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The deputy's dilemma: Gachagua warns Kindiki he is next

Rigathi Gachagua yesterday accused President William Ruto of deliberately humiliating Deputy President Kithure Kindiki at the recent broad-based government retreat in Naivasha, warning that the President was laying the groundwork to remove hm from office

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The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Beyond 2030 Kenya has launched a national conversation about 2060 while its political class is already consumed by 2027

The politics of tomorrow

Kenya is having another conversation about the future. Yesterday, the country formally launched nationwide consultations on a long-term development framework looking beyond Vision 2030, with Vision 2060 emerging as the proposed horizon. President William Ruto has called on Kenyans to help shape the country's direction — an invitation to imagine the Kenya that future generations will inherit.

That should be encouraging. A country that stops thinking about tomorrow eventually becomes trapped by today. But there is an uncomfortable contradiction at the heart of this latest national conversation. We are being invited to imagine 2060 at precisely the moment when our political discourse is being consumed by 2027. Kenya is trying to look four decades ahead while much of its political class is already looking one election ahead.

There is nothing inherently wrong with politicians thinking about elections. Elections are the mechanism through which citizens choose their leaders. The problem begins when the electoral calendar displaces the national calendar — when the next campaign matters more than the next generation, and when every long-term ambition is forced to compete with the immediate demands of political survival.

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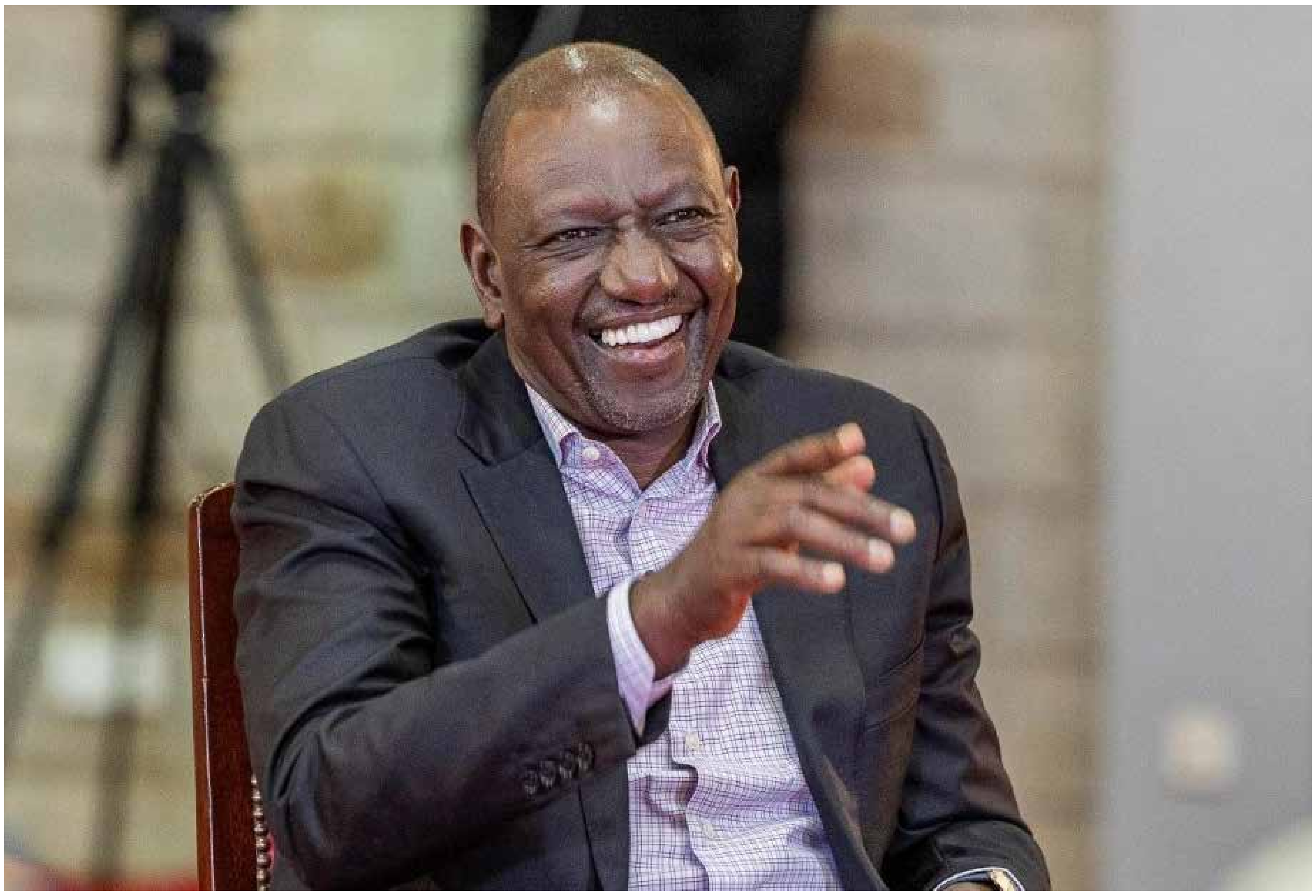

President William Ruto

Ruto launches national dialogue to shape Kenya's post-2030 future

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto yesterday launched a national conversation to shape Kenya's development agenda beyond Vision 2030, urging citizens to take a leading role in defining the country they want for future generations.

Speaking at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi, Ruto said the process must be people-driven and involve young people, workers, professionals, businesses, religious organisations and civil society.

He said the dialogue would build on the Constitution, which guarantees rights including healthcare, education, housing, food, water, social security and human dignity.

Ruto said the discussions should establish what these constitutional guarantees should mean in the daily lives of Kenyans and how they can be achieved.

He proposed that the outcome be anchored in a long-term National Development Charter capable of transcending electoral cycles and political administrations.

The initiative, which has been described as the foundation for a proposed Vision 2060 framework, seeks to create a shared national development direction beyond 2030.











Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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NEWS IN BRIEF

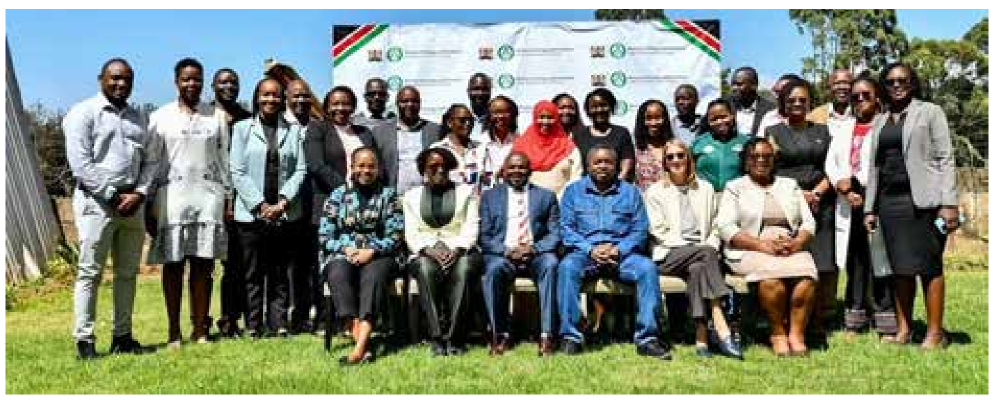
The completion of the Kitale–Lodwar road has transformed transport and commerce in Northern Kenya, cutting journeys that once took up to seven days to just a few hours. Long-distance truckers now make more trips with fewer breakdowns and lower repair costs, while passenger fares have fallen significantly. Traders also benefit from faster access to fresh produce, reducing losses from perishables. Beyond roads, a Sh16.5 million electrification project has connected more than 1,200 residents and public institutions. Solar-powered street lighting has improved security and extended business hours, turning towns that once emptied after dusk into vibrant centres of economic activity.

Two students from Senior Chief Adano Girls Day Secondary School in Wajir County have won the ninth Young Scientists Kenya National Science and Technology Exhibition with an artificial intelligence-based drought prediction system. Hafsa Ibrahim Adan and Asha Harun Yarow emerged overall winners among 308 finalists from 125 schools after developing a system that uses sensors to monitor soil moisture, temperature, humidity and rainfall before generating drought-risk predictions. The technology also estimates the time remaining before drought conditions emerge, helping communities prepare for water shortages and protect crops and livestock. Students from Marsabit's Zad Muslim School finished second with an automated smart garden designed to conserve water. The exhibition highlighted how STEM and AI are helping young innovators address drought, food insecurity and climate challenges in arid regions.

Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi says proposed changes to Kenya's Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax system are expected by September, following consultations with Kenyans and other stakeholders. The government will gather public views before submitting the proposed measures to Parliament for consideration. Among the proposed relief measures is raising the tax-free income threshold from KSh24,000 to KSh30,000, which would exempt more low-income earners from PAYE. The government also proposes reducing the PAYE rate from 30 per cent to 25 per cent for individuals earning between KSh30,001 and KSh50,000. Treasury will further consider recommendations from stakeholder groups, including the Kenya Bankers Association, before finalising the proposals.

Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Sharif Nassir and Kids Operating Room (KidsOR) Chief Executive David Cunningham have officially opened a new paediatric operating theatre at Coast General Teaching and Referral Hospital (CGTRH) in Mombasa. The KSh50 million facility, established through a partnership between the Mombasa County Government and international charity KidsOR, is fully equipped to provide safe and specialised surgical services to children from across the Coast region. The theatre is expected to expand access to critical paediatric procedures and improve outcomes for young patients who previously faced limited access to specialised care. It also features innovative "Solar Surgery" technology, providing reliable and uninterrupted power during operations and reducing disruptions caused by electricity outages.

A multi-agency team led by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities has begun verifying the eligibility of persons with disabilities for tax exemption. NCPWD's Chief Executive Officer Dr. Michael Munene said the nationwide exercise is aimed at providing tax relief for PWDs in formal and informal employment as stipulated under the Act for Persons with Disabilities. Dr Munene noted the month-long activity had commenced in Kisii, which is a strategic region serving more than seven neighbouring counties and the team vetted more than 400 persons.



