



CS Kinyanjui: Invest in high-rise buildings to save agricultural land
The Government is encouraging investment in High-rise buildings in counties like Kiambu where real estate is rapidly replacing agricultural land.

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Jubilee intensifies 2027 preparations as Matiang'i meets Nyeri aspirants
The Jubilee Party has stepped up its preparations for the 2027 General Election after its Deputy Party Leader, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, held a consultative meeting with a section of party aspirants from Nyeri County

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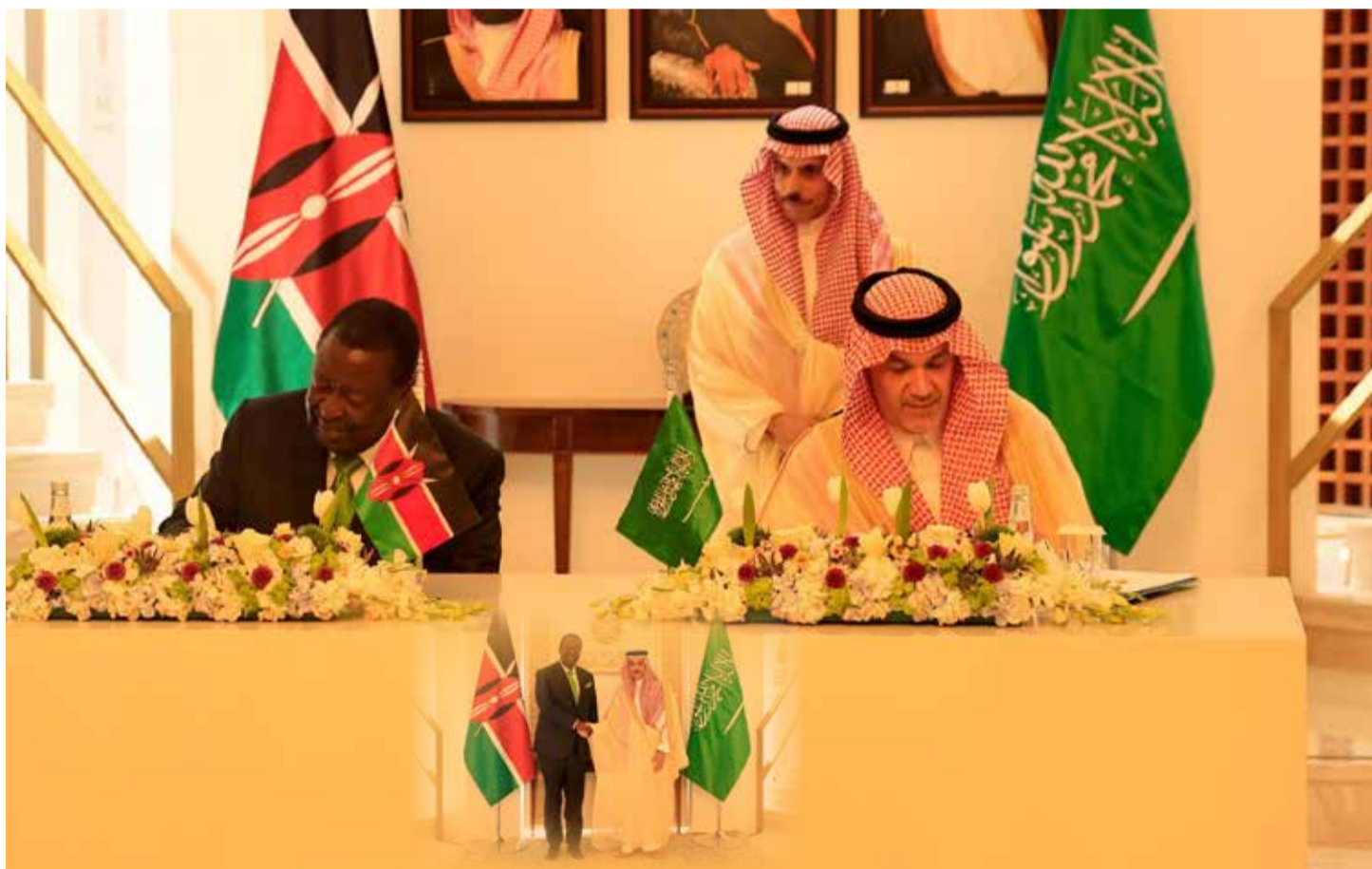
Kenya-Saudi Arabia For Kenya, the centrepiece of the discussions was the welfare of the more than 300,000 Kenyans currently working in the Kingdom

Kenya, Saudi ink three pacts in Riyadh

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The agreements cap a three-day official visit by Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi, who led the Kenyan delegation in talks with Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, at the first meeting of the newly established Saudi-Kenyan Political Consultations Committee.

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Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi in Riyadh with His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Gachagua steps up 2027 consultations, courts Gichugu and Othaya leaders

BY DMS
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has intensified his grassroots consultations ahead of the 2027 General Election, hosting delegations from Gichugu and Othaya Constituencies as he continues building political alliances for what he has described as the formation of Kenya's "Sixth Administration."

The back-to-back meetings form part of Gachagua's broader nationwide consultations with opinion leaders, grassroots mobilisers and political stakeholders as the opposition seeks to consolidate support in the Mt Kenya region and beyond ahead of the next general election.

In the first meeting, Gachagua welcomed a delegation of opinion leaders from Gichugu led by former Gichugu MP Justus Munene.

Speaking after the meeting, Gachagua described Gichugu as his "second home," recalling his personal and professional ties to the constituency. He said he spent nine years of his early life in the area, six of them as a student at Kianyaga



Contd page 8

Editor's Desk



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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/>

Our Contacts
P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Six suspects arrested in connection with the alleged attack on Linda Mwananchi's convoy in Keumbu failed to take a plea at a Kisii court after the Prosecution and arresting officer failed to show up. Senior Resident Magistrate Caroline Cheruiyot ordered the suspects to be taken back to the cells until such a time when the file is ready. The suspects were apprehended over the weekend following ongoing investigations and security operations by the OCS Keumbu and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations in Kisii Central. Linda Mwananchi's convoy of vehicles was pelted with stones by a group of individuals last Friday during the team's tour of Gusii region, leaving one person dead and several people nursing serious injuries.



A section of Christian clergy in Malindi, Kilifi County, has condemned the recently concluded Summer Tides Festival, accusing it of promoting immorality, indecent behaviour and practices contrary to African cultural values and Christian teachings. During a prayer meeting at Cleopatra Grounds, the clerics urged authorities to stop similar events from being held in the town, saying entertainment should respect local traditions and public decency. Malindi Pastors Fellowship chairman Bishop Thomas Kakala alleged the festival featured public nudity, prostitution and same-sex behaviour, while Bishop Patrick Mathole said some scenes at the event were inappropriate for families. The clergy also appealed to government agencies to ensure future events comply with the law and uphold public morality.



An 82-year-old man from Uasin Gishu County has asked an Eldoret court to help relocate his son after accusing him of attempting to kill him and forcefully taking over his property. Appearing before Presiding Magistrate Beatrice Toroitich, Francis Chepkok alleged that his son, Kiprop Chepkok, tried to burn down his house using petrol before chasing him away with a machete. The dispute is said to revolve around a 30-acre piece of land in Tulwet, despite the son having already received a share of the family property. Chepkok told the court he now lives like a refugee and sought orders allowing him to sell part of his land to buy his son property elsewhere. The accused is out on bond.



The government has announced plans to begin a forceful disarmament exercise in Tana River County following the expiry of a 60-day amnesty for the voluntary surrender of illegal firearms. The move comes amid recurring inter-community clashes that have claimed dozens of lives, including six deaths reported during last week's fighting between the Wardey and Degodia communities in Bangale Sub-county. Coast Regional Police Commander Ali Nuno said preparations for the operation were complete and warned that anyone found with illegal firearms, as well as politicians accused of inciting violence, would face the law. Tana River County Commissioner Joseph Mwangi urged community and religious leaders to support peace efforts, insisting the county would not be allowed to remain a hotspot for ethnic conflict.



Principal Secretary for Aviation and Aerospace Development Teresia Mbaika has urged women in Ilima Ward, Kilungu Sub-county, to invest funds received through government empowerment programmes in businesses to improve their livelihoods and achieve financial independence. Speaking during an empowerment forum at Akatch Stadium in Kyambeke Market, Mbaika said the funds should be treated as seed capital to grow businesses, increase household incomes and create jobs. She reaffirmed the government's commitment to delivering development through the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, citing ongoing road projects in the area. Mbaika also called on residents to support the Kenya Kwanza administration, while Kibwezi West MP Mwangi Mutuse urged them to back development-oriented leaders over tribal politics.

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Technology For Mohmud, technology has always been more than computers and code it has been a tool for transformation.

From passion to purpose: How Temesgen Mohmud is shaping Africa's digital future

BY Jofeth Ogada

@themkenyatimes

Africa's digital economy is evolving at an unprecedented pace. From small businesses embracing e-commerce to startups leveraging technology to solve everyday challenges, the demand for innovative digital solutions has never been greater.

At the heart of this transformation is a new generation of entrepreneurs using technology not only to build businesses but also to solve problems and create opportunities.

Among them is Temesgen Mohmud, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Temesgen Web Developers, whose journey from a curious technology enthusiast to a successful entrepreneur reflects the promise of Africa's digital revolution.

For Mohmud, technology has always been more than computers and code it has been a tool for transformation.

During an exclusive interview with Newline Media, he said his fascination with technology began at an early age.

Curious about how digital systems worked, he spent much of his childhood exploring gadgets and seeking answers to how technology could simplify everyday life.

"That curiosity eventually inspired me to pursue Information Technology, where I have developed skills in web development, software engineering, networking and database management among

others," he said.

While academic training at the University provided the technical foundation, Mohmud says his growth as a professional was further strengthened through mentorship and hands-on industry exposure at Newline Media and Training Agency.

The centre, which offers practical training, mentorship and attachment opportunities to university and college students, enabled him to translate classroom knowledge into real-world experience by working on practical projects and interacting with professionals in the technology and media sectors.

The experience, he says, gave him the confidence to think beyond employment and inspired him to pursue entrepreneurship by developing technology solutions that address real business challenges.

"I've always believed technology should solve problems and improve people's lives," Mohmud says. "That belief became the foundation of everything we do."

While working with businesses, Mohmud noticed that many small and medium-sized enterprises had quality products and services but lacked a professional digital presence. Others struggled with outdated websites, inefficient systems or could not afford reliable web development services.

Recognizing this gap, he founded Temesgen Web Developers with the mission of providing secure, modern and affordable digital solutions



A collage of Temesgen Mohmud, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Temesgen Web Developers.

that help businesses improve their visibility and efficiency.

Like many entrepreneurs, the journey was not without challenges. Limited financial resources, attracting clients and earning customer trust tested his determination during the company's early years. Entering a competitive technology industry required resilience, patience and an unwavering commitment to quality.

Rather than allowing those challenges to discourage him, Mohmud embraced continuous learning and focused on delivering solutions that exceeded client expectations.

Over time, satisfied customers became the company's greatest ambassadors, helping to build its reputation through referrals and positive testimonials.

One of the defining moments in his entrepreneurial journey came after successfully completing projects that transformed clients' businesses and earned overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Those experiences reinforced his belief that technology has the power to improve business performance, create opportunities and transform lives.

Today, Temesgen Web De-

velopers has grown into a trusted digital solutions company serving businesses seeking to strengthen their online presence through professional websites and digital systems. The company continues to help organisations embrace digital transformation while improving customer engagement and operational efficiency.

Looking ahead, Mohmud envisions the company becoming one of Africa's leading technology firms.

His ambition is to develop advanced digital solutions, support emerging startups and

create employment opportunities for young African software developers.

He also believes Africa's future lies in embracing innovation, with technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cybersecurity and automation expected to reshape how businesses operate across the continent.

"Success doesn't happen overnight," he says. "It comes through persistence, hard work, discipline, integrity and a willingness to keep learning."

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Gachagua steps up 2027 consultations, courts Gichugu and Othaya leaders

Contd from page 2

High School before serving for three years as a District Officer. "I was humbled this morning to receive a high-powered delegation of respected opinion leaders from Gichugu led by Hon. Justus Munene as part of the ongoing consultations on the liberation of our country and the formation of the Sixth Administration," Gachagua said.

He added that the consultations with leaders across the country would continue as political realignments gather momentum ahead of the 2027 elections. Later, Gachagua held another consultative meeting with grassroots leaders from Othaya Constituency, a region he described as the home of Kenya's third President, Mwai Kibaki.

The Othaya delegation was led by Antony Gitonga, popularly known as Antogito, who is seeking to become the constituency's next Member of Parliament.

Addressing the meeting, Gachagua praised the constituency for producing one of Kenya's most respected leaders, saying he had benefited from the wisdom, focus and experience of the grassroots leaders he met.

He noted that Othaya had been represented by Kibaki in Parliament for four decades, a period he said was marked by visionary and effective leadership.

Gachagua also appeared to reflect on past political decisions, saying he had played a role in influencing the election of Kibaki's successor, a move he now believes diminished the constituency's political stature.

Without mentioning specific individuals, he said Othaya had previously been represented by "a great mind, an eloquent, astute debater and effective people's representative," adding that the constituency deserved equally strong leadership.

"We have agreed with the people that this mistake is regrettable and will not happen again," he said.

According to Gachagua, leaders and residents who attended the consultations resolved to work together toward electing "a sharp, intelligent and focused leader" in the August 10, 2027 General Election to restore Othaya's legacy of distinguished leadership. "Othaya will be great again," he declared.

The consultations come amid heightened political activity across the country as leaders position themselves for the 2027 General Election. Gachagua has in recent months embarked on an extensive grassroots mobilisation campaign, particularly in the Mt Kenya region, where he has consistently called for political unity while engaging local leaders, professionals, religious groups and opinion shapers.

His meetings have largely centred on governance, economic empowerment, national unity and the need to build a broad political coalition capable of challenging the Kenya Kwanza administration in the next election.

Political analysts view the consultations as part of an emerging opposition strategy to consolidate support in key voting blocs while laying the groundwork for a united front ahead of the 2027 presidential contest.

Although Gachagua has yet to formally declare his political plans, his sustained engagements across the country have fuelled speculation that he will play a central role in shaping the opposition's strategy and leadership ahead of the next general election.

