



**Mau Mau and descendants convene in Thika as push for justice and recognition gains momentum**

A new chapter in the long struggle for historical justice and recognition

is unfolding, as former freedom fighters and their descendants prepare to gather in Thika for a landmark conference

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**A presidency that cannot fund a child should not ask for a second term**

There comes a moment in the life of a nation when numbers cease to be mere statistics and become moral verdicts. Budgets, after all, are not neutral instruments; they are ethical documents.

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Daily ePAPER

**Politics** Kang'ata said differences have emerged, stressing that his divergence with the President is not personal but rooted in principle

## Kang'ata breaks with UDA ahead of 2027 elections



Murang'a governor Irungu Kang'ata yesterday announced that he will not defend his seat on his current party's ticket when the time comes, marking a significant political development ahead of the 2027 General Election and signalling possible realignments within Kenya's political landscape.

In a statement issued, Kang'ata addressed constituents, colleagues, and the wider public, reflecting on his long-standing political with William Ruto, which dates back to 2013 when he first served as Member of Parliament for Kiharu.

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Governor Irungu Kang'ata

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SCAN TO REGISTER

# Gachagua escalates 2027 campaign messaging, accuses government of economic collapse and launches nationwide mobilisation

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

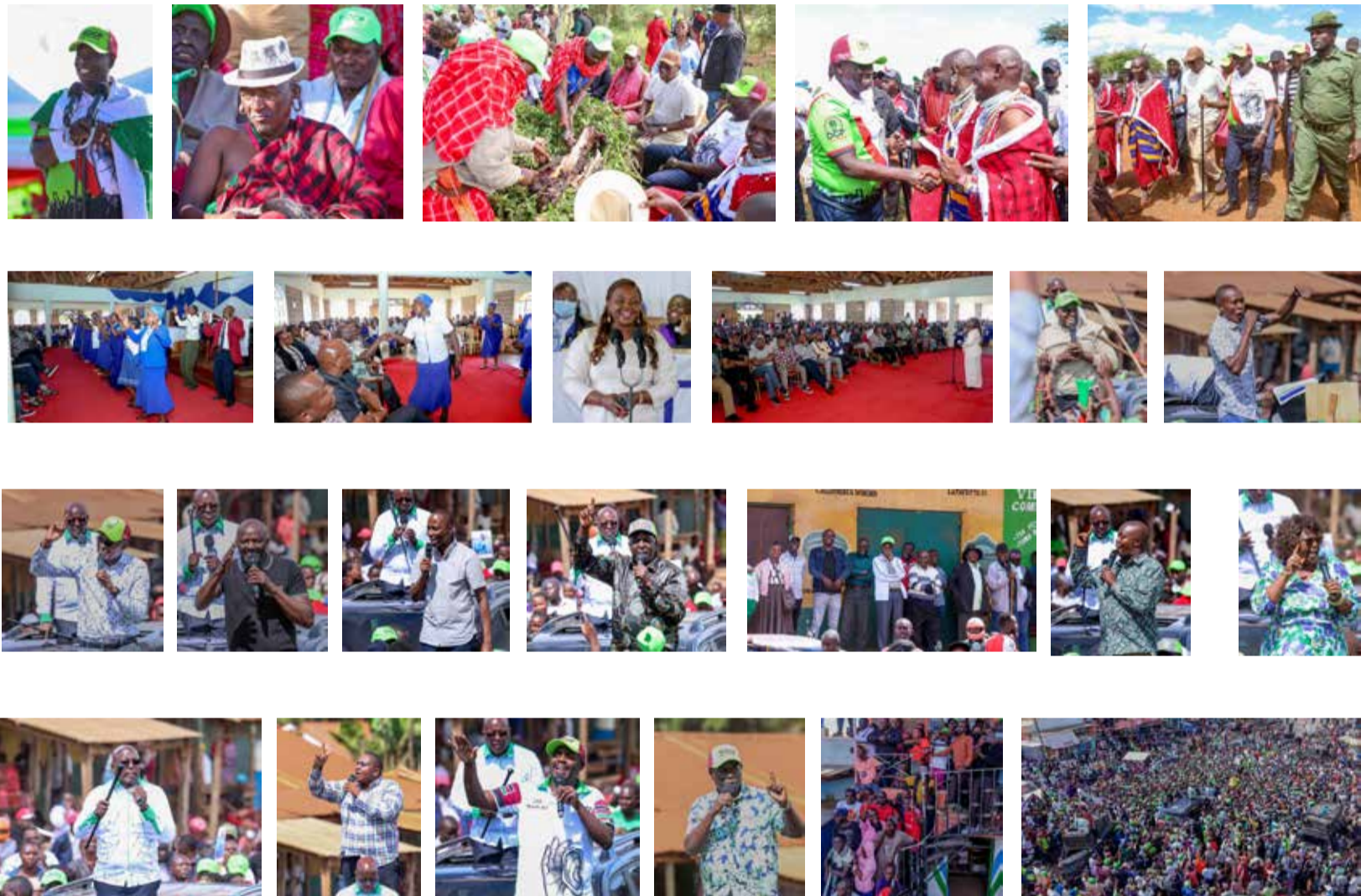
*Some of the moments as captured in pictures*

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has intensified his political messaging ahead of the 2027 General Election, accusing the government of economic mismanagement, insecurity, and weakening public services while calling for what he describes as a “national reset” through the ballot.

Addressing various gatherings in Kajiado County, including Illasit, Kimana, Elangata Enkima, and Oloitoktok, Gachagua said Kenyans are facing worsening economic hardship, citing high medical costs under the Social Health Authority, insecurity concerns, rising university fees, and declining agricultural support.

He claimed citizens are dissatisfied and increasingly uncertain about their livelihoods.

He said the 2027 election will be a “battle for the soul of Kenya,” framing it as a choice between citizens and a leadership he accused of looting public resources, mismanaging healthcare, and undermining national assets. He vowed that a future administration under his influence would restore education, healthcare, security, and economic stability.



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Editor's Desk



The Mt. Kenya Times



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Julius Melly met youth, traders, and business people in Nandi Hills for a consultative forum focused on improving the local business environment and promoting economic development. The meeting brought together boda boda operators, small traders, youth groups, and entrepreneurs who discussed challenges and solutions affecting businesses. Melly emphasized the need to support SMEs through better infrastructure, easier access to financing, and reduced barriers to doing business, highlighting youth empowerment as a priority. Nandi Hills MCA Benard Kitur called for improved market facilities and fair taxation, while youth leader Kevin Kiptoo pushed for job creation and skills development. Traders raised concerns over high taxes, poor roads, and limited credit. Participants also urged digital adoption and better infrastructure to boost trade and growth in the area.



A nurse screens a pregnant woman during the Mombasa Hospital pregnancy fair. The day-long event targeted 150 expectant women from diverse backgrounds. The one-stop pregnancy fair brought together exhibitors, including nutrition specialists, pharmaceutical companies, and insurance firms. Participants received free childbirth classes, fetal heart monitoring, and medical check-ups. They were also educated on the importance of routine check-ups, proper nutrition, and the role of exercise in maintaining a healthy pregnancy.



Mombasa Hospital hosted a pregnancy fair aimed at encouraging expectant mothers to prioritise regular antenatal care for early detection of complications and proper fetal monitoring. Resident Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Dr Tanwira Chiragdin urged women to attend routine check-ups where ultrasound scans, heart rate monitoring, and other assessments can track fetal development and maternal health. The event brought together about 150 expectant mothers and featured exhibitors including nutritionists, pharmaceutical companies, and insurance providers. Participants received free childbirth classes, medical check-ups, and fetal heart monitoring. They were also educated on proper nutrition, supplements, exercise, and the importance of hospital deliveries. Dr Chiragdin emphasized that the initiative aimed to inform and empower mothers to ensure safer pregnancies and healthier outcomes for both mother and child.



United Democratic Alliance (UDA) successfully conducted its grassroots elections across Wajir County, with officials reporting a smooth and well-attended exercise held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Party official Salma Ochieng said the process followed a week-long sensitisation campaign for members and aspirants. She was joined by County Returning Officer Gladys Chebet and party official Victor Mtai, noting that all polling centres were closed after the voting exercise. The elections focused on establishing grassroots leadership structures across seven categories, including special interest groups, youth, women, farmers, professionals, MSMEs, and religious representatives. Ochieng said the elections were peaceful, free, and fair, with strong voter turnout and no major challenges reported, terming the exercise a success in strengthening the party's grassroots organization.

Kenya Dairy Board Acting Director Paul Ndugu has urged dairy farmers to embrace value addition and uphold proper milk hygiene to improve the quality and competitiveness of milk production. Speaking in Molo town during a dairy farmers' field day, he noted that Nakuru County now produces about 400 million litres of milk annually, a 25% increase since 2020, making it the third-largest milk-producing county after Kiambu and Murang'a. Ndugu said the growth is supported by processors such as New KCC and Brookside through training on good dairy practices. He encouraged farmers to adopt artificial insemination to improve cattle breeds, noting that over 7,000 farmers in Nakuru have already benefited from superior semen to enhance productivity and breed quality.



Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) Chairman Cornelly Serem has urged farmers in Kwale County to increase cotton production to support a new ginnery being established in the Kinondo area. He noted that the facility will require over four tonnes of cotton daily, but current production levels remain insufficient. Speaking during an agricultural support initiative, Serem distributed cotton seedlings, including 300 kg of BT cotton seeds and pesticides to farmers. He also provided 10,000 Bixa (Mrangi) seedlings to encourage crop diversification and boost incomes. The initiative aims to strengthen raw material supply, improve productivity, and enhance farmers' livelihoods through expanded cotton farming and alternative cash crops in the region.

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**Nakuru** The Governor said the bodaboda empowerment initiative comes amid a global fuel supply

# Kihika pushes low-cost electric notorbike plan for Nakuru riders

BY Suleiman Mbatiah  
@themkenyatimes

In a practical move to empower youth in the bodaboda sector, Governor Susan Kihika has announced an ambitious plan to enable riders to acquire affordable electric motorcycles across Nakuru County.

The Governor said the bodaboda empowerment initiative comes amid a global fuel supply strain linked to the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict, positioning electric mobility as a timely, cost-stable alternative for riders.

Under the plan, a new electric motorcycle will cost KSh85,000 in cash, significantly below prevailing market prices where comparable models currently operating in the country retail between KSh150,000 and KSh200,000 for cash purchase.

The proposal further lowers entry barriers, requiring riders to raise only KSh5,000 as an initial commitment, compared to existing market arrangements where deposits typically average about KSh25,000 and are funded by 'unfriendly' creditors.

Daily operating costs also reflect a sharp reduction, with riders expected to remit about Sh180 per day under the county plan, compared to prevailing charges ranging between KSh300 and KSh500 per day for 18 months.

Speaking in Gilgil, the Gov-



Governor Susan Kihika (center) during the handover of more than 20 fuel-powered motorcycles to boda boda groups across three wards in November last year.

ernor said the revised structure is designed to ease financial pressure on riders while accelerating ownership, drawing positive reactions from operators who attended a bursary issuance event.

Comparatively, she said, the county-backed model presents a lower acquisition cost, reduced upfront payment, and significantly lighter daily repayment burden, creating a more accessible and faster pathway to full ownership.