Nyeri County will host the seventh edition of Clean Cooking Week (CCW) from November 3 to 6, 2026, bringing together national and county stakeholders to promote clean cooking solutions. The annual initiative, launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum and the Clean Cooking Association of Kenya, seeks to expand access to clean fuels and technologies by strengthening policies, markets and sector collaboration. County Secretary Edward Irungu reaffirmed Nyeri's commitment to hosting the event, with Governor Mutahi Kahiga supporting the initiative. CEC Abdi Hanif said 38.9 per cent of Nyeri's 270,743 households use clean cooking solutions, while 60.5 per cent rely on traditional fuels. The county plans to promote biogas, solar energy, waste-to-energy and eCooking to advance universal clean cooking access by 2030.

Peace Wahogo said every Kenyan has the constitutional freedom to associate with any political party

Peace forum initiatives urge leaders to shun divisive politics ahead of 2027 polls

BY Diplomatic Media Services
@themtkenyatimes

Amb. Mary Wahogo with some of officials who attended the forum. | *Photo:* Courtesy.

peaceful campaigns and elections and avoid utterances that could fuel political intolerance and divisions among Kenyans.

Members who met at Theta Hotel, called for responsible political discourse ahead of the 2027 General Election, stressing the need for communities to coexist peacefully regardless of their political affiliations.

The meeting was led by Ambassador Mary Wahogo, a representative of the Global Compact Initiative, who condemned what she described as inflammatory remarks by some opposition leaders allegedly aimed at turning communities against each other by branding those supporting rival political formations as "wasaliti" (traitors).

Wahogo said every Kenyan has the constitutional freedom to associate with any political party or support a leader of their choice without being subjected to discrimination or intimidation on the basis of ethnicity.

She called on political leaders to exercise restraint and ensure their campaigns do not create hostility among communities.

"The incitement should stop. Every Kenyan should enjoy their freedom to align with any political party or leader regardless of their tribe," Wahogo said.

The Global Compact Initiative is a global organisation promoting peace, human security, dignity, sustainable development and responsible international cooperation, guided by principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations.

The organisation works with governments, civil society organisations, intergovernmental bodies and other stakeholders to promote constructive cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

Wahogo said the initiative will roll out peace campaigns, rallies and civic education programmes across the country as Kenya prepares for the 2027 elections.

The programme will bring together political leaders, peace ambassadors, church leaders, artists, civil society representatives, women leaders, persons with disabilities, youth leaders, members of the business community and professionals from different regions.

The initiative seeks to encourage citizens to participate in the electoral process peacefully while respecting divergent political views.

Among those who attended the meeting were Bishop Karanja, Dr Ben Ngigi, former leaders Peter Maina and Benson Munene, Ambassadors Victor Macharia and Mohammed Abdi Ibrahim, and Gospel artist representative Elder Hezekiah Ndung'u, among other leaders.

The leaders said sustained civic education and engagement would be critical in preventing political disagreements from escalating into community conflicts during the electioneering period.

Nairobi County backs Lavington club amid noise row

213 Lounge and Restaurant Limited in Lavington

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

The Nairobi City County government yesterday told the Environment and Land Court that it will not revoke the operating licence of 213 Lounge and Restaurant Limited in Lavington, insisting the club is fully compliant with noise regulations and that its location falls within a legally designated mixed-use zone.

The county's position, filed in a replying affidavit on Tuesday, came in response to a petition by resident Allan Monroe Onyango, who approached the court on August 3 alleging that the club plays loud music throughout the night, every day, causing significant disturbance to people living nearby. The court issued interim orders on August 10 barring the club from playing music on the premises while the matter is heard.

The county, listed as the second respondent in the case, said the National Environment Management Authority had conducted multiple inspections at the facility and found it compliant. County officers also visited the premises on July 16 and 17 following noise complaints and issued a notice requiring the club to put in place applicable noise-control measures, with which it subsequently complied.

"The petitioner's assertion that the county illegally and unlawfully permitted the first respondent to operate a bar and restaurant within a residential area is therefore factually and legally misconceived," the county submitted, pointing out that the Lavington location is classified as a mixed-use zone rather than an exclusive residential area.

The county went further, rejecting Monroe's additional claims that the club causes traffic chaos by allowing patrons to park on pavements and obstruct access roads. It said those allegations were unsupported by any independent traffic assessment or management report linking the conditions to the club's operations.

Monroe, represented by advocate Dennis Onyango, asked the court to provide relief during the court's vacation period, describing the situation as a source of ongoing misery for area residents.

The county was unequivocal in its reply: it is not obliged to revoke a valid licence simply because one resident is dissatisfied.

The matter returns to court for further directions.


NEWS PAPER
IN BUSINESS

Violence **“They are planning to have goons hide under a voter registration exercise near Kabunde Airport to block us,” Omondi said.**

Linda Mwananchi movement warns of plot to disrupt Homa Bay rally

The Linda Mwananchi movement has alleged that rival groups are planning to block access routes and intimidate supporters ahead of its rally in Homa Bay this Sunday.

BY Hadassah Karangu
@themtkenyatimes

The Linda Mwananchi movement yesterday raised the alarm over an alleged plot to disrupt its planned rally in Homa Bay on Sunday, claiming that organised groups intend to block key access routes into the town and intimidate supporters travelling to the event.

Suba South Member of Parliament Caroli Omondi was the most direct in laying out the allegations, claiming that individuals opposed to the rally planned to use an ongoing voter registration exercise near Kabunde Airport as cover to restrict the movement of people heading into town.

“They are planning to have goons hide under a voter registration exercise near Kabunde Airport to block us,” Omondi said.

He went further, alleging that bridges leading into Homa Bay town could be blocked and that individuals would be stationed at the hotel where movement members plan to spend the night before the rally.

“They are also planning to block the bridges leading to Homa Bay town and have goons camp at the hotel where we will be staying the night before,” he said.

The allegations, which remain unverified and without independent confirmation, have nonetheless injected fresh tension into an already charged political environment. No response has yet been issued by any individual or group named in connection with the alleged plan, and those accused retain the opportunity to answer the claims.

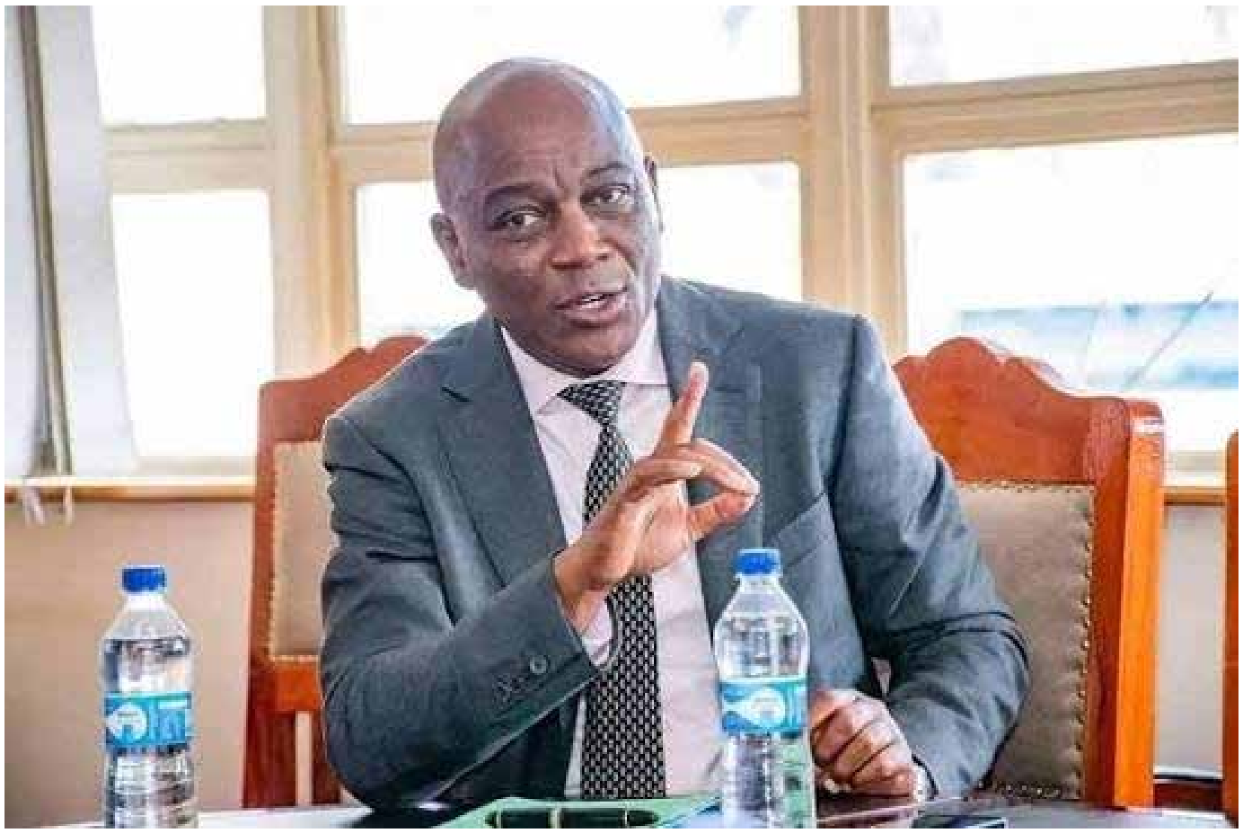
What gives the accusations particular weight — beyond the political theatre that often surrounds such gatherings — is the specificity of the alleged methods. Blocking bridges into Homa Bay would affect far more than rally attendees. Ordinary residents, traders, motorists and commuters going about their daily lives would be caught in the disruption. That dimension elevates the concern from a political dispute to a potential public order matter.

The claim involving Kabunde Airport carries its own implications. If a voter registration exercise were deliberately used as a mechanism to restrict political movement, it would represent a serious breach of the principle that electoral processes must remain free from partisan interference. Registration drives exist to extend democratic participation, not curtail it. Any suggestion that such an exercise is being weaponised for political ends demands urgent scrutiny from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and relevant authorities.

Kenya’s history of political gatherings is not without incident. Competing mobilisations, clashing supporters and, at times, deliberate attempts to prevent rival movements from assembling have punctuated the country’s democratic journey. The Linda Mwananchi movement, led by Nominated Senator Edwin Sifuna and drawing support across Luo Nyanza and Western Kenya, has been among the more vocal opposition formations in recent months, making its Homa Bay rally a significant test of its organisational reach and public support.

That significance is precisely why the allegations matter. Political rallies serve a democratic function. They allow movements to test their appeal, energise their base and signal strength to a watching public and political establishment. Any attempt to prevent such a gathering from taking place — whether through physical obstruction, intimidation or the misuse of state-adjacent processes — strikes at the foundations of political freedom.