For now, the former Deputy President maintains that the consultations are aimed at listening to wananchi and building consensus on what he calls the country's political and economic liberation, insisting that the engagements will continue in the coming months.



Lee Kinyanjui, CS for Investments, Trade, and Industry; Stephen Jennings, Founder and CEO of Rendevour, the owner and developer of Tatu City; and Eng. Faris Mudathir Mohamed, CEO of Mabani Projects, at the signing ceremony of an agreement that will see Saudi Arabian construction and investment company, Mabani Aljazeera Holdings Group, purchase a 50% minus one share stake of Tatu City's Jabali Towers mixed-use development.

CS Kinyanjui: Invest In high-rise buildings to save agricultural land

BY John Kamau
@themkenyatimes

The Government is encouraging investment in High-rise buildings in counties like Kiambu where real estate is rapidly replacing agricultural land.

Cabinet Secretary for Investment, Trade and Industrialization Lee Kinyanjui noted that this is the only way to save land meant for agriculture in Kiambu and other regions.

"Agricultural land is being consumed rapidly by residential constructions particularly in Kiambu. So the more we go vertical, the more we shall have land available for agriculture. This development will help us address long-term food security challenges," the CS stated.

He was speaking during the signing ceremony for the development of two multi-storey residential towers at Tatu City in Ruiru, Kiambu County, through a partnership between Saudi Arabia's Mabani Company, Al-Jazeera Group and Rendevour, which runs Tatu City.

Kinyanjui also commended Tatu City management for creating an enabling environment for investors and residents, and assured them of government support in security matters.

At the same time, the CS challenged Kenyans in the Diaspora to take advantage of the prevailing in-

vestment opportunities and plough their earnings back home to help develop the country.

He pointed out that about 800,000 Kenyans work abroad and continue to wire money back home and urged them to expand their contribution by investing in productive sectors such as housing, manufacturing and agribusiness.

Observing that Kenya's improving investment climate presents an ideal opportunity for wealth creation, the CS said that the government has aligned laws and policies to support investment through Special Economic Zones and introduced incentives aimed at attracting both local and international investors.

"Kenyans living and working abroad now have a chance to channel their incomes back home and the government continues to create favourable environment for both local and foreign investors," Kinyanjui emphasized.

The CS also noted that the removal of Visa requirements for travellers from across Africa has further enhanced the country's position as a regional investment destination.

"The stability of the Kenyan shilling over the past two years, even during periods of global economic uncertainty, coupled with visa free travel from across Africa demonstrates the country's resilience and makes it one of the most attractive

destinations for investment in the region," he added.

The CS further noted that demand for housing continues to put space supply, with the construction sector contributing about 10 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product.

Additionally, Kinyanjui noted that almost half of home purchases in Nairobi are made by foreigners, reflecting growing investor confidence in the country's real estate market.

Kenya Investment Authority Chief Executive Officer John Mwendwa said that the government will continue working with relevant agencies to facilitate approvals for strategic investments.

Mwendwa added that Kenya remains committed to providing a predictable and investor-friendly business environment.

The project, comprising two 27 and 33-twin storey apartment towers at Tatu City, is expected to create about 700 jobs during construction.

According to the developers, nearly 80 percent of the units have already been sold even though the construction is yet to begin, underscoring the strong demand for quality housing and growing confidence among investors from Kenya and Abroad.

Kenya-Saudi Arabia For Kenya, the centrepiece of the discussions was the welfare of the more than 300,000 Kenyans currently working in the Kingdom

Kenya, Saudi Arabia sign three pacts on trade, labour and investment as Mudavadi concludes Riyadh visit

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya and Saudi Arabia concluded the inaugural Kenya-Saudi Arabia Political Consultations in Riyadh on Sunday by signing three memoranda of understanding covering direct investment, customs cooperation, and a new financing partnership between the Saudi Export-Import Bank and the Kenya Development Corporation.

The agreements cap a three-day official visit by Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi, who led the Kenyan delegation in talks with Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, at the first meeting of the newly established Saudi-Kenyan Political Consultations Committee.

For Kenya, the centrepiece of the discussions was the welfare of the more than 300,000 Kenyans currently working in the Kingdom. The Kenyan delegation pressed for stronger labour protections, ethical recruitment practices, and improved dispute resolution mechanisms for migrant workers, an issue that has repeatedly drawn public attention at home over allegations of exploitation in the Gulf labour market.

Mudavadi said the discussions had produced concrete outcomes rather than symbolic gestures. "Kenya's diplomacy is delivering tangible results by expanding opportunities for our workers, businesses and investors," he said, adding that the consultations reaffirmed the two governments' commitment to deeper cooperation in labour mobility, trade, investment, peace and security, technical education, and information and communications technology.

Trade access featured prominently in the talks. Kenya is pushing for greater market share in Saudi Arabia for its horticultural exports, including tea, cut flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables, while exploring opportunities to diversify the range of goods it sells into the Kingdom. Saudi officials, for their part, expressed interest in expanding public-private partnerships with Kenya in renewable energy, infrastructure, and logistics,

according to Mudavadi.

The visit forms part of a broader recalibration of Kenya's economic diplomacy, which has increasingly looked to Gulf capital as an alternative source of investment even as Western aid structures shift and Chinese infrastructure financing is reassessed elsewhere on the continent. Officials in Nairobi have framed the Riyadh talks as evidence of an "active, people-centred and economically driven foreign policy" intended to translate diplomatic engagement into direct benefits for Kenyan citizens and businesses.

The labour question, however, remains the most closely watched aspect of the relationship. Kenya's diaspora community in Saudi Arabia has long been a source of significant remittance income, but it has also been the subject of periodic reports of exploitative recruitment practices and poor working conditions, concerns that have previously sparked public criticism of the government's handling of labour migration to the Gulf. During the visit, Mudavadi also met members of the Kenyan community in Saudi Arabia, who raised concerns about access to government services, worker protection, and opportunities to invest back home.

"The government is determined to address labour mobility issues and to protect the rights and dignity of Kenyans working overseas through regular and safe labour mobility pathways," Mudavadi told the gathering, according to a statement from his office.

Beyond the three signed agreements, the two sides reviewed progress under existing bilateral frameworks and identified further areas for collaboration, including agriculture and food security, tourism, health, education and skills development, the digital economy, aviation, maritime cooperation, manufacturing, and climate resilience. Officials said these discussions would feed into future rounds of the Political Consultations Committee, now established as a standing mechanism for regular engagement between Nairobi and Riyadh.

Kenya's outreach to Saudi Arabia also comes at a moment of heightened domestic pressure on the gov-



Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi in Riyadh with His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Foreign Affairs

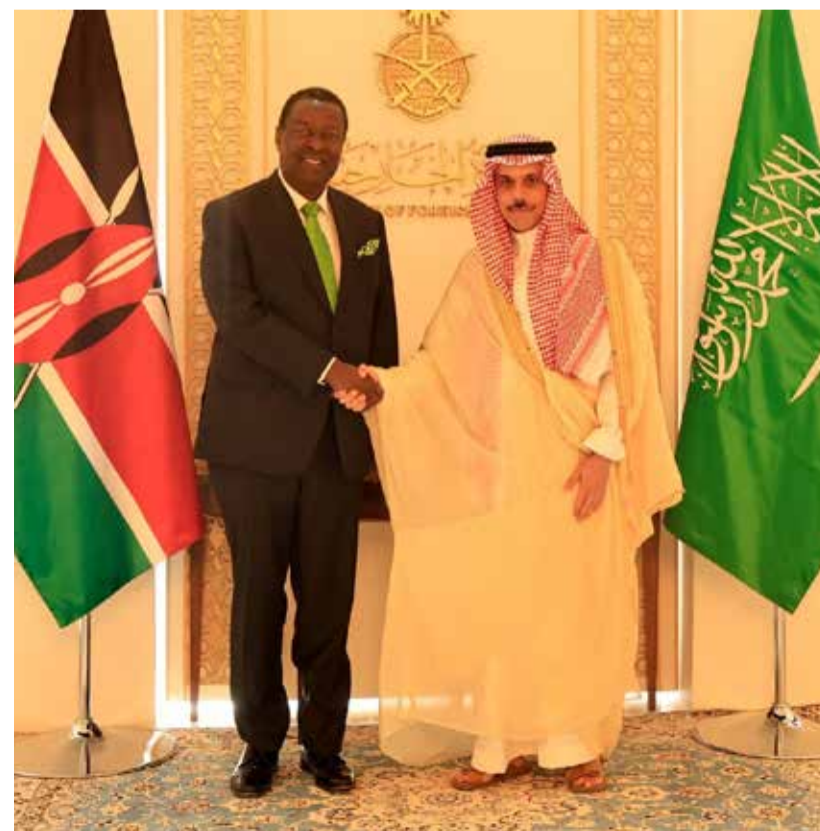
ernment to demonstrate that its foreign policy delivers practical results. Mudavadi has in recent days urged Kenyan regulatory agencies to pursue reforms aimed at rebuilding public trust ahead of the Global Trust Summit due in Nairobi in October, and the Riyadh visit was widely seen in Nairobi as an opportunity to show that diplomatic engagement abroad can produce concrete protections for citizens rather than statements of goodwill alone.

Saudi Arabia has for years ranked among Kenya's most significant partners in the Middle East, with cooperation spanning trade, investment, labour mobility, development financing and regional diplomacy. Officials in both capitals described the new committee and the accompanying agreements as a foundation for expanding that relationship rather than its conclusion, with further technical negotiations expected in the coming months to translate the broad commitments into implementable programmes, particularly on labour standards and dispute resolution for Kenyan workers in the Kingdom.

Whether the agreements signed in Riyadh translate into measurable improvements will depend on im-

plementation over the months ahead. Kenyan officials have acknowledged that previous engagements with Gulf partners have at times produced commitments that were slow to materialise into enforceable protections for workers on the ground. For now,

the government has staked its credibility on a promise that this round of consultations will be different, and that the benefits, for workers, exporters and investors alike, will be felt well beyond the ceremonial signing of a memorandum in Riyadh.



EACC The appellate court affirmed that the land had already been surrendered to the Government and therefore constituted public land

EACC targets recovery of KSh1.5 billion after court upholds Ruaraka land ruling

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has launched the next phase of one of Kenya's longest-running public land scandals, announcing plans to recover KSh1.5 billion paid out in what courts have now declared an illegal compensation scheme involving land occupied by Ruaraka High School and Drive Inn Primary School.

The anti-graft agency also said it will seek the prosecution of public officials and private individuals implicated in the controversial transaction following last week's land-

mark Court of Appeal judgment.

The announcement follows a last Friday decision by the Court of Appeal, which upheld an earlier Environment and Land Court (ELC) ruling that declared the payment of KSh1.5 billion to private companies as compensation for the school land unlawful, null and void.

The appellate court affirmed that the land had already been surrendered to the Government and therefore constituted public land, making its compulsory acquisition legally impossible.

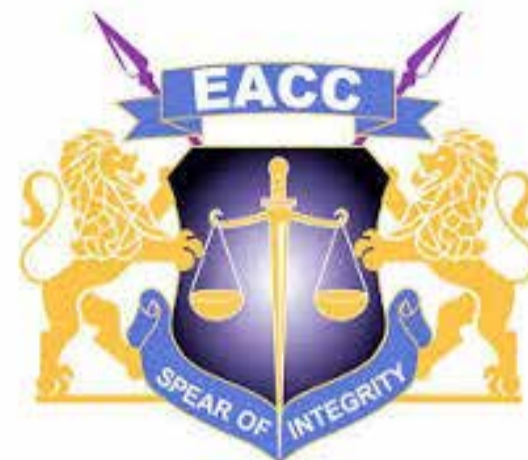
In a statement issued yesterday, by EACC Chief Executive Officer, Abdi Mohamud, the commission welcomed

the judgment, describing it as a major victory in the fight against corruption and the protection of public assets.

"The Commission will now pursue the recovery of the KES 1.5 billion unlawfully paid to Afrison Export Import Limited and Huelands Limited through Whispering Palms Estate Limited under the fraudulent compensation scheme," the agency said.

Beyond recovering the funds, the Commission revealed that investigations into criminal liability have already been completed.

According to EACC, the investigation file was submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) on February 11, 2025.



ETHICS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC)

However, the DPP advised that criminal proceedings be deferred until the Court of Appeal determined the pending appeal challenging the ELC decision.

With the appeal now concluded, the Commission says it will resubmit the file to the DPP for action.

"Those found culpable will be prosecuted in accordance with the law," the Commission stated.

The prosecutions are expected to target public officials involved in processing and approving the compensation, as well as private individuals alleged to have participated in the scheme.

The dispute revolves around approximately 13.5 acres occupied by Ruaraka High School and Drive Inn Primary School.

EACC investigations established that the parcel formed part of LR No. 7879/4 and had been surrendered to the Government free of charge as a mandatory condition during the approval of a subdivision scheme many years ago.

The Commission said the surrender effectively extinguished any private ownership rights, converting the land into public utility land reserved for educational purposes.

Investigators also secured the original title deed during their inquiry and placed a caveat on the property to safeguard public interest after the controversial compensation had already been paid.

In dismissing the appeal filed by Afrison Export Import Limited and Huelands

Limited, a three-judge bench comprising Justices Wanjiru Karanja, Francis Tuiyott and Weldon Korir held that the National Land Commission (NLC) had no legal authority to compulsorily acquire land already owned by the Government.

The judges further ruled that the KSh1.5 billion paid as compensation constituted a loss of public funds because the acquisition process itself was illegal.

The appellate court also rejected an attempt by the companies to pursue an additional compensation claim reportedly exceeding Sh1.7 billion.

EACC said its investigations were conducted jointly with several government institutions, including the Ministry of Lands, the Ministry of Education and the Nairobi City County Government.

The agencies provided documentary records and technical evidence that established the true legal status of the land, helping investigators trace its planning history and the conditions attached to its subdivision.

The Commission said the evidence proved that the schools' land had long ceased to be private property.

Following the judgment, EACC has urged the Ministry of Education and the National Land Commission to expedite the processing and issuance of title documents in favour of the Government.

According to the Commission, formal registration will permanently safeguard the schools from future ownership disputes and protect pub-

lic education infrastructure.

"The Ministry of Education and the National Land Commission should take the necessary measures to secure the public interest by facilitating the processing and issuance of title documents for the land occupied by Ruaraka High School and Drive Inn Primary School," EACC said.

