairperson, Francis Meja, emphasized that supervisors were tasked with the responsibility of protecting and mentoring young graduates under their care, reminding them of their duty to actively safeguard the young graduates stationed in government offices rather than just overseeing their daily tasks.

"Mentors and coaches must serve as the primary shield for these graduates. Your responsibility is to cultivate a workplace that treats every intern with safety, respect and dignity." Stated Meja.

He further noted that physical, emotional, or sexual misconduct violates basic workplace ethics, betrays public trust and represents a punishable criminal act.

The Commission issued the warning after identifying a growing trend of intern mistreatment. The rise in cases has sparked concerns regarding the safety and well-being of young graduates participating in the premier programme.

PSC Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Paul Famba, urged mentors and coaches to fully embrace their responsibilities. He emphasized the need for supervisors to actively commit to the professional development of the interns placed under their guidance.

"These interns enter your institutions waiting for guidance and protection, and the quality of your mentorship is what stands between a shattered career and a successful future." Stated Famba.

The Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) is a government initiative that provides graduates with hands-on work experience, giving young professionals the chance to develop essential technical and career skills within the public sector. Successful applicants are stationed across government ministries and agencies, where they gain valuable experience through a one-year paid internship.

PSC team with mentors and coaches in Naivasha yesterday. | *Photo:* Courtesy.

Politics **"President Uhuru Kenyatta, we have heard you loud and clear," Mbarire said in the statement.**

UDA blasts Uhuru over leadership

BY Suleiman Mbatiah
@themtkenyatimes

The ruling United Democratic Alliance (UDA) yesterday launched a scathing attack on former President Uhuru Kenyatta, accusing him of refusing to accept President William Ruto's victory and deliberately working to undermine the Kenya Kwanza administration.

In a lengthy 12-page open letter, UDA accused Uhuru of bitterness, political sabotage, hypocrisy, and presiding over what the party described as one of the most dysfunctional administrations in Kenya's recent history.

The statement, signed by UDA Chairperson Cecily Mbarire and Secretary General Hassan Omar Hassan, defended Ruto's economic and development agenda while blaming the former president for the country's debt crisis, stalled projects, failing sectors, and rising public frustrations.

"President Uhuru Kenyatta, we have heard you loud and clear," Mbarire said in the statement. "Temper your intense bitterness, fierce jealousy, endless envy, and toxic obsession with William Ruto."

The ruling party said Uhuru had failed to come to terms with the outcome of the 2022 General Election despite Ruto securing victory after a fiercely contested presidential race against opposition leader Raila Odinga.

UDA claimed the former president had expected the country to collapse economically under Ruto's leadership after allegedly leaving behind deliberate financial sabotage intended to cripple the incoming administration.

The party further alleged that Uhuru's support for Raila Odinga during the 2022 election was part of a wider political plan designed to facilitate his eventual political return after a potential collapse of the Kenya Kwanza government.

The sharp response appeared to have been triggered by Uhuru's recent remarks criticising the Kenya Kwanza administration while insisting he had warned Kenyans during the 2022 campaigns about the direction the country would take under Ruto's leadership.

In a recent public appearance at a Jubilee party meeting in Kiambu, Uhuru faulted the government over the rising cost of living, economic hardship, governance concerns, and growing public frustration, remarks that have increasingly irritated senior UDA leaders and allies of the president.

UDA used the letter to mount a broad defence of Ruto's administration, arguing the president inherited a collapsing economy burdened by runaway debt, inflation, subsidy liabilities, and institutions weakened during Uhuru's tenure.

The party claimed Kenya had been dangerously close to default due to heavy borrowing and reckless financial management under the previous administration, adding that inflation had severely eroded public confidence and economic stability.

"William Ruto inherited the wreckage your administration left behind and stabilised the country," Mbarire said. "Kenya did not default despite the economic landmines you left behind."

UDA also accused Uhuru of crippling the agricultural sector, saying fertiliser prices rose sharply during his final years in office while sugar factories collapsed under corruption and delayed payments to farmers.

The party claimed coffee farmers suffered exploitation and poor returns during Uhuru's presidency but argued the Ruto administration had revived agriculture through fertiliser subsidies, improved crop prices, and renewed support for sugar factories.

On healthcare, UDA described the now-defunct National Hospital Insurance Fund as a corruption-ridden institution that accumulated massive debts while failing to deliver universal healthcare coverage promised under Uhuru's administration.

The ruling party defended the transition to the Social Health Authority, saying millions of Kenyans had already been onboarded into the new system while hospitals across the country continued receiving payments for services rendered.

UDA further blamed Uhuru for failures in the education sector, accusing his administration of introducing an unclear curriculum and presiding over financial crises in public universities that pushed several institutions close to insolvency.

The party argued the Ruto administration had streamlined the Competency Based Curriculum, recruited thousands of teachers, and introduced reforms intended to rescue struggling universities from financial distress.

The letter also defended Ruto's affordable housing programme, accusing Uhuru of abandoning the project despite initially promoting it under the Big Four Agenda during his presidency.

UDA said the current administration had accelerated housing construction across the country, creating jobs and stimulating local economies through ongoing projects in counties including Kiambu.

The ruling party additionally revisited stalled infrastructure projects initiated during Uhuru's tenure, particularly the Mau Summit Road and expansion of Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, accusing the former administration of delays, indecision, and endless public launches without implementation.

UDA claimed Ruto's administration had revived the stalled projects by unlocking financing arrangements and moving construction works forward after years of delays.

The party also criticised Uhuru over fuel prices and subsidy programmes, saying his administration left behind fuel shortages, massive subsidy debts, and long queues at petrol stations across the country.

UDA referenced controversial remarks Uhuru made during his presidency while responding to complaints about high fuel prices, arguing the former president had been dismissive of the economic pain experienced by ordinary Kenyans.

The letter defended Ruto's fuel and energy policies, saying the government was pursuing long-term energy security through investments in oil refining, renewable energy, electric mobility, and public transport systems.

UDA further accused Uhuru of abandoning the role expected of a retired statesman by allegedly fuelling political hostility and encouraging public anger against the current administration from behind the scenes.

"Since leaving office, you have dedicated yourself to undermining the very government you handed over," Hassan Omar said in the statement. "You operate from behind the scenes, mobilising political hostility and fuelling public anger."

The party accused Uhuru of exploiting frustrations among young people and attempting to turn public dissatisfaction into a political platform aimed at weakening the Kenya Kwanza administration ahead of the next election cycle.

UDA argued that instead of offering solutions or constructive criticism, the former president had resorted to political attacks while quietly hoping the current administration would fail.

The exchange marks the latest escalation in the political fallout between Ruto and Uhuru, whose once-close alliance collapsed dramatically before the 2022 elections after the former president endorsed Raila Odinga's presidential bid.

Since leaving office, Uhuru has increasingly criticised the Kenya Kwanza administration over governance, economic hardship, and political intolerance, while Ruto's allies continue blaming the former regime for many of Kenya's current economic challenges.

Uhuru Kenyatta

Hassan Omar

Cecily Mbarire

ORPP During the Malindi and Mombasa visits on May 24, Lorionokou commended regional teams for their professionalism, dedication and consistency

ORPP leadership engages field staff to strengthen service delivery

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) has launched a series of nationwide engagement visits with field-based staff aimed at strengthening decentralized services and improving stakeholder responsiveness across the country.