The responsibility now rests with several parties simultaneously. Security agencies must ensure that access routes remain open and that supporters can travel freely without fear of confrontation. Local authorities must coordinate with national security services to guarantee a peaceful environment. The movement’s own organisers must ensure their supporters conduct themselves lawfully, regardless of provocation. And those opposed to the rally must pursue their disagreements through democratic channels rather than through intimidation.



Suba South Member of Parliament Caroli Omondi

For the movement, the message it is sending is unambiguous: it will not be deterred. Whether the alleged plot materialises or proves to be political noise, the very act of raising the alarm publicly places pressure on authorities to act and creates accountability ahead of Sunday’s event.

All eyes now turn to Homa Bay. The rally’s success will be measured not only in attendance figures but in whether Kenya’s democratic space proves robust enough to accommodate political competition without descending into confrontation.

Sunday will provide the answer.

Kenyans Contribute Over KSh 10 Million To Fund The Linda Mwananchi Movement

Politics ....

The politics of tomorrow: Why Kenya keeps replacing the future with the next election

Kenya has launched a national conversation about 2060 while its political class is already consumed by 2027 — and that contradiction may be the most important story of this moment.

BY Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya is having another conversation about the future. Yesterday, the country formally launched nationwide consultations on a long-term development framework looking beyond Vision 2030, with Vision 2060 emerging as the proposed horizon. President William Ruto has called on Kenyans to help shape the country's direction — an invitation to imagine the Kenya that future generations will inherit.

That should be encouraging. A country that stops thinking about tomorrow eventually becomes trapped by today. But there is an uncomfortable contradiction at the heart of this latest national conversation. We are being invited to imagine 2060 at precisely the moment when our political discourse is being consumed by 2027. Kenya is trying to look four decades ahead while much of its political class is already looking one election ahead.

There is nothing inherently wrong with politicians thinking about elections. Elections are the mechanism through which citizens choose their leaders. The problem begins when the electoral calendar displaces the national calendar — when the next campaign matters more than the next generation, and when every long-term ambition is forced to compete with the immediate demands of political survival.

Vision 2030 was itself an attempt to escape that cycle. It gave Kenya a long-term development framework intended to guide the country beyond individual administrations. Yet as its horizon approaches, Kenya is once again asking what comes next. That does not automatically mean Vision 2030 failed. Long-term plans must be reviewed, adjusted and renewed as circumstances change. But it should prompt a harder question: why is it so difficult to maintain national continuity when political leadership changes?

The answer lies partly in the incentives of politics. Elections reward visible results. Politicians understandably gravitate towards projects that can be pointed to, inaugurated and associated with their names. But some of the most important investments a country can make produce no immediate political reward. A school built today may educate children for decades. A policy reform may take years before its benefits become obvious. A research programme may produce breakthroughs under a government that did not create it. A forest planted today may matter more to a Kenyan in 2060 than any campaign slogan of 2027.

President William Ruto and his deputy Kithuire Kindiki

Political careers are short. National development is supposed to be long. That tension is the root of the problem.

Vision 2060 should not, therefore, simply become another document launched with speeches, logos and ambitious targets. It must become a genuine test of whether Kenya can finally separate national planning from political succession. The government has said the new vision should be insulated from electoral politics. Prof Anyang' Nyong'o has argued that long-term development goals should not be disrupted by electoral cycles. Those are the right sentiments. But promises deserve public scrutiny, because the credibility of any 2060 plan will ultimately depend on what happens when the politicians who launched it are no longer in office.

A genuine national vision must survive a change of government.

Kenya should be mature enough to say that a good idea does not become bad simply because it was proposed by a political opponent. A new administration should not feel compelled to erase the previous administration's fingerprints before it can claim ownership of the future. That is how countries lose time. And time is precisely what Kenya cannot afford to waste.

The 2060 conversation is particularly urgent because the people who will live with its consequences are already among us. Today's young Kenyans are not merely the leaders of tomorrow. They are students, workers, entrepreneurs, voters, innovators and citizens whose choices are already shaping the country. For years, we have told young people that they are leaders of tomorrow. It sounds inspiring. It can also become a convenient way of postponing their participation.

Tomorrow is not a guarantee.

The young people being invited to imagine Kenya in 2060 deserve more than a seat in a conference hall. They deserve a meaningful role in deciding what that future looks like — the right to ask what education they will receive, what jobs they will find, what environment they will inherit, what institutions will protect their rights, and whether public resources will still be consumed by short-term political calculations. If Vision 2060 is truly about the future, young people cannot merely be its audience. They must be among its authors.

This is also why the national conversation must be more than a government exercise. Public participation cannot mean gathering citizens, presenting a finished idea and calling the meeting a consultation. It must mean listening seriously, incorporating competing views and creating mechanisms through which citizens can later determine whether the promises made today are actually being fulfilled. The questions should be uncomfortable. What happens to Vision 2060 when governments change? Who measures its progress? Which targets will be legally protected? How will Parliament, counties, civil society and ordinary citizens hold successive administrations accountable?

A serious vision should welcome those questions.

Because the future is not created by optimism alone. It is created by institutions, budgets, policies, discipline and continuity. When the next election consistently overwhelms the next generation, democracy becomes dangerously short-sighted. Leaders begin governing for the next opinion poll instead of the next decade. Long-term projects become vulnerable to political transitions, while short-term announcements receive disproportionate attention.

A country can win every election and still lose its future.

That is the warning Kenya must carry into the Vision 2060 conversation. We do not need another grand document that looks impressive on a shelf. We need a national commitment that survives political seasons — leaders who understand that governing is not merely the art of delivering what can be seen before the next election, but the responsibility of building things whose full value may only be appreciated long after they have left office.

Let 2027 be about choosing leaders. Let 2030 be a lesson in what worked, what failed and what must change. But let 2060 remind us that this country belongs to more than the people currently occupying political office.

The future should not be a campaign promise. It should be a national responsibility. And if today's leaders truly want to be remembered as architects of Kenya's tomorrow, they must be willing to build for people they may never meet, in a country they may never live to see.

Because tomorrow is not a guarantee.

It is a responsibility.

Meru **The ruling has unsettled traders who fear the decision could disrupt their livelihoods and strip away a busy commercial space that thousands depend on daily**

Meru County to appeal Soko Mjinga land ruling as traders fear losing business space

The Meru County Government has vowed to challenge a court decision awarding ownership of the Soko Mjinga trading site to a private individual, with Municipal Manager Gatobu Nkanata assuring traders that the land will be fought for in the public interest.

Meru Town Municipal Board Manager Gatobu Nkanata Adresses the press. | *Photo:* Brian Gitonga

BY Brian Gitonga
@themtkenyatimes

The Meru County Government yesterday announced it will appeal a court ruling that awarded ownership of land occupied by traders at Soko Mjinga to a private individual, with Municipal Manager Gatobu Nkanata assuring the business community that the county is committed to keeping the space in public hands.

The ruling has unsettled traders who fear the decision could disrupt their livelihoods and strip away a busy commercial space that thousands depend on daily. Speaking at the Municipal Board offices in Meru town, Nkanata moved quickly to reassure them, making clear that Governor Mutuma M'Ethingia's administration would not allow the matter to rest.

"The government's position, led by Governor M'Ethingia, is that the land should not go to an individual. We will lodge an appeal so that it remains with the people who carry out business on the land," Nkanata said.

He acknowledged that losing a court case is not unusual and stressed that the law provides every aggrieved party with the right to challenge such a decision. His message to residents was one of patience rather than panic.

"You all know what happens with court cases — it is normal for people to lose and win at times, but there is a provision for appeal. That is why I am asking Meru people to have patience as we address that issue," he said.

Nkanata confirmed that the county had already held several meetings with sections of the business community, including members of the Matatu Owners Association, mitumba traders and hawkers, following anxiety over the ruling's implications. He said the county had reassured all affected parties that it was actively pursuing legal remedies to protect the public interest.

The Municipal Manager also addressed a separate and increasingly contentious dispute over the planned construction of the KSh1.2B Gakoromone Market, where a section of traders has resisted plans to relocate them to a newly completed temporary trading site during the building period.

Nkanata defended the project robustly, describing Gakoromone as one of the largest open-air markets in the country and arguing that its redevelopment would deliver lasting benefits for the thousands of traders who depend on it. He said the market attracts an estimated 10,000 traders on a typical market day — a figure that illustrates both the scale of the challenge and the importance of getting the redevelopment right.

"What I can tell our people from Imenti North is not to be misled, but instead allow that market to come up to accommodate traders, because Gakoromone carries an average of 10,000 traders every market day," he said.

He urged traders and residents not to politicise the relocation process, warning that political interference could undermine an investment designed squarely to improve the town's trading infrastructure and create better conditions for business.

Nkanata also used the occasion to address a road safety concern that has been building along the Meru-Nairobi Highway. Traders operating at Gitimbine and Kathita have been displaying and selling merchandise in close proximity to the busy highway — a practice he described as dangerous for both the traders themselves and motorists passing through.

"We have a problem at Kathita where traders are selling their products along the busy highway. We tell them that this is dangerous because all the heavy vehicles pass along there and anything can happen," he said.

Nkanata said he had personally visited the area to caution traders, but that some have continued operating along the roadside despite repeated warnings. He confirmed that the Municipal Board had directed enforcement officers to prevent traders from setting up businesses in areas reserved for pedestrians and along the highway corridor.

"We have told our enforcement officers not to allow any trader to sell their goods near the highway, because no one is permitted by law to sell their products where pedestrians are walking," he said.

The combined issues of the Soko Mjinga appeal, the Gakoromone redevelopment and highway trading enforcement paint a picture of a busy county administration grappling simultaneously with legal, commercial and public safety challenges — all of them centred on how Meru's trading spaces are managed, protected and developed for the long term.

A section of Gakoromone Market Traders Adress the Press. | *Photo:* Brian Gitonga

Music The MKU team also claimed victory in the Office of the Data Protection Commission sponsored class and were placed third in the Central Bank of Kenya sponsored set piece bagging KSh50,000

MKU creative arts team shines at national music festivals with a record haul of medals

BY James Wakahiu
@themtkenyatimes

Mount Kenya University (MKU)'s creative arts groups have once again proven its dominance at the Kenya National Music Festivals, delivering a sterling impressive performance that yielded an impressive tally of 19 overall positions.