The Ruaraka land dispute has been one of Kenya's most controversial public land cases, attracting investigations by Parliament, EACC and other oversight agencies over allegations that taxpayers lost billions through an irregular compensation process.

At the centre of the dispute was the decision by the National Land Commission to compulsorily acquire land for two public schools despite evidence that the property had already been surrendered to the Government decades earlier.

The Court of Appeal judgment effectively settles the ownership question by affirming that the land belongs to the public.

Attention now shifts to asset recovery proceedings and possible criminal prosecutions that could see former public officials and private beneficiaries answer charges arising from the transaction.

EACC said the latest developments demonstrate its commitment to recovering public assets lost through corruption and ensuring accountability for those responsible for fraudulent dealings involving public resources.




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Youth The demonstration saw youth president aspirant, Fridah Kemunto, symbolically sworn in by her supporters outside the council offices

Youth leaders protest over delayed national youth council elections

BY Anita Kariuki and Sallo Gobana

@themkenyatimes

Tension gripped the National Youth Council (NYC) offices at Absa Towers in Nairobi after youth leaders staged a protest over the postponement of the long-awaited National Youth Council elections, which had been scheduled to begin last Sunday. The demonstration saw youth president aspirant, Fridah Kemunto, symbolically sworn in by her supporters outside the council offices as protesters demanded the immediate commencement of the electoral process.

The protesters accused the government of delaying the elections despite earlier assurances that the exercise would proceed, saying Kenyan youth had waited for more than a decade to elect their representatives.

Responding to the concerns, National Youth Council Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Gloria Wawira, acknowledged the frustration among young people but appealed for patience, stressing that the government remains committed to conducting the elections.

“I understand the fatigue. I am a young person myself. I understand the fatigue amongst young people asking for the elections,” Wawira reiterated.

She noted that although the elections had been delayed, the government had made significant progress after years of unsuccessful attempts. “The last NYC elections were held in 2012, 14 years ago. For the first time in 14 years, we actually have Cabinet approval for the elections,” stated the CEO.

While explaining that the exercise could not proceed as planned because of logistical challenges, Wawira however disclosed that the government had already received Cabinet approval to conduct the elections and had published the proposed election dates in the Kenya Gazette.

“We had tentative gazette dates that we’ve not been able to meet. But that is progress because over the last 14 years, young people agitated for the elections and did not get them,” noted Wawira.

She further emphasized that despite the postponement, the government had made more progress than in

previous years when young people repeatedly demanded elections but no approval or official election dates had been issued.

To this regard, the CEO urged young people to recognize the progress made so far while the remaining challenges are being addressed.

“Even as we count our glass half empty, I ask that we count just the little, the fact that we have, at the very least, Cabinet approval for those elections. We will work and do everything within our power to work towards these elections,” she vowed.

Likewise, Wawira assured the youth that the National Youth Council, the State Department for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, and the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports remain committed to ensuring the elections are held.

“We have done everything within our power to mobilize the logistics and to get the process off the floor. We have hit a wall. We have not stopped. It is a hurdle along the way, but the commitment to Kenya’s youth remains to deliver these National Youth Council elections,” Wawira reported.

Meanwhile, the postponement sparked frustration among youth leaders and aspirants, who pointed out that further delays deny young people the opportunity to elect leaders who will represent their interests.

During the demonstration, supporters of Kemunto who conducted a symbolic swearing-in ceremony, declaring her the youth president, called on the government to fulfil its promise of holding the elections without further delay.

In the meantime, the National Youth Council elections are expected to elect youth representatives from across the country to champion the interests of young people in national development.

The elections have not been held since 2012, making this one of the longest delays in the council’s electoral history.

The government has since not announced a new date for the elections.



Ms Gloria Wawira



Youth leaders protesting over delayed national youth council elections

Politics The meeting, held as part of the party's ongoing nationwide engagement with grassroots leaders and stakeholders, brought together aspiring leaders

Jubilee intensifies 2027 preparations as Matiang'i meets Nyeri aspirants

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

The Jubilee Party has stepped up its preparations for the 2027 General Election after its Deputy Party Leader, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, held a consultative meeting with a section of party aspirants from Nyeri County aimed at strengthening grassroots structures and consolidating the party's presence in the vote-rich Mt Kenya region.

The meeting, held as part of the party's ongoing nationwide engagement with grassroots leaders and stakeholders, brought together aspiring leaders seeking various elective positions under the former ruling party ticket.

According to the party secretariat, the consultations focused on strengthening the party, deepening grassroots organisation, and fostering unity as the party seeks to reposition itself as a credible, people-centred political



Jubilee deputy party leader Dr Fred Matiang'i with a section of Nyeri county aspirants after yesterday's meeting | Photo: Courtesy.

movement ahead of the next general election.

The meeting also provided a platform for candid discussions on the challenges facing the party and strategies for

rebuilding its support base in Nyeri County, a region that has traditionally played a significant role in national politics.

Among those who attended was Nyeri gubernatorial aspirant Eng. Wangai Ndiran-

gu, who described the engagement as productive and timely as the party intensifies its preparations for the 2027 polls.

Ndirangu said the discussions centred on building leadership that is accountable, organised

and responsive to the needs of wananchi.

"As we prepare for the future, our focus must remain on ideas over politics, efficient organisation and practical solutions that improve people's lives," he said after

the meeting.

Nyeri senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo echoed similar sentiments, saying the consultative forum underscored the importance of rebuilding the party's grassroots structures while promoting accountable leadership.

Mararo noted that Jubilee leaders and aspirants were united in their commitment to strengthening the party's organisation and ensuring that its agenda remains focused on delivering practical solutions to citizens.

"Our discussions centred on strengthening our grassroots structures and, more importantly, revamping our efforts toward building a leadership that remains accountable and responsive to the people," he said.

The meeting comes at a time when Jubilee is seeking to revitalise its political fortunes after suffering significant setbacks following the 2022 General Election. The party has in recent months embarked on a series of consultations across the country aimed at reorganising its structures and reconnecting with supporters.

Political observers view the renewed engagements, particularly in the Mt Kenya region, as part of a broader strategy by the party to regain influence in one of Kenya's most politically significant voting blocs.

Matiang'i, who has increasingly emerged as one of the key figures in Jubilee's reorganisation efforts, has been leading consultations with party officials, aspirants and grassroots leaders across different counties as the party lays the groundwork for the 2027 elections.

Party officials maintain that the ongoing consultations are intended to strengthen internal democracy, enhance grassroots mobilisation and build a united political movement capable of offering Kenyans an alternative leadership platform.

The Nyeri meeting is expected to be followed by similar engagements in other counties as Jubilee continues its nationwide reorganisation and recruitment drive ahead of the 2027 General Election.



Dr Fred Matiang'i being welcomed to the meeting venue by Nyeri senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo



From left; Nyeri gubernatorial aspirant Eng. Wangai Ndirangu, Dr Fred Matiang'i and former Mathira MP Peter Weru during yesterday's meeting.

Business The Sacco was among the top performers during the National Ushirika Day celebrations held in Nairobi last Saturday

Tower Sacco marks golden jubilee with four national Ushirika day awards

BY Felix Njenga
@themkenyatimes

Tower (DT) Sacco capped this year's 104th Ushirika Day celebrations with a strong showing on the national stage after scooping four prestigious awards, reinforcing its reputation as one of Kenya's leading cooperative financial institutions.

The Sacco was among the top performers during the National Ushirika Day celebrations held in Nairobi last Saturday, where it was recognized for outstanding performance in operational efficiency, innovation, risk management and overall institutional growth among employer-based deposit-taking Saccos with assets exceeding KSh30 billion.

The Sacco emerged as the Most Improved DT Sacco in its category. It also received the Second Best Efficient DT Sacco award, Second Best DT Sacco in Risk Management, and Third Best DT Sacco in Technology

Optimization, highlighting its consistent investment in sound governance, digital transformation and prudent financial management.

The recognition comes as the Sacco celebrates its Golden Jubilee under the Tower@50 campaign, marking 50 years of empowering members, families and communities through affordable financial services and the cooperative model.

Speaking as the country marked the International Day of Cooperatives, the Sacco dedicated the awards to its members, saying their unwavering confidence and loyalty have been the driving force behind its sustained success.

"As we celebrate Ushirika Day, we appreciate and celebrate our members for being part of our journey and making us the number one Sacco in Kenya. Your trust and support have made these achievements possible," the Sacco said in a statement.

It noted that it continues to reward its members through attractive re-

turns, having declared 20 per cent dividends on share capital and 13 per cent rebates on share deposits, placing it among the country's top-performing Saccos in member returns.

The institution said the impressive financial performance reflects disciplined management, strong capitalization and a commitment to ensuring members receive maximum value from their investments while enjoying quality financial services.

The latest awards also underscore Tower Sacco's strategic focus on strengthening risk management systems and embracing technology to enhance service delivery in an increasingly digital financial environment.

Over the past five decades, the Sacco has grown into one of Kenya's largest deposit-taking cooperative societies, providing savings, credit and investment solutions to thousands of members while contributing significantly to the country's cooperative sector.



Tower DT sacco officials holding trophies awarded to the sacco during ushirika day celebrations.

Management reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, innovation and operational excellence as it positions the institution for continued growth in the years ahead.

With four national trophies added to its cabinet and a 50-year legacy of service, Tower Sacco enters its next chapter with renewed confidence and a firm commitment to its enduring promise to members.

The Mt. Kenya Times



My mind says, "Let go," but my heart says, "Hold on."



but the mind may say that they are not necessary.

When people like something, what their mind says may not matter to them; they often follow what their heart says.

However, we should think carefully and hold on to what is truly good and meaningful in life. The heart gives us feelings, but the mind gives us direction.

Wisdom comes from listening to both.

—G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt.

The mind thinks deeply and wisely, while the heart approaches things with kindness and emotion. This creates a conflict between approach and retreat.

We should not approach everything based only on emotions.

Instead, we should approach things with deep analysis and careful thinking. Bright, shiny, and attractive things often draw people's attention,

How we can enjoy ourselves without medicine



In today's fast-moving world, many people depend on medicines to overcome stress, tiredness, anxiety, and unhealthy lifestyles. While medicines are essential for treating illnesses when prescribed by healthcare professionals, many aspects of our physical and mental well-being can be improved naturally through healthy daily habits. True happiness begins not in a medicine bottle but in the way we choose to live each day.

A joyful day starts with a Miracle Morning. Waking up early, expressing gratitude, praying or meditating, exercising, reading inspiring books, and visualizing our dreams create positive energy that lasts throughout the day. Even a tiny improvement of 0.001% every day leads to remarkable changes over time. When we continue these positive habits consistently for 90 days, they gradually become a natural part of our lifestyle.

Time Boxing is another powerful habit. Planning our day, setting today's goals, and giving each task a specific time improve productivity, reduce stress, and help us complete our responsibilities with confidence. At the end of the day, reviewing our progress gives us a sense of satisfaction and motivates us to do even better tomorrow.

A happy life depends on balancing four important areas: Growth, Relationships, Finance, and Health. We should continue learning new skills, spend quality time with our family, manage our money wisely, and take good care of our physical and mental health. Strong relationships, a healthy body, and continuous personal growth bring lasting happiness.

Simple daily practices also make a big difference. Walking in the morning sunlight, drinking enough water, eating fresh and nutritious food, getting adequate sleep, and spending time in nature refresh both the body and the mind. Practicing Super Brain Yoga, deep breathing, or meditation may help improve concentration, relaxation, and

emotional balance. Laughing, smiling, singing, and dancing are wonderful ways to reduce stress and fill our lives with joy. Reducing unnecessary mobile phone use and spending more meaningful time with family and friends strengthen our relationships and improve our emotional well-being.

Kindness is another natural source of happiness. Helping others, sharing what we have, and performing acts of charity bring peace to our hearts. A kind word, a smile, or a helping hand can brighten someone's day while filling our own life with purpose and satisfaction.

We can also make each month meaningful by following simple practices: Day 1 as Self-Care Day, the First Sunday as Family Day, and the Third Sunday as Social Day. These special days remind us to care for ourselves, strengthen family bonds, and serve society with love and compassion.

Celebrating every small success is equally important. A smile, a song, or a simple dance after achieving a goal fills us with enthusiasm and encourages us to continue our journey with confidence. Success is built not only on big achievements but also on small victories celebrated with gratitude.

Medicines play an important role in treating diseases, but a healthy lifestyle helps prevent many problems and improves our overall well-being. Healthy habits, positive thinking, meaningful relationships, regular exercise, adequate rest, gratitude, and service to others are among life's greatest gifts.

Let us choose a lifestyle that nourishes our body, mind, and soul. When we live with discipline, kindness, gratitude, and purpose, we discover that the greatest medicine is the way we live.

"Healthy habits are the best medicine, and a joyful heart is one of life's greatest healers."

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
Chengalpattu district

The quiet path to peace and wisdom



Silence saves the scattered force,
And Energy returns to source,
A peaceful mind, both calm and clear,
Finds the Divine ever near.

Listening enriches every day,
Teaching us a nobler way,
Peace and wisdom walk as one,
Like moon and stars, like dawn and sun.

As the Bhagavad Gita (17:16) beautifully declares:

"*Mana-prasadaḥ saumyatvam maunam atma-
vinigrahaḥ,
Bhava-samsuddhir ity etat tapo manasam
ucyate.*"

"Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, and purity of heart—these are called the austerity of the mind."

So speak with purpose, hear with grace,
Let silence hold its sacred place.
For lips that rest and ears that heed,
Will harvest wisdom's richest seed.

Seek less to speak, more to understand,
In silence blooms peace, in listening stands
wisdom.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator, Writer, Motivator, Freelancer
(In Service of Education)

If you seek peace, talk less
If you seek wisdom, listen more.
These simple keys unlock the heart,
To treasures greater than before.

Silence is not an empty space,
It is the soul's serene embrace,
When outward noise begins to cease,
The inward self awakens peace.

Words are arrows once they fly,
Often wounding, passing by,
Silence builds a healing shore,
Where restless waves can rage no more.

Listening is the first true school,
The humble seek, the proud refute,
Each attentive ear receives,
Seeds of truth that wisdom weaves.

The more we learn, the more we grow,
Like rivers deep that gently flow,
Knowledge ripens into light,
Guiding hearts through darkest night.