Kihika said her administration recognises the bodaboda sector as a key driver of small and medium enterprises, supporting livelihoods and sustaining local economic activity across urban and rural areas.

"Our 'Lipa Pole Pole' plan is structured to remain flexi-

ble, allowing riders to operate sustainably while gradually acquiring full ownership through manageable daily payments," the Governor said.

The programme is anchored within the KSh100 million Wezesha Fund and KSh30 million Boda Boda Revolving Fund, which will extend affordable credit to individual youth and groups in need to purchase the electric motorcycles.

Electric mobility advocate Stephen Mwanda said current commercial financing models remain restrictive, citing high deposits, steep daily payments, costly spare parts, and limited charging infrastructure as persistent barriers.

"The idea is long overdue, and riders are ready for a sys-

tem that allows them to clear payments within reasonable timelines while maintaining stable incomes," said Mwanda, who is also the county bodaboda riders' spokesperson.

He said bodaboda operators have raised persistent concerns over steadily rising fuel costs, saying the increases are eating into daily earnings, raising operating expenses, and threatening the sustainability of their businesses.

The Governor indicated that the programme will be scaled progressively to reach more beneficiaries, with parallel investments in support infrastructure such as spares and charging stations to strengthen adoption and long-term sustainability.

## Gachagua escalates 2027 campaign messaging, accuses government of economic collapse and launches nationwide mobilisation



DCP Party leader Rigathi Gachagua

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Gachagua also warned against what he termed economic brutality and governance failures, saying these issues have pushed Kenyans into hardship. He pledged that within 14 months, opposition forces would begin "reclaiming the country" through political mobilisation.

He reaffirmed his leadership philosophy as anchored on truth, accountability, and integrity, contrasting it with what he described as dishonesty and intimidation in government.


During a church service

at PCEA Illasit Church, he invoked Isaiah 60:22, urging hope and faith in national renewal.

Separately, he attended the thanksgiving ceremony for David Persaina in Kitengela-Korompoi, where he congratulated him as pioneer chairperson of the Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP), calling for leadership focused on ordinary citizens. Gachagua concluded by thanking the Maa community for their support and urged continued unity and political participation ahead of 2027. He was accompanied by dozens of former, current and aspiring political leaders from various parts of the country.

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IN BUSINESS

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**Politics** Tension had reportedly been building from the moment the governor arrived, with sections of mourners appearing agitated.

# Chaos, political showdown mar burial of MP Nyikal's father in Seme



Some of the leaders who attended the ceremony.

**BY Chris Mahandara**  
@themtkenyatimes

Chaos and political recriminations overshadowed the burial of the father to Seme Member of Parliament (MP) James Nyikal in Kisumu County on Saturday, after goons disrupted proceedings and forced Siaya Governor James Orendo to leave the venue.

The incident, which laid bare deepening cracks within the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), saw a group of rowdy youth storm the section reserved for leaders, chanting slogans and demanding that Orendo exits before the ceremony could proceed.

Tension had reportedly been building from the moment the governor arrived, with sections of mourners appearing agitated.

The situation escalated midway through speeches when the rowdy youth advanced toward the dais where senior leaders including MPs, Governors and Senators were seated.

A scuffle ensued, briefly halting the funeral rites.

Orendo, a key figure in the emerging Linda Mwananchi faction of ODM, was whisked

away from the venue as clergy struggled to restore calm.

Church leaders, led by the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Maseno South Diocese Bishop Charles Ong'in-

**The incident, which laid bare deepening cracks within the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), saw a group of rowdy youth storm the section reserved for leaders, chanting slogans and demanding that Orendo exits before the ceremony could proceed.**

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jo, intervened and urged mourners to respect the sanctity of the funeral and the dignity of the deceased.

Following Orendo's exit, normalcy returned and the programme resumed, but not before leaders took turns to condemn the disruption.

Kisumu Governor Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o termed the incident disgraceful, saying it dishonored the memory of the departed elder.

"It is unacceptable for leaders to preside over chaos at a funeral. We must exercise decorum and uphold peace," Nyong'o said.

ODM National Chairperson Gladys Wanga reaffirmed the party's position in the broad-based government, dismissing dissenting factions.

"We know where we have come from and where we are going. We are in the broad-based government to stay," she said, accusing rival camps of attempting to divide the party against the vision of party leader Raila Odinga.

Migori Governor Ochilo Ayacko urged politicians to focus on service delivery rather than political rivalry.

"Whether you are for one term or two term, let us prioritize what benefits our people," he said.

Kisumu Woman Representative Ruth Odinga called for unity within ODM, warning that internal divisions could weaken the party ahead of future political engagements.

"As senior party members, we must sit down with the clergy and reconcile these factions. A divided party achieves nothing," she said.

However, the most direct accusations came from host MP Nyikal, who blamed Kisumu Senator Tom Ojienda for allegedly facilitating the chaos. "You are the one who walked

in with these people. When I asked you to stop them, did you?" Nyikal posed, alleging that hired goons had infiltrated the funeral.

He decried the growing trend of politicians ferrying rowdy youth to public events to project popularity.

"These people almost harmed my son. Why must leaders move around with goons disguised as supporters?" he lamented.

In his address, Bishop Ong'injo condemned the violence, calling it deeply un-

fortunate and urging restraint among political actors.

He also took aim at the growing culture of political sloganeering, warning leaders against what he termed nonsensical slogans at solemn events.

The Bishop challenged politicians to prioritize meaningful service and accountability over empty rhetoric, cautioning that funerals should not be turned into arenas for political theatrics but remain spaces of respect and reflection.

The late Eliud Nyikal Okaka was laid to rest at his rural home in Seme, Kisumu County, as the disruption highlighted escalating tensions within ODM, turning what should have been a solemn farewell into a stark display of political divisions in the region.



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**Politics** Kang'ata said differences have emerged, stressing that his divergence with the President is not personal but rooted in principle

# Irungu Kang'ata signals political shift ahead of 2027, breaks with party ticket while backing economic reforms

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Murang'a governor Irungu Kang'ata yesterday announced that he will not defend his seat on his current party's ticket when the time comes, marking a significant political development ahead of the 2027 General Election and signalling possible realignments within Kenya's political landscape.

In a statement issued, Kang'ata addressed constituents, colleagues, and the wider public, reflecting on his long-standing political  $\square$  with William Ruto, which dates back to 2013 when he first served as Member of Parliament for Kiharu.

He noted that their cooperation continued through his time as Senator and later Governor, including his role as Senate Majority Whip, which he said strengthened mutual respect and shared political work.

Despite this history, Kang'ata said differences have emerged, stressing that his divergence with the President is not personal but rooted in principle.

He highlighted disagreements over political strategy, citizen engagement, and policy priorities, arguing that leadership should be based on persuasion, dialogue, and respectful engagement rather than pressure or coercion.

He warned against rising political tension in the country, noting that recent confrontational approaches in politics risk undermining democratic values. Without naming specific incidents, he cautioned that hostility in political competition could generate unintended sympathy for those perceived to be targeted and risk repeating past mistakes in Kenya's political history.

A major focus of his statement was economic policy, where Kang'ata called for a stronger national emphasis on manufacturing, education, and healthcare as the core pillars of development.

On education, he proposed fully funding free day secondary schooling, estimating the cost at about KSh 40 billion annually, to ensure universal access and reduce the financial burden on families. He also called for increased investment in teacher



President William Ruto with Murang'a governor Irungu Kang'ata at past event

training, technical and vocational education, and school infrastructure.

In manufacturing, he urged a shift from a consumption-based economy to a production-driven model. He proposed lowering energy costs, aligning tax incentives with exports and output, developing industrial zones linked to agro-processing and textiles, and prioritising locally produced goods in public procurement to stimulate job creation.

On healthcare, Kang'ata emphasized strengthening primary healthcare systems, ensuring consistent access to essential medicines, expanding insurance coverage in a sustainable way, and prioritising

preventive care to reduce long-term costs.

Politically, Kang'ata confirmed that he has held internal discussions within his party and engaged leadership at the highest level, but said there has been no full agreement on key issues.

He maintained that his role as an elected leader requires independent judgment and accountability to the electorate.

In a notable declaration, he stated that when the appropriate time comes, he will not seek to defend his seat on the party's ticket.

However, he did not immediately announce an alternative political

platform, saying he will communicate his next political direction later.

Despite this, Kang'ata affirmed that he remains a disciplined member of his party for now and will continue working within government structures, cooperating with the national administration in delivering development projects.

He also pledged continued loyalty to both the party and the President through the remainder of the current term leading up to the 2027 elections.

His statement is likely to intensify political discussions within ruling party circles and among observers tracking early alignments ahead of

2027, especially given his senior position and long association with the President.

Kang'ata concluded by reaffirming his commitment to issue-based politics, economic transformation, and leadership that prioritises dignity, opportunity, and inclusive development for Kenyans.

**Health** County Public Health Chief Officer Henry Nthiga said the programme was a strategic move to decentralise healthcare by shifting specialist services

# Embu launches programme of decentralising specialized medical care

BY MKT REPORTER  
@themtkenyatimes

The County Government of Embu has launched a health outreach programme designed to take specialist medical care to residents in rural sub-counties. Through the initiative dubbed “Mada-ktari Mashinani” (Doctors at the grassroots), the Department of Health will assemble a team of specialist doctors to offer a wide array of services, including specialised consultations, comprehensive screening, and rehabilitative care. Speaking during the first outreach event held at Kategi Health Centre in Mwea



Residents undergoing tests

Sub-county on Saturday, County Public Health Chief Officer Henry Nthiga said the

programme was a strategic move to decentralise health-care by shifting specialist ser-

vices from Embu Level Five Hospital and Level Fours to rural communities. “Our ob-

jective is to ensure residents can access specialised care and treatment at local primary care facilities, reducing the burden of long-distance travel to major facilities such as our Level Five Hospital,” he said. He noted that many patients in rural areas have historically been forced to forgo referral appointments at major facilities due to high costs and physical strain. “We have seen cases of patients referred for specialised treatment failing to honour their referrals as a result of cost and distance factors that could occasion deterioration of conditions or lead to irreversible damage,” he said. Nthiga said the initiative fills that gap, allowing patients to be reviewed and booked at their nearest health facility. Area Medical Officer of Health Terry Matheka said the initiative had also been an eye-opener, revealing the large population of patients at the grassroots suffering in silence because they cannot reach major hospitals. “The sheer number of patients who

attended this outreach camp indicates a hidden burden of disease among people at the grassroots unable to access specialised care at our major facilities,” she said. She also expressed concern over growing cases of non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and various forms of cancer, appealing to residents to go for regular check-ups for early detection and intervention before conditions cause irreversible damage or death. Patients expressed gratitude over the initiative, terming it a lifeline. Miriam Nyaguthii, whose baby was diagnosed with Down Syndrome, said it was the first time she had been able to access a paediatric specialist — a consultation that would otherwise have required an expensive trip to Nairobi. “Though I was given a referral to Kenyatta National Hospital, I am glad I now know what has been ailing my child and where to get assistance,” she said.