The leadership plenary, led by Registrar of Political Parties J.C. Lorionokou, has begun the consultative visits in various regions, including Malindi and Mombasa, as part of a structured programme running through May and June.

The initiative is intended to assess operational needs in regional offices, appreciate ongoing work by staff on the ground, and enhance coordination between headquarters and field stations in delivering services to political parties and other stakeholders.

During the Malindi and Mombasa visits on May 24, Lorionokou commended regional teams for their professionalism, dedication and consistency in service delivery, noting that field offices remain central to ORPP's mandate of ensuring effective political party regulation and engagement at the grassroots level.

He emphasized the need to further strengthen regional offices as key service hubs, saying the success of ORPP's mandate depends on efficient, well-resourced and responsive field operations.

"We will continue equipping and empowering field offices to effectively implement office activities across the country through established stakeholder engagement and communication standards," Lorionokou said.

Assistant Registrar CS Agatha also praised regional officers for maintaining operational standards and improving service delivery. She, however, underscored the importance of continuous resourcing and closer coordination between headquarters and regional offices to further enhance efficiency and institutional performance.

The engagement sessions also provide an opportunity for regional coordinators and staff to brief the leadership on operational milestones, challenges, and stakeholder engagement outcomes. The discussions are expected to inform reforms and improve service delivery within the institution.

According to ORPP, the visits are part of a broader institutional strategy to strengthen decentralization, improve accountability, and enhance responsiveness to political parties and other key stakeholders across all regions.

The delegation, accompanied by senior ORPP officials and regional coordinators, also conducted courtesy visits to various public entity stakeholders within the respective regions as part of ongoing relationship-building efforts.

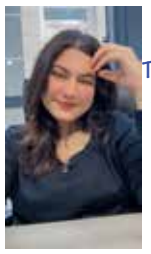
The Field Services Coordination Department, led by Joshua Ngala, is overseeing the nationwide exercise, ensuring structured engagement between headquarters and regional offices.

Registrar of political parties J. C. Lorionokou with other staff.

ORPP says the ongoing consultations will help align regional operations with national objectives, improve efficiency, and support long-term reforms aimed at strengthening political party governance and administrative support systems in the country.

The exercise is expected to continue in other regions in the coming weeks as part of ORPP's commitment to enhancing decentralized service delivery and institutional effectiveness.

The eternal melody of Radha & Krishna



Beneath the moon of Vrindavan bright,
Two souls became one in divine light.
No vows were spoken, no promises made,
Yet their sacred love shall never fade.

When Krishna's flute kissed the evening air,
Radha would find His presence there.
Each note He played, so tender and sweet,
Would guide her heart to His lotus feet.

The Yamuna danced with a silver gleam,
Reflecting the glow of their timeless dream.
The stars stood still in the velvet sky,
To witness a love that would never die.

Not bound by distance, nor touched by time,
Their hearts composed heaven's sweetest rhyme.
Though paths apart the world may see,
Their souls remained in eternity.

Radha was devotion, pure and deep,
A sacred promise the heavens keep.
Krishna was love in its highest art,
Forever residing in Radha's heart.

Even today when the flute notes rise,
Love awakens beneath the skies.
For where there is faith, and where hearts shine,
Radha and Krishna remain divine.

Their story whispers through every flower,
Of love beyond fate, beyond earthly power.
A bond so pure, no words can measure,
An endless ocean of heavenly treasure. ✨🌿💙

"Radha was Krishna's prayer, Krishna was Radha's song;
Though two names the world may utter, their love was always one."

©Dr. Daksha Udhani
Ahmedabad

Pause when it's heavy

When the mountain on your shoulders
Turns your footsteps slow and sore,
When the tired heart grows fragile
Beneath the fury of the storm.

It is okay to lay it down,
To rest beneath the sky,
Even rivers pause in silence
Before they onward glide.

You worked like dawn for others,
Giving warmth without a plea,
Till your hands became like branches
Bent beneath a burdened tree.

Some hearts cherish all your efforts,
Some pass by and never see,
Yet celestial light keep shining
Though unseen by the world below.

'Do your duty' ,whispers wisdom
'Leave the rest to God's
For the seed you sow with faith
Will still be watered by his love.

So when the weight grows far too heavy,
And your soul can bear no more,
Let God cradle all your weariness
And guide your heart to shore.

For a weary soul deserves peace,
Just as the earth deserves the rain,
And the hands that carried others
Need soft healing from the strain.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator Writer,Motivator,Freelancer

Every time you choose yourself, your future gets clearer

When you are waiting for the solution
Wait until the arrival of the better option.
Don't seek any guidance from anyone,
Nobody is ready to hear your pain.

You are the master of your path.
You can choose your way as you wish.
Then only the way takes you happily.
You can reach your destination wisely.

What ever you want , you can proceed with that
Then only you are satisfied!
Think yourself, ink the story on your way
You will get a clear story in your future.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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Every wait has its worth

"An IVF journey is never an easy path to walk,
The emotions carried within it are beyond words to explain.
Before stepping into this journey of hope,
One must prepare to be mentally, physically,
And emotionally strong.
Many spend most of their savings on this journey,
Often walking through difficult phases of life.
Yet they rarely worry about the financial burden,
Because all they truly desire
Is to hold a baby with hope in their arms.
They learn to live with injections, scans, and medicines,
Carrying courage beyond their fear.
Injections in the thighs, belly, and back
Become a part of their everyday battle.
They turn themselves strong like stone,
Even after shedding endless tears.
Sleepless nights, silent prayers,
And constant comments about fertility
Become part of their invisible wounds.
Throughout every retrieval and embryo transfer,
They undergo spinal anaesthesia and immense suffering.
The weight they carry is beyond imagination,
Yet they never allow themselves to lose faith.
During those fourteen days of waiting,
Every second feels like years in hell.
What they truly need is not financial support,
But emotional support filled with love and care.
Just a single sentence saying,
"Whatever happens, I will always be there for you.
Let us walk through this journey together
And face everything with positivity,"
Can heal a heart more than anything else.
Please respect the partners
Who are going through this journey.
Whether men or women,
All they truly need is support,
Not embarrassment, judgment, or hurtful words.
Just hold their hands and say,
"Yes, we are all with you."
Trust that God will never let them down,
Because every wait in life
Always carries its own worth."

BY
ZAHETHA R
BT ASST ENGLISH
GHS PAPPANTHANGAL
TVM DIST

Our life depends on four Ms

Our life depends on four important Ms:
Mind, Mouth, Mood, and Money.
Among them, the Mind comes first,
For when the mind is under control,
The other three follow naturally.

A pure mind leads us toward honesty.
When thoughts are clear and calm,Harsh words disappear,
And the mouth speaks with care and kindness.

Kind words soothe troubled hearts
And quietly build trust.
Whether we are joyful or sorrowful,
Our mood depends on
The thoughts we choose to hold.

Money is important for living,
But greed must never lead our way.
When the mind learns contentment,
Life becomes peaceful and meaningful.

When money is guided by values,
It supports life instead of controlling it.
With balance and wisdom,
Wealth becomes a blessing,
Never a burden.

Control the mind,
And the mouth speaks gently.
Guide the mood,
And life remains steady
Use money wisely,
And life stays simple and happy.