The institution also took 25 second-place finishes and 14 third-place positions. The university's choirs and verse teams were virtually untouchable across major categories, from gospel pop adaptations to specialised compositions, cementing MKU's reputation as a powerhouse in artistic excellence.

The university choir showcased exceptional talent, securing top honours in the "Zilizo Pendwa" category with live instruments, along with wins for adaptation and arrangement of popular gospel pop tunes, winning pop secular tunes from Kenya "Zinazovuma".

They also topped in a special composition sponsored by Equity Group that earned a prize of KSh100,000.

The MKU team also claimed victory in the Office of the Data Protection Commission sponsored class and were placed third in the Central Bank of Kenya sponsored set piece bagging KSh50,000.

Not to be outdone, the Verses team added to the medal haul with wins in the Special Composition for the Communication Authority and a Special Composition on Tuberculosis sponsored by Amref Kenya. They won the French verse, among others

The Dean of Students, Dr. Emmanuel Awour, said the team had "exceeded his expectations," offering his congratulations and best wishes. Team leaders Tracy Mulindi and Brillian Ochieng', overwhelmed with emotions, attributed their success to divine guidance, patience, and sacrifice. "Through God, our sacrifices have paid off," she stated, reflecting on the rigorous rehearsal process.

The 98th Kenya National Music Festival is being held at Kibabii University in Bungoma County from August 7 to 14th, 2026. The theme for this year's event is "Enhancing the Creative Economy through Knowledge, Skills and Artistic Production for Sustainable Development".

"The collective effort by MKU underscores the depth of talent within MKU's creative arts department," noted Mr. William Luta, Head of Sports, Film, Creative, and Performing Arts.

Learners from schools, training colleges and universities across Kenya are competing in music, vibrant Zilizopendwa classics, classical tunes, African choral chants and elocution. President William Ruto is expected to attend a music festival gala where some of the top winners will be showcased.

A Learning Curve

Despite the remarkable success, the journey was not without challenges. Mr Luta said that while the team was "thirsty for more accolades," fatigue set in towards the end, affecting concentration. Nonetheless, the future is bright as the the team is largely composed of first and second-year students who have gained invaluable experience that will fuel future competitions.

This year's festival attracted the highest number of participating universities in recent years, making MKU's achievement even more notable. The university's consistent performance at such national events highlights its commitment to nurturing creative talents alongside academic pursuits.

Among other participating colleges were Kabarak University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University, Kenyatta University, University Of Embu, Masinde Muliro University, Cooperative University, Jomo Kenyatta University, Dedan Kimathi University, Egerton University, Alupe University, Machakos University, Multimedia University, Daystar University, Kibabii University, Technical University Of Mombasa, Rongo University, Karatina University, Maseno University, St. Paul's University, University Of Nairobi, Turkana University College and Kaimosi University

Poised for Future Glory

With a young and promising squad that has now been battle-tested, MKU's creative arts group is poised for even greater heights in upcoming competitions. Their latest triumph is not just a collection of trophies but a testament to hard work, resilience, and the vibrant artistic spirit thriving at MKU.

Since its inception in 1948, the Kenya Music Festival has blossomed into the largest documented cultural festival in East and Central Africa. What began as a modest performance platform has evolved into a nationwide celebration of music, dance, and elocution — showcasing over 600 competitive genres and drawing more than 3 million participants each year.

Mount kenya University choir perfoming a special composition sponsored by Equity Group during winners concert gala perfomance at the 98th kenya music festival at Kibabii university. | Photo: Courtesy.

Jubilant Mount Kenya university students raise trophies won at the 98th Kenya music festival at kibabii university.

Mount Kenya University choir perfomimg data protection commission class at the 98th Kenya music festival at Kibabii university.

Politics Gachagua delivered what amounted to both a political warning and a personal testimony — one grounded in his own experience

The deputy's dilemma: Gachagua warns Kindiki he is next

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua has accused President William Ruto of publicly humiliating Deputy President Kithure Kindiki at the Naivasha retreat and plotting to ease him from office — echoing the very pattern Gachagua says was used against him.

DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes

Rigathi Gachagua yesterday accused President William Ruto of deliberately humiliating Deputy President Kithure Kindiki at the recent broad-based government retreat in Naivasha, warning that the President was laying the groundwork to remove his second-in-command from office and replace him with figures drawn from the Orange Democratic Movement.

Speaking at a Democracy for the Citizens Party rally in Kipeto, Keekonyokie Ward, Kajiado West Constituency, Gachagua delivered what amounted to both a political warning and a personal testimony — one grounded in his own experience of what he described as a calculated, methodical pattern of presidential marginalisation. The man who once occupied the Deputy President's office was telling the man who replaced him that history was repeating itself, and that he recognised every step of the choreography.

The allegations were specific and pointed. Gachagua claimed that during the Naivasha retreat, Kindiki was seated away from the main dais — not by accident, he insisted, but by design. He further alleged that Kisii Governor Simba Arati, emboldened by what Gachagua described as Ruto's tacit encouragement, openly declared that the Deputy President's seat belonged to the ODM, and that Kindiki was welcome to cross the floor if he wanted to keep it. The remark, Gachagua said, was made while Kindiki sat in the room.

"Even as he said this, Kindiki was seated right there and could only look down," Gachagua said.

It was, in his telling, a moment of acute and deliberate humiliation — a sitting Deputy President forced to absorb a public challenge to his own position in silence, unable to respond, unwilling or perhaps simply unable to push back.

To understand why that image carries such resonance, it is necessary to look at what happened to Gachagua himself in the months before his impeachment in October 2024. The pattern, as those who observed it closely will attest, was strikingly similar. It did not begin with a vote in parliament. It began with a seat at the wrong table.

Long before the impeachment motion was tabled, Gachagua found himself being edged out of the inner circle in ways that were visible to those paying attention. Meetings he expected to attend were held without him. Events at which the Deputy President would ordinarily be prominent saw his presence diminished or his position on the programme quietly altered. Political allies who had been close began to create distance. The signals were being sent, and they were being read — by the public, by the press, and by Gachagua himself, who says he confronted the situation head-on in ways that Kindiki, given his particular political circumstances, simply cannot.

"When he wants to remove you, he does not tell you to go," Gachagua said yesterday. "He begins to sideline you, then brings in others to occupy your political space, and then uses them to come after you."

He described his own response to the early stages of that treatment in characteristically combative terms, recounting incidents during his tenure when he said attempts were made to physically marginalise him within the presidential entourage. He claimed that at a Naivasha function, presidential economic adviser David Ndii attempted to insert himself into the walking party and was physically removed. "I pushed back. I made clear I would not be sidelined," Gachagua said. The implication was unmistakable: Kindiki, constrained by a fundamentally different political situation, does not have that option.

That distinction is structural, not personal. Gachagua was elected to the Deputy President's office on a joint ticket with Ruto in 2022, which gave him an independent electoral mandate — a political base he could in theory appeal to separately from the presidency. Kindiki was appointed to the position by Ruto following the impeachment, which means he holds the office entirely at the President's discretion, without the cushion of his own electoral mandate to fall back on. In any internal confrontation with the President, the leverage available to him is almost non-existent.

"Because he was given the job rather than elected to it, his role is simply to say yes sir," Gachagua said. "He cannot push back."

The parallel between the two deputies is uncomfortable in its precision. Both are Mount Kenya figures appointed to serve alongside a President from the Rift Valley. Both were positioned as bridges between their region and the presidency. Both have found, or are finding, that such bridges can be dismantled from one end without much warning. The difference is that Gachagua reached the end of that process and emerged on the other side with a political platform, a party and a grievance he has converted into fuel. Kindiki is, on Gachagua's reading of events, somewhere in the middle of the same journey — though he has given no public indication that he sees it that way.

Gachagua was careful, amid the political sharp-shooting, to frame his concern for Kindiki in terms that were personal and even moral. Whatever the calculation behind it, the register was unexpected from a man addressing a political rally.

"Even if you are done with someone and no longer want them, why do you have to embarrass them in front of other men?" he said. "Does he have no dignity in his own home?"

It is a question that lingers. In Kenyan political culture, where public displays of loyalty and hierarchy carry enormous symbolic weight, the deliberate humiliation of a senior official in the presence of his peers sends a message that travels far beyond the room in which it happens. It tells the political market who is rising and who is falling. It signals to allies where to place their bets. And it places the person being humiliated in an impossible position — forced to choose between absorbing the slight in silence or responding in a way that accelerates the very outcome they are trying to avoid.

Gachagua chose to respond. It did not save him, but it defined him. The question now hanging over Kindiki is whether he will find a way to assert himself before events make the choice for him — or whether, as Gachagua clearly believes, the machinery is already too far advanced for any individual response to alter the outcome.

The 2027 general election is now the fixed point around which every political calculation in Kenya revolves. Gachagua's DCP has positioned itself as the authentic voice of Mount Kenya, a community whose vote Ruto cannot win the next election without, and whose patience with the current arrangement, Gachagua insists, is running out. Whether Kindiki's continued public silence reinforces that narrative or eventually contradicts it will be one of the defining sub-plots of the political period now unfolding.

In Kenya, the road from Deputy President to the political wilderness can be travelled with remarkable speed. Gachagua completed that journey in under two years. Yesterday, with the precision of a man who knows every pothole on the route, he was offering Kindiki a map.

Whether Kindiki reads it is another matter entirely.

Business Our focus for the rest of the year is to grow quality insurance revenue, hold the line on costs, and convert our new capital base into profitable growth," said Dr Nyamemba Patrick Tumbo

Sanlam Allianz Holdings posts KSh124.6 million half-year net profit

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Listed Non-Bank financial services provider Sanlam Allianz Holdings (Kenya) Plc has posted a KSh124.6 million net profit in its half-year results, released yesterday.

Insurance revenue increased to KSh2.2 billion, while net profit grew to KSh124.6 million, up from KSh30.9 million posted in the same period last year. This shows a resilient performance in the context of higher claims and lower investment returns during the period.

Speaking while confirming the half-year financials, Sanlam Allianz Holdings Kenya Group Chief Executive Officer Dr Nyamemba Patrick Tumbo said the firm had sustained ongoing business development efforts geared towards accelerating growth while reducing its operating costs.