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**Mau Mau** The event brings together members of Mau Mau descendant groups, civil society actors, and stakeholders in the public benefit sector.

# Mau Mau and descendants convene in Thika as push for justice and recognition gains momentum



Some of the MMV Associates CLG members who are preparing for next week's conference at Blue Post Hotel in Thika | Photo: courtesy.

## BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

A new chapter in the long struggle for historical justice and recognition is unfolding, as former freedom fighters and their descendants prepare to gather in Thika for a landmark conference aimed at advancing the legacy of the Mau Mau movement.

A public notice issued over the weekend by their caucus, MMV Associates CLG announced a five-day conference and seminar to be held at the Blue Post Hotel from Monday next week.

The event brings together members of Mau Mau descendant groups, civil society actors, and stakeholders in the public benefit sector.

The conference seeks to address both historical injustices and contemporary socio-economic challenges facing descendants of the liberation movement. The initiative is supported by key partners of Mau Mau Children Post Co-

lonial Elites which includes; the Mau Mau War Veterans Association, Jeremiah Mugi Foundation, and other organizations focused on indigenous knowledge and heritage preservation.

### Agenda focused on legal recognition and global linkages

According to the notice signed by MMV Associates CLG Director James Njuguna Mahuria, the conference will focus on three key areas;

Registration of members under the Public Benefit Organizations Act, Engagement with the Public Benefit Organizations Regulatory Authority and Consideration of joining the World Federation of Kenya.

Organizers say the gathering is intended not only as an administrative milestone but also as a strategic forum to consolidate advocacy efforts for Mau Mau descendants.

### Mahuria's long road in the

### fight for compensation

At the center of this movement is Mahuria, a figure who has spent years advo-

cating for justice for victims of colonial-era abuses. His work builds on the historic 2013 settlement between the British government and Mau

Mau veterans, a case widely associated with survivors of torture during the Mau Mau Uprising.

While that settlement; facilitated through legal action supported by organizations such as the Kenya Human Rights Commission provided compensation to a limited number of elderly survivors, many descendants were left out.

Mahuria has consistently argued that the scope of reparations should extend beyond direct survivors to include families and communities that suffered displacement, loss of land, and generational trauma.

Through MMV Associates CLG and affiliated initiatives, he has been pushing for; Expanded recognition of Mau Mau descendants as beneficiaries of compensation frameworks, documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge tied to the liberation struggle

Inclusion of descendants in national development and empowerment programs.

Colleagues describe his approach as both legal and grassroots; combining policy advocacy with community mobilization across central Kenya and beyond.

### Renewed momentum among Mau Mau descendants

The upcoming Thika conference reflects a broader resurgence of interest among

younger generations seeking to reclaim their historical identity and rights.

Many see themselves not just as inheritors of a legacy, but as stakeholders in unfinished justice.

"This is about continuity," Mahuria noted, adding "The veterans fought for independence. Now their children and grandchildren are fighting for recognition, dignity, and inclusion."

The involvement of regulatory bodies signals a shift toward formalizing these efforts within Kenya's legal framework for public benefit organizations, potentially opening doors to funding, partnerships, and international advocacy platforms.

### Looking ahead

As participants prepare to convene in Thika, expectations are high that the conference will produce actionable resolutions; ranging from legal registration to international alliances that could redefine the trajectory of Mau Mau descendant advocacy.

For Mahuria and his allies, the goal remains clear; to ensure that the sacrifices of the past are neither forgotten nor left uncompensated, and that future generations can claim their place in Kenya's historical and socio-economic landscape.



MMV Associates CLG director James Njuguna Mahuria in discussion with the caucus members last Saturday.

**Press** This year's global theme, "Shaping a Future at Peace: Promoting Press Freedom for Human Rights, Development, and Security"

# Kenyan leaders rally behind press freedom as nation eyes 2027 polls

BY Felix Njenga

@themkenyatimes

Kenyan leaders joined the international community in marking World Press Freedom Day, issuing a strong appeal for the protection of journalists, the safeguarding of democratic values, and the responsible use of digital platforms as the country prepares for the 2027 General Election. Commemorating this year's global theme, "Shaping a Fu-

ture at Peace: Promoting Press Freedom for Human Rights, Development, and Security," leaders emphasized that a free and independent media is not just a pillar of democracy, but its very lifeblood.

William Kabogo, Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communication and Digital Economy, highlighted the rapidly evolving digital landscape and its implications for media freedom.

He reaffirmed the govern-

ment's commitment to ensuring that technological advancement does not undermine journalistic safety or independence.

"A free, independent, and secure press remains the foundation of both democracy and digital transformation," Kabogo said. "The Ministry is dedicated to promoting an open internet, protecting journalists in online spaces, and implementing policies that tackle disinformation with-



Journalists at work.

out stifling legitimate expression."

He further called for a united continental approach to information integrity, urging African nations to embrace a shared digital future where truth prevails over manipula-

tion.

According to Kabogo, press freedom and innovation must advance together to empower citizens and strengthen governance.

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua paid tribute to journalists often referred to as the Fourth Estate for their resilience and sacrifice in informing the public and defending critical societal values.

He acknowledged the risks media practitioners face in exposing wrongdoing and amplifying voices across the country.

Reflecting on Kenya's progress in media independence, Gachagua cautioned journalists against complacency as political temperatures begin to rise ahead of the August 10, 2027, polls. He urged them to remain vigilant, objective, and committed to truth.

"Press freedom in Kenya has been hard earned," he said. "Journalists must continue to listen to the people and tell their stories faithfully. A free press does not merely signal democracy it embodies it."

Gachagua also underscored the responsibility that comes with press freedom, calling on media professionals to uphold accuracy and fairness as the nation navigates a critical political period.

In a separate statement, Kiambu Senator Karungo wa Thang'wa raised concerns over persistent threats facing journalists, particularly during political protests.

He condemned instances of harassment and violence allegedly perpetrated by security agencies, warning that such actions undermine democratic accountability.

"It is alarming that journalists continue to face intimidation and physical harm while carrying out their duties," Thang'wa said. "They are not enemies of the state but vital players in ensuring transparency and accountability. Silencing them is a direct assault on democracy."

The senator described Kenya's civic space as fragile and called for urgent reforms both legislative and institutional to protect media practitioners from abuse. He also emphasized the growing role of artificial intelligence in the media sector, urging stakeholders to adopt AI responsibly to counter misinformation while maintaining ethical standards.

A shared message emerged from leaders across the political divide: Kenya's democratic future hinges on a free, safe, and independent press. Calls for accountability within security agencies, alongside efforts to enhance media literacy, signal increasing awareness of the challenges posed by emerging technologies and high-stakes politics.

In an era defined by rapid digital transformation and political contestation, leaders warned that truth remains Kenya's most valuable and most vulnerable asset.

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**Politics** Sakaja warned that planning officials who approved developments on riparian reserves and flood-prone areas will be held accountable

# Sakaja urges political calm as Nairobi steps up flood crackdown, warns errant planners

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyentimes

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja has called for reduced political tensions as the county intensifies efforts to tackle flooding and restore order in the city.

Speaking at PCEA Evergreen Parish in Westlands yesterday, Sakaja said Nairobi is scaling up its crackdown on illegal developments on riparian land, with demolitions and reclamation works already underway across several areas, including Kirichwa Kubwa in Kilimani.

“The work to reclaim riparian land is ongoing at high speed. We are recovering many areas, and as the rains continue, more structures built on riparian land are being identified

and removed. No one is being exempted,” he said.

The Governor cited the ongoing removal of part of the State House Nairobi perimeter wall to restore natural water flow as evidence of national backing for the initiative.

He linked the demolitions directly to the city’s worsening flood situation, warning that illegal construction on waterways and poor planning continue to deepen the crisis. “You cannot block waterways and then complain about floods,” he said, adding that planning officials who approved developments on riparian reserves and floodplains will be held accountable.

Sakaja urged residents in high-risk areas to relocate, stressing that reclaiming riparian land is central to broader efforts to improve drainage

and sewer infrastructure. “In places like Grogan, we are losing lives. People cannot continue living in dangerous zones. This is not about politics — it is about safety and saving lives,” he said.

The Governor also cautioned against politicising development projects, including the ongoing construction of the modern Gikomba Market, expected to be completed within six months.

Condemning recent incidents of violence at public gatherings, he called for calm. “We need peace, stability, and tolerance. In a democracy, we may disagree, but we must respect each other’s right to be heard,” he said.



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja

## The Mt. Kenya Times

THE



## The realm of the soul



Seek not for happiness in the world in vain,  
It dwells within your faith and in your heart.  
At times in lowlands, or on a mountain peak,  
Or like a shield, it guards your every part.

The gift of life is the greatest victory won,  
And gratitude is the key to find its door.  
If you gather your bread with honest labor,  
Each righteous step is a ticket to bliss evermore.

Happiness is a father's blessing, a mother's

prayer,  
The spark of light in your child's bright eyes.  
It is the river's whisper, the mountain's call,  
A fleeting trust under today's vast skies.

With hands in honest work and faith in your soul,  
When your table is filled with rightful gain,  
The spirit is free, the heart is full of joy,  
In the finest of eras, you shall surely reign.

Jewels and wealth are not the roots of bliss,  
It is the lamp that glows within your mind.  
If your conscience is pure and crystal clear,  
Sorrow and grief you will leave far behind.

About the Author  
Nigora Yo'ldasheva Sodiqjon qizi  
Born: May 29, 1999, in Yangiqo'rg'on district,  
Namangan region.  
Personal Life: Married, mother of one child.  
Status: Currently a student.

## When my heart speaks



When my heart speaks,  
it does not use loud words—  
it speaks in quiet emotions.

One day, I sat alone  
and asked myself,  
"Are you really happy,  
or are you just pretending?"

My heart replied  
in a soft and sensitive voice.  
It said,

"My answer depends  
on the people around you.

They decide  
whether you laugh or cry."

"And the hardest truth is—  
no one truly understands you,  
not even your parents,  
and sometimes, not even you."

"They care,  
but they may not always understand  
your emotions and feelings."

"So take care of yourself.  
Listen to what you feel."

And that day,  
I finally understood  
my true emotions.

V. S. NITHIYASRI  
VII  
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY  
SCHOOL, CUDDALORE, TAMILNADU.

## Newspaper



Newspaper is to read,  
Newspaper is to improve our knowledge,  
Newspaper is to improve our reading practice,  
Newspaper is to do all kind of activities,  
The newspaper has many competition,  
Everyone can participate in the competition,  
Newspaper can have in many language ,  
Tamil, English, Hindi etc many language we have,

we can read the newspaper daily,  
The newspaper can have poem,  
The newspaper use use to read, if we read  
newspaper our reading knowledge will be  
developed,  
We read newspaper to improve our reading  
knowledge,  
It be develope reading,  
If you read English newspaper English will easy to  
read,  
If you read Tamil or Hindi newspaper it is easy to  
read in any other,  
Read newspaper daily.

P. HEMANYA  
VIII  
JOHN DEWEY MAT HR SEC SCHOOL  
PANRUTI CUDDALORE DISTRICT.

## Bruises of alienation and poverty



Collins Munyanda - Zimbabwe

We are the turds and chess pieces,  
Treading aimlessly chessboard checkered boxes  
of our existence.