When these four Ms live in harmony,
Life flows with peace, purpose, and grace.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
PUMS Konganancherry
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Tamil Nadu India

The night sky

The night sky is very beautiful.
I can see the moon and many stars.
The stars shine like tiny diamonds.
Sometimes I see clouds moving slowly.
The cool wind makes me happy.
I like to watch the sky with my family.
The moon gives soft white light.
Some stars look bright and big.
The night sky feels calm and peaceful.
I love the beautiful night sky.

Yasir Shihan
VII std
GHS Sakkarakkottai
RAMANATHAPURAM district
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Tree The exercise attracted enthusiastic participation from learners and teachers, who joined the team in planting the trees across the institution

Dedan Kimathi Foundation delivers 2,000 tree seedlings to Mau region school

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Dedan Kimathi Foundation team and Siwot School fraternity on Monday. | *Photo:* Courtesy.

The Dedan Kimathi Foundation has intensified its environmental conservation efforts after delivering 2,000 cypress tree seedlings to Siwot Comprehensive School near the Mau Forest Complex, in fulfillment of a pledge made during the launch of the Mau Forest Complex Integrated Conservation and Livelihoods Improvement Programme (MFC ICLIP).

The programme, spearheaded by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry through the State Department for Environment and Climate Change, seeks to restore degraded sections of the Mau Forest while promoting sustainable livelihoods among surrounding communities.

During the launch event led by Principal Secretary Eng. Festus Ngeno recently the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer Ms. Evelyn Kimathi pledged support to the school through donation of cypress and Hass avocado seedlings aimed at promoting environmental conservation and income generation.

On Monday, the Foundation's environmental conservation team visited the school carrying the promised seedlings from the organisation's central tree nursery in Nyandarua County. The exercise attracted enthusiastic participation from learners and teachers, who joined the team in planting the trees across the institution.

Speaking during the exercise, teachers at the school welcomed the initiative, noting that cypress trees mature fast and could eventually provide timber and firewood, while also supporting future school development projects through commercial use.

Learners also expressed excitement after learning the environmental and economic importance of tree growing. Many cited firewood as a major household need in communities neighbouring the Mau Forest Complex, where dependence on forest resources remains high.

Each learner adopted several seedlings to nurture during their time in school, a move the Foundation said would help instill long-term environmental responsibility among young people.

Leading the exercise, the foundation team leader Dickson Maina urged both teachers and learners to ensure proper care of the trees to guarantee high survival rates.

He further encouraged students to plant trees at their homes to help reduce pressure on the Mau Forest Complex, one of Kenya's most important water towers.

Environmental experts have repeatedly warned that continued destruction of the Mau ecosystem threatens water catchment areas, biodiversity and climate stability in the region. Conservation initiatives involving schools and local communities are increasingly being viewed as critical in restoring the forest and reducing overreliance on natural resources.

The Foundation also announced that about 220 Hass avocado seedlings promised to the institution will be delivered and planted once they mature in the organisation's nurseries.

The tree planting exercise forms part of broader national efforts to increase forest cover and strengthen climate resilience through community-driven conservation programmes.

Fuel According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the country earned about *KSh1.8 billion ($14 million)* from the export of 324,000 barrels of crude oil

Questions mount over Kenya's crude oil revenues amid rising pump prices

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Kenyans are increasingly questioning why fuel prices remain among the highest in East Africa despite the country exporting crude oil since 2019, with growing frustration over the rising cost of living fueling accusations of economic mismanagement, excessive taxation and lack of transparency in the oil sector.

The debate has intensified following regional fuel price comparisons that show motorists in Kenya paying significantly more for petrol than consumers in neighboring countries such as Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi, even though those countries do not produce crude oil and rely heavily on imports routed through Kenya.

Critics argue that ordinary citizens have seen little benefit from Kenya's entry into the oil-exporting market, years after the government celebrated the country's first crude oil shipment from Turkana under the Early Oil Pilot Scheme in 2019.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the country earned about *KSh1.8 billion ($14 million)* from the export of 324,000 barrels of crude oil from Turkana oilfields under the pilot project.

The Early Oil Pilot Scheme, operated at the Ngamia and Amosi fields, was launched in June 2018 through a partnership between the Kenyan government and exploration firms Tullow Oil, TotalEnergies and Africa Oil Corp. The project involved transporting crude oil by road from Turkana County to the port city of Mombasa for export.

The administration of former President Uhuru Kenyatta said the pilot scheme was designed to test reservoir flow assurance ahead of full-scale commercial production. Kenya officially began exporting crude oil through Mombasa in August 2019, with the inaugural shipment of 200,000 barrels purchased by ChemChina UK Ltd for an estimated *KSh1.55 billion ($12 million)*.

Tanker trucks haul the crude oil from Turkana to Mombasa for export. | *Photo:Courtesy*

Dr. Isaac Newton Kinity, a counselor and human rights activist, accused the government of failing to provide transparency and accountability over how revenues generated from Kenya's crude oil exports are being managed and whether ordinary citizens are benefiting from the sector.

"It is perturbing, disturbing and annoying to see Kenya's system of administration raising the prices of fuel to unbearable levels, whereas the neighbouring countries Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi are selling their petrol at very cheap prices. Kenya has got oil," Kinity said.

Kenya's first crude oil export in 2019 was widely viewed as a milestone for the country's energy ambitions. However, the project immediately raised questions over revenue sharing between the national government and local communities in Turkana, concerns that continue to linger years later.

In March 2019, President Kenyatta signed the Petroleum Act 2019 into law, providing a legal framework for revenue sharing from oil resources. Under the law, 75 percent of state-designated oil revenue goes to the national government, 20 percent to oil-producing counties and five percent to local communities.

Kinity, who is also the chairman of the Kikimo Foundation for Corruption and Poverty Eradication, claimed there was little public information about the amount of crude oil being exported or the revenues generated from the sector.

"In 2019, Kenya shipped its first batch of crude oil outside Kenya. No one understands how much oil is sold weekly, monthly or annually. This has been kept as a secret of those looters of public funds in Kenya," he said.

Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics showed production under the pilot scheme increased steadily, with daily transportation volumes rising from 600 barrels per day to about 2,000 barrels per day during the review period.

However, operations later faced major setbacks. In January 2020, Tullow Oil suspended transportation of crude oil from Turkana to Mombasa after heavy rains severely damaged roads used by trucks ferrying the oil. During the operation, the company relied on more than 100 tankers transporting approximately 2,000 barrels daily across a distance of more than 1,000 kilometres.

The suspension significantly reduced the government's chances of achieving its annual shipment target of 500,000 barrels before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted global markets and logistics.

The criticism comes at a time when Kenyan households are struggling with higher taxes, increased transport costs and elevated prices of basic commodities, pressures that many economists link to inflation, public debt obligations and a weakening shilling.

Dr. Isaac Newton Kinity

Energy analysts note that while Kenya exports crude oil, the country still imports most of its refined petroleum products because it lacks adequate refining capacity. As a result, local pump prices remain heavily influenced by global oil prices, exchange rate fluctuations, shipping costs and government-imposed taxes and levies.

Fuel prices in Kenya include multiple charges such as the Road Maintenance Levy, Petroleum Development Levy and Value Added Tax, all of which contribute significantly to the final retail price paid by consumers.

Economists also point out that neighboring countries may maintain lower pump prices through different tax regimes, subsidies or state pricing interventions despite not producing oil locally.

Even so, the issue has become increasingly political, with critics insisting that Kenya's status as an oil exporter should translate into at least some relief for consumers burdened by a high cost of living.