Courage brings success



I thought I couldn't, yet I did,
Turned the page where fear was hid.
Now my book is out, complete,
A dream that learned to walk on feet.

If you dare to start, you'll see,
Mountains move and stones break free.
Impossible will learn to bend,
Courage takes you to the end.

RAJITHA D
BT Asst English
GGHSS PADAPPAI
KANCHIPURAM
TAMILNADU

A hundred came, I almost stopped,
"Next year," I said, and hope had dropped.
Then Brinda Ma'am held out a light,
Gave me courage, gave me sight.

True friends force you grow



In dark situations, they throw light.

True friends act as defence,
Boosting your self confidence.
Stay faithful in hard situations,
Till you try hard for better actions.

Though tough times show,
Make friends those who force you to grow.
They are the faithful ones,
Who don't let you down at once.

Make friends who are affectionate,
Through thick and thin they remain great.
They make you grow: support you steadily,
Helping all times readily.

Though situations may be hard and dry,
They never make you cry.
They lift you to reach high sky,
Till you reach the top sky.

Friends who are true,
Are those who force you
To make your life bright,

Jael Beulah. R.
Creative Writers,
Graduate Teacher,
Govt Hr. Sec. School,
Kilpalur,
Tiruvannamalai.
Tamil Nadu.

PwDs The Constitution of Kenya 2010, affirms that every citizen is equal before the law and intitled to inherent dignity, equal protection and freedom from discrimination

Beyond welfare: Why Kenya must reimagine disability as a constitutional, Development and human rights imperative



BY Fredrick Chelimo

@themtkenyatimes

“The world is enabled or disabled not by medicine or biology, but by the choices societies make”

As Kenya advances towards becoming a prosperous, inclusive and globally competitive nation, one profound national contradiction continues to demand urgent attention. While the country has enacted progressive constitutional and legislative protections for persons with disabilities, millions of citizens with disabilities continue to live between the promise of equality and the reality of exclusion.

This contradiction is not simply a failure of implementation, but a deeper policy misunderstanding. Kenya has mainly approached disability through the lens of welfare and social assistance rather than recognizing it as a constitutional right, development priority and a matter of economic justice. The time has come to rethink fundamentally that approach.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010, affirms that every citizen is equal before the law and intitled to inherent dignity, equal protection and freedom from discrimination and further requires affirmative measures to ensure PwDs have reasonable access to public education, transport, employment, information, communication and every sphere of public life. These guarantees are neither symbolic nor optional, but binding constitutional obligations.

In Kenya, these guarantees are reinforced internationally by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) that recognizes disability results not only from physical or sensory impairments but also from environmental, institutional and societal barriers that prevent full realization of full potential on PwDs capabilities and abilities in the society. African Union has a similar protocol that stresses that disability is not a favour to be accommodated but a constitutional entitlement that demands practical implementation



Illustration

Yet the lived experience of many Kenyans living with disabilities tells a different story. Government currently provides limited support to some PwDs through Inua Jamii social protection- programme and some assistive devices. While acknowledging the gesture, the monthly 2,000v shillings cannot realistically pay for a caregiver per month leave alone to compensate for economic consequences of disability. Disability imposes costs that citizens have to meet including transport, assistive devices, specialized communication technologies, medical costs, rehabilitative services, personal assistance, sign language interpreters, home modifications among others. These are not luxury expenses.

Consequently, disability support should not be viewed as poverty support, but should be understood as a compensation for disability-related barriers that prevent equal participation in the society. It is intended to narrow the gap between the disability limits and what constitutional equality promises. The measure of public support should be informed by the actual economic burden created by disability rather than arbitrary welfare allocations.

Equally important, disability support should not be discriminatory by pegging benefits to employment status or income status, but should be standardized to recognize disability and compensate the disability challenge. The compensation should be linked to disability-related costs rather than employment or income

status. Poverty reduction and disability compensation serve different public purposes and should not be conflated.

Across political campaigns, government policy papers and development programmes, certain clusters of the society are frequented fronted as the principal vulnerable groups deserving affirmative action. While the group or cluster may be facing profound structural inequalities that requires deliberate policy response, the interventions must continue. However, such national conversations become incomplete when disability is treated as a secondary concern.

PwDs are not a separate constituency existing outside society's other vulnerable group. They are men, women, youth, children and older persons from all sections of the society. Disability intersects with every category of vulnerability recognized in public policy. A woman with disability often experiences both gender inequality and disability related exclusion. A child with disability faces the ordinary vulnerabilities of childhood while confronting barriers to education, rehabilitation and social acceptance and other unique challenges to age, gender and nature of disability.

Disability should not occupy the margins of development planning but should become a central consideration in every programme designed to address vulnerability because disability cuts across every social category and every stage of life. A nation committed to leaving no one behind

must recognize that addressing disability inclusion strengthens outcomes for men, women, childe and youth of the nation.

Unfortunately, implementation remains Kenya's greatest weakness with numerous legal protections largely unfulfilled, The Access to Government Procurement Opportunities continues to record inconsistent participation especially by disability-owned enterprises despite clear policy intentions. Adverts on AGPO related tenders remain skewed to the disadvantage of PwDs and real actualization remains unaided for conformity.

Many buildings remain inaccessible and for the few which are accessible other utilities remain hostile to disability long after enactment of legal and regulatory frameworks. Healthcare systems remain unsupportive of disability groups, while education, employment and public participation continue to remain exclusive. The challenge is no longer absence of the law; it is absence of accountability. This call for parliament to reassess both its understanding of disability and its oversight responsibility.

Disability related support should progressively move from symbolic welfare towards evidence-based compensation that enable equal participation. Parliament should purpose to undertake yearly national disability compliance audit across all public institutions, state departments, constitutional commissions, state corporations and compile a compliance report to measure acces-

sibility, employment, procurement, education, healthcare, budget allocations and implementation of implementation corrective measures within defined timelines. Senate should equally strengthen its oversight and compliance surveillance in counties. It aim should be to ensure disability inclusion is integrated into all departments and sectors rather than being confined in social services alone. Universities, professional bodies, financial institutions, media, and development partners should mainstream disability across all programmes rather than treating it as an isolated issue. Most importantly, persons with disabilities should occupy themselves the center of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring that sustainable solutions cannot emerge without leadership, knowledge and lived experience of those directly affected. The principle of Nothing about us without us" should become the standard governing every disability-related decision.

It should be noted that every inaccessible school leaves a talent undeveloped, hospital diminishes human dignity, workplace reduces national productivity, law left unenforced weakens constitutional governance and every capable citizen excluded from economic life represents lost national potential. Disability is not a burden carried only by individuals but a national development issue, a constitutional responsibility and a test of democratic maturity. Kenya possesses the legal mandate, constitutional mandate, and international commitment.

What remains is the political will and courage to transform those promises into lived realities. When this occurs, Kenya will not merely improve lives of PwDs, but strengthen its democracy, deepen social justice and demonstrate that true development is not measured by the majority alone, but by dignity, opportunity and inclusion afforded to every citizen.

“Throughout history people with disabilities have been institutionalized and segregated, which tends to make you think it's a group in need of charity. It is NOT about charity; it is about EMPOWERMENT” Jay Ruderman

Tuk tuk TTON National Chairman Vincent Were said the remarks were “unfortunate, inaccurate, demeaning, and dismissive”

Tuk tuk operators give Makau Mutua seven days to apologise over “pathetic contraptions” remark

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya’s tuk tuk industry issued an ultimatum yesterday to Professor Makau Mutua, giving the presidential adviser on constitutional affairs seven days to withdraw remarks in which he described the three-wheeled vehicles as “pathetic contraptions” unfit for the country’s roads.

The Tuk Tuk Operators Network (TTON), the umbrella body representing operators across more than thirty counties, said it would consult its members nationwide and consider “lawful, peaceful, constitutional, and democratic measures” if Mutua failed to apologise within the stipulated period.

The row traces back to 2 July, when Mutua took to X to argue that tuk tuks had no place on Kenya’s major roads and highways. “Why do we have tuk tuks on major roads



Tuk Tuk Operators press briefing

and highways, even in Nairobi? We shouldn’t,” he wrote. “These pathetic contraptions aren’t roadworthy. They obstruct traffic, are completely unsightly, and degrade our capital city. Please remove them from our major roads in cities and towns.”

The comments, posted in his capacity as a senior adviser to President William Ruto, reignited a debate on urban transport that Mutua himself had stirred a year earlier, when he called for a total ban on boda bodas from the country’s major cities and towns.

Speaking on behalf of the

sector yesterday, TTON National Chairman Vincent Were said the remarks were “unfortunate, inaccurate, demeaning, and dismissive” of the hundreds of thousands of Kenyans whose livelihoods depend on the industry.

“We are taxpayers. We are investors. We are employers. We are job creators. We are nation builders,” Were said. “We deserve recognition, not ridicule.”

According to figures cited by the network, Kenya has roughly 250,000 registered tuk tuks, directly supporting more than 750,000 licensed

drivers operating on a shift basis, and sustaining well over a million livelihoods once owners, mechanics, financiers, insurers, spare parts dealers, fuel stations and manufacturers are factored in. TTON estimates that a minimum of 150,000 tuk tuks generate KSh1,000 each in daily revenue, translating to roughly KSh4.5 billion a month and an annual economic contribution in the region of KSh54 billion, before accounting for fuel levies, registration fees, insurance, licensing and county permits.

Were argued that the sec-

tor, which has grown rapidly since the rollout of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, moves close to six million passengers daily to workplaces, schools, hospitals and markets, and has consistently maintained cordial working relations with the National Police Service, county administrations and other security agencies.

He cautioned that inflammatory remarks directed at an organised sector risked provoking “emotional and reactive responses” from operators spread across the country, particularly as Kenya heads into an electioneering period, though he stressed this should not be mistaken for a threat to peace and stability, which the sector’s leadership has consistently worked to safeguard.

TTON also used the statement to press the case for tuk tuks as a vehicle, quite literally, for Kenya’s clean energy transition, pointing to opportunities in electric

mobility, local assembly and battery-swapping technology that the sector says it stands ready to develop in partnership with government.

The network closed its statement with a direct appeal to President Ruto for a hearing, expressing confidence that he appreciates the informal transport sector’s contribution to employment and revenue generation, and requesting an opportunity to present the industry’s case directly to him.

Mutua’s remarks drew swift criticism online, with business figures, transport stakeholders and ordinary Kenyans arguing that operators in lawful enterprise deserved dignity rather than public ridicule. He had made near-identical arguments against boda bodas in July last year, branding them chaotic and undisciplined, a claim that likewise drew condemnation from the Boda Boda Association of Kenya.

As of yesterday, neither Mutua nor the Executive Office of the President had issued a public response to TTON’s ultimatum.

The hidden victims of xenophobia: children paying the highest price

As deportations continue, thousands of Zimbabwean children are losing more than just a classroom

BY Alice Nyamande

@themtkenyatimes

The reports that thousands of Zimbabwean children are being withdrawn from schools across South Africa as deportations continue should concern every person who values human dignity and the future of our region.

Behind every child leaving a classroom lies a story of disruption, uncertainty, and loss. These are children who had begun building friendships, adapting to new environments, learning new skills, and dreaming about their futures. Many are now being forced to abandon those dreams through circumstances entirely beyond their control.

An interrupted education carries consequences that can last for years.

Children who leave school mid-year often struggle to reintegrate into another system. Differences in curricula, shortages of school places, financial hardship, and missing academic records can leave many falling behind or dropping out altogether.

The emotional toll is just as serious. Many of these children experience anxiety, fear, confusion, and distress after being separated from classmates, teachers, and communities they had come to know as home. Some will carry the psychological effects of sudden displacement long after the journey ends.

For younger children, the experience can undermine their sense of safety and stability during the most formative years of their development. For teenagers, an interrupted education can close doors to higher learning and employment, increas-

ing the risk of long-term poverty and social exclusion.

Families, too, are under immense pressure. Parents who have spent years working to give their children an education now face impossible decisions while trying to rebuild their lives under difficult circumstances. That burden does not disappear when a family crosses a border.

The consequences extend far beyond individual households. Every child whose education is disrupted represents lost human potential. Our region cannot afford to lose a generation of young people whose only wish was to learn, grow, and contribute positively to society.

As the Action Democratic Movement, we recognise every nation’s sovereign right to enforce its immigration laws. However, the implementation of those laws should



The hidden victims of xenophobia

always take into account the welfare and best interests of children. It is possible to enforce policy while still protecting children’s access to education, preserving their dignity, and reducing unnecessary trauma.

History reminds us that children should never become the greatest victims of political decisions or social tensions. They did not create these circumstances, and they should not be made to carry their lifelong consequences.

It is our hope that all governments involved, alongside educational

authorities, humanitarian organisations, and community leaders, will work together to protect these children’s education as far as possible, and ensure they receive the support they need to rebuild their lives.

Every child deserves the chance to learn, to dream, and to build a future free from fear and uncertainty. That is not a political position — it is a moral responsibility.