"The business has seen a significant growth of 32% in Gross Written Premiums (GWP) compared to the same period last year. Most importantly, the business is fundamentally stronger and better capitalised than it was eighteen months ago, with our balance sheet surpassing KSh40 billion for the first time and our solvency ratio closing at 266%, significantly above regulatory minimum requirements.

Our focus for the rest of the year is to grow quality insurance revenue, hold the line on costs, and convert our new capital base into profitable growth," said Dr Nyamemba Patrick Tumbo.

The Group continued to strengthen its retirement and goal-based savings propositions during the period. In February 2026, it launched the Sanlam Allianz Income Drawdown Fund, extending its retirement offering into income drawdown and complementing the annuities it pioneered in this market.

Sanlam Allianz Life Insurance (Kenya) Limited Chief Executive Officer Ms. Jacqueline Karasha (left) joins Sanlam Allianz Holdings (Kenya) PLC Group CEO Dr. PatrickTumbo (centre) and SanlamAllianz General Insurance (Kenya) CEO Mr George Kuria.

This was further supported by the expansion of its savings range through Flexi Future Plus, strengthening the Group's focus on solutions that help customers plan, save and draw income throughout various life stages.

The business continues to centre on innovation in products and processes, capital efficiency, and digitalisation to build a strong business that offers a competitive customer value proposition while delivering sustainable benefit to its shareholders.

Thursday, August 13, 2026 The Mt. Kenya Times

Never Give Up

The road may be long and uneven.
Your feet may grow tired.
The sky may look full of clouds.
Still, keep moving forward.
Every small step has a purpose.

Every mistake teaches a lesson.
Every challenge builds quiet strength.
Do not measure yourself by one bad day.
Believe in the light you carry inside.
Dreams grow through patience, not shortcuts.

Courage is choosing to try once more.
Hope is stronger than fear.
Your story is still being written.
Keep your heart open to tomorrow.
Never give up, because the next step may change everything.

V.Joshika
Grade 8
John dewey matric higher secondary School, Link road , panruti

Value what you have while you have it

Life is not permanent;
it is always changing. No one knows what will happen in the next moment.
Therefore, we should appreciate and value what we have.

Sometimes, we do not realize the importance of the precious people and things in our lives.
Only after we lose them do we truly understand their value.
However, once they are gone, they may never come back.

So, value what you have while it is with you.
Be grateful for the people and blessings in your life.
Appreciating them will bring you happiness and peace of mind.

G. YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Dream requires effortless sleep and Aim requires sleepless efforts.

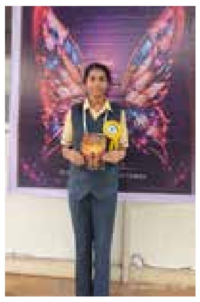
Ordinary men enjoy day dreaming
They prefer to live on online streaming
Extraordinarymen enjoy thinking
As thinking prevents them from sinking.

Two people were sitting under an apple tree
One simply rested and started sleeping
The second one started thinking
why should apples fall from the tree?

He aimed at discovering the fact
The aim urged him to act
The aim made him interact
With nature.He discovered Gravitational force.

The man who slept and enjoyed day dreaming
under the apple tree was not known
The man who was blinking and thinking
Still the world remembers him as Newton.
....
Penned by
RANGANATHAN E
B.T Asst.(Eng)
Marwar Govt.Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

My Pain



My eyes are sore
from crying.

My heart feels
like it is breaking.

My mouth keeps lying,
hiding what I truly feel.

My mind is racing,
and my body is fighting.

I don't know
what to do anymore.

Yet somewhere
deep inside me,

a small spark
still whispers,

"Hold on.
A new dawn
will come."

V. S. NITHIYA SRI
VIII -D
JOHN DEWEY MAT. HR. SEC. SCHOOL,
TAMILNADU.

My First Belief

Before I trust the world outside,
I trust the love I know.
My parents' hands have held me close
Since I was small and slow.

They taught me how to stand up tall,
To rise each time I fall.
Their faith became the voice inside
That answers every call.

I don't chase every passing cheer,
Or follow every crowd.
I walk with quiet confidence,
My heart is calm and proud.

The strongest roots are not in fame,
Nor in what others say.
They're grown through love, through honest hearts,
That guide me every day.

So if the road is dark ahead,
I will not fear or hide.
My parents' love, my self-belief,
That's all I need to guide.

D.DHANYASRI
GRADE 8
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL,LINK ROAD, PANRUTI, CUDDALORE.

Sweet Memories

Images are fixed in the mind—Happiness, sorrow, fun, or worries.Every moment leaves an imageThat remains within the heart.

But the moments of joy,Laughter, and togethernessNever fade away.

Whenever memories are recalled,Those sweet imagesCome alive in the mind once again.

They are the beautiful moments of life.

Keep sweet memories,Live for happiness,And cherish every beautiful moment.
Mohana. k, BT Assistant, PUMS KOVAKULAM ,KARUR,Tamil Nadu, India.

KEMSA Ejersa, who has led KEMSA through a period of renewed institutional focus, used the forum to outline the agency's priorities

KEMSA chief outlines supply chain reforms ahead of health summit

Kenya Medical Supplies Authority chief executive Waqo Dulacha Ejersa has reaffirmed the agency's commitment to expanding access to affordable medicines and strengthening the national health supply chain in support of the government's Universal Health Coverage agenda.

BY John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya Medical Supplies Authority chief executive Waqo Dulacha Ejersa

Kenya Medical Supplies Authority chief executive Waqo Dulacha Ejersa yesterday told a media town hall ahead of the Kenya Health Summit 2026 that the agency is focused on expanding access to quality, affordable health products and technologies while reinforcing the supply chain systems that underpin the government's Universal Health Coverage programme.

Ejersa, who has led KEMSA through a period of renewed institutional focus, used the forum to outline the agency's priorities and respond to questions from journalists on the state of Kenya's health supply chain — a sector that directly affects the availability of medicines and medical supplies in public facilities across the country.

His appearance at the town hall came as the health sector prepares for the Kenya Health Summit 2026, a gathering expected to bring together policymakers, health professionals, development partners and civil society to assess progress on the country's healthcare agenda and chart priorities for the period ahead.

KEMSA plays a central role in that agenda. As the government's primary procurement and distribution agency for health commodities, it is responsible for ensuring that medicines, medical equipment and other health products reach public facilities in sufficient quantities and on time. Failures in that chain — whether through procurement delays, distribution breakdowns or stock-outs — have real consequences for patients who depend on public health services.

Ejersa acknowledged the scale of that responsibility, stressing that every improvement in the supply chain translates directly into better health outcomes for ordinary Kenyans. He said KEMSA remains committed to delivering results that reflect the government's broader ambition of making quality healthcare accessible and affordable to all citizens, regardless of where they live.

The Universal Health Coverage agenda, a flagship priority of President William Ruto's administration, has placed significant demands on the health supply chain. Expanding coverage to previously underserved populations requires not only adequate funding but also a reliable and efficient system for procuring and distributing health commodities at scale. KEMSA's ability to meet those demands will be a critical determinant of how effectively the programme delivers on its promises.

Ejersa did not shy away from the institutional challenges that have historically dogged KEMSA, including past procurement controversies that damaged public confidence in the agency. His public engagement at the town hall appeared designed in part to signal a more transparent and accountable approach to the agency's operations — one focused on performance and professional standards rather than the opacity that has occasionally surrounded public procurement in Kenya's health sector.

The Kenya Health Summit 2026, at which KEMSA is expected to feature prominently, will provide a broader platform for assessing whether the agency's stated commitments are translating into measurable improvements in health commodity availability and supply chain efficiency.

For millions of Kenyans who rely on public health facilities for their medical needs, the answer to that question is anything but abstract.

Beyond 2030 **"The tourism sector of tomorrow cannot rely solely on the models of yesterday," she has said. "It must be smarter, greener, more inclusive and more technologically advanced."**

Miano champions tourism as pillar of Kenya's future beyond 2030

Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano has placed tourism and wildlife conservation at the centre of Kenya's long-term economic agenda, outlining an ambitious strategy to transform the sector into a primary driver of inclusive growth.

BY John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano (L)

Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano yesterday joined President William Ruto, Deputy President Kithure Kindiki and national and county leaders at the launch of the Beyond 2030 National Conversation at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi, using the platform to lay out a sweeping vision for repositioning tourism as a cornerstone of Kenya's economic future.

For Miano, the forum represents more than a policy discussion. It is, in her framing, a historic opportunity to redefine what Kenya's economy can look like in the decades ahead — and to ensure that tourism and wildlife conservation are no longer treated as peripheral earners but as central pillars of national transformation.

The targets she is pursuing are significant. Under her stewardship, Kenya is working to scale tourism's contribution to more than 12 per cent of GDP, with an annual economic value target of KSh1.2 trillion — roughly US$9B — while creating more than 2.5 million direct jobs for young people and local communities. The figures are ambitious by any measure, but Miano has been consistent in arguing that ambition is precisely what the moment requires.

"The tourism sector of tomorrow cannot rely solely on the models of yesterday," she has said. "It must be smarter, greener, more inclusive and more technologically advanced."

Her agenda reflects that conviction. Miano has placed technology and innovation at the heart of her strategy, championing artificial intelligence-driven conservation, smart park management systems, green mobility solutions and digital travel platforms. The vision is of a modern tourism ecosystem that embraces the tools of the future without compromising the natural heritage that makes Kenya extraordinary in the first place.

That balance — between economic growth and environmental responsibility — runs through everything Miano has articulated since taking office. She has been deliberate in rejecting the idea that conservation and development are competing priorities. Properly integrated, she argues, they reinforce each other, creating a durable engine of sustainable prosperity rather than a short-term extractive model that depletes the very resources it depends upon.

Kenya's tourism strength, in her assessment, lies not only in its iconic wildlife and landscapes. It lies equally in its people, communities, culture and hospitality — the human texture of the country that no marketing campaign can manufacture. Ensuring that the benefits of the sector reach those communities, rather than flowing primarily to large operators and foreign investors, has emerged as a defining theme of her tenure.

The ambition to position Magical Kenya as a premier sustainable global destination is, in this context, more than a branding exercise. It is a statement of strategic intent — one that connects conservation policy, community development, youth employment and technological modernisation into a single coherent framework.

Tourism, Miano has noted, touches an unusually wide range of economic activity. From hospitality and transport to conservation, culture, technology and the creative industries, the sector's value chain has the potential to improve millions of Kenyan livelihoods — many of them belonging to young people for whom formal employment has remained elusive.