Kinity further called on the administration of President William Ruto to publicly disclose how Kenya's oil resources and revenues are being managed, saying citizens deserve transparency on the country's crude oil exports and the benefits generated from the sector.

"A country with oil like Kenya should have the cheapest prices of oil. The administration of William Ruto has got to explain to Kenyans what is going on about the oil that is being excavated in Kenya and whose first batch of crude oil was sold outside Kenya in 2019," he said.

Future They had goats tied to trees, cows that defined wealth, and keys — actual keys — to doors they could call their own.

The generation that owns memories but not futures

At 25, we hold photographs like property deeds in a world that denied us everything else

By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
mukphix@gmail.com

There is something quietly devastating about being 25 in this era. It is not loud like poverty used to be — not always visible like hunger or homelessness. It is subtle. It hides behind filtered smiles, curated timelines, and captions that declare "living my best life" while something deeper whispers: but what do I truly own?

At 25, our parents had land. Small plots carved out of sweat and sacrifice. They had goats tied to trees, cows that defined wealth, and keys — actual keys — to doors they could call their own. Ownership was tangible. It had weight, smell, and presence. You could touch it, defend it, pass it down to children who would one day do the same. The generational contract was simple and legible: work hard, accumulate, transfer. The ladder existed, and though its rungs were worn, they held.

That ladder has since collapsed beneath us, and most of us did not even hear it fall. We were too busy studying, training, hustling, and believing — as we had been told to believe — that effort would be rewarded, that the system was imperfect but basically fair, that our turn would come. We did everything right. We stayed in school. We played by the rules. We dared to dream with specificity, sketching futures in notebooks and announcing them to relatives at family gatherings with the quiet confidence of those who have no reason to doubt themselves yet.

But today, at 25, many of us own nothing that breathes, nothing that grows, nothing that gains value with time. What we own instead are photographs — thousands of them. Frozen smiles from school competitions, captured moments of glory on dusty fields, worn jerseys on bodies that still believed life would open its doors as easily as a goalpost invites a shot.

The generation that owns memories but not futures

Those pictures have become our most consistent assets. They are our certificates of what could have been. We scroll through them like landlords revisiting territories we once ruled — territories that felt, at the time, like rehearsals for something greater. In those frames, we were champions, captains, dreamers with direction. Life had structure: training sessions, match days, applause, recognition. There was identity. There was purpose. There was a future that felt almost guaranteed, close enough to touch.

Outside those frames, the world shifted. Employment became a maze with no clear entrance and too many dead ends. Degrees multiplied while opportunities shrank. Entire industries automated themselves while we were still in lecture halls being prepared for jobs that no longer existed in the form we had been promised. Experience was demanded from people who had never been given the chance to gain it — a catch-22 so commonplace it has stopped striking anyone as absurd. Internships replaced salaries. Gig work replaced careers. The language of the labour market rebranded precarity as "flexibility" and called it progress.

And slowly, painfully, the transition from promise to uncertainty began. The same hands that once lifted trophies now clutch CVs that return unanswered. The same voices that once commanded teammates, directed plays, and led chants now lower themselves in interview rooms, carefully calibrating tone, adjusting vocabulary, performing enthusiasm for roles that barely cover rent. The same minds that once solved problems instinctively on the field now spend hours crafting cover letters for positions that have already been quietly earmarked for someone else's cousin.

It is a cruel irony — to have invested your entire youth in building potential, only to arrive at adulthood and find that potential has no buyer. To have been celebrated for promise and then punished for circumstance. To have done, in every measurable sense, what was asked of you, and still find yourself standing outside a door that will not open.

So we hold onto what we can. And what we can hold onto are memories. Photographs become proof that we were once something — that we once belonged somewhere, that we once mattered in ways that required no validation from a job offer or a bank balance. We share them on anniversaries of old victories. We tag old teammates across distances that once seemed impossible. We use them to remind ourselves, and each other, that the people we are now contain the people we used to be, and that those people were worth something.

But even that ownership is bittersweet, because a photograph does not feed you. It does not shelter you. It does not settle your rent or silence the anxiety that arrives at the end of each month with clockwork cruelty. It does not build you a home or secure your tomorrow. It only reminds you, again and again, of a time when you believed those things were inevitable — when the future felt like a destination you were already moving toward, not a country that kept denying you a visa.

This generation is not lazy. It is not entitled. It is not ungrateful or unwilling. It is tired. Tired of being told to "be patient" in a world that moves forward without them. Tired of being asked to "start small" when even the smallest opportunities are rationed and competitive and contingent on connections most of us were never born into. Tired of watching others inherit what they were told to earn. Tired of the gap between the world as it was described to them in classrooms and the world as it actually operates — transactional, hierarchical, indifferent to merit without access.

And perhaps most painfully, tired of pretending that everything is fine — because it is not fine to reach 25 and discover that your most valuable possessions are digital fragments of a past that no longer exists in any physical, transferable, or meaningful form. It is not fine that survival has displaced ambition as the primary daily objective. It is not fine that an entire generation has been handed smartphones instead of opportunities and told to be grateful for the connectivity.

Yet somehow, we keep going. We wake up. We try again. We send applications into silence and chase opportunities that feel like shadows moving just beyond reach. We encourage each other in group chats at midnight. We celebrate small wins with the same energy our parents reserved for major milestones, because we have learned to find dignity in the incremental. We smile for new photographs, even when the old ones still sting — adding new frames to a gallery that keeps growing, even as the world outside it refuses to.

We keep hoping — because hope, unlike property, cannot be repossessed. It cannot be auctioned, inherited by someone more connected, or transferred beyond our reach by a system that was never truly designed with us in mind.

And perhaps hope is the last thing we truly own. Hope that one day ownership will mean more than memories. Hope that our names will be attached to something real — something built with our own hands, earned through our own persistence, lasting beyond our own lifetimes. Hope that the world will eventually make room for us, not as spectators of success, but as full and equal participants in it. Hope that the generation coming behind us will inherit a ladder that has been repaired, its rungs reinforced, its height made achievable.

Until then, we remain a generation suspended between who we were and who we are still fighting to become — holding tightly to photographs, not because they are enough, but because, for now, they are all we have.

Digital The smartphone once celebrated as a revolutionary communication tool, has evolved into a powerful social force shaping attitudes, behaviours...

The digital society and the sociological dilemma of the smartphone age

BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themtkenyatimes

There was a time when homes in Kenya echoed with conversation. Evenings were defined by storytelling around fireplaces, neighbours visited each other without appointments, children invented games in dusty paths, and families shared meals while exchanging thoughts about life, school, work and society. Human interaction was physical, emotional, and immediate. Communities grew not merely from geography, but from constant social engagement and shared cultural experiences.

Today, however, a silent transformation has taken place. The modern family may sit together in the same room while emotionally existing completely qin different worlds. Children are glued to smart phones screens watching endless streams of digital content. Parents spend hours scrolling through social media timelines, chasing trends, political arguments, entertainment, or validation form strangers online. Friends meet physically only to spend most of their time looking down at their devices. The digital space has not merely entered society; it has become society itself.

The smartphone once celebrated as a revolutionary communication tool, has evolved into a powerful social force shaping attitudes, behaviours, relationships, morals, politics and even personal identity. In modern Kenya, digital platforms increasingly influence how people speak, dress, relate, vote, think, worship, love and perceive success. A generation is emerging whose worldview is no longer primarily shaped by parents, teachers, religious institutions, or communities, bur by algorithmic influencers and viral content.