In the hands of the chessman, we are but mere  
pawns.  
At the heart of our existence,  
Lies the gaoler of destiny,  
And in this world we are on our own, alienated.

Our destiny was mortgaged all in the name of  
freedom and patriotism.  
We suckled breasts of overt subjugation,  
And rolled to the fringes of destitution,  
Cut from the troughs of oneness,  
Marooned like a flightless pilot,  
Who lost his compass.

Who derailed our dreams,  
And quick paced our death?  
Like sand dunes we exist soulless in this

godforsaken country,  
Where we are but chattel,  
Buttered by miserly pittances we call wages,  
Alienated by avaricious productivity masters  
And yet still we grope for survival  
And nibble on the tiny morsels at their hegemonic  
tables.

Cupid masters lounge on purple thrones,  
and sup upon our indigent sweat.  
Dearth of ignoble breaths' livelihoods  
suffocate our social veins.  
Ascendant demons inspire mortal souls  
to pauperdom that rules and riles,  
and farts malodorous, mercenaric gas upon our  
solemn society,  
and heckle our destiny with the albatross of  
insensitivity.

Justice's voices become silenced.  
Maybe Avernus ghosts stealthily  
invaded weaklings' wealth heirdom.  
Lucifer's choir sing canorous autocratic songs  
while overbearing waltzing skeletons  
above black and white chequered dance floors.  
Paucity! Paucity! Paucity!  
Our green courtyards metamorphed  
into dreary tyrannical foramens.  
Ooh, inflicted mediocrity  
horned in impecuniousness!

## Between the sun and the half moon



You are my dawn, yet softly incomplete,  
A half moon glow where silence and dreams meet.  
Not blazing loud like the noonday sun,  
But gentle warmth when day is done.

Half of you shines in golden flame,

A sun that calls my hidden name,  
The other half in silver hue,  
A moon that whispers, soft and true.

You rise in me like morning light,  
Yet calm my storms like tender night,  
A balance rare, a love so deep,  
You wake my soul, yet let it sleep.

In your warmth, I learn to feel,  
In your quiet, I learn to heal,  
You are the fire, the calm, the art—  
Half sky above, whole in my heart.

©Dr. Daksha Udhani  
Ahmedabad

## To me, the world is being corrupted



To me, the world is being corrupted,  
Where the wrong people get promoted,  
In the name of assessment or performance,  
But the best leave with no option!  
The same scenario is there all around,

No matter, of great competence and knowledge  
bound!

False praise and show off gains a place,  
True talent and goodness loses their space!  
Years of hardwork and loads of dreams,  
Proven nothing before "yes man's" scenes;  
Bundle of skills and princely gut,  
Was timely used and squeezed the very next!  
This must be changed now; or else,  
There will be neither pearls nor shells!  
The snake is around your neck,  
Feed it not or you'll be shipwrecked!

Anusha S. T

**Kenya - Japan** Mudavadi said Kenya and Japan reviewed progress in Kenya -Japan relations and explored new areas of cooperation.

# Kenya, Japan pledge deeper economic cooperation as talks focus on trade and investment

BY OPCS

@themkenyaintimes

Kenya attaches great importance to its partnership with Japan, which has continued to deliver tangible results across critical sectors of the economy, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi has said.

Speaking when he hosted a Japanese government visiting delegation led by Japan's Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu, Mudavadi said that Kenya and Japan have committed to deepen their cooperation in trade, investment, development and multilateral engagement.

Mudavadi said Kenya and Japan reviewed progress in Kenya -Japan relations and explored new areas of cooperation.

"Japan is Kenya's key and dependable development partner. Kenya attaches great importance to its partnership with Japan, which has continued to deliver tangible results across critical sectors of our economy," he said.

PCS noted that the visit comes at a time of global economic and geopolitical uncertainty, saying stronger partnerships are necessary to sustain development momentum.

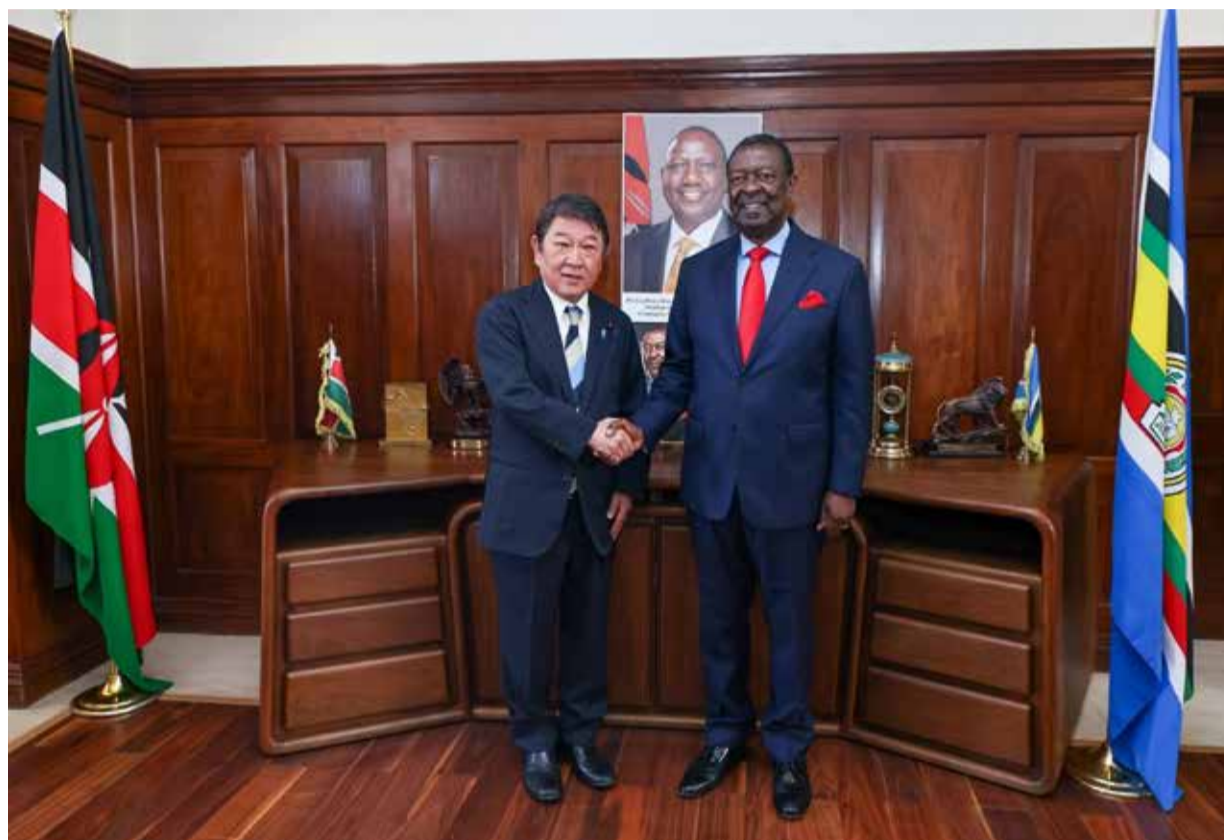
"We are operating in an increasingly volatile global environment, and it is important that we continue to strengthen strategic partnerships such as this one," said Mudavadi.

Mudavadi highlighted Japan's support through Official Development Assistance, which has financed major projects in energy, infrastructure, agriculture, health, ICT, and education.

"Japan's development cooperation has been instrumental in supporting Kenya's transformation, particularly in geothermal energy, irrigation, and infrastructure development," said Mudavadi.

On trade relations, Mudavadi pointed to the existing imbalance, noting that Kenya's exports to Japan remain significantly lower than imports.

"There is a need to expand market access for Kenyan products and create a more balanced and mutually beneficial trade relationship," he said.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi with Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu.

He encouraged Japanese investors to take advantage of opportunities in Kenya under Public-Private Partnerships and ongoing economic reforms.

"Kenya remains open and ready for investment. We welcome deeper Japanese participation in our development agenda," he said.

On financial cooperation, Mudavadi highlighted ongoing discussions on innovative financing arrangements, including the proposed Samurai loan structure and support for key infrastructure projects such as the Mombasa Special Economic Zone Phase II.

"These financing discussions are critical in supporting priority national projects and strengthening economic resilience," he said.

On security cooperation, he welcomed Japan's continued support in maritime security and capacity building, noting its importance to regional stability and trade facilitation. Mudavadi also addressed multilateral cooperation, calling for stronger collaboration in global governance reform and international financial systems.

"We must continue to push for a

more inclusive and responsive multilateral system that reflects current global realities," he said.

On global peace and security, he expressed concern over ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and parts of Africa.

"These conflicts continue to disrupt global supply chains and economic stability. Dialogue remains the most viable path to lasting solutions," he said.

During the talks, Mudavadi congratulated Japan on the election of

Sanae Takaichi as the country's first female Prime Minister, describing it as a historic milestone.

"Kenya congratulates Japan on the election of its first female Prime Minister. This is a significant milestone that reflects progress in inclusive leadership," he said.

Toshimitsu said Japan values its partnership with Kenya and is committed to expanding cooperation.

"Kenya is an important partner for Japan in Africa. We are committed to deepening our cooperation in trade, investment, and development," Toshimitsu said.

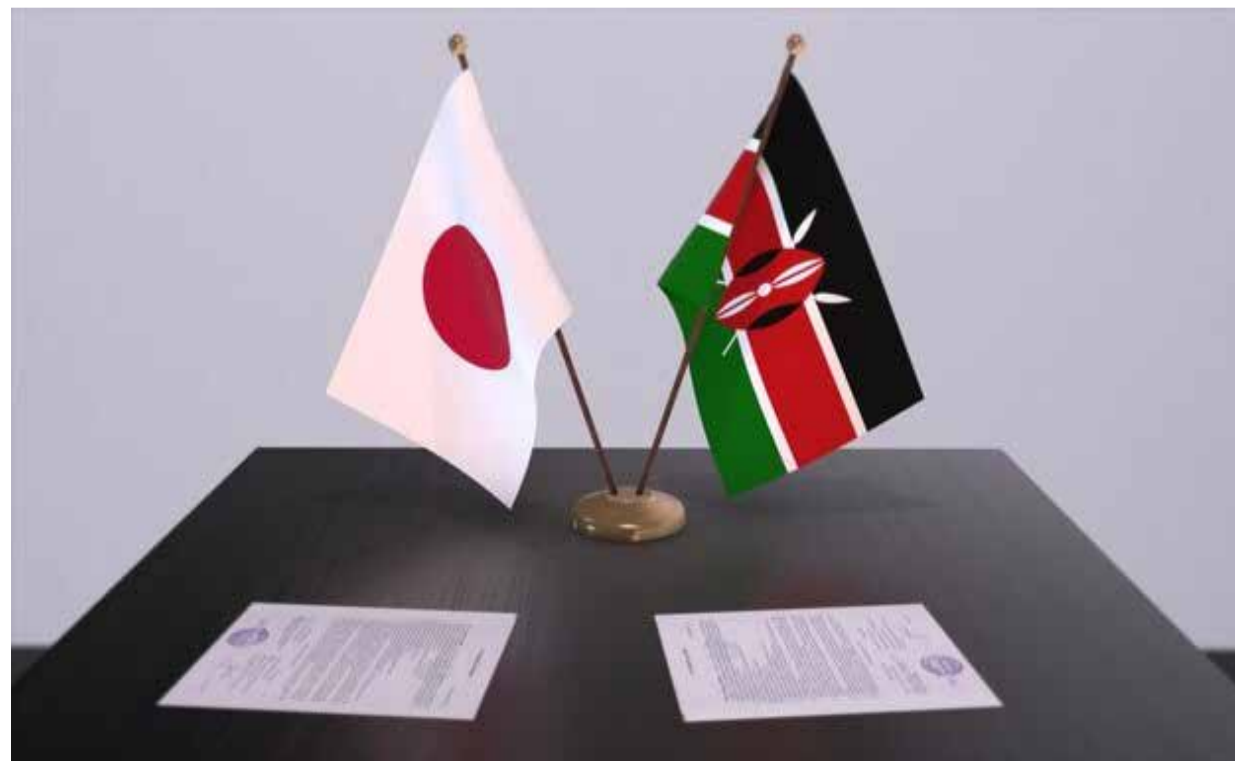
The two leaders called for accelerated efforts to address the trade imbalance, expand market access, and promote value addition for Kenyan exports. They also called for stronger collaboration in investment promotion and business linkages.