At a time when Kenya must generate meaningful work for a rapidly growing youth population, that breadth matters enormously. Miano's leadership has been notable for its recognition of this interconnectedness — its insistence that tourism policy is, at its core, also labour policy, environmental policy and community policy.

Her participation in the Beyond 2030 conversation arrives at a critical juncture. As Kenya reflects on the achievements and shortcomings of Vision 2030 and looks ahead to the following decades, the country needs leaders capable of imagining possibilities beyond the familiar. Miano has demonstrated that capacity.

She brings to the tourism and wildlife portfolio institutional experience, strategic clarity and a genuine appreciation of what makes Kenya's natural and cultural heritage worth protecting. The targets are bold. The framework is credible. The question now is whether the resources, political will and institutional coordination required to deliver it can be assembled in time.

Under Miano's watch, at least, the sector knows where it is headed.

For Miano, the forum represents more than a policy discussion. It is, in her framing, a historic opportunity to redefine what Kenya's economy can look like in the decades ahead — and to ensure that tourism and wildlife conservation are no longer treated as peripheral earners but as central pillars of national transformation.

Neglect The Surgeon General has called loneliness an epidemic whose mortality risk rivals smoking fifteen cigarettes a day

The architecture of neglect: Why consideration and humanity must become our fierce rebellion

By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
@themtkenyatimes

Nearly six in ten Americans report feeling lonely. The Surgeon General has called loneliness an epidemic whose mortality risk rivals smoking fifteen cigarettes a day. It raises the odds of heart disease by roughly 29 percent, stroke by 32 percent, and premature death by 26 to 29 percent. Face-to-face time with friends among young people has collapsed by nearly 70 percent in less than two decades. These are not soft feelings or cultural mood swings. They are measurable fractures in the social body, and they reveal a deeper failure: the progressive atrophy of consideration and the quiet abandonment of the humane.

Consideration is not politeness. It is the disciplined act of treating another consciousness as real. Humanity is not sentimentality; it is the refusal to let efficiency, convenience, or self-protection erase the person standing in front of you. When these capacities weaken, isolation does not merely increase it becomes structural. We design our days, our apps, our workplaces, and our politics around the assumption that other people are optional or, worse, obstacles.

Look at the pattern. Empathy scores among college students dropped sharply across earlier decades; even where some measures later stabilized or partially recovered, a persistent "empathy perception gap" remains: people systematically underestimate how much others care. Loneliness and reduced prosocial behavior reinforce each other. The more isolated we feel, the less we reach outward; the less we reach outward, the more isolated we become. Digital life accelerated the loop. We optimized strangers and even intimates out of the texture of ordinary existence. One app at a time, we removed the small frictions waiting in line, asking directions, noticing the person next to us that once forced us to practice seeing others. The result is not freedom. It is a thinner existence in which the self becomes both sovereign and starved.

This is not nostalgia for a gentler past that never fully existed. Cruelty and indifference are ancient. What is new is the scale and the sophistication of the systems that reward emotional minimalism. We have built environments that make it easier to look past than to look at. In workplaces, loneliness costs organizations thousands per employee annually through absenteeism, turnover, and diminished performance. Teams that practice genuine regard managers who notice, colleagues who adjust without being asked show higher engagement, lower burnout, and stronger results. The data are unambiguous: prosocial motivation and acts of consideration improve well-being for both giver and receiver. Kindness is not a soft luxury. It is a performance enhancer and a public-health intervention.

Nevertheless, we treat it as optional. We call out toxicity when it is loud and spectacular, but we rarely name the quieter violence of habitual inconsideration: the message left unread for days, the meeting scheduled without regard for the other person's constraints, the conversation that never asks how someone is actually doing because the answer might require time. These small withholdings accumulate. They teach people that their inner weather does not matter. Over years, the lesson becomes identity. People begin to move through the world armored, assuming scarcity of care, and therefore offering little themselves. The correlation is vicious and circular.

True consideration demands intellectual acuity. It requires the capacity to hold two truths at once: that one's own needs are legitimate and that another's are equally so. It is not self-erasure. The person who collapses every boundary in the name of "being nice" is not humane; they are depleted and eventually resentful. Mastery lies in the calibrated act knowing when to yield, when to hold firm, when to speak the difficult truth with precision rather than blunt force. It is the difference between the surgeon who cuts with care and the one who hacks. Both remove the problem; only one leaves the patient whole.

Consider the vivid mechanics. A colleague is struggling with an invisible deadline pressure or a private grief. The inconsiderate response is to proceed as if the calendar is the only reality. The considerate response does not require solving their life. It requires a single adjusted sentence: "I can shift this by a day if that helps." Or simply noticing the tightness in their face and asking once, without performance. That small recognition can interrupt the loneliness cascade. Neuroscience and behavioral studies show that being seen reduces physiological stress markers and increases feelings of connection and purpose. The giver benefits as well: acts of kindness reliably elevate mood and meaning. The exchange is not zero-sum. It is generative.

We must also confront the harder cases. Consideration does not mean endorsing harm or pretending all perspectives are equal. It means refusing to dehumanize even those we oppose. The person who disagrees with you still has a nervous system that flinches, a history that shaped them, a capacity for pain. To deny that is to practice a selective blindness that eventually blinds us to ourselves. Societies that perfect the art of othering eventually turn the same machinery inward. History is littered with the evidence.

Original thought demands we stop treating consideration as a personality trait some people luckily possess. It is a skill that atrophies without deliberate practice and strengthens with it. In an age of constant partial attention, the practice is radical: put the phone down when someone is speaking. Leave the meeting early enough that the other person is not left scrambling. Write the email that anticipates the question the recipient will have rather than forcing them to ask. These are not grand gestures. They are the daily architecture of a society that still believes people are ends rather than means.

The alternative is already visible. Rising rates of anxiety and depression among the young track the collapse of unstructured social time. The perception that others care less than they do fuels withdrawal. Workplace cultures that treat people as interchangeable units produce higher burnout and lower loyalty. The data form a coherent picture: when we starve the capacity for mutual regard, everything downstream suffers health, productivity, creativity, the simple willingness to risk connection.

Even so, the same data contain the remedy. Interventions that simply inform people that their peers report higher empathy than expected increase social risk-taking and expand networks months later. Empathy-focused conversations reduce loneliness and depression even when delivered by trained laypeople. Prosocial acts improve the giver's mental health. The machinery of disconnection can be run in reverse.

This is the call. Stop romanticizing rugged individualism when it has become a cover for emotional freeloading. Stop treating kindness as weakness when the evidence shows it is a form of strength that compounds. Demand of yourself the intellectual honesty to notice when you are optimizing people out of your path. Demand of institutions that they measure not only output but the human cost of how that output is achieved. Teach children not merely to achieve but to attend to the person beside them, to the subtle shift in tone that signals distress, to the quiet labor of making another's day fractionally lighter.

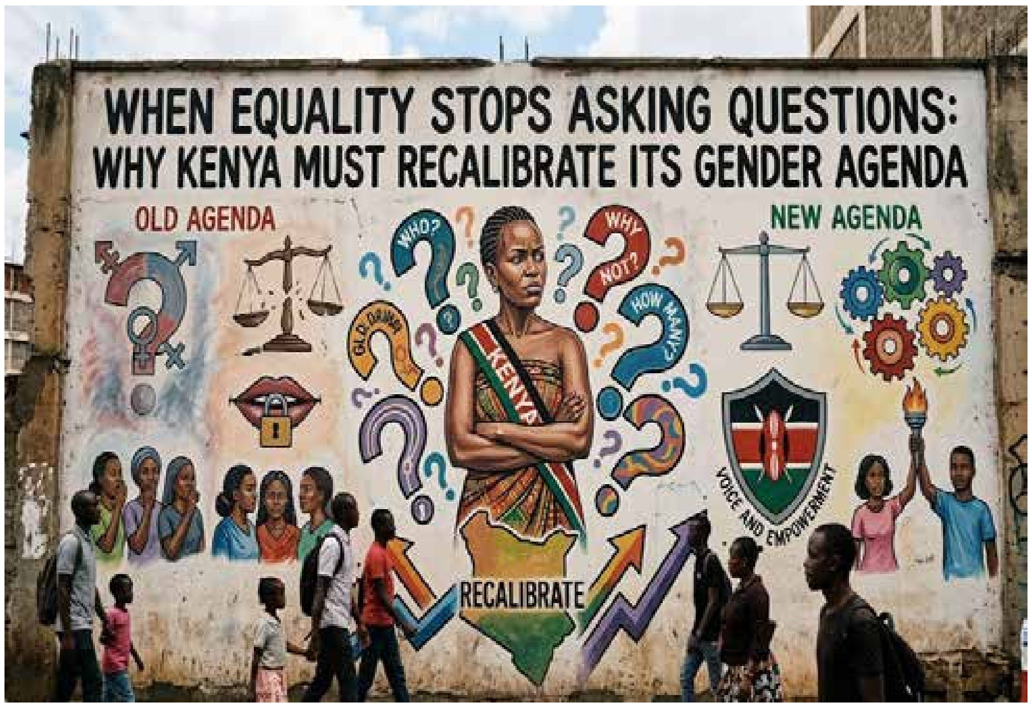
Consideration and humanity are not the soft underbelly of progress. They are the load-bearing structure. Without them the edifice cracks: first in private loneliness, then in public distrust, then in a culture that can no longer imagine the interior life of the stranger. The statistics are already speaking. The question is whether we will answer with the only force strong enough to reverse the trend deliberate, skilled, unapologetic regard for one another as fully real.

The writer is a social commentator

Equality History will judge that constitutional moment kindly. It corrected profound injustices, expanded democratic participation and transformed the aspirations of millions of girls and women

When equality stops asking questions: Why Kenya must recalibrate its gender agenda

BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themtkenyatimes



Illustration

A society demonstrates its moral maturity not by the slogans it proclaims but by its willingness to question whether its institutions still serve justice. There was a time when Kenya's greatest constitutional challenge was to dismantle the deeply entrenched barriers that denied women equal opportunity. Women were systematically excluded from political leadership, formal employment, education, financial services and positions of influence. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 rightly responded by enshrining equality before the law, prohibiting discrimination, requiring affirmative measures to redress historical disadvantage and affirming that human dignity belongs equally to every Kenyan. Those reforms were not gifts bestowed upon women; they were a long-overdue recognition of rights that should never have been denied.