Alice Nyamande President, Action Democratic Movement (ADM)

Comparison Comparison has become so woven into daily life that many of us do it without even noticing. We scroll through social media, glance at our neighbours

The comparison trap

While you're busy admiring someone else's life, someone else may be admiring yours

BY Hadassah Karangu

@themkenyatimes

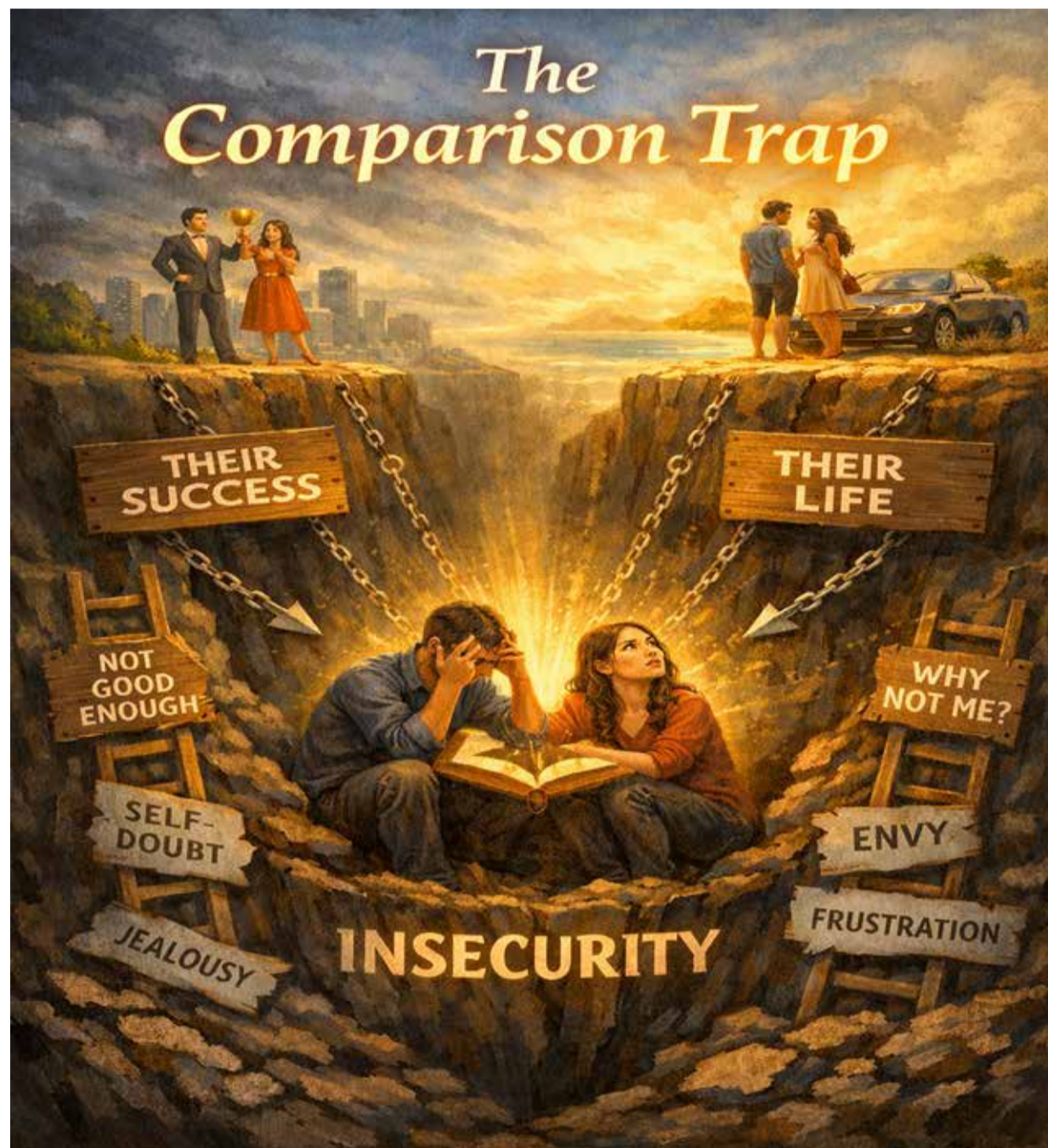
In almost every neighbourhood, village, campus, workplace, and social media feed, a quiet competition is underway. It has no rules, no judges, no medals, and no official winners — yet millions of people take part in it every single day. It is the competition of comparison.

The young graduate measures herself against a classmate who landed a job first. The businessman tracks his progress against his neighbour's. Parents compare their children to other people's children. The university student compares their lifestyle to what they see online. The content creator counts someone else's followers. The employee eyes a colleague's salary. The list goes on, and it never really ends.

Comparison has become so woven into daily life that many of us do it without even noticing. We scroll through social media, glance at our neighbours, watch other people's success unfold online, and suddenly feel as though our own lives are falling behind. A new car passes by. Someone posts holiday photos. A friend announces an engagement. Another buys land, graduates, or starts a business. Before long, we are measuring our worth against other people's milestones.

What most of us fail to realise is that comparison often creates an illusion rather than a true picture. The person driving the expensive car may be drowning in debt. The smiling couple online may be quietly working through problems nobody sees. The successful entrepreneur may be carrying more pressure than anyone imagines. The perfectly edited photograph may be hiding loneliness, anxiety, or uncertainty. What we are really comparing is our reality to someone else's highlight reel — and that has never been a fair contest.

Social media has made this far worse than anything earlier generations faced. Years ago, people mostly compared themselves to those around them. Today, a young person in Kenya can measure their life against celebrities, influencers, entrepreneurs, and strangers from every corner of the world within minutes. A single scroll can expose someone to luxury homes, dream



holidays, designer wardrobes, and seemingly flawless lives. The result is that many people feel inadequate despite making real progress of their own. They begin to believe they are behind, that they are failing, that everyone else has somehow figured life out except them.

But is that really true? Take a moment to consider the other side. While you are looking at someone else's life and wishing it were yours, there may be someone looking at your life and wishing the same thing. The student worried about school fees may be admired by someone who never had the chance to attend school at all. The person living in a modest house may be envied by someone with no permanent shelter.

The employee unhappy with their salary may be the answer to another person's desperate job search. The person anxious about their appearance may be admired by someone fighting a serious illness. The person frustrated by how slowly they're moving may already be far ahead of someone who hasn't found the courage to begin.

Life looks different depending on where you're standing. What feels ordinary to you may be extraordinary to someone else — and that is one of the truths comparison tends to hide. Too many of us spend so much energy focusing on what we lack that we forget to appreciate what we already have. We overlook our own strengths, ignore our own growth,

forget our own victories, and dismiss our own blessings. Instead of celebrating how far we've come, we criticise ourselves for not being further along.

But life was never meant to be a race against other people. Every person is running a different course. Some start with advantages, others with real challenges. Some find success early, others later. Some walk smooth roads, others climb over obstacles nobody else ever sees. Comparing two people without knowing their stories is like comparing the speed of two vehicles travelling on entirely different roads — the comparison simply doesn't hold up.

It's also worth remembering that the people we admire are often com-

paring themselves to someone else too. The successful business owner may be looking enviously at a bigger company. The influencer with thousands of followers may be eyeing someone with millions. The wealthy individual may be measuring themselves against someone wealthier still. Comparison doesn't disappear once a person succeeds — it simply finds a new target.

That's why contentment matters so much. Contentment doesn't mean giving up on your dreams or losing your ambition. It means appreciating the season you're in while still working towards something better. It means understanding that your worth was never determined by what someone else owns, earns, posts, or achieves. It means recognising that your journey belongs to you alone.

Perhaps the greatest danger of comparison is that it quietly steals joy from the present moment. Instead of celebrating our own wins, we get distracted by someone else's. Instead of acknowledging how far we've come, we fixate on how far we still have to go. Instead of building our own lives, we spend our time studying everyone else's. What's left is frustration, envy, insecurity, and pressure we never needed to carry.

Now imagine redirecting that energy instead. Imagine celebrating other people's success without feeling threatened by it. Imagine drawing inspiration from it rather than feeling defeated. Imagine chasing personal growth instead of constant comparison, measuring your progress against who you were yesterday rather than against who someone else is today. That single shift in mindset could change a life.

Every person carries something valuable — strengths, talents, experiences, and opportunities that belong to them alone. No two stories are the same. No two journeys are identical. No two destinies are copies of one another. The world would be a far happier place if we spent less time comparing and more time appreciating; less time competing and more time growing; less time envying and more time simply becoming.

So the next time you're tempted to compare your life to someone else's, remember this: you are only seeing a chapter of their story, not the whole book. And while you're busy admiring their life, there's a good chance that someone, somewhere, is looking at yours and wondering what it would feel like to have what you already have.

Life was never about being better than everyone else. It's about becoming the best version of yourself — because at the end of the day, the only person you truly need to outperform is who you were yesterday.

Politics From the independence era's founding fathers to today's dynasties and newcomers, leaders cultivate images of infallible redeemers

The empty thrones: Kenya's political cults and the cost of blind devotion

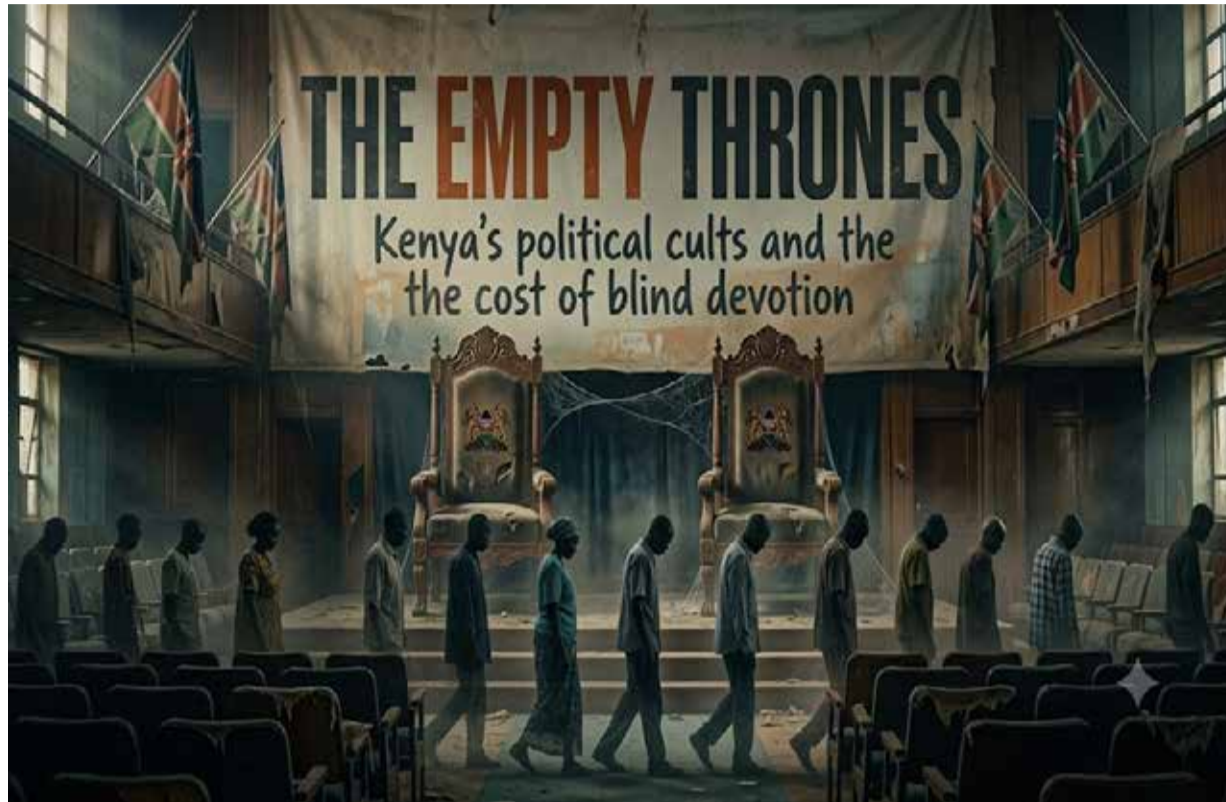


By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor
Odhiambo

[@themkenyatimes](#)

It is a norm that in political rallies that thousands chant a single name as if it were scripture, waving placards like holy banners while their leader, draped in party colors, promises heaven on earth yet again. This is not ancient ritual but modern Kenyan politics, where loyalty borders on worship. Recent election cycles have laid bare the pattern: politicians ascend not primarily on policy blueprints but on ethnic arithmetic and messianic auras. According to data from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, voter turnout often hinges less on manifestos than on perceived tribal strongholds, with incidents of violence and intimidation spiking around anointed figures. Transparency International's reports consistently rank Kenya's governance challenges high, citing grand corruption cases involving billions of shillings siphoned from public coffers, yet many implicated leaders retain fervent followings. These are not mere supporters; they are disciples, heads nodding in unison, brains seemingly disengaged from scrutiny.

Kenyan politics has long thrived on personality cults that eclipse institutions. From the independence era's founding fathers to today's dynasties and newcomers, leaders cultivate images of infallible redeemers. A cabinet secretary might defend a scandal-plagued project by invoking "development records," while followers on social media and streets amplify the defense with ferocity, dismissing evidence as opposition sabotage. This dynamic isn't unique to one side of the aisle. Across the political spectrum, from Azimio to Kenya Kwanza echoes, the script repeats: criticize the leader, and you attack the tribe, the region, the very hope of the people. Economists at the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis have noted how such polarization stalls reforms, with public debt servicing consuming over 40% of the national budget amid persistent youth unemploy-



Kenya's political cults and the cost of blind devotion

ment hovering near 35% for those under 24. Nevertheless, rallies swell, hymns of praise drown out questions about value for money in infrastructure megaprojects that sometimes deliver half-built shells or inflated costs.

As an unyielding voice for a Kenya that could be prosperous, just, and forward-looking one aches at this spectacle. Imagine the potential if that same energy funneled into demanding audited accounts rather than defending the indefensible. The activist heart burns seeing university graduates, sharp minds honed in lecture halls, reduced to online warriors hurling insults at anyone questioning their "baba" or "hustler" savior. It is not hatred of leaders that fuels this yearning, but love for the land: the fertile soils of the Rift that should feed millions without food imports, the tech-savvy youth in Konza who could rival Silicon Valley if governance matched ambition, the coastal potentials stifled by neglect. Kenya deserves better than recycled promises wrapped in cultic fervor.

Objectively, the phenomenon has roots deep in history and sociology. Colonial legacies left fragmented identities, which post-independence leaders exploited through patronage networks. Multiparty democracy, ushered in the 1990s amid bloody clashes, did not erase these. Instead, it layered competitive tribalism atop

weak institutions. A balanced lens reveals nuances: some politicians deliver tangible wins. Devolution under the 2010 Constitution has channeled resources to counties, birthing hospitals, roads, and markets in previously marginalized areas. Leaders like those who spearheaded digital innovations Huduma centers, mobile money integrations have modernized service delivery, earning genuine gratitude. Followers are not mindless automatons; many are pragmatic survivors in a harsh economy. In informal settlements or arid northern expanses, a politician's bursary or harambee contribution feels like salvation. Loyalty becomes currency in a system where state services falter. Devil's advocate whispers: perhaps the "cult" is rational choice under uncertainty. When formal accountability mechanisms courts, audits, parliament move glacially or selectively, personal allegiance to a strongman offers perceived protection and access. Critics from afar, comfortable in stable democracies, underestimate how poverty and information asymmetry breed such bonds.