They further called for expanded cooperation in people-to-people exchanges, including education, tourism, culture and sports, as well as technical training and scholarship programmes.

On maritime security and climate action, the two sides called for enhanced cooperation, including Kenya's participation in global green initiatives such as the Yokohama Green Expo 2027.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing commitment to deepen practical cooperation aimed at delivering tangible economic and development outcomes.

The Kenya - Japan partnership spans over six decades and continues to evolve as a key pillar of bilateral relations, anchored on development cooperation, trade and strong people-to-people ties.



**Politics** .Kamau said it was disheartening to find some leaders abandoning their electorate, immediately they are elected, only to seek the citizens

# Lawyer Mbiyu Kamau urges leaders to deliver development beyond politics



Lawyer Mbiyu Wa Kamau

**BY MKT REPORTER**  
@themtkenyatimes

Human rights lawyer Mbiyu Kamau has called on leaders to be sensitive to the plight of citizens and ensure they reap maximum benefits from the government.

Kamau said it was disheartening to find some leaders abandoning their electorate, immediately they are elected, only to seek the citizens, support when seeking another term in election.

Speaking during various engagements with several media outlets, among them; Mt Ken-

ya Times newspaper, Njamba TV, Inoro FM and Coro FM last week, Kamau said it is the responsibility of elected leaders to address challenges facing their constituencies, noting that development is continuous and cannot be completed in a single phase.

Kamau called on kenyans to consider those seeking various political seats based on their potential and not on parties that they support saying they have been instances where the electorate regret for going by political waves instead of the aspiring leaders capability.

He noted that some development initiatives takes long and a lot of resources and thus it calls for a lot of commitment and dedication to ensure they are completed for the benefit of the intended people.

Kamau dismissed claims that there are no ongoing projects in the mountain region which is currently perceived to be titling towards President William Ruto's opposition.

Kamau who is seeking to be the next Juja constituency MP outlined several mega projects that are going on saying opposition leaders wanted to discredit the government for

their selfish gains.

He noted that a project like the Mau Mau Roads was cutting across several counties and further named the Kimbo-Matangi Road in his constituency.

The lawyer also criticized the leaders who were accusing Deputy President of being biased saying he was working for the whole country and not his home area as claimed.

He added that the Kithure Kindiki serves the entire country, emphasizing that both the President and Deputy President are elected to serve all Kenyans, not specific regions.

At the same time, he defended the Broadbased government saying it was serving

one of its main agenda of uniting the country. He noted that the system, introduced by President Ruto had ensured that Kenyans, despite the population have a stake in the government through appointment to various positions.

He said the opposition leaders, though opposed to the current working relationship between President Ruto's government and ODM, we working on plans to field one candidate which is akin to the broadbased system.

The lawyer took kenyans through the electioneering process where he articulated what it takes from the time an individual declares interest for a particular political seat to the time one is declared a

winner.

He comprehensively took citizens through from voters registration, declaring interest, party nominations, clearance by IEBC, election, declaration of winners and taking oath of office.

He further also explained the recall of leaders and impeachment process.

He said that once elected, he will work closely with the national and Kiambu county governments for the sake and benefit of Juja constituency people.

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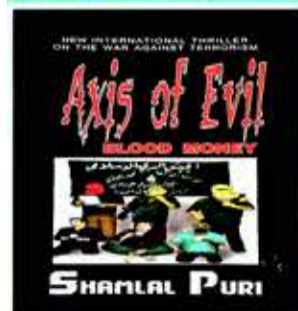
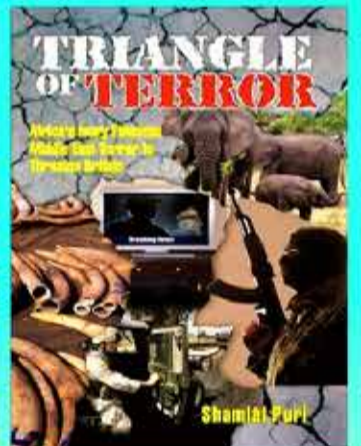
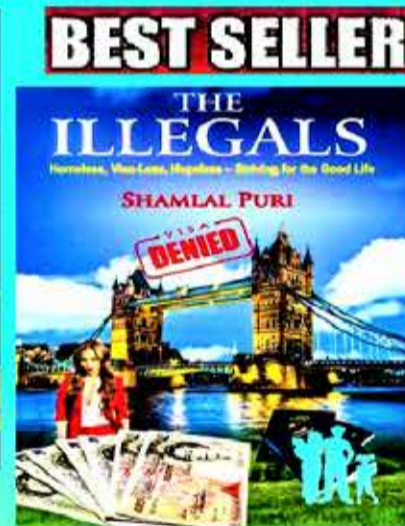
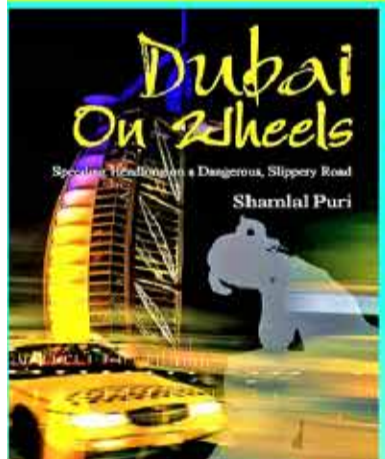
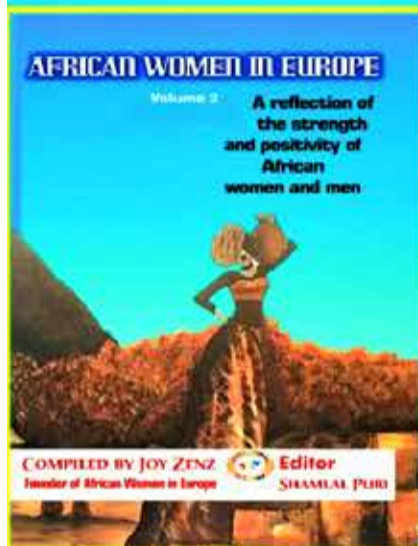
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**Africa** The elite theory (internal factors) focuses on internal governance and posits that African nations are controlled by a power elite

# The curse that never was: Power, design, and the illusion of African leadership failure



BY Fredrick Chelimo  
@themtkenyatimes

Dependency theory & neocolonialism developed by scholars like Walter Rodney and Samir Amin did argue that underdevelopment is not a natural state but a deliberate result of Africa's integration into the global capitalism system, where Africa was a source of raw material and a market for finished products. This resulted in a trade imbalance in favor of the west, African nations, having lost the potential for domestic industrialization, became perpetual beggars who must borrow money or seek aid to survive.

The resource curse or paradox of the plenty opined that countries with vast non-renewable natural resources experience weaker economic growth, less democracy and worse development outcomes than countries with fewer resources. They suggest that wealth (oil, minerals) creates economic volatility and fuels corruption, as elites focus on owning, managing or controlling it making it more extractive than generative economic ventures. This leads to rent seeking behaviour, where leaders siphon off national revenue into foreign banks, resulting inability to govern itself into prosperity.

The elite theory (internal factors) focuses on internal governance and posits that African nations are controlled by a power elite or predatory ruling class that acts in its own self-interest, often in connivance with foreign interests. Rather than developing the nation, this class uses public offices for personal wealth accumulation. This explains why, despite immense potential, resources do not translate into development. All these failures have been attributed to what has been called a curse.

No one wants to own this curse, but every one understands there is collapse of roads, leadership failure, national resources vanishing, health, education and other uncountable

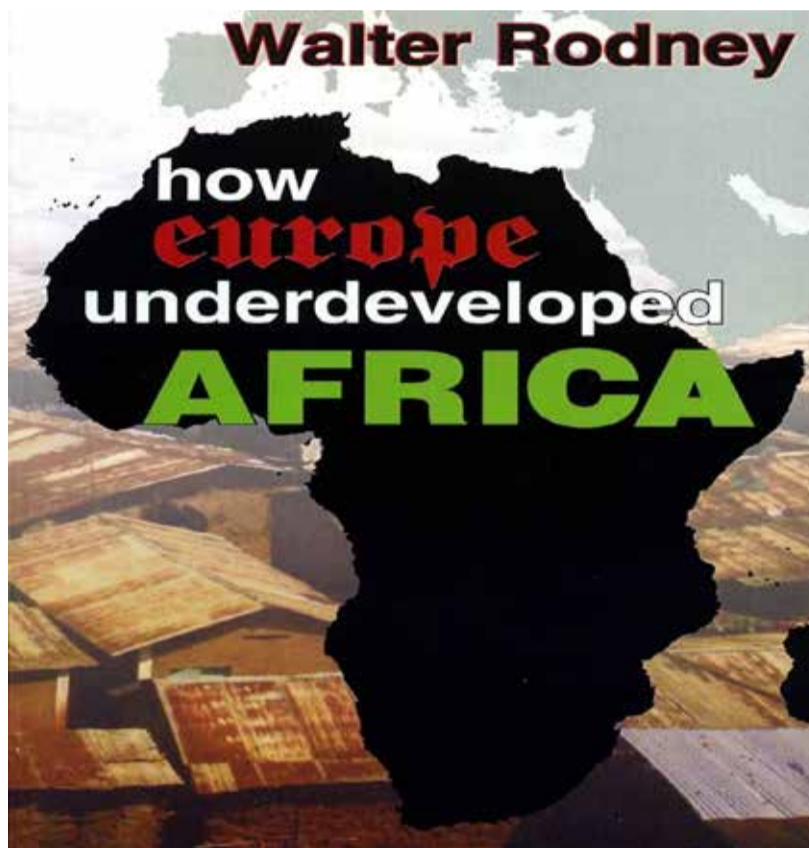
failures attributed to cure as a convenient excuse. Because curse in their very nature cannot be audited, the very leaders think they cannot be audited, voted out and be reformed. They demand acceptance, not resistance. And once people accept a curse, they quietly surrender the burden of responsibility to leaders and to systems aligned to the believe.