This transformation presents one of the greatest sociological dilemmas of modern age. On one hand the digital revolution has undeniably empowered the society. Never before in human history has information been so accessible. A student in rural Kenya can now attend online lessons, learn foreign languages, acquire technical skills, and access educational resources previously reserved for the elite institutions. Young entrepreneurs market products online with little capital. Artists, journalists, activists, and innovators can reach global audience through a single smartphone. Mobile money innovations have transformed commerce and financial access, making Kenya one of the most digitally integrated societies in Africa.

Smartphone age

Digital space has also democratized public discourse. Citizens can now question leaders directly, expose corruption instantly, mobilize social movements, and participate in governance discussions without relying entirely on traditional media institution. During emergencies and national crises, information spreads rapidly, often saving lives and coordinating support more effectively than older communication systems. Yet beneath these undeniable benefits lies a growing social crisis that society is only beginning to understand.

The modern digital environment has altered human behaviour in ways that challenge the very foundation of social life. Sociologically, human beings are communal creatures whose emotional stability, moral development, and social identity are build through real human interaction. Traditional African societies especially depended heavily on communal structures, interpersonal relationships, and collective moral guidance. Elders shaped values, families nurtured identities and communities provided emotional belonging. The digital age has gradually weakened these structures.

Today many children are growing up emotionally attached to devices more than babysitter, teacher, entertainer, and companion. Parents struggling with economic pressure and modern lifestyles increasingly rely on screens to occupy children, often unknowingly surrendering moral and psychological influence to the internet. As a result, children are exposed prematurely to violence, vulgarity, hypersexualized content, misinformation and unrealistic lifestyles before they develop the emotional maturity to process such influences.

The consequences are becoming rapidly visible as attention spans shrink, declining reading culture, patience is weakening, face-to-face communication skills deteriorating. Many young people struggle with prolonged concentration because their mindsets are conditioned for short, rapid bursts of stimulation from social media videos and notifications. Silence itself has become uncomfortable for a generation constantly seeking digital stimulation.

The sociological dilemma emerges from the contradiction that while technology claims to connect humanity, society appears increasingly emotionally disconnected. Families communicate less despite being constantly online. Loneliness and mental health challenges are rising in an era of permanent connectivity. Young people compare their ordinary lives to carefully edited digital lifestyles, leading to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and emotional dissatisfaction. Validation is increasingly measured through likes, followers, and online approval rather than genuine human relationship or personal growth.

In Kenya's urban areas especially, a new culture of digital performance has emerged. Many individuals no longer simply live life; they perform life for social media. Experiences are increasingly measured not by emotional meaning but by their ability to generate online attention. Relationships are displayed publicly for validation, success is exaggerated for perception, and even is sometimes commercialized for sympathy and engagement. This creates another dangerous sociological contradiction; erosion of authenticity.

The digital environment rewards visibly more than integrity, attention more than substance and validity more than wisdom. As a result, society increasingly elevates influencers over intellectuals, trends over values, and online popularity over character. Many young people now aspire to instant fame rather than meaningful contribution. Hard work, patience, and long-term discipline often appear less attractive than the illusion of quick success projected online.

The internet has exposed society to global cultures without corresponding moral filters or cultural preparation. Vulgarity, cyberbullying, online fraud, gambling culture, public humiliation, and reckless lifestyles are often glamorized online. The greatest danger is in silent normalization of digital dependency as many people become deeply controlled emotionally, in attention, and daily routines. As technology remains one of humanity's greatest achievements, challenge lies in the society's inability to establish healthy boundaries around its use.

Families must intentionally rebuild human connection and reclaim their respective roles as primary moral mentors instead of outsourcing emotional upbringing to screens. Schools must teach digital ethics alongside digital literacy and churches, communities and policy makers must confront the psychological and moral implications of unchecked digital exposure. The smartphone has given humanity extraordinary power, but it has also introduced a silent sociological crisis; a world where people are increasingly connected digitally while becoming disconnected emotionally, culturally and psychologically. While embracing technology, we must strive to preserve human identity, relationships, morality, and social stability within an increasingly virtual civilization.

Zimbabwe Mbizo constituency MP Corban Madzivanyika has been among the most vocal opponents, and his language has been unsparing

Zimbabwe's constitutional coup: the fight to stop the 2030 agenda

Opposition forces, lawyers, and civil society have united to resist a sweeping constitutional bill that would extend President Mnangagwa's rule by two years and strip Zimbabweans of the right to directly elect their president

BY Norman Mwale
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Zimbabwe's cabinet approved Constitutional Amendment Bill No. 3 in February 2026, triggering the most serious constitutional crisis the country has faced since the fall of Robert Mugabe, as opposition politicians, legal scholars, war veterans, and civil society organisations mobilise to block legislation that would extend President Emmerson Mnangagwa's rule to 2030.

The bill, gazetted by the Speaker of Parliament on 16 February 2026, proposes extending presidential and parliamentary terms from five to seven years — effectively prolonging Mnangagwa's tenure until 2030 — while replacing direct presidential elections with parliamentary selection of the president and consolidating executive control over key state institutions. It is, critics argue, nothing less than a rewriting of the democratic contract between the government and the governed.

Mbizo constituency MP Corban Madzivanyika has been among the most vocal opponents, and his language has been unsparing. "I strongly condemn the proposed Bill, which threatens to undermine Zimbabwe's democracy and entrench authoritarian rule," he told the Masvingo Mirror. "The amendments are a blatant attempt by President Mnangagwa to extend his grip on power, disregarding the will of the people and the country's constitutional integrity." Madzivanyika went further, alleging that the bill was designed not for the public good but to benefit, in his words, "criminals around President Mnangagwa." He

Mbizo constituency MP Corban Madzivanyika

warned that extending presidential terms from five to seven years would not be the end of it — that those in power, once emboldened, might be tempted to delay elections indefinitely.

The roots of the crisis stretch back to October 2024. At its 21st National People's Conference in Bulawayo, ZANU-PF passed Resolution Number One, calling for Mnangagwa's term to be extended beyond 2028 to 2030, and directed the party and government to begin amending the Constitution accordingly. At the party's 22nd Annual Conference in Mutare a year later, ZANU-PF reaffirmed the resolution, directing the Ministry of Justice to fast-track the necessary constitutional amendments by October 2026. Mnangagwa, who has previously described himself as a "constitutionalist" with no interest in clinging to power, has nonetheless made public statements indicating he expects to remain in office until 2030.

A cabinet statement presented by Justice Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi said the amendments would "enhance political stability and policy continuity to allow development programmes to be implemented to completion." Ziyambi has maintained that the bill does not require a national referendum, arguing it does not touch the term-limit provisions of Section 91 of the Constitution. "We are not touching Section 91 of the Constitution but rather we are extending the electoral cycle," he said when addressing the media in Harare.

That argument has been met with scorn by constitutional lawyers and opposition politicians alike. "Any amendment which has the 'effect' of extending an incumbent's tenure should be subjected to a referendum," said opposition politician David Coltart. "They know that if that happens, they will fail, so they will do all in their power to prevent a referendum from happening." Constitutional analyst Justice Mavedzenge has described the bill as an attempt by the president to extend his time in office, further noting that Mnangagwa himself chaired the cabinet meeting that approved it.