Even so this defense crumbles under sustained analysis. Cultic followership exacts a steep price. It infantilizes citizens, turning them into cheerleaders rather than co-authors of national destiny. When a governor faces graft allegations involving

ghost projects, yet supporters storm courts in his defense, development stalls. Independent reports, including those from the Auditor General, routinely flag billions in irregular expenditures, yet electoral victories follow. Sentiment from ordinary Kenyans, captured in street interviews and civil society briefs, echoes the frustration: "They eat, we clap," one market vendor lamented during a recent fuel price hike. Intellectuals and diaspora voices amplify this Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's enduring critiques of power's betrayal, or economists like David Ndi highlighting how elite capture perpetuates inequality. Even within parties, dissenting voices whisper of sycophancy's dangers, only to be sidelined as traitors.

The activist in me refuses numbness. Kenya's youth bulge over 75% under 35 holds explosive promise, yet too many channel vigor into defending yesterday's men instead of forging tomorrow. Picture a different script: followers interrogating budgets line by line, demanding performance contracts from leaders, leveraging social media for evidence-based advocacy rather than tribal echo chambers. This yearning isn't utopian; precedents exist. Civil society campaigns that birthed the 2010 Constitution showed what informed, persistent citizenry achieves. Grassroots movements against police brutality or for electoral reforms demonstrate

brains overriding blind loyalty. Politicians, too, face incentives: those who pivot toward transparency and results, like certain county executives delivering measurable health or education metrics, quietly earn respect beyond chants.

Balance demands acknowledging systemic complicity. Media, sometimes partisan, amplifies spectacle over substance. Economic desperation makes patronage appealing. Foreign influences and campaign financing muddy waters further. A devil's advocate might argue that in Africa's complex democracies, charismatic leadership stabilizes fractured societies, preventing worse chaos seen elsewhere. True enough, Kenya has avoided full-scale civil war despite tensions. Yet stability bought with cults is brittle. It breeds mediocrity, where competence yields to connection. Heads bow, brains idle, and the republic limps.

For the soul aching for Kenya's ascent, the path forward glimmers in education and empowerment. Civic curricula fostering critical thinking, coupled with digital literacy to pierce propaganda, could dismantle the spell. Leaders must model vulnerability admitting failures, debating ideas openly rather than god-like posturing. Followers, in turn, might evolve from devotees to demanding partners. The banger of rallies could transform into sustained pressure for anti-corruption enforcement, merit-based appointments, and equitable resource sharing.

Kenya stands at a crossroads. The cultic allure of politicians with heads but seemingly absent brains persists because we allow it. But within that same populace lies untapped genius: innovators, farmers, teachers, entrepreneurs dreaming beyond the next election cycle. The yearning burns fierce not for vengeance, but renaissance. Let the chants evolve into questions. Let loyalty mature into accountability. Only then will the empty thrones fill with genuine servants, and Kenya claim its rightful place as the continent's beacon. The soil is rich, the people resilient; the missing ingredient is collective awakening. In that hope, the activist presses on, voice hoarse but unbowed.

The writer is a social commentator

Short story Tafadzwa stared at his phone. He was 29, a junior accountant, and he had been praying for a wife since he was 24

The Side Hustle short story



By Norman Mwale
@themkenyatimes

The message came in at 9:02am.

“Good morning. I love you.”

At 9:47am the reply came. “Aww thanks babe! Can you send data? And maybe lunch.”

Tafadzwa stared at his phone. He was 29, a junior accountant, and he had been praying for a wife since he was 24. He had read all the books. He had tithed. He had waited.

And now, 45 minutes after “I love you,” the ledger had opened.

He didn’t answer immediately. He walked to his window in Harare and watched traffic crawl along Samora Machel. He thought about his father. His father had married his mother with one suitcase and a Bible. They fought, they prayed, they stayed. There was no data, no nails, no lunch allowance. There was only *_us_*.

“Lord,” he whispered, “when did love become a side hustle?”

Two weeks earlier he had met Rudo at a church conference. She was bright. She laughed with her whole body. During the Q&A she asked, “How do we date in a way that honours God and doesn’t leave us broke?”

The room laughed. The speaker said, “Pray about it.” Tafadzwa didn’t laugh. He wrote her question down.

After the service they talked by the gate. She told him about her job at a salon, about her younger brother at school, about how tired she was of men who disappeared after the first date.

“I just want to be happy,” she said. “Is that wrong?”

“No,” he said. “Happiness is good. I just think happiness lasts longer when it’s built on something.”

She looked at him. “Like what?”

“Like people,” he said. “The kind who stay when there’s nothing to withdraw.”

She nodded, but he saw the flicker. The flicker that said: prove it.

That flicker had a history.

Rudo’s first boyfriend paid her rent. Then he left when she lost the job.

Her second sent groceries every Friday. Then he asked for pictures she wasn’t willing to send.

Her third said “I love you” and vanished after she said she couldn’t lend him money.

So her nervous system had learned a simple equation: Affection = Provision. Silence = Danger.

Psychologists call it anxious attachment. Theologians call it a wounded *_imago Dei_*.

Rudo just called it survival.

They dated for three months. Coffee, walks, Bible study on WhatsApp voice notes.

Tafadzwa liked her mind. She asked questions. She noticed people. Once she bought chips for a street kid and didn’t post it.

He thought: There is something here.

But the messages kept sliding.

“Morning. How are you?”

“I’m okay. My hair needs redoing. It’s 60.”

“Praying for you today.”

“Thanks. Data finished.”

He would send. Not because he was rich, but because he was afraid that if he didn’t, she would disappear.

And sometimes she would say “You’re so sweet” right after.

Philosophically, something had shifted. The *_telos_* was

gone. The *_why_* of them was no longer “to know and be known.” It had become “to give and receive.”

Aristotle would have called it a corrupted friendship of utility.

Buber would have called it I-It.

Tafadzwa called it 2am anxiety.

One night he asked her, “Rudo, what makes you feel truly happy? Not in the moment, but deep down?”

She paused. Then typed: “What do you mean by kind of people?”

He smiled at the question. It was honest.

“By ‘kind of people’ I mean the kind of people who make you feel safe, respected, and at peace. People who are kind when no one is watching. People who don’t just take, but also give. People who are there for you on good days and bad days. That’s the kind of people I believe bring real happiness. What do you think?”

She didn’t reply that night.

The next Sunday the pastor preached from Romans 5:8.

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Tafadzwa wrote in his journal: *_No invoice. No collateral. He loved us at our worst._*

After the service Rudo texted: “Can we talk?”

They met at a park. She was quiet.

“I read your message,” she said. “About kind of people.”

“Okay.”

“I don’t know if I’m that kind of person,” she said. “I keep score. If you don’t send, I panic. If you do send, I feel guilty. I’m tired of it.”

He didn’t defend. He didn’t preach.

“Me too,” he said. “I keep score too. I send and then I watch to see if you’ll say thank you fast enough.”

They laughed, but it was the sad kind.

“I think,” she said slowly, “I’ve been treating love like a side hustle. Because I’m scared if I’m not useful, I’ll be left.”

Tafadzwa nodded. “And I’ve been treating it like a contract. Because I’m scared if I’m not needed, I won’t be chosen.”

The wind moved through the jacarandas. Somewhere a child was shouting.

“What do we do?” she asked. “I don’t know all of it,” he said. “But I know the Gospel starts with a God who gives before we ask. Who stays when we have nothing. Maybe we start there. We practise giving without keeping receipts. And receiving without panic.”

She looked at him. “That sounds hard.”

“It is,” he said. “Love is a cross before it’s a crown.”

They didn’t get it right the next week.

She still asked for lunch. He still felt the twitch to send and secure.

But they started naming it. “Hey, I’m asking from fear, not need.”

“Hey, I’m sending from guilt, not joy.”

They started praying together, badly, awkwardly.

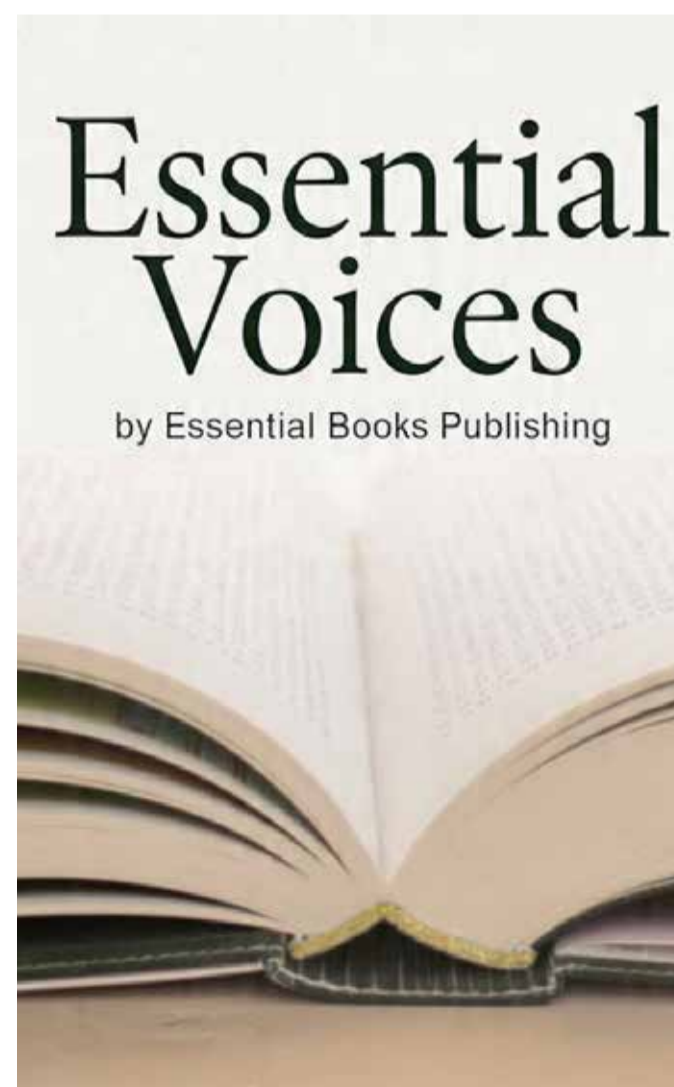
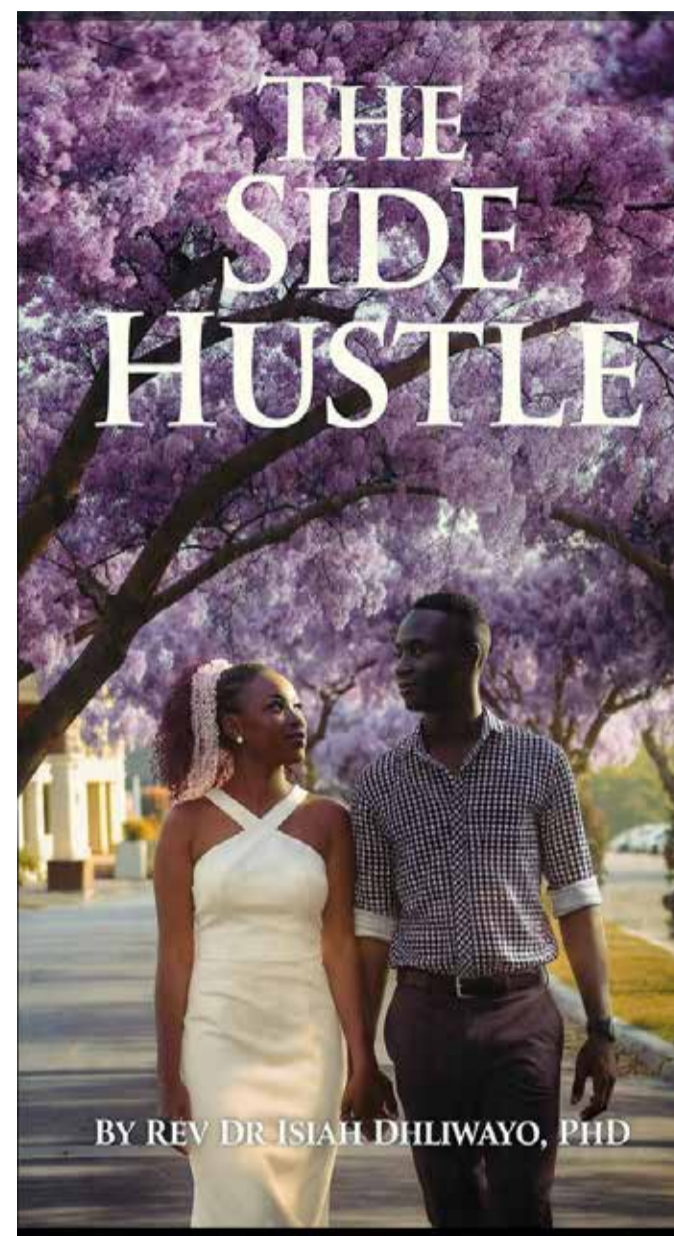
They started serving at church together, not to impress, but because it was hard to commodify someone you’re washing dishes next to.

Slowly, the ledger faded. Not because money stopped mattering. Rent still came. Hair still grew.

But because something else grew louder: the sound of two people choosing each other on an empty day.

Six months later Rudo texted at 9:02am again.

“Good morning. I love you. No request today. Just wanted you to know.”



America The celebrations, which were supposed to foster a sense of national unity, has dissolved into a political theater for partisan exploitation

Behind the fireworks: America's 250th anniversary marred by grim reality

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themkenyatimes

The celebrations honoring the 250th anniversary of America's Declaration of Independence were marked not just by a historic heatwave and more lavish fireworks than usual, but by bitter partisan warfare, social division, as well as institutional failure. As the country marked its quarter-millennium milestone, the glittering spectacles in the sky could scarcely conceal a grim domestic reality and the mounting costs of its overseas entanglements.



Epitome of political division

The celebrations, which were supposed to foster a sense of national unity, has dissolved into a political theater for partisan exploitation. From the outright boycott by some Democratic-led states to events heavily tinged with campaign rhetoric, an occasion meant to forge consensus through shared history instead exposed a bitter truth: the deep partisan divides are fracturing the nation. Democrats criticized the Trump administration for politicizing the national celebration, and launched investigations in Congress questioning the "Freedom 250" organization, a group U.S. President Donald Trump declared as the sole official planning body of the celebrations. The celebrations also faced partial boycotts. The "Great American State Fair," scheduled to run for 16 days, was intended to be one of the highlights of the festivities. But over 10 states -- the vast majority being Democratic-led "blue states" -- previously indicated they would not send official representatives, but would focus on their own local celebrations.