History will judge that constitutional moment kindly. It corrected profound injustices, expanded democratic participation and transformed the aspirations of millions of girls and women. Yet constitutions are living instruments, not frozen monuments. They are designed to respond to changing realities, and the legitimacy of any public policy depends not only on the justice of its origins but also on the justice of its continuing effects. No democratic society should fear examining whether programmes created to correct historical inequality remain proportionate, evidence-based and faithful to the constitutional promise of equal protection for every person.

The most dangerous assumption any nation can make is that yesterday's solutions will always solve tomorrow's problems. Justice is not a destination reached once and preserved forever; it is a continual process of measuring whether public institutions remain fair to all. If that process stops, equality itself risks becoming ideological rather than constitutional.

Across Kenya, a new social conversation is quietly unfolding. It is not driven by hostility towards women or by nostalgia for discrimination. It is driven by citizens asking whether some affirmative interventions have become so permanent that they are no longer periodically assessed against current evidence. Public policy should never become immune from review simply because its original purpose was noble.

This conversation is particularly evident in the allocation of public opportunities. Over the past decade, Kenya has created numerous empowerment initiatives, procurement preferences and targeted financial programmes intended to increase women's participation in the economy. Many of these interventions have delivered important gains. However, questions are increasingly being asked about whether future programmes should be designed around measurable disadvantage rather than assuming disadvantage solely on the basis of gender. A young unemployed man from a poor rural household, a widower raising children alone, or a man living with a disability may face profound barriers that are not adequately recognised by programmes built around categorical assumptions. The Constitution protects every person from discrimination; its promise is not confined to one sex.

The same need for recalibration is emerging in education. For many years, Kenya's education policies rightly focused on improving girls' enrolment, retention and completion because girls faced significant structural barriers. Those interventions produced remarkable progress. Today, however, several counties report worrying levels of boys leaving school for casual labour, motorcycle transport, gambling, substance abuse and other forms of social disengagement. This does not diminish the continuing challenges faced by girls. It simply demonstrates that vulnerability evolves. Educational policy should evolve with it. Protecting girls and supporting boys are not competing objectives; they are complementary responsibilities.

The labour market presents another challenge. Public confidence in recruitment depends upon transparency, merit and fairness. Affirmative action remains constitutionally legitimate where clear underrepresentation exists, but citizens also expect appointments to reflect competence and integrity. Recruitment policies should therefore be subject to regular public review, supported by objective data showing where genuine disparities remain and where equal competition has become possible. Such transparency would strengthen affirmative action by ensuring it is demonstrably necessary rather than merely assumed.

Perhaps nowhere is the need for balance more delicate than within the family. Stable families remain the foundation of every prosperous society. Public institutions should therefore avoid reinforcing outdated stereotypes that caregiving belongs exclusively to mothers or financial responsibility exclusively to fathers. The constitutional principle of equality calls for shared parental responsibility wherever circumstances permit and for decisions guided by the best interests of the child rather than assumptions about gender. Strong families are built upon partnership, not institutional preference.

These questions should not be misunderstood as arguments for dismantling the legal protections that women continue to need. Gender-based violence remains an urgent national crisis. Women continue to bear disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities. Harmful cultural practices, unequal access to productive assets and barriers to leadership persist in many parts of the country. Those realities justify continued legal protection and effective enforcement. The challenge is not whether protection should continue, but whether every intervention should be periodically tested against evidence to ensure that it remains necessary, proportionate and constitutionally balanced.

The philosopher Aristotle taught that justice consists in giving each person what is due according to relevant circumstances. His insight remains profoundly relevant. Equality is not achieved by treating every situation identically, nor by permanently privileging one category of citizens regardless of changing realities. It is achieved by ensuring that public policy responds to actual disadvantage wherever it exists.

The political philosopher John Rawls advanced a similar principle through his concept of the "veil of ignorance." He argued that just institutions are those we would design without knowing whether we would be born male or female, wealthy or poor, urban or rural, able-bodied or living with a disability. If Kenya's equality framework were designed today from behind that veil, would it focus exclusively on one historical disadvantage, or would it seek to identify and respond to all forms of vulnerability? That question deserves thoughtful national reflection.

Our own African moral tradition reaches the same conclusion through Ubuntu: "I am because we are." Ubuntu rejects the notion that one group's flourishing must come at another's expense. It reminds us that justice strengthens communities only when it deepens the dignity of everyone. Policies that unintentionally foster resentment, competition or perceptions of unequal treatment weaken the social trust upon which democracy depends.

Kenya now stands at a constitutional crossroads. One path treats existing policies as untouchable, beyond periodic review because their original purpose was just. The other path remains faithful to the Constitution by recognising that justice requires continuous evaluation, transparency and responsiveness to evidence. The second path does not abandon women's rights; it safeguards them by ensuring that affirmative measures retain broad public legitimacy and continue to address genuine need.

The Constitution did not promise perpetual preference. It promised equal protection, equal dignity and equal benefit of the law. Those promises are strongest when they are understood to belong to every Kenyan. The future of equality in Kenya therefore lies not in preserving policies unchanged, nor in dismantling them, but in having the courage to refine them in the light of evidence, constitutional fidelity and the common good.

The American civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. reminded the world that, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." That arc bends only when nations have the courage to ask difficult questions, measure their institutions honestly and ensure that justice remains recognisable as justice to all.

Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo PWD
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KARLO Gichohi also said the institution would support efforts to reduce Kenya's dependence on imported staple foods by promoting technologies

Benson Gichohi takes over as KALRO chairman, vows to put farmers at centre of research

Benson Gichohi Ngure (left) with Dr Patrick Ketiem

BY Diplomatic Media Services
@themtkenyatimes

Benson Gichohi Ngure has officially assumed office as the new chairman of the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO), promising to steer the institution towards research and innovations that deliver tangible benefits to farmers and strengthen Kenya's food security.

Gichohi formally took over the leadership of the KALRO Board alongside fellow directors Rose Sang, Capt. Bootsy Mutiso and Dennis K., in the presence of Director General Dr Patrick Ketiem and senior management officials.

In his inaugural remarks, Gichohi said the new board recognised the responsibility entrusted to it and would uphold KALRO's mandate of advancing agricultural research, innovation, technology development and knowledge transfer.

He said the board would prioritise farmer-centred solutions aimed at increasing productivity, strengthening climate resilience, promoting sustainable food systems and creating opportunities across agricultural value chains.

Gichohi also said the institution would support efforts to reduce Kenya's dependence on imported staple foods by promoting technologies and innovations capable of boosting domestic production.

"Research must go beyond generating knowledge. It must translate into practical technologies, innovations, policies and solutions that farmers can access, adopt and use to improve their productivity and incomes," he said.

He pledged to strengthen the link between scientists and farmers so that research generated by KALRO translates into measurable improvements in agricultural production and household incomes.

The new chairman takes over at a time when Kenya is seeking to increase agricultural productivity amid climate change, rising production costs, food imports and pressure to create employment and incomes through agriculture.

His appointment follows the abrupt departure of his predecessor, Dr Thuo Mathenge, whose tenure was terminated by President William Ruto.

In a Gazette notice issued last Friday, President Ruto revoked Mathenge's appointment as KALRO chairperson with effect from the same day.

Mathenge later publicly linked his removal to his political support for former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and his association with the Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP).

His exit came barely weeks after he had presided over KALRO activities aimed at strengthening agricultural research and innovation. In June, Mathenge was involved in the organisation's second Scientific Conference and Innovation Expo, where he emphasised the role of scientists in food security and climate resilience.

Mathenge had also overseen the appointment of Dr Patrick Ketiem as KALRO Director General in January, replacing Dr Eliud Kireger after his 11-year tenure. At the time, Mathenge said KALRO had strengthened its research and innovation pipeline and developed technologies used by smallholder farmers.

Gichohi inherits an organisation whose work has a direct bearing on one of the most important sectors of the Kenyan economy.

Agriculture directly contributed about 21.2 per cent of Kenya's GDP in 2022 and another 27 per cent indirectly through linkages with agro-based and associated industries.

The organisation says research and development have contributed to the sector's growth and remain critical to improving productivity and incomes.

Established under the KALRO Act of 2013, the organisation is mandated to generate and disseminate technologies and innovations to increase the productivity and quality of agricultural products, processes and services. Its research covers crops, livestock, genetic resources, plant and animal health, environmental management, mechanisation and agricultural socio-economics.

The institution's impact can be seen across major food and agricultural value chains. Its Food Crops Research Institute develops and promotes staple-food technologies across all 47 counties, including maize, pasture and fodder technologies. KALRO-developed varieties such as H614D have played a significant role in Kenya's food security.

In the livestock sector, KALRO's Dairy Research Institute conducts research on breeding, animal nutrition, fodder, disease management, value addition and climate adaptation, with the objective of improving productivity, competitiveness and farmers' livelihoods.

The organisation has also been involved in the development of drought-tolerant and insect-protected maize varieties, reflecting the growing need for farming systems capable of withstanding climate shocks.

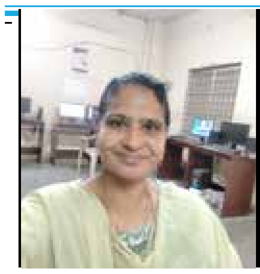
The importance of such research is underscored by the government's recent call for increased investment in agricultural science. In June, the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture warned that inadequate funding was constraining research and innovation, with the sector facing a reported Sh43 billion financing gap.

The government has consequently pledged to increase annual agricultural research funding and improve the dissemination of research findings to farmers.

Gichohi said the new board would pursue collaboration and partnerships to ensure that KALRO's scientific work does not remain within laboratories and research stations but reaches farms and communities.

He said the board's guiding philosophy would be: "Research for Impact. Innovation for Transformation. Farmers at the Centre."

Dr Thuo Mathenge in one of the events during his days as KALRO chairman. | *Photo:* Courtesy



BOOKS & LITERATURE

with D Brinda Srinivasan

Creative writers GHS Melpattampakkam Cuddalore dist Tamilnadu India

English Literary:

Inaugural Ceremony of the Tamil and English Literary. Literally association

The inaugural ceremony of the Tamil and English Literary Club was conducted at St. Mary's Matriculation School, Panruti on 11th August 2026 at 2:00 PM.