If we decide to test the curse, just for a moment, then if Africa is cursed, why does the world refuse to leave it alone? Why do powerful nations circle around its minerals, markets, its lands with calculated persistence? Why is there no shortage of interests but only a shortage of equitable incomes? Cursed things are abandoned. Africa is pursued. Are our scholars inadequately equipped with knowledge or leaderships are bankrupt with creative ideas?

No Africa is not cursed. It is something far less mystical and far more uncomfortable; a system-constructed, refines, and sustained over time. To better understand it, one must return to that infamous moment when Africa was not governed, but allocated – during the Berlin Conference. Imagine the audacity; borders drawn by strangers, nations stitched together without consent, rival communities forced into artificial coexistence. Governance was not designed for cohesion. It was engineered for extraction.

The first uncomfortable truth of the Constrained Sovereignty Theory; African leadership did not begin on a neutral ground. It inherited a structure already titled – subtly, deliberately, and decisively. Independence came, but independence as it turned out, is not autonomy. The Uniforms changed, the flags changed. The system, the quiet machinery of control was adapted. Economic dependence replaced economic domination. Actually, without fanfare, the next layer of constraint settled in.

Next entered institutions like International Monetary Fund and World Bank as guardians of stability, architects of reform, and, occasionally, custodians of limitations. Their prescriptions arrive neatly packaged; fiscal discipline, market liberalization, and structural adjustments. This is where sovereignty becomes more defined. If all our intellectual and



political capacities can be summed up to foreign economic prescriptions, then our leaders, institutional managers and scholars must tell the citizens that they are incapacitated and occupying positions we pay through our taxes in proxy.

While from lived experiences, these financial institutions in which our leaders, in most cases prescribe as a magic bullet to our economic challenges, have led to bigger economic problems. Whether our leaders learn from history, knowledge or lack of it, these institutions have not led any country to any notable success. We remain stuck in either the same problems or even worse year in year out. Why should we employ and spend too much money in our monetary sectors only to be lectured by this institution on when and by how much we should spend or not and to which sector.

Do we have leadership incompetence or expertise deficiency? And the theory begins to lean outwards, blaming history, blaming systems. Because no theory worth defending survives, without confronting its most uncomfortable evidence. Internally tribalism, patronage and elite capture are not imported, but homegrown and deeply entrenched.

Leadership in most cases, become less about national transformation and more about political survival. Appointments follow loyalty. Resources follow allegiance and development follows map of votes, not the map of need. It becomes messy, frustrating and at time indefensible.

The theory therefore, refuses to be romantic providing no evidence of curse, nor proof of total enslavement, but it is proof of adaptive behaviour within weak institutions. When systems are fragile, individuals become the system, and when power is insecure, leaders secure it the only way they know how; by building networks that guarantee survival, even at the expenses of national progress.

The grand global chessboard, where Africa is one move behind, the theory demands precision, this is not about intelligence, but asymmetry. One side negotiates with decades of institutional memory, advanced data systems, and strategic patience. The other negotiates with urgent needs, political pressure, and often, limited technical capacity. The outcome is predictable, not because one side is foolish, but because the game was not evenly designed.

The theory, becomes tested because if African leadership were entirely

cursed, entirely enslaved, or entirely outsmarted, then excellence would be impossible. Thomas Sankara refuses dependency and dared to imagine self-reliance. Ellen Johnsonrebuild institutions from the ashes of conflict. Paul Kagame as controversial as he may be, demonstrated what focused, disciplined governance can achieve within a constrained environment.

These cases refine the theory. They reveal its most conclusion; constraint is real, but it is not absolute. Africa is not cursed, that claim fails under scrutiny. There is no mystical force selectively targeting governance while sparing opportunity. Africa is not entirely enslaved, that argument oversimplifies a complex web of interdependence and ignores internal agencies. Africa is neither outsmarted, and that reduces the structural imbalance to the equation of intellect, which is not.

The hard truth and the uncomfortable one is that African leadership exists within a system of constrained sovereignty, shaped by history, influenced by global power structures and complicated by internal political dynamics in which it is neither free nor fully bound, but navigating. Sometimes effective, strategic, or odd and because of the concept of curse, we do nothing about it.

If it were total enslavement, resistance would treat, for incompetence, replacement would treat, and in it was systemic, layered, persistent, and partially within our control would solve. Citizens are left with more questions than answers; demand more than rhetoric, leaders must rise above survival politics, and institutions must outlive personalities. The most dangerous idea is no longer that Africa is cursed, but understands the system, and how to fully to dismantle it. The greatest tragedy is not that the system limits the people, but that the people, seeing the limits, learn to live comfortably within them.

Combining global capitalism structures that force African economies into primary commodity production, weak governance, corruption and puppet leadership that prioritizes personal gain over national development and coupled with aid trap that is aligned to foreign dependency on aid and loans completes the equation. These arguments lead to the conclusion that Africa is not poor, but rather, its wealth is extracted by an unequal global system enforced by both external partners and an internal elite collision

Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo  
PWD  
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**Teachers** We call them nation builders in speeches and budget frameworks. Then we hand them a payslip that cannot cover decent rent

# A nation that starves its teachers is planning to be poor



By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza  
mukphix@gmail.com

The nation wakes up because a teacher woke up first. Before the doctor saves a life, a teacher rescued him from ignorance. Before the engineer builds a bridge, a teacher built his mind. Before the president reads a policy brief, a teacher taught him how to read. Yet across East Africa, we have perfected a cruel paradox: we entrust teachers with the future of every profession, then pay them as though their own futures do not matter.

Walk into any staffroom at 5:30 a.m. in Kampala, Nairobi, Kigali, Dar es Salaam, or Juba. You will find them there — marking books by the light of a dying bulb, rehearsing lessons they will deliver to eighty children in a room built for forty, reaching into their own pockets for chalk, manila paper, and sanitary pads for girls who would otherwise miss class. They sacrifice sleep to write lesson plans, sacrifice weekends to set exams, sacrifice their health to stand for eight hours a day moulding the minds that will one day tax them, legislate for them, and — too often — forget them.

We call them nation builders in speeches and budget frameworks. Then we hand them a payslip that cannot cover decent rent, cannot pay for their own child's university tuition, and cannot survive a single medical emergency. In Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and across the region, a primary school teacher's net pay routinely falls below the cost of living in the very communities they serve. Meanwhile, we tax that modest income as though it were a chief executive's bonus — deducting PAYE, NSSF, and local



Teachers

service tax before sending teachers back to classrooms with leaking roofs and no textbooks, and expecting miracles. We have quietly turned sacrifice into a job description.

The human cost of this neglect is visible and specific. A teacher with twenty years of service still commutes by boda boda in the rain while the district officials he once taught drive past in government V8s. She manages diabetes with herbal remedies because the health insurance is inadequate and the pharmacy too far. He retires at sixty with a gratuity that cannot buy a plot of land, after spending thirty-five years producing every other professional in the country. We have normalised their poverty and dressed it up as a calling. That is not noble. That is exploitation.

Consider, for one sobering moment, what would happen if they stopped. If every teacher in East Africa set down their chalk tomorrow and said

no more — no more midnight lesson plans, no more remedial sessions for struggling learners, no more quietly feeding the hungry child or counselling the frightened teenager — the consequences would be generational. In one generation, we would have no doctors. In two, no engineers, no pilots, no presidents. The courts would empty. The hospitals would close. The economies would not collapse with a dramatic bang but with the eerie silence of a classroom without a teacher. That is how essential they are, and that is how recklessly we have taken them for granted.

This neglect is not only about money, though money remains the most honest admission of respect. It is about a government that will commission a new parliament chamber before it builds decent teachers' quarters. It is about a society that tips a musician millions at a concert but haggles when a teacher asks for a ten percent pay rise.

It is about parents who will storm a school over a child's grade but never once storm the Ministry of Finance over a teacher's wage. We have made teaching the profession we praise loudly in public and quietly pity in private.

"Teacher's reward is in heaven." We repeat this phrase like scripture. It is not scripture. It is the most sophisticated wage theft in the region, dressed up as virtue — a phrase invented to sedate our collective conscience so we do not have to open the Treasury. No one tells a doctor his reward is in heaven. No one tells a member of parliament her pension is waiting in paradise. Only the teacher must defer gratification into eternity. The classroom is not a church. Teaching is not a tithe. It is skilled, exhausting, irreplaceable labour, and in any just society, labour must be paid — on earth, in shillings, before the landlord knocks.

There are eight things East African governments can and

must do, and none of them require waiting for a better economic season. Pay teachers like the essential workers they are, benchmarking graduate teacher salaries against those of other degree-holding civil servants. Untax their sacrifice through a Teacher's Tax Credit that exempts the first portion of their income from PAYE — if we can offer tax holidays to foreign investors, we can offer tax relief to the people investing in our children. Build staff quarters with water, electricity, and internet access at every new school. Establish a comprehensive teachers' health insurance scheme covering spouses and children. Overhaul the pension system so that retirement actually sustains a home. Create career pathways — Master Teacher, Curriculum Specialist, Teacher Mentor — that reward excellence in the classroom without requiring a teacher to leave it. Enforce laws that protect teachers from abuse by parents, land-

lords, and district officials. And seat teacher unions as equal partners at every table where education policy is shaped, because teachers are not implementers of policy. They are the experts on it.

A teacher is the only civil servant who parents eighty children who are not his own, then goes home to parent his own on an empty stomach. During COVID-19, they became data bundles and radio presenters so that learning would not die. During elections, they became polling officials so democracy would not fail. We deploy them in every national emergency, then abandon them in every national budget.

The consequences of continued neglect are not theoretical. They are already accumulating, quietly and without announcement, in every staffroom where another talented young person looks at their predecessor's pension slip and chooses a telecommunications job instead. Every time a teacher leaves for a market stall or an NGO that pays on time, a piece of the national foundation goes with them. We are not simply losing staff. We are haemorrhaging architects, and we call it natural attrition.

This is not a funding problem. It is a choice problem. The money exists. It is deployed elsewhere, to other loyalties and other priorities. So the real question is not where the money will come from. The real question is what kind of people we are if, after everything teachers have given, we still have to ask.

Pay them. House them. Heal them. Honour them — before the silence in the staffroom becomes the silence of a generation that never learned to read, to count, or to dream.

The future is not built in State House. It is built in Primary One, by a teacher who arrived before the sun rose and left long after it set.

*The writer is an author, researcher, corporate communicator, and gender equality activist. He can be reached at mukphix@gmail.com*

**Politics** A child in Grade One to Six is allocated KSh 188 for an entire term, not per week, not per month, but per term.