The opposition has responded with uncommon unity. Opposition leaders, constitutional lawyers, and human rights activists launched the Defend the Constitution Platform in January 2026, convened by opposition politician Jameson Timba. Timba has insisted that only a referendum can legitimately decide on constitutional changes of this magnitude: "Zimbabwe is ruled by law, not party resolutions," he said. In March 2026, the platform launched a national petition campaign entitled "One Million Voices for the Constitution", aimed at gathering one million signatures demanding that any amendment be put to a popular vote.

By April 2026, the Defend the Constitution Platform, the Constitutional Defenders Forum, and the National Constitutional Assembly had jointly withdrawn from the government's public hearings, citing violence, intimidation, and what they described as a stage-managed process. At a press conference in Harare, Jameson Timba, Tendai Biti, and Lovemore Madhuku announced a separate citizen-driven consultation as an alternative.

The repression has been real. Human Rights Watch documented at least seven incidents targeting student leaders during the public consultation period, including harassment, abduction, and arbitrary detention of those opposing the amendment. On April 14, police arrested former Zimbabwe National Students Union president Emmanuel Sitima on charges linked to anti-amendment materials — including "No to 2030" flyers — with bail denied. ZINASU has described the bill as a "constitutional coup."

The Constitution imposes a strict two-term limit on presidents. Section 91(2) disqualifies anyone who has already served two terms from seeking re-election, while Section 328(7) prevents a sitting president from benefiting from any constitutional amendments to term limits. It is precisely these provisions that critics say the government is attempting to circumvent.

The bill has drawn opposition from church leaders, the Law Society of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, and civil society organisations broadly — many of whom argue that a referendum is constitutionally required.

Gift Ostalos Siziba, speaking for a broad coalition of opposition voices, captured the gravity of the moment: "Zimbabweans must now convene. It is clear that the current push by ZANU-PF to amputate the Constitution demands collective vigilance and a firm defence of our democratic gains. Silence is not an option when the supreme law of the land is at stake."

ZANU-PF holds a two-thirds parliamentary majority and overwhelmingly controls the upper house, giving it the raw numbers to pass the bill without a referendum — if it chooses to push through regardless of public opposition. The question now is not merely legal but moral: whether a government that came to power promising a new Zimbabwe will use that power to foreclose the possibility of ever being voted out.

In Harare, in Kwekwe, and in the courts, the people of Zimbabwe are answering that question one signature, one protest, and one lawsuit at a time.

South African **"Almost all political parties met the deadline, except the ANC, which indicated that it would submit its names over the weekend," said the statement.**

South African parliament announces 31-member impeachment committee on Ramaphosa's Phala Phala case

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

President Cyril Ramaphosa addressing the public in the past. | *Photo:* Courtesy

South Africa's National Assembly has announced the formation of a 31-member committee to investigate possible impeachment proceedings linked to President Cyril Ramaphosa over the Phala Phala farm incident.

According to a statement issued by the National Assembly, the committee comprises 31 members nominated by 16 political parties in proportion to their parliamentary representation. Two smaller parties, GOOD and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, indicated they would not participate, citing limited parliamentary representation and executive responsibilities of their sole members of parliament. The African National Congress (ANC) holds nine seats on the committee, followed by the Democratic Alliance (DA) with five, the uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) Party with three, and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) with two. Smaller parties, including the Inkatha Freedom Party, Patriotic Alliance, Freedom Front Plus, Action SA, African Christian Democratic Party, United Democratic Movement, Rise Mzansi, Build One South Africa (BOSA), African Transformation Movement, Al-Jama-ah, National Colored Congress and United Africans Transformation, each hold one seat.

"The deadline for the submission of names by political parties was Friday. Almost all political parties met the deadline, except the ANC, which indicated that it would submit its names over the weekend," said the statement.

The ANC submitted nominees later than other parties, naming nine members and one alternate representative, including Dorries Eunice Mpapane, the chairperson of the Committee on the Presidency.

Other prominent members appointed to the committee include EFF leader Julius Malema, DA member of parliament Glynnis Breytenbach, MK Party member of parliament John Hlophe and BOSA leader Mmusi Maimane. In an earlier statement issued on May 13, National Assembly Speaker Thoko Didiza said that the composition of the committee reflects both proportional representation and inclusivity to ensure participation of smaller parties. The ad hoc committee will assess whether there are grounds under Section 89 of the Constitution to initiate impeachment proceedings against the president and will submit recommendations to the National Assembly after completing its inquiry.

The process follows a May 8 Constitutional Court ruling that the country's parliament acted unconstitutionally when it rejected an independent panel report on the Phala Phala matter involving Ramaphosa.

Following the ruling, Ramaphosa on May 11 addressed the nation, saying that he accepted and respected the ruling, reaffirming his firm commitment to the constitution, the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law, while denying wrongdoing.

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The Phala Phala case stems from an alleged theft of about 580,000 U.S. dollars from Ramaphosa's private game farm in Limpopo Province in 2020, which later sparked public controversy over whether the funds were properly declared and reported to authorities.

An independent panel, chaired by former Constitutional Court judge Sandile Ngcobo, found prima facie evidence suggesting possible constitutional and legal breaches, including possible failures to declare foreign currency earnings, involvement in private business activities, failure to report the burglary to authorities and alleged improper conduct during subsequent investigations.

In December 2022, the National Assembly, where the ruling ANC commanded a majority, voted against proceeding with impeachment. The EFF and other opposition parties subsequently challenged the decision at the Constitutional Court.

Under South Africa's constitution, impeachment requires a two-thirds majority in the 400-member National Assembly. Analysts say that while the case continues to exert political pressure on Ramaphosa, the governing ANC and its coalition partners still retain sufficient parliamentary strength, making impeachment unlikely in the near term. However, it is expected to further intensify internal political dynamics within the party and may influence coalition stability and upcoming local elections.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kenya's 9,000 engineers are building the future — if policymakers will listen

The Institution of Engineers of Kenya is reshaping infrastructure, energy, and cities, but its impact depends on government partnership

BY David Nyaga
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The Institution of Engineers of Kenya, representing more than 9,000 professionals, is driving the country's transformation across renewable energy, affordable housing, and digital infrastructure — and calling on policymakers to match its ambition.

Engineering in Kenya has moved far beyond the laying of concrete and the erection of steel frames. As the national Affordable Housing Programme scales to meet the demands of a rapidly urbanising population, IEK members are championing engineered timber as a structurally sound, carbon-negative alternative to conventional materials. The proposition is as practical as it is bold: that environmental conservation and mass urban development need not be in conflict, provided engineers are given the standards and the mandate to act.

On energy, Kenya already commands global respect. The country runs one of the highest proportions of green power on any national grid in the world, and it is IEK-affiliated engineers who have expanded the Olkaria Geothermal Plant in the Rift Valley and optimised the Lake Turkana Wind Power Project — the largest of its kind on the continent. The institution's reach, however, extends beyond Kenya's borders. The technical frameworks its members develop are increasingly being adopted by other developing economies seeking to decarbonise their infrastructure.

The frontier of smart cities presents the next defining challenge. At Konza Technopolis, civil engineers and digital infrastructure specialists are laying the groundwork for urban environments designed to communicate, adapt, and scale with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The IEK has positioned itself at the centre of that conversation, advocating for policy frameworks that embed intelligence into civic planning from the foundation up, not as an afterthought.