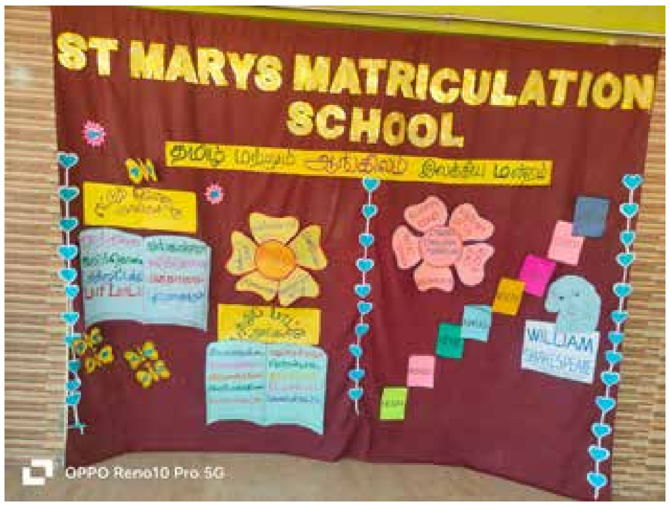
The event commenced with a prayer song, "There Shall Be Showers of Blessing". This was followed by the Welcome address by Mrs. Srimathi

Honourable Chief guests were Mr. Sabastian Tamil teacher and Mrs. Brinda English teacher GHS Melpattampakkam,

the chief guests were honoured by Principal sister Rev.Sr. Gracy
Mother superior -Sr.Theresina Mary
The students actively participated in various literary events organized to highlight the importance of both Tamil and English languages. The performances included
Literally speech in English ,
Tamil poem
Tamil drama (Ariuv sal aviyyar)
English drama
Dance and speech competitions. Each event showcased the students' talent, creativity, and love for language and literature.

The Chief Guests addressed the gathering and spoke about the significance of both Tamil and English. They emphasized how proficiency in our mother tongue, Tamil, connects us to our culture and roots, while English opens doors to global communication and opportunities. They encouraged students to develop skills in both languages.

The students who performed in the various activities were appreciated and encouraged with prizes and medals.
Prizes were distributed by the Chief guest speech The recognition motivated the participants and added enthusiasm to the event.
All the students took part actively and made the inaugural ceremony a grand success. The event concluded on a positive note, inspiring students to make the best use of the Literary Club to improve their language skills and express themselves confidently. Mrs . Sheela devi proposed Vote of thanks. The event came to an end with cheers.



Sports >> *Tabitha and Temwa Chawinga combined for all three goals as rank outsiders Malawi stunned Algeria 3-1 in Rabat on Wednesday to reach the Women's Africa Cup of Nations final

Chawinga sisters fire Malawi into WAFCON final

By **Martin Weche**

Malawi, ranked 153rd in the world, defeated Algeria 3-1 in Rabat on Wednesday to reach the Women's Africa Cup of Nations final, with sisters Tabitha and Temwa Chawinga delivering a performance that will be spoken about long after the tournament ends.

The result is among the most remarkable in the history of African women's football. Malawi entered the tournament as debutants, 116 places below pre-tournament favourites and record ten-time champions Nigeria — a side that did not even make the final four. On Sunday, they will compete for a prize pot of two million dollars, the largest in the competition's history.

The match turned decisively in Malawi's favour when Algerian midfielder Morgane Belkhiter was shown a red card for a last-defender foul midway through the first half, leaving Algeria to defend with ten players for the remainder of the match. Malawi wasted no time exploiting the advantage.

Tabitha Chawinga, the Lyon forward and captain, broke the deadlock on 33 minutes with a stunning overhead kick from a corner — a goal of genuine quality, not mere fortune. Her sister Temwa, who plays her club football for Kansas City in the United States, added a second in first-half stoppage time, rounding goalkeeper Chloé N'Gazi before finishing with composure.

Malawi's task became considerably harder moments later when Rose Kadzere was dismissed for a studs-up challenge, leaving both sides reduced to ten players heading into the break. The symmetry did little to ease the tension.

Algeria pulled one back through Ikram Adjabi on the hour mark, and for a spell the tie appeared to be drifting into uncertainty.

Malawi team

Then Tabitha Chawinga settled it. Collecting the ball wide on 76 minutes, she drove at the Algerian defence before finishing with the authority of a player who has long belonged on the biggest stage. Her second of the match and fourth of the tournament was the decisive blow.

Between them, the Chawinga sisters have now scored nine goals at this WAFCON — Temwa with five, Tabitha with four. Their combination of club pedigree and international hunger has powered a team that few beyond their own supporters gave any genuine chance of progressing past the group stage.

Malawi's opponents in Sunday's final will be either Morocco or Cameroon, who meet in the second semi-final later Wednesday. Whoever emerges, Malawi arrive as the neutral's choice — a side built on collective belief, sibling brilliance, and a refusal to be defined by their world ranking.

For Algeria, who must now prepare for Saturday's third-place playoff, the campaign ends in disappointment. They will take some comfort in the knowledge that reaching the semi-finals has secured their place at the 2027 Women's World Cup in Brazil — a qualification that also extends to Malawi, Morocco, and Cameroon regardless of Sunday's result.

That World Cup berth will mean everything to nations still building the infrastructure and investment to compete at the highest level. For Algeria, it is a foundation. For Malawi, it is a bonus. Their eyes, for now, are fixed firmly on Sunday.

Nigeria's absence from the final stages remains the tournament's other defining story. The Super Falcons, who have won this competition ten times, were eliminated in the quarter-finals — a result that will trigger searching questions about the direction of women's football in Africa's most populous nation.

But this moment belongs to Malawi. A nation of roughly twenty million people, with a women's football programme that has operated largely in obscurity on the continental stage, now stands ninety minutes from history.

The Chawinga sisters did not arrive at this tournament seeking validation. They came to win. On Wednesday in Rabat, they gave every indication that they mean it.

Sports >> *Belgium's all-time leading scorer Romelu Lukaku has joined Turkish Super Lig side Fenerbahce from Napoli, the Istanbul club confirmed on yesterday.

Lukaku signs for Fenerbahce in bid to revive career

By **Martin Weche**

Romelu Lukaku

Romelu Lukaku has signed for Fenerbahce, the Turkish Super Lig club announced on Wednesday, ending the Belgian striker's troubled spell at Napoli and opening a new chapter in one of European football's most turbulent careers.

Financial terms and contract length were not disclosed, but Lukaku wasted no time addressing the club's supporters directly. "It's an honour and a privilege to be joining your club," the 33-year-old said in a video message posted on social media. "I'm fit, 100 percent, ready to go." It was the declaration of a player with something to prove — and a fanbase more than willing to believe him.

Lukaku's arrival at Fenerbahce is the latest twist in a career that has oscillated between brilliance and frustration with remarkable consistency. Belgium's all-time leading scorer, with 93 international goals, he has worn the shirts of Chelsea, Manchester United and Inter Milan, collecting trophies and headlines in roughly equal measure. His time at Napoli, where he arrived in the summer of 2024, was meant to be a fresh start. It began promisingly — a Scudetto in his debut season — before unravelling almost completely. A serious injury followed by a reported falling-out with the club's management reduced him to just 64 minutes of playing time last season. For a striker of his standing, it was a humiliation by any measure.

Yet the football world had not written him off. Belgium's national team selectors included him in their 2026 World Cup squad, a decision that proved thoroughly justified. Lukaku scored three times as Belgium reached the quarter-finals before falling to eventual champions Spain. He returned from that tournament with his reputation restored, his appetite clearly undimmed, and presumably a number of clubs reconsidering their interest.

Fenerbahce moved quickest and most decisively. The Istanbul giants, who have not won the Turkish league title since 2014, have spent the past four seasons finishing as runners-up to fierce city rivals Galatasaray — a run of near-misses that has tested the patience of one of Turkey's most passionate and demanding support bases. Their response in the transfer market has been emphatic. Lukaku joins a forward line that already includes Mason Greenwood, the former Manchester United winger, who moved to Fenerbahce in a transfer that similarly attracted widespread attention.

Together, Lukaku and Greenwood represent a striking partnership of considerable pedigree — two players who have arrived in Istanbul carrying the weight of complicated histories and the shared hunger of men who understand that this posting matters. For Lukaku in particular, there is the added incentive of regular football at an age when every minute on the pitch carries greater significance than it once did.

The Turkish Super Lig has increasingly positioned itself as a destination of genuine ambition rather than comfortable retirement. Fenerbahce, under sustained pressure from Galatasaray domestically and chasing relevance in European competition, have embraced that shift with conviction. The acquisition of Lukaku is not window dressing — it is a statement of intent from a club that believes the title drought can be ended this season.

Whether Lukaku can deliver at the level Fenerbahce require remains to be seen. His physical condition, by his own account, is excellent. The motivation, given everything that preceded this move, is unlikely to be in question. What the Turkish top flight now offers him is precisely what the final years of Napoli denied him entirely: a stage, a squad, and the simple opportunity to play.

For a striker who has spent much of the past eighteen months on the periphery of the game he has dominated for the better part of a decade, that is not a small thing.

Fenerbahce's title ambitions have a new focal point. Lukaku, for his part, has a point to make.

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Why Audi's smaller models are often more desirable than their bigger brothers

By: John Irungu Maina
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **The A5 is a perfect place to start. Positioned below the A6 in Audi's hierarchy, it offers much of the brand's premium character without carrying the same size and ownership burden. The styling, technology and road presence are unmistakably Audi, but its relatively compact dimensions make it more appealing to drivers who want something genuinely sporty without stepping into a large executive saloon.**
- **The A6 is the more sophisticated car in many respects — more spacious, more refined and designed to compete directly with the BMW 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz E-Class. The A7 goes further still, combining executive-car comfort with a dramatic Sportback silhouette that turns heads in a way that four-door saloons rarely manage. Both are accomplished machines. Neither is what you would call modest.**

Audi has never struggled to produce expensive cars. The real achievement has been creating cars that people actually want to keep buying — and that distinction matters more than most buyers realise when they are standing in a showroom choosing between models.

Look at the A5 and A6, or the RS3 and RS5, and an interesting pattern emerges. The bigger car is not always the more desirable one. In many markets, the smaller model proves easier to sell, easier to live with and, critically, easier to resell. Understanding why tells you something important not just about Audi, but about how the used-car market actually works.

The A5 is a perfect place to start. Positioned below the A6 in Audi's hierarchy