At the fair hosted on the National Mall, the pavilions for states including Oregon, Washington, Rhode Island, Vermont and Hawaii were empty, leaving behind nothing but posters bearing the state names and vacant chairs. "The withdrawals add to the growing signs that a summer of national celebration has become an increasingly fragmented and partisan affair as Mr. Trump has sought to stamp his imprint on the events," The New York Times commented. Multiple prominent American musicians withdrew from the events. Rock singer Bret Michaels said on

social media that although he had originally agreed to perform, the celebrations had "evolved into something much more divisive than what I agreed to be a part of." Greg Cusack, a former member of the Iowa House of Representatives now in his 80s, told Xinhua that the milestone anniversary should have been a genuine national celebration and an occasion for historical reflection -- but partisanship has made the entire affair utterly ugly. The past few days offer merely a snapshot, but drawing such distinct political lines has already become a daily reality.

Widening social rift

Confrontation and hostility among voters over various issues have inevitably intensified consequently. For instance, a PBS poll released in May revealed that 89 percent of Democrats believed the Trump administration should bear responsibility for rising oil prices, whereas only 32 percent of Republicans shared that view. National pride among "red" and "blue" voters has also shown a deeply polarized trend. According to a recent Gallup poll, this deep-seated ideological rift has only widened. While 70 percent of Republicans report feeling "extremely proud" to be American, that figure plummets to just 14 percent among Democrats. The anniversary celebrations have also served as a catalyst for the public to voice discontent with the administration. In late June, hundreds of demonstrators gathered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania -- the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence -- to protest the Trump administration's perceived whitewashing of the darker chapters of American history,

including slavery, the massacres and oppression of Indigenous peoples. Philip Gulley, a 65-year-old pastor and writer, told CNN that rather than evoking memories of a shared history, the 250th anniversary celebration feels more like an amplification of the country's current divisions.

Institutional failure

The current political polarization and societal fracture in the United States stem from deep-seated institutional roots. Experts from Brookings Institution have pointed out that under the two-party system and "winner-take-all" electoral rules, both the Republican and Democratic parties are increasingly inclined to sharpen their differences and oppositions in values and policy stances to secure the alignment and support of their "base." As a result, American politics has increasingly devolved into a zero-sum, us-versus-them confrontation, with polarization deepening by the day.

Multiple polls show that the partisan divide in the United States has reached its most severe level in more than half a century. Johanna Dunaway, a political science professor at Syracuse University, has pointed out that "when the electorate is so highly affectively polarized -- so angry at the political elites on the other side -- it makes it harder for them to view compromise between their party and the other party as a good thing." To achieve their ends, politicians do not hesitate to exploit or even actively manufacture divisions in public opinion. Consequently, ordinary Americans are increasingly polarized over issues like gun control, abortion, and social security,

triggering a rise in political violence. These social-level conflicts are, in turn, weaponized by both parties as leverage to attack one another, permanently cementing America's fracture within this vicious cycle. "Our political system is broken, and our politicians seem unable to solve big social or economic problems," David Ignatius, a columnist for The Washington Post, wrote in an opinion.

Deepening wealth gap

Driven by this partisan logic, party interests have overridden the interests of the nation and its people, observers noted. Crucial social and livelihood issues -- such as immigration, the economy, race, and the environment -- have degenerated into mere tools for both parties to harvest votes, while genuine national governance is left neglected.

The price is that deep-seated problems like America's wealth gap and systemic injustice have become entrenched. "This country has never been a 'good place' to be poor," Cusack said. The U.S. federal government entered a shutdown at the start of Oct. 1, 2025, as partisan divisions prevented Congress from passing a funding bill. Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Darrell West said low-income Americans relying on food stamps, known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), "have gone hungry" because the aid was suspended during the 43-day shutdown. "The entire episode has harmed American prestige around the world because it looks like the country is unable to govern itself," he told Xinhua. The question facing the United States is therefore no longer simply whether its political institutions endure, but whether they remain capable of governing effectively and responding to the expectations of its own people.

Political turmoil

The White House unveiled a ballroom renovation project in late July last year, and in October, the Trump administration swiftly demolished the White House East Wing to make room for the ballroom, a move that drew opposition from the National Trust and other historic preservation groups.

Congressional Democrats have criticized the lack of transparency

surrounding the project, noting that Congress had neither been notified nor asked to approve the demolition of the East Wing in advance. In December, the National Trust sued the Trump administration in attempt to block the project, arguing that the demolition of the East Wing failed to undergo proper review and was unlawful. In March this year, a U.S. federal judge ordered the Trump administration to pause construction of the ballroom, noting that the 400-million-U.S.-dollar project must halt pending congressional authorization. The release of files related to late U.S. financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein has also rattled U.S. politics. On Jan. 30, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) released the remaining Epstein files, including over 3 million pages, more than 2,000 video segments and 180,000 images. In total, the DOJ has released nearly 3.5 million pages of documents related to the case. Not only did the case expose the corruption and privilege of the powerful elite, along with their disregard for morality, it also shattered the self-proclaimed universal values of Western society. More importantly, it compelled a sobering reassessment of the Western justice system's fairness, revealing a structure that seems to grant impunity to the rich and powerful.

Creating chaos beyond borders

From military interventions in countries such as Venezuela, to the Iraq War and its recent military strikes against Iran that have destabilized the Middle East and threatened global energy security, Washington has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to use force, coercion and economic pressure to pursue its strategic objectives. From Iraq to Libya to Syria, military intervention has been justified in the name of stability and security, only to unleash prolonged turmoil. Escalation squeezes diplomatic space, entrenches hostility and multiplies risks far beyond initial calculations. The wars did not have to happen. There were still diplomatic options before the strikes began, but they were set aside by Washington. Experience shows that such actions rarely bring order. More often, they deepen divisions and make the situation worse. Washington always argues that force can restore deterrence and security. But recent history suggests otherwise. Military interventions framed as preventive or stabilizing have often produced the opposite effect -- prolonging conflicts, deepening divisions and leaving lasting instability.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Open Posthumous Letter to Chinua Achebe The Centre Still Trembles: Kenya's Unfinished Conversation with Chinua Achebe



BY Maina Wahome

@themkenyatimes

The Centre Still Trembles: Kenya's Unfinished Conversation with Chinua Achebe

Dear Chinua Achebe,

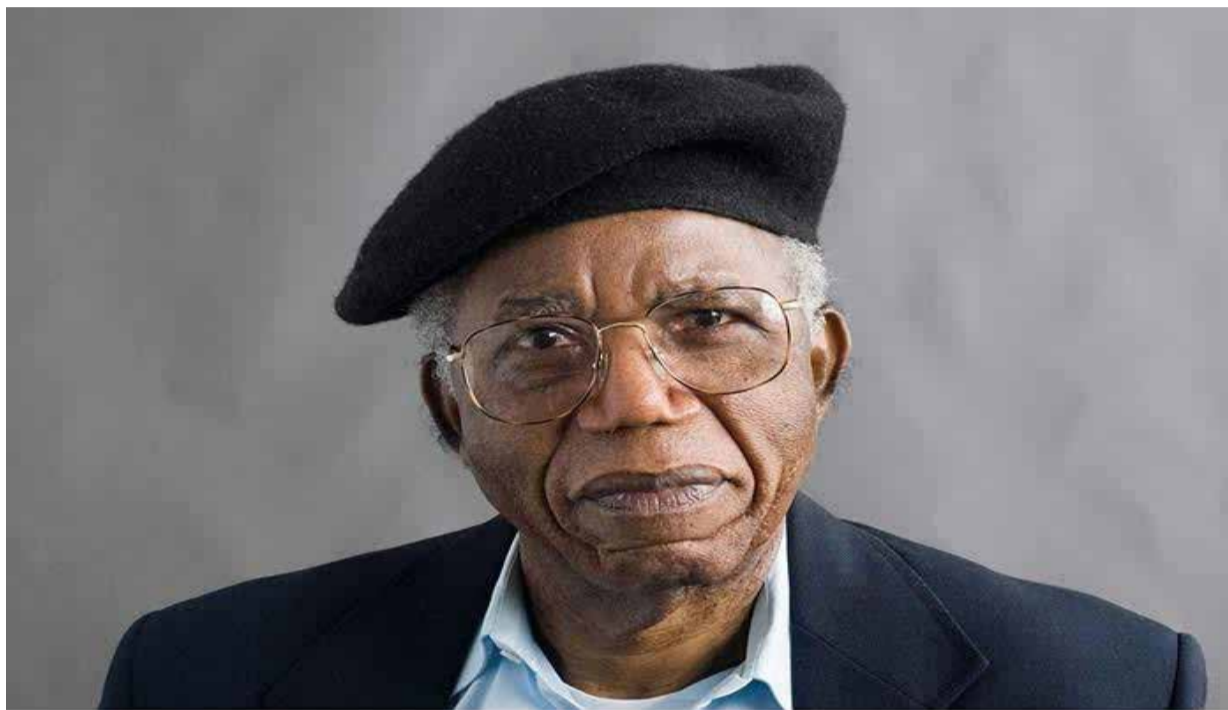
The falcon cannot hear the falconer; things fall apart; the centre cannot hold.

Yeats' words remain prophetic and immortalized in your novel *Things Fall Apart*; they have become some of the most quoted in African literature. Yet I often wonder whether, if you were alive today, you would feel that we misunderstood your warning. We memorized the phrase, examined your work in schools, debated Okonkwo's tragedy in classrooms, and wrote essays about colonialism. But somewhere along the way, we reduced your novel to history rather than prophecy.

You warned us that things fall apart when the centre cannot hold. Decades after you gave Africa *Things Fall Apart*, I write to tell you that in Kenya, things have not merely fallen apart. They continue to fall apart, often in plain sight, while those entrusted with holding the centre congratulate themselves for maintaining order.

If you were to walk through Kenya today, I suspect you would recognize your characters long before anyone introduced them. You would hear Okonkwo's voice in our politics, Unoka's laughter in our forgotten streets, Ikemefuna's silence in our cemeteries, Nwoye's questions in our universities, and Obierika's wisdom in the few who still dare to speak truth without expecting reward.

Our Okonkwos are no longer wrestlers. They wear tailored suits, command political rallies, and measure strength not by character but by the size of their motorcades and the volume of their applause. Like your tragic hero, they mistake power for wisdom and authority for justice.



Chinua Achebe

Their greatest fear is not failure but appearing weak, so they rule with intimidation rather than conviction. Every election season they promise unity, yet they return to the oldest script in politics: dividing citizens into tribes, rewarding loyalty over competence, and turning public office into private inheritance. They invoke patriotism while accumulating wealth no honest salary could explain.

Your Okonkwo feared becoming his father; Kenyan "leaders" fear accountability. They fear independent courts, progressive activists, investigative journalists, auditors, and inquisitive citizens. They fear young people armed not with spears but with smartphones and placards. They fear the camera more than conscience.

Unoka, too, survives in Kenya. Our Unokas are everywhere. Some are unemployed graduates carrying degrees that have become expensive certificates of disappointment. He is the graduate sending out endless applications without response. He is the teacher whose salary cannot sustain a family. He is the artist told creativity is not a profession. He is the farmer battered by floods and rising input costs. He is the boda boda rider and mama mboga trader trapped in loans that grow faster than income. Society still laughs at his condition while ignoring the systems that produce it. Perhaps our greatest tragedy is that we have become skilled at

blaming the poor for surviving poverty.

Ikemefuna still dies among us. He is the young Kenyan sacrificed to political expediency, ethnic mobilization, unemployment, police brutality, and broken promises. Every election produces another Ikemefuna. Every scandal buries another dream before it reaches adulthood.

Nwoye has multiplied into a generation of restless youth who no longer believe the stories their fathers tell. He is the Kenyan youth questioning why billions vanish while schools lack laboratories. He questions why taxes rise while services decline. He questions why corruption is rewarded while honesty is punished. He is dismissed as impatient or entitled, yet perhaps he is simply refusing to inherit systems that no longer deserve loyalty.

Ekwefi in Kenya is not only a symbolic mother but the woman who rises before dawn and sleeps after midnight, not by choice but necessity. In the public sphere, she is drawn into performance, summoned to political rallies to sing, dance, and ululate at speeches that promise transformation but often recycle disappointment, where her presence becomes aesthetic proof of legitimacy and her voice background decoration for promises that seldom materialize; she is praised in rhetoric and later forgotten in budgeting. At home, there is no performance, only arithmetic. Her endurance is not simply

personal strength but structural compensation for institutional absence.

Ezinma is a symbol of quiet excellence shaped under pressure and sustained by resilience rather than privilege. She represents what Kenya repeatedly discovers but does not always institutionalize: potential that exceeds circumstance. She is the learner who excels in examinations despite studying under leaking roofs and inadequate lighting. She is the young person who understands systems more clearly than the systems understand them. She is the innovator building solutions without funding. She is the researcher experimenting without laboratories. She is the entrepreneur creating opportunities where none were designed to exist.

Obierika remains the conscience we lack. He remains among us, asking difficult questions that few leaders wish to answer. He is the lecturer who still insists on thinking as discipline, the investigative journalist threatened into silence, the judge under scrutiny, the academic dismissed as unpatriotic, the activist branded an enemy, and the citizen who refuses to confuse loyalty with obedience.

The District Commissioner never truly left. He merely changed clothes. Sometimes he arrives as the international lender prescribing austerity from distant boardrooms. Sometimes he appears as the multinational corporation extracting wealth while communities remain

poor. Sometimes he is our "expert" political elite, ruling citizens with the detached gaze once reserved for colonial subjects. The language has changed, but the hierarchy often remains.

Our missionaries have also multiplied. They no longer carry only Bibles. Some arrive with ideologies that sound convincing but are detached from local reality. Others come through algorithms that shape what we see, think, and desire without our awareness. Consumerism teaches us to measure worth by possession. Disinformation confuses truth until it becomes difficult to tell what is real. Imported ambitions persuade us to value everything except what is already ours. They rarely conquer through force. They conquer by slowly making us forget what we once knew.

The egwugwu still wear masks, though theirs now take the form of constitutional offices, commissions, tenders, and carefully rehearsed press conferences. Justice often arrives masked, delayed, or applied selectively, depending on power and proximity.

Even the Oracle has changed. It now speaks through polling data, public relations strategies, and trending hashtags. It is consulted less for truth and more for political convenience, shaped to fit what is popular rather than what is right.

Yet the centre persists, not because of political leadership alone, but because ordinary people continue to carry it. Farmers, teachers, doctors, writers, entrepreneurs, and young people hold on to the possibility of a better tomorrow despite repeated disappointment. Ordinary citizens still believe that honesty is not foolishness. They are the quiet force preventing complete fragmentation.

Perhaps that is why your novel still matters: it is not only a story of collapse, but also a reminder that what holds a society together is often invisible, uncelebrated, and carried by those who are least acknowledged.

You once told Africa how things fall apart. We are living the sequel. The tragedy is no longer that we failed to read your novel. It is that we read it, admire it, teach it in our schools, quote it in our speeches, and still allow ourselves to become its characters.

*Yours sincerely,
Maina Wahome
(A reader in a country still negotiating its centre)*

Maina Wahome's Bio
Maina Wahome is a linguist, a columnist, and a published author. He is also a lecturer in English.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Two late strikes from the Manchester City forward end the five-time champions' campaign at the last 16

Haaland double stuns Brazil as Norway reach first-ever World Cup quarter-final



By Norman Mwale

Erling Haaland scored twice in the closing stages to send Norway to a historic 2-1 win over Brazil in the FIFA World Cup 2026 Round of 16 on Sunday, ending the five-time champions' campaign in East Rutherford and sending the Scandinavians to their first-ever quarter-final. Played in humid conditions at the New York New Jersey Stadium before a sellout crowd of 80,663, the match stayed goalless until the closing stages despite a string of chances at both ends. Brazil had the game's first big moment in the 13th minute, when Kristoffer Ajer was penalised for fouling Matheus Cunha inside the box after a VAR review. Bruno Guimarães, rather than Vinícius Júnior, stepped up to take it, and saw his effort

saved low to Ørjan Nyland's left. Nyland went on to deny several more Brazilian chances before the break, including efforts from Vinícius Júnior and Gabriel Martinelli. Norway made the breakthrough in the 79th minute. Substitute Andreas Schjelderup, on since half-time, whipped in a cross from the left that Haaland rose above the Brazilian defence to head home. It was his sixth goal of the tournament. Eleven minutes later, Haaland struck again. Schjelderup again supplied the pass, and the Manchester City striker drove a low, powerful finish into the corner from the edge of the box to make it 2-0. The goal marked his 14th consecutive competitive international in which he has scored, and drew him level with Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi at the top of the tournament's scoring

charts, on seven goals. Brazil pulled one back deep into stoppage time. Neymar, introduced as a second-half substitute, converted a penalty after Leo Østigård was penalised for an elbow on Casemiro. It proved only a consolation. Visibly emotional afterwards, Neymar signalled the end of his international career: "I tried, I tried. Now it's over. I started here, I finished here," he said — a reference to the same stadium where he made his Brazil debut in 2010. Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti defended the decision to hand the penalty to Guimarães ahead of Vinícius Júnior, explaining that statistical analysis of penalty-takers had ranked Guimarães third among available players, behind Neymar and Igor Thiago, with first-choice taker Raphinha unavailable through injury. Ancelotti

also acknowledged deeper problems in his side, saying Brazil needed "new, young players of a high level" to emerge in midfield. The defeat means Brazil have failed to reach the World Cup quarter-finals for the first time since 1990. For Norway, the win was built on second-half changes, with coach Ståle Solbakken's decision to introduce Schjelderup and Oscar Bobb proving decisive in unlocking Haaland's game-winning contributions.

Final score: Brazil 1-2 Norway
Scorers: Brazil — Neymar 90+10' (pen); Norway — Haaland 79', 90'
Venue: New York New Jersey Stadium, East Rutherford
Attendance: 80,663

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Jude Bellingham's rapid first-half double sends the Three Lions through despite a red card and a battling Mexican fightback

England edge hosts Mexico 3-2 in Azteca thriller to reach World Cup quarter-finals



By Norman Mwale

England survived a hostile Azteca crowd and more than half an hour with 10 men to beat co-hosts Mexico 3-2 on Sunday night, booking their place in the FIFA World Cup 2026 quarter-finals.

The Round of 16 tie at Mexico City's Estadio Azteca was delayed by an hour due to thunderstorms, but once it got under way, England settled quickly and produced a stunning burst either side of the half-hour mark.

Jude Bellingham broke the deadlock in the 36th minute, meeting a Bukayo Saka cross with a diving header. Just 98 seconds later he doubled the lead, finishing a swift one-two with Harry Kane to make it 2-0. It was the fastest brace by an England player in World Cup history, and the same stadium where Diego

Maradona's "Hand of God" had ended England's 1986 campaign. Mexico hit back before the break. Julián Quiñones pounced on a loose ball inside the box from a corner and drilled it into the net in the 42nd minute to make it 2-1 and lift the home crowd.

The game turned again just after the hour when Jarell Quansah was shown a straight red card following a VAR review, for a high, studs-up challenge on Jesús Gallardo. England were left to defend with 10 men for the rest of the match.

They restored their two-goal cushion soon after. In the 60th minute, Harry Kane converted from the spot after goalkeeper Raúl Rangel brought down Anthony Gordon in the area.

Mexico were handed a route back into the game in the 69th minute, when VAR ruled that

Kane had fouled Brian Gutiérrez inside the box. Raúl Jiménez stepped up and scored to make it 3-2. Mexico pushed hard for an equaliser in the closing stages, but England's defence held firm. England manager Thomas Tuchel praised his side's resolve afterwards. "I am just proud of the mentality and the attitude... we did it with pure mentality and heart," he said, adding that his players had found a way to win when it mattered most.

Bellingham, named Player of the Match for the third time this tournament, admitted the game had been hard to process. "It was a chaotic game," he said, praising Mexico's quality and crediting his team's character for seeing it through.

For Mexico manager Javier Aguirre, it was a painful farewell to the Azteca. "To dream and then fall like this hurts deep-

ly, but the players should leave with their heads held high," he said, backing assistant Rafael Márquez to take over and build on the team's progress.

Mexico's defeat ended the co-hosts' deepest World Cup run since they last hosted the tournament in 1986. It was only the third competitive loss for Mexico at the Azteca since the stadium opened in 1966.

The result sets up a quarter-final against Norway in Miami on Saturday, 11 July.

Final score: Mexico 2-3 England
 Scorers: Mexico — Quiñones 42'; England — Bellingham 36', 38', Kane 60' (pen)
 Penalty scored: Jiménez 69' (pen), Mexico Venue: Estadio Azteca (Mexico City Stadium), Mexico City
 Attendance: 80,824 Red card: Quansah 54'

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



The teacher – An eternal light infusing hearts with illumination



By: Sariyeva Gulnurabegim
San'atjon

@themtkenyatimes



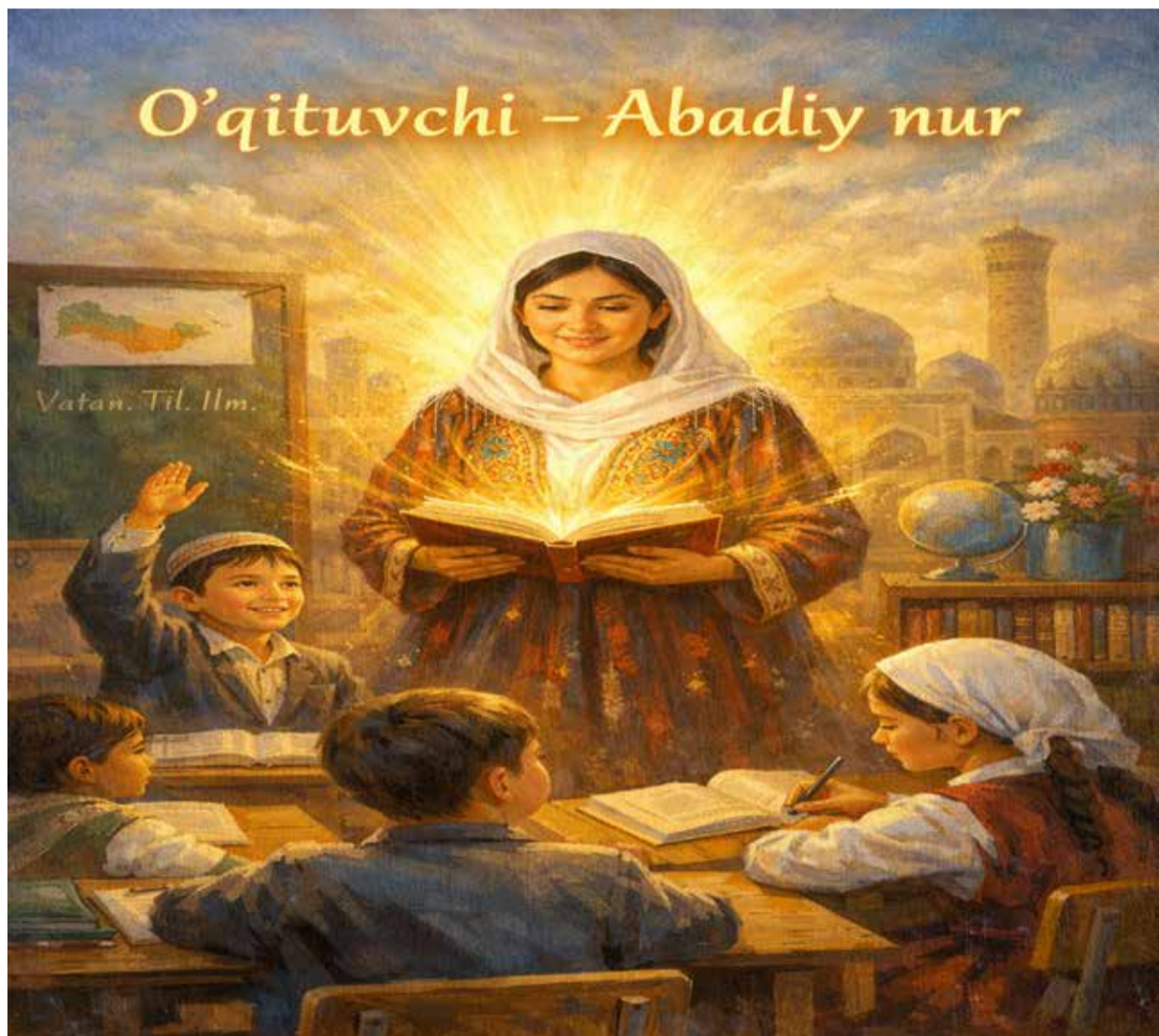
Worth Noting:

- The stature of a teacher stands far superior to any material wealth or earthly titles. For the fruit of a teacher's labor is neither a monument of stone nor a complex machine, but the human being itself.
- When a tiny, innocent heart, still unable to distinguish black from white and devoid of any conception of the world, arrives before a teacher, they resemble unrefined raw material.
- The magnanimous educator, through boundless love and endurance, sows the seeds of benevolence within that tender soul, refines their innate talent, and elevates them into a valuable member of society a complete human being. Behind the simple act of teaching a single letter or guiding a hand to write correctly lie countless sleepless nights, frayed nerves, the warmth of the heart, and the fading light of the eyes.

Since the dawn of humanity, mankind has perpetually strived toward light, perfection, and the realization of Truth. In the intricate pathways of this boundless world, there exists a sacred soul who serves as our guiding star, ensuring we take each step wisely, leading us through the depths of darkness toward the realms of enlightenment, and flinging wide the gates of spirituality. That soul is the Teacherborn of boundless affection and unwavering fortitude. When the word "teacher" is uttered, it evokes not merely a practitioner of a profession, but a sublime figure who has sacrificed their entire being for the future of their disciples, consuming their own life like a candle to diffuse radiance to all around them. While parents bring a human being into the physical world and grant them life, it is the teacher who imparts the wisdom of how to live that life, how to uphold human dignity, and gives both spirit and form to our inner world.

The stature of a teacher stands far superior to any material wealth or earthly titles. For the fruit of a teacher's labor is neither a monument of stone nor a complex machine, but the human being itself. When a tiny, innocent heart, still unable to distinguish black from white and devoid of any conception of the world, arrives before a teacher, they resemble unrefined raw material. The magnanimous educator, through boundless love and endurance, sows the seeds of benevolence within that tender soul, refines their innate talent, and elevates them into a valuable member of society a complete human being. Behind the simple act of teaching a single letter or guiding a hand to write correctly lie countless sleepless nights, frayed nerves, the warmth of the heart, and the fading light of the eyes. This selflessness can neither be measured by any material yardstick nor fully compensated. The teacher is that most noble soul on earth who finds their ultimate happiness solely in the perfection, success, and societal contribution of their disciple.

When we turn the pages of history, we witness that even the great con-



querors who shook the world and the scholars who astonished mankind with their intellect always bowed their heads before their tutors, showing them infinite reverence. The grand figures of the Eastern Renaissance and mighty rulers like Amir Timur regarded the prayers and counsels of their spiritual mentors and teachers as the supreme command in every state affair and life-altering decision. Indeed, no matter how deeply a person travels down the path of knowledge, if they do not hold the lessons of their guide in absolute reverence, their knowledge will remain hollow and their attained titles devoid of true grace. Respect for a teacher is, in essence, the ultimate symbol of respect for knowledge, enlightenment, and humanity itself.

In today's fast-paced era, overflow-

ing with an ocean of information, the painstaking responsibility of teachers is multiplying even further. They are no longer just conveyers of textbook facts, but spiritual shields ensuring that the youth do not drift away amidst the trials of life and the vortex of the internet and technology. While infusing the disciple's mind with wisdom, a true educator simultaneously implants the highest sentiments, such as love for the motherland, humanity, honesty, and loyalty, into their heart. Through their own conduct, morality, and worldview, they stand as a living example and a school of exemplary behavior for their students.

As we take independent steps at the great crossroads called life, the painstaking labor of our mentors reflects in every achievement we attain, every right word we speak,

and every line we write. The silver strands in their hair and the luminous wrinkles upon their faces are the beautiful seals of the sacrificial hardships endured to shape us into true human beings. The supreme response to a teacher's selfless labor is to make them proud, to honor the lessons they imparted, and to become an honorable individual who serves the nation. We bow for a lifetime before all our dear and sacred teachers who nourished us with the light of wisdom and familiarized our hearts with goodness; their pure prayers will forever remain an unquenchable torch illuminating our path through life.

Sariyeva Gulnurabegim San'atjon
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Student of Urgench State University
named after Abu Rayhon Beruniy