Perhaps the institution's most consequential — and least celebrated — contribution is to human capital. By pushing for mandatory internships for graduate engineers and mentoring young professionals into major national projects, the IEK is closing the gap between academic theory and on-site execution. In a continent where the median age is under 20, that pipeline is not a peripheral concern; it is a strategic imperative.

The institution is not simply regulating a profession. It is, quietly and methodically, designing the country's future. The only variable is whether those in power are paying close enough attention to follow the blueprint.

A nation in concern: the rising tide of crimes against children

Kenya's children are being abducted, assaulted, and killed at an alarming rate — and the response remains dangerously inadequate

BY Gael Agira
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Cases of child abduction, rape, and murder are rising across Kenya, triggering alarm among parents, human rights organisations, and security agencies as communities demand urgent government action.

The incidents span both urban centres and rural villages, dismantling any illusion that this is a localised problem. Children have vanished from homes, schools, and neighbourhoods, only to be found injured, traumatised, or dead. The pattern is consistent and the geography is wide. Child protection agencies attribute the surge to a convergence of factors: deepening poverty, rampant drug abuse, collapsing community safety networks, and the growing menace of online exploitation targeting minors.

Hospitals and rescue centres are bearing the weight of this crisis in the most visceral terms, recording a steady rise in children seeking medical and psychological care following sexual violence. The damage is rarely confined to the immediate incident. Experts warn of long-term trauma, chronic fear, and emotional distress that fracture educational prospects and permanently alter the arc of a child's life. Abduction cases compound the picture further, with children kidnapped for ransom or trafficked into forced labour and sexual exploitation — crimes that frequently go unpunished and underreported.

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations has intensified rescue operations, and authorities have pledged to strengthen child protection legislation and tighten security around schools and residential areas. But affected families are not satisfied with pledges. They want prosecutions. They want perpetrators brought to account swiftly, not lost in the slow machinery of an overstretched justice system. The gap between government assurances and lived reality remains vast, and it is children who are paying the price.

Religious leaders, educators, and civil society organisations are filling some of that gap — running awareness campaigns, training communities to recognise and report suspicious behaviour, and pushing back against the culture of silence that allows abuse to persist. Parents and guardians are being urged to maintain open dialogue with their children, teach personal safety, and remain alert to the early signs of abuse. These are necessary measures. They are not sufficient ones.

Protecting children cannot be outsourced to parents alone, nor delegated entirely to an overstretched police service. It demands coordinated, adequately funded action across the DCI, children's services departments, community policing structures, schools, and civil society — operating not in silos but in deliberate partnership. Kenya has the frameworks on paper. What it lacks is the political will and institutional urgency to enforce them with consistency.

Every child lost to violence is a failure of the collective — a signal that the systems built to protect the most vulnerable among us have been allowed to decay. Kenya can no longer afford to treat this crisis as background noise.

The children of this nation are not a statistic. They are a verdict on the kind of society we have chosen to be.

Sports >> *The reigning European champions name a 26-man squad built around Barcelona — and entirely without Los Blancos

De la Fuente's bold call: Spain goes to the World Cup without Real Madrid

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente.

By **Norman Mwale**

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente named a 26-man World Cup squad on Monday that contains no Real Madrid players — an unprecedented omission as the reigning European champions prepare to pursue football's biggest prize in the United States, Mexico, and Canada this summer.

Defenders Dean Huijsen and Dani Carvajal were among the Real Madrid names to miss out, leaving the club without a single representative in a Spanish squad chasing a second World Cup title since their 2010 triumph in South Africa. The announcement, made at a formal event in Madrid, immediately ignited debate across the footballing world — and De la Fuente met that debate head-on.

"For me, the greatest team there is — the very greatest — is the Spanish national team," the coach said during a media breakfast organised by Spanish public broadcaster RTVE and news agency EFE. He was equally direct on the selection process itself. "We think about every possible scenario that can happen in games with our opponents, and their characteristics. We've chosen these 26. I think we've covered the needs of the team. I don't look at whether they play for one team or another."

It is a philosophy De la Fuente has maintained with quiet consistency since taking charge, and the results have vindicated him spectacularly. Spain extended their unbeaten streak to 30 matches with a 4-0 victory over Georgia, surpassing the 29-game record previously held by Vicente del Bosque's golden generation between 2010 and 2013 — a run that included a perfect European Championship campaign in which they won all seven games to claim a record fourth title.

Asked to define his squad in three words, De la Fuente chose quality, humanity, and competitiveness. "In these areas, we are a very powerful team," he said. That self-assurance, earned rather than assumed, permeates a squad that he and his coaching staff had, by his own account, finalised months before Monday's announcement.

The squad is built in Barcelona's image. Eight Barça players feature, including Pedri, Gavi — returning from serious knee surgery — Rodri, Fabián Ruiz, Martín Zubimendi, Álex Baena, Mikel Merino, and 17-year-old forward Lamine Yamal, who remains the squad's talisman despite recovering from a hamstring injury. De la Fuente expressed measured confidence that his key players would be available in time. "We're in contact with all the clubs," he said, noting that Yamal, Nico Williams, and Merino were all managing fitness concerns ahead of the tournament opener.

Spain will play a pre-tournament friendly against Iraq in A Coruña on June 4, before travelling to Puebla, Mexico, for a warmup against Peru on June 8. Their World Cup campaign opens on June 15 against Cape Verde in Atlanta in Group H, which also contains Saudi Arabia and Uruguay.

The absence of Real Madrid — who endured a trophyless and turbulent domestic season — has inevitably drawn comparisons with other nations whose top-club players were similarly overlooked. De la Fuente dismissed any suggestion that the decision might alienate Real Madrid's considerable fanbase. His position was characteristically unequivocal: "The day I make a mistake, fail to make the right choice, or act in a way that might be beneficial just to get a result, I'm putting my job on the line."

It is the language of a coach who knows exactly what he is doing — and who, on recent evidence, has earned the right to be trusted.

In De la Fuente's Spain, no club badge outranks the national crest, and no reputation buys a seat on the plane.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Fan violence threatens to unravel years of hard-won progress in the beautiful game

Chahwanda chaos: a wake-up call for Zimbabwean football

Violence erupted at Chahwanda Stadium last weekend

By **Norman Mwale**

Violence erupted at Chahwanda Stadium on Saturday, forcing the abandonment of a Premier Soccer League match between Hardrock FC and Dynamos FC, leaving several Dynamos supporters injured and four individuals under arrest.

The scenes that unfolded in Kwekwe were ugly, and their implications reach far beyond one abandoned fixture. Several injured Dynamos supporters were rushed to Kwekwe General Hospital while Zimbabwe Republic Police moved to contain the disorder, arresting four individuals in connection with the violence. Authorities are now investigating how approximately 5,000 fans came to be left outside the stadium — a crowd management failure that, by any reckoning, lit the fuse.

A Dynamos FC official, who asked not to be named, did not mince words. "It is appalling that fans were put in harm's way," the official said. "We condemn the actions of a few individuals who brought shame to our club and the game." That sentiment — earnest, embarrassed, exasperated — captures the mood of a footballing community that has watched this story repeat itself one too many times.

Premier Soccer League chairman Phera Rudzatshe moved swiftly to signal that consequences would follow. "We will not tolerate any form of violence or disruption to the game," he said. "Our stadiums must be safe havens for fans, players, and officials. We will not compromise on safety and security." The PSL is awaiting official match reports before determining sanctions, but the clubs involved face potential fines of up to $10,000, point deductions of between three and six points, and stadium closures for two to three matches.