# A presidency that cannot fund a child should not ask for a second term



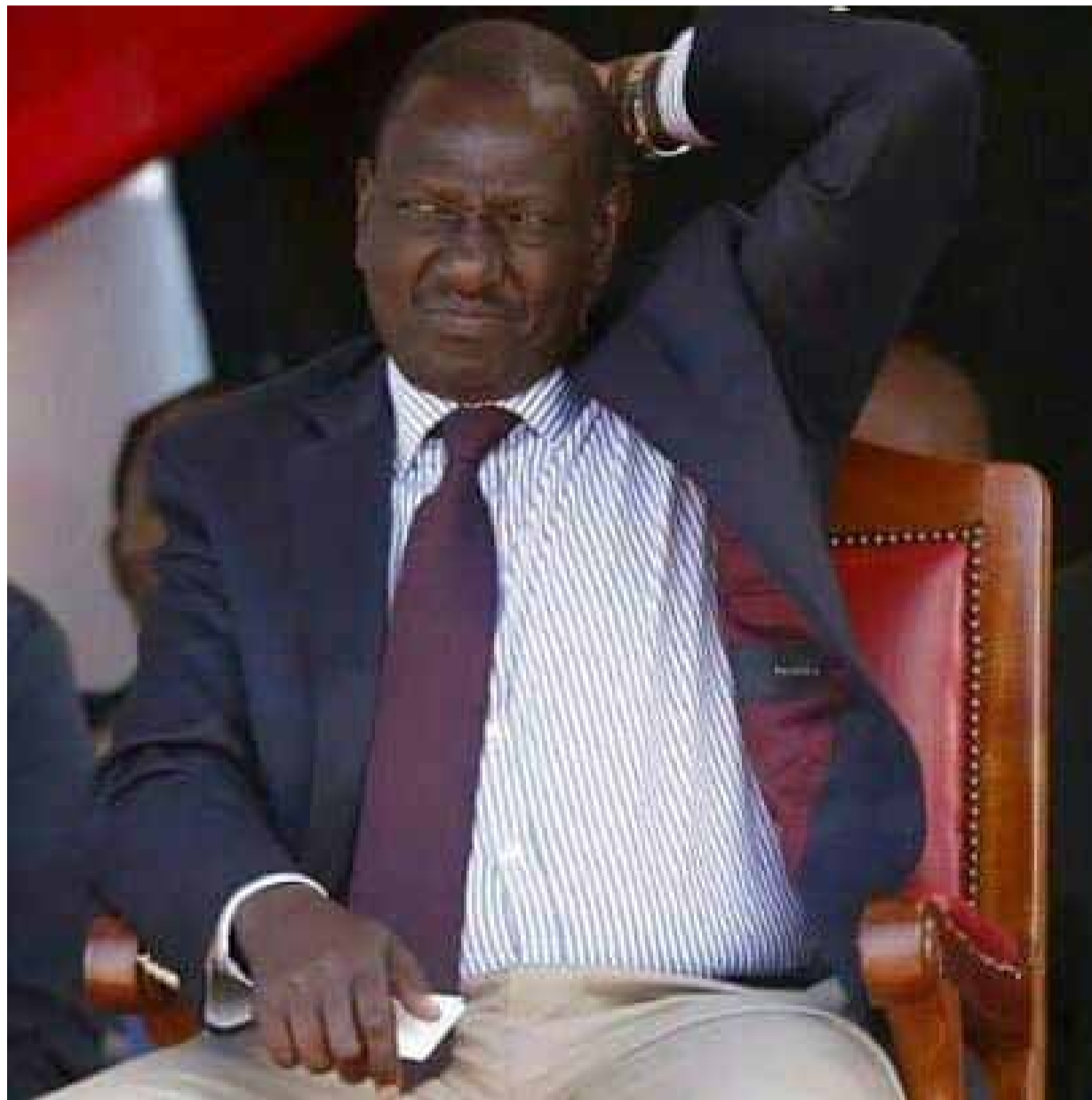
By: Gitile Naituli  
@themkenyatimes

There comes a moment in the life of a nation when numbers cease to be mere statistics and become moral verdicts. Budgets, after all, are not neutral instruments; they are ethical documents. They reveal what a government values, what it is willing to protect, and, perhaps more tellingly, what it is prepared to neglect. When a state assigns a child's education a value so small it borders on absurdity, it is not merely making an accounting choice. It is making a declaration about the worth of its future.

The recent broadcast detailing capitation for primary education in Kenya presents such a moment. Shilling by shilling, the story unfolds into something deeply unsettling. A child in Grade One to Six is allocated KSh 188 for an entire term, not per week, not per month, but per term. Out of this, only KSh 40 is set aside for books. The rest must stretch across fourteen weeks to cover everything from writing materials to school operations, maintenance, and even co-curricular activities. By the time the arithmetic is done, the classroom has already suffocated under the weight of scarcity before a lesson has even begun.

Consider what this means in practice. Exercise books, teacher guides, writing materials, all must be sourced from a budget that evaporates almost instantly. Operational costs, cleaning, electricity, minor repairs, communication, are funded in amounts that would be laughable if they were not so tragic. Science and technology, the very pillars upon which Kenya claims to build its future, are allocated a mere KSh 2 per child per term. It is difficult to decide whether this is symbolic neglect or a quiet abandonment of ambition.

In any serious society, such figures



President William Ruto

would provoke not just debate but alarm. For primary education is not a peripheral concern; it is the foundation upon which all other sectors stand. Undermine it, and the entire edifice of national development becomes unstable. Starve it, and the promise of social mobility, innovation, and cohesion begins to wither.

Yet the Kenyan paradox lies precisely here: while classrooms struggle to breathe, the state continues to spend lavishly elsewhere. Political rallies, official convoys, and administrative excesses consume vast resources with little scrutiny. We are told there is no money for schools, even as millions are mobilized overnight for events of questionable national value. One cannot escape the



**In any serious society, such figures would provoke not just debate but alarm. For primary education is not a peripheral concern; it is the foundation upon which all other sectors stand. Undermine it, and the entire edifice of national development becomes unstable. Starve it, and the promise of social mobility, innovation, and cohesion begins to wither.**

uncomfortable contrast between a child allocated KSh 188 for a term and a political spectacle costing millions for a single day.

The moral tension deepens when one considers the silence, or complicity, of those expected to speak for education. Teacher unions, historically the guardians of educators' welfare, appear subdued. Their voices, once sharp with advocacy, now seem dulled by proximity to power. Meanwhile, teachers themselves navigate impossible conditions: overcrowded classrooms, insufficient materials, and mounting psychological strain. The profession that should inspire the nation increasingly survives on resilience alone.

This is not merely a policy failure; it

is a failure of priority. And priorities are the clearest window into leadership. A government that cannot adequately fund the earliest stage of learning is not simply underperforming. It is misdirected. It is choosing optics over substance, immediacy over legacy.

The Kenyan child, seated in a classroom with too few books and too many expectations, becomes the silent witness to this misdirection. Their reality contradicts the rhetoric of "quality education" repeated in policy documents and speeches. And in that contradiction lies a deeper question: what kind of future is being constructed when the foundation is this fragile?

It is within this context that the question of political continuity must be confronted. A second term is not an entitlement; it is a renewal of trust. It is granted when a leader demonstrates not only intent but measurable progress in the lives of citizens. It is justified when the trajectory of governance inspires confidence that the next five years will build meaningfully upon the last.

But what does one make of a first term where primary education, arguably the most critical investment a nation can make, has been reduced to such precarious arithmetic? What confidence can be drawn from a system where a school of two hundred pupils receives funding that cannot sustain even its most basic functions? And what does it say about leadership when these realities coexist with visible excess elsewhere in government?

These are not rhetorical questions meant to inflame; they are reflective questions meant to clarify. For ultimately, the legitimacy of a second term rests not on political strategy or electoral maneuvering, but on a simple moral calculus: has the government honored its responsibility to the most fundamental needs of its people? If the answer is found in classrooms that cannot function, in teachers who cannot cope, and in children who cannot access the tools of learning, then the conclusion becomes difficult to avoid. A presidency that struggles to fund a child's education must first account for that failure before seeking renewal.

For in the end, the measure of leadership is not found in speeches or ceremonies, but in the quiet dignity of a functioning classroom. And where that dignity is absent, so too is the strongest argument for a second term.

*The writer is a former commissioner with NCIC who comments on various topical issues*

**Zimbabwe** The lithium industry is a prime example of Zimbabwe’s potential for economic diversification and growth.

# Zimbabwe’s lithium boom: Opportunities and challenges

BY Norman Mwale

@themtkenyatimes

Zimbabwe’s economy is poised for significant growth, with projections indicating a 5% increase in 2026, driven by stronger fiscal and monetary coordination, lower inflation, and support for key sectors. This growth is underpinned by the country’s rich mineral reserves, particularly lithium, which has become a strategic resource globally due to its use in rechargeable batteries for electric vehicles and energy storage systems.

The lithium industry is a prime example of Zimbabwe’s potential for economic diversification and growth. With Africa’s largest lithium reserves, the country has attracted significant investments from Chinese companies, including Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt’s \$400 million Prospect Lithium Plant and Sinomine’s planned \$500 million lithium



Zimbabwe’s lithium boom

sulphate plant at Bikita mine. These investments will not only boost lithium production but also create employment opportunities and stimulate local economic growth.

However, challenges persist, including unreliable electricity, inconsistent policy implementation, and foreign

currency shortages. To mitigate these issues, strategic coordination between the Ministries of Energy and Mines is crucial to ensure sufficient energy supply and support the growth of the mining sector. Zimbabwe’s energy sector faces significant challenges, including ageing infrastruc-

ture, inadequate generation capacity, and limited access to electricity, particularly in rural areas. To address these issues, the government has initiated several projects, including the expansion of the Hwange Thermal Power Station, which is expected to add

600MW to the national grid, the development of renewable energy projects, such as solar and wind farms, to diversify the country’s energy mix, and the implementation of net metering policies, which allow households and businesses to generate their own electricity and sell excess back to the grid. In Kwekwe, for instance, the government has launched initiatives to increase access to clean energy, including the installation of solar-powered streetlights and the promotion of rooftop solar systems.

Zimbabwe’s water sector also faces significant challenges, including ageing infrastructure, inadequate treatment capacity, and increasing demand due to population growth and urbanization. In Harare, the capital city, the water crisis has worsened, with residents facing frequent shortages and poor water quality.

In Kwekwe, residents are grappling with a crippling water shortage, with some going for weeks without a single drop of tap water, forcing them to rely on unreliable boreholes and expensive, water vendors. Kwekwe Mayor, Albert Zinhanga, has appealed to residents to be patient, saying, “We understand the hardship our people are facing,

and we are committed to finding a lasting solution.” The city council is working to repair broken pipes and increase water production. In Redcliff, residents have been protesting against the town’s water woes, citing inadequate supply and poor service delivery. To address these challenges, the government has initiated several projects, including the rehabilitation of water treatment plants and distribution networks, the development of new water sources, such as boreholes and dams, and the promotion of water conservation measures, such as rainwater harvesting and efficient irrigation systems.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe’s economic prospects are promising, driven by its rich mineral reserves and growing investments in the lithium sector. However, addressing the country’s energy and water challenges is crucial to sustaining growth and improving living standards. With effective policy implementation and strategic coordination, Zimbabwe can overcome these challenges and achieve sustainable development.



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# SPORTS NEWS

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**Sports >>** \*Millicent Jelimo announced herself on the global marathon stage on Sunday, winning the Prague Marathon on debut in 2:24:19 to lead a historic one-two-three finish for Kenya

## Kenya sweeps Prague Marathon podium as Jelimo marks debut victory

By Martin Weche

Millicent Jelimo announced herself on the global marathon stage on Sunday, winning the Prague Marathon on debut in 2:24:19 to lead a historic one-two-three finish for Kenya, with Janet Ruguru clocking 2:26:41 in second and Angela Tanui completing the clean sweep in third with 2:27:45.

For Jelimo, 29, the victory was the culmination of a quiet but steady rise through the ranks of African middle and long-distance running. She had arrived in Prague with respectable but unremarkable credentials — a fourth-place finish at the Roma Half Marathon in March, where she clocked 1:11:15, and two previous podium appearances at the Rome Half Marathon in 2025 and the Shaoxing Half Marathon in 2024, where she finished second and third respectively. Nothing in that record quite predicted what unfolded on the streets of the Czech capital.

Yet those close to Jelimo say Sunday was no surprise. She had trained through the European winter with renewed focus, and her coaches had long believed the marathon distance suited her patient, measured running style better than the half-marathon circuit where she had built her name. Prague, with its relatively flat course winding through one of central Europe's most scenic capitals, gave her the ideal conditions to prove them right.

She ran with authority from the early stages, moving to the front of the leading group before the halfway mark and refusing to yield as the kilometres accumulated. By the final stretch, the race was hers. The time — 2:24:19 — was a debut of genuine quality, one that will draw serious attention from the sport's major race directors ahead of the autumn marathon season.

"This is a dream come true,"



Millicent Jelimo in a past race. PHOTO/DANRAGOS FROLIC

Jelimo said after crossing the line, still composed despite the effort of the previous two hours and twenty-four minutes. "I have been working very hard and waiting for this moment. I believed in myself even when things were not easy."

The women's podium completed an extraordinary afternoon for Kenyan athletics — a full sweep that underlined the depth and continued dominance of Kenyan women's marathon running at the international level. Ruguru and Tanui, both accomplished campaigners on the European circuit, ran their own disciplined races to support what became a commanding Kenyan statement.

The men's race told a different and more complicated story for

Kenya. Felix Kipkoech crossed the line in 2:07:45 to take second place, a strong performance by any objective measure, but one ultimately overshadowed by the commanding display of Ethiopia's Berehanu Wemdemu Tsegu, who won in 2:05:51 — a time that placed him firmly among the day's standout performers. Another Ethiopian, Andualem Belay Shiferaw, claimed third in 2:07:59, completing a mirror image of the women's race, this time with the continental bragging rights reversed.

The men's result will sting slightly in the Kenyan camp. Kipkoech ran bravely and executed his race plan, but Tsegu was simply in another register on the day — moving through the field with the kind of smooth,

relentless efficiency that has become a hallmark of Ethiopian marathon running in recent seasons. The rivalry between Kenya and Ethiopia on the roads remains as tight and combustible as ever, and Prague added another compelling chapter.

For Kenya, however, Sunday ultimately belonged to the women — and above all to Jelimo, who stepped onto the marathon stage for the first time and refused to leave without the top prize. At 29, with her best years still ahead of her and her first marathon title now secured, the quiet contender from the Rift Valley has a great deal more to say.

Prague was only the beginning.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Hopes of securing a berth at the 2027 World Championships in China evaporate as Moses Onyango, Millicent Ndoro, Dennis Mwai, and Eunice Kadogo clock a disappointing 41.84

## Bitter last place for Kenya: relay team crashes out of world relays in Gaborone



**GABORONE, Botswana** — It was supposed to be a springboard to China. Instead, it became a dead end in Gaborone. Kenya's 4x100 metres mixed relay team suffered a crushing elimination on Sunday at the World Athletics Relays in Botswana's capital, finishing a distant seventh in Heat 1 and effectively ending any realistic ambition of claiming a qualifying place for the 2027 World Championships in Beijing.

The quartet of Moses Onyango, Millicent Ndoro, Dennis Mwai, and Eunice Kadogo crossed the line in 41.84 seconds — a time that told its own story, one of a team that never found its rhythm when the stakes were at their highest. The gap to the front of the field was not merely a matter of fractions. It was a chasm.

Leading the charge with clinical European efficiency was Italy, whose four-person lineup of Junior Tardioli, Elisa Valensin, Andrea Bernardi, and the electrifying Zaynab Dosso de-

livered a season's best of 40.69 to take the heat in commanding fashion. Portugal, equally sharp and composed through the baton exchanges, finished second in a season's best of 40.76. France completed the European clean sweep of the podium positions, crossing the line in 40.88 to claim third.

Between France in third and Kenya in seventh, the message for Kenyan athletics officials and selectors could not have been clearer: the gap between the continent's distance running excellence and its short-sprint infrastructure remains stubborn and painfully wide.

Kenya has built its global athletics reputation across the distances — in the 1500m, the 5000m, the 10,000m, and above all the marathon, where Kenyan runners have dominated world athletics for decades. But the sprints have long represented a frontier the country has struggled to cross. Sunday's performance in Gaborone was a vivid illustration

of that ongoing challenge, with the 1.15-second deficit to the victorious Italian team reflecting not merely the difficulties of one afternoon's racing, but a deeper structural gap in Kenyan sprint development.

The World Athletics Relays in Gaborone serve a precise competitive function: they are one of the key qualifying pathways for the World Championships, and nations that fail to post competitive times in the heats risk exclusion from athletics' most prestigious gathering. For Kenya's mixed relay team, the elimination carries consequences that extend well beyond the disappointment of a single result — it signals that the country will need to undertake significant work at home if its sprinters are to become serious contenders on the global stage.

For Italy, Sunday was a moment of genuine continental vindication. The Italian sprint programme has been one of European athletics' great success stories

of the past decade, culminating in Marcell Jacobs' shock 100m gold at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, and the national relay infrastructure has built steadily on that foundation. Zaynab Dosso, the Italian-born Ivorian sprinter who has become one of the most exciting short-sprint talents in Europe, brought characteristic acceleration to the anchor leg, and the team's baton work throughout was composed and precise.

Portugal and France, both nations with deep relay traditions and well-resourced sprint programmes, demonstrated the depth of European talent in the mixed relay format — a discipline that demands not only individual speed but flawless technical execution across four very different athletes.

For Kenyan athletics, the priority now must be honest reflection. The talent that exists in the country's school and club systems is not in doubt. What Sunday exposed was the need for dedicated relay camps, technical sprint coaching investment, and a sustained programme designed to close the gap to the world's best — before the next qualification window opens and history risks repeating itself.

In Gaborone, Kenya arrived with hope. It departed with homework.

# SPORTS NEWS



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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



# A Journey of Resilience, Purpose, and Timeless Empowerment



By: Anila Bukhari  
@themtkenyatimes



## Worth Noting:

- Rita considers herself a multifaceted woman who thrives on continuous learning and self-improvement. She embraces challenges with courage and curiosity, always seeking opportunities to grow, evolve, and explore new dimensions of her potential. Whether it is stepping into new roles, acquiring new skills, or connecting with people from different walks of life, she approaches everything with authenticity and purpose. Her ability to adapt and reinvent herself has become one of her strongest qualities, allowing her to navigate life with grace and confidence.
- Her life, however, has not been without hardship. From a young age, Rita faced one of life's most profound challenges—the loss of her parents. This experience deeply shaped her character and became a driving force behind her resilience.

Rita Castro is a remarkable Costa Rican woman whose life story reflects strength, elegance, and the unwavering determination of a modern woman who continues to evolve with every stage of life. She is not defined by a single role but rather by the harmony with which she embraces many—dentist, mother, beauty queen, and a woman of deep values. Her journey stands as a testament to resilience, discipline, and the belief that growth never stops, no matter age or circumstance.

With over 23 years of experience in dentistry, Rita has dedicated her professional life to more than just oral health. For her, dentistry is a powerful tool to transform lives. Through her work, she has helped countless individuals regain confidence, improve their self-esteem, and present the best version of themselves to the world. Her passion for her profession goes beyond technical expertise; it lies in the human connection she builds with every patient. She believes that a smile can change not only appearances but also the way people feel about themselves, and this philosophy has shaped her approach throughout her career.

Rita considers herself a multifaceted woman who thrives on continuous learning and self-improvement. She embraces challenges with courage and curiosity, always seeking opportunities to grow, evolve, and explore new dimensions of her potential. Whether it is stepping into new roles, acquiring new skills, or connecting with people from different walks of life, she approaches everything with authenticity and purpose. Her ability to adapt and reinvent herself has become one of her strongest qualities, allowing her to navigate life with grace and confidence.

Her life, however, has not been without hardship. From a young age, Rita faced one of life's most profound challenges—the loss of her parents. This experience deeply shaped her character and became a driving force behind her resilience. Instead of allowing adversity to define her negatively, she chose to build a life rooted in strong values

such as honesty, respect, and discipline. These principles became her foundation, guiding her decisions and helping her stay on the right path despite difficulties. Her journey is a powerful reminder that strength is often born from the challenges we endure.

As a mother of two pre-teen children, Rita finds her greatest source of inspiration and purpose within her family. Motherhood holds a central place in her life, and she is deeply committed to raising her children with love, responsibility, and strong moral values. She strives to be a role model for them, demonstrating through her actions the importance of perseverance, kindness, and integrity. Balancing motherhood with her professional and personal ambitions is something she embraces wholeheartedly, proving that women can nurture their families while still pursuing their dreams.

Rita's journey in the world of beauty and modeling began at the age of 17, marking the start of a path that would later become a significant part of her identity. Over the years, she has achieved notable recognition, earning titles such as Miss Teen Costa Rica and Miss Latina Internacional. These accomplishments are not merely about external beauty; they represent her confidence, dedication, and ability to stand strong in competitive environments. Today, she proudly holds the title of Missis Costa Rica Classic 2026, a milestone that symbolizes her personal rebirth and sends a powerful message about embracing life after 40. Through this achievement, she challenges societal expectations and inspires women to believe that their dreams remain valid at any age.

Beyond her professional and pageant success, Rita is deeply committed to giving back to her community. She actively participates in social work, particularly supporting women who are battling cancer. Her compassion and desire to serve are evident in her involvement with institutions such as Hospital México, Hospital Calderón Guardia, Hospital San Juan de Dios, and the organization Creando Sonrisas. Through her



Rita Castro

volunteer work, she brings hope, encouragement, and positivity to those who need it most, reinforcing her belief that true fulfillment comes from helping others.

Rita also uses her platform to inspire women to embrace all aspects of their lives without fear or limitation. She strongly advocates for balance, encouraging women to pursue their careers, nurture their families, and prioritize their own well-being and personal growth. She believes that women do not have to choose between roles—they can successfully integrate them with the right mindset and determination. Her message is clear: self-love, discipline, and courage are the keys to living a fulfilling and meaningful life.

Today, Rita Castro stands as a symbol of empowerment and transformation. Her story continues to inspire those around her, reminding them that setbacks are not the end but rather opportunities to rise stronger. She embodies the idea that beauty is not just physical but is deeply rooted in resilience, character, and the courage to keep moving forward.

Rita Castro is living proof that true beauty is born from resilience, self-love, and the courage to embrace every chapter of life with confidence and purpose.