Those measures, if applied firmly, would send a message. But punishing clubs after the fact has never, on its own, solved the deeper problem. Football analyst Tendai Mudzamiri put it plainly. "We need to take a hard look at ourselves and ask what we are doing wrong," she said. "Fan violence is a cancer that is eating away at our game, and we need to cut it out before it is too late."

The Zimbabwe Football Association shares responsibility for that cure. Spokesperson Andrew Anthony acknowledged as much, stating that ZIFA would continue working with the PSL and law enforcement to foster a culture of respect. "We will not tolerate any form of violence or abuse," he said. "We will ensure that those responsible are brought to book." Fine words, but Zimbabwean football has heard fine words before. What the game now demands is structural change — more security personnel and trained stewards deployed at matches, stricter ticketing protocols to prevent dangerous overcrowding, improved crowd control frameworks, and sustained fan education programmes that treat sportsmanship not as an afterthought but as a cornerstone of the game.

The tragedy of Chahwanda is not simply that a match was abandoned or that supporters were hurt, though both facts are damning enough. It is that Zimbabwean football has, in recent years, shown genuine signs of growth — rising attendances, renewed corporate interest, and a generation of young players of real promise. Fan violence does not merely embarrass; it actively dismantles. Sponsors retreat, broadcasters hesitate, and families who might otherwise fill the terraces stay home.

Zimbabwe's football authorities have a narrow window to act decisively before the damage becomes structural. The game's stakeholders — the PSL, ZIFA, club executives, and supporters' groups — must treat Saturday's violence not as an isolated incident to be managed, but as the urgent, collective crisis it plainly is.

The beautiful game deserves better than this, and so do the fans who love it.

SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN

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A Visionary leader empowering Africa through creativity, education, and compassion

By: Anila Bukhari
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Cwenga Kotu-Rammopo is a remarkable young African woman whose journey reflects resilience, purpose, creativity, and leadership. Known for her passion for social impact and youth empowerment, she has emerged as one of the inspiring voices of her generation. As a creative entrepreneur, artist, aspiring philanthropist, and servant leader, Cwenga has dedicated her life to transforming communities and uplifting vulnerable young women, especially adolescent mothers across Africa. Her story is one of courage, education, faith, and determination to create lasting change in society.

Born with a strong sense of compassion and a vision for a better future, Cwenga understood from an early age that true success is not only measured by personal achievements but also by the ability to positively impact the lives of others. Her deep love for humanity and commitment to empowering disadvantaged communities became the foundation of her life's mission. Through education, leadership, and innovation, she has continued to inspire countless young people to believe in their potential and pursue meaningful change within their communities.

Cwenga's educational journey is a reflection of her dedication to excellence and lifelong learning. She recently completed her Master's Philosophy in Digital Curation at the University of Cape Town (UCT), one of Africa's leading academic institutions. Before achieving her master's degree, she had already earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre and Performing Arts as well as a BA Honours degree in Film and Television Studies from the same university. Her academic background demonstrates her passion for storytelling, media, creativity, and the arts. She believes that art and digital media have the power to educate, preserve culture, inspire communities, and amplify important social issues affecting society today.

Her academic achievements were not simply personal milestones; they became tools she could use to serve others. Throughout her journey, Cwenga remained deeply committed to empowering young women and adolescent mothers who often face social and economic challenges. She understood that many young mothers across Africa struggle with limited access to education, financial independence, and opportunities for growth. Rather than ignoring these realities, she decided to become part of the solution.

This vision led to the creation of Talitha Together, a non-profit organization she co-founded with the mission of empowering adolescent mothers in Africa through education and entrepreneurial skills development. Talitha Together quickly became a transformative platform focused on restoring hope, dignity, and opportunity to young mothers who are often marginalized by society. Through mentorship, skills training, education initiatives, and empowerment programs, the organization seeks to help adolescent mothers rebuild their confidence and create sustainable futures for themselves and their children.

Under Cwenga's leadership and vision, Talitha Together gained international recognition for its meaningful work and social impact. In March 2022, the organization won the prestigious Dream For Change Projects award at the UNESCO and Women@Dior Global Conference held in Paris, France. This recognition placed Talitha Together on a global stage and highlighted the importance of supporting adolescent mothers through innovative and compassionate solutions. The achievement also reflected Cwenga's ability to combine leadership, creativity, and social entrepreneurship to address real societal challenges.

The success of Talitha Together continued to grow over the years. In 2022, the organization received the NYDA Trailblazer Award, recognizing its innovative contribution toward youth empowerment and community transformation. In 2023, Talitha Together was also honored with the UN Women Young Entrepreneurs Award, further affirming the impact of its work across Africa. These recognitions solidified Cwenga's position as one of the emerging young leaders committed to creating positive social change.

As a result of her outstanding achievements and dedication to empowering others, Cwenga herself received numerous prestigious awards and honors. She was recognized as one of the University of Cape Town's Inspirational Graduates in both 2022 and 2023, an honor awarded to graduates making meaningful contributions to society. Her work, leadership, and commitment to humanity continued to gain attention both locally and internationally.

In 2024, Cwenga was honored with the News24 Young Mandela Award, a recognition inspired by the legacy of Nelson Mandela and awarded to young individuals who embody leadership, service, and social impact. This award reflected her unwavering dedication to justice, empowerment, and community development. Her influence continued to expand internationally when she was named among the She Leads Africa Top 50 Under 30 Motherland Moguls in 2025, celebrating young African women who are shaping the future through innovation and leadership.

Her achievements in 2026 further demonstrated the global reach of her influence. She became the Women Changing the World Global Youth Impact Runner Up in Paris, recognizing her extraordinary contribution toward empowering women and youth globally. In the same year, she was also listed among StArfrica's Top 10 Face Changing Africa, honoring influential African leaders driving transformation and progress across the continent.

Beyond her work in social entrepreneurship and leadership, Cwenga has also built a presence in media and storytelling. She serves as the voice of UCT News Podcasting at the UCT TV Studios, where she uses communication and digital platforms to share stories, inform audiences, and amplify important conversations. Her work in media reflects her belief in the power of storytelling to inspire change, educate communities, and connect people across cultures and experiences.

Cwenga Kotu-Rammopo

Despite her many accomplishments, Cwenga remains deeply grounded in her faith and values. She is widely recognized as a faith-centered and values-driven servant leader who leads with humility, compassion, and integrity. Her leadership style is rooted in empathy and a sincere desire to uplift others rather than seek personal recognition. She continues to inspire many young women, artists, entrepreneurs, and aspiring leaders through her example of perseverance, service, and purpose-driven leadership.

Cwenga Kotu-Rammopo's journey is a powerful example of how education, creativity, and compassion can come together to transform lives and communities. Through her work, she has become a voice for vulnerable young women and a symbol of hope for many across Africa. Her story reminds the world that true leadership is not only about success but about using one's gifts and opportunities to empower others and create meaningful impact.

As she continues to grow as a leader, entrepreneur, artist, and humanitarian, Cwenga remains committed to building a future where young people, especially adolescent mothers and women, are empowered with the tools, opportunities, and support needed to thrive. Her legacy is already inspiring a new generation of African changemakers who believe in the power of education, compassion, and purpose-driven leadership to change the world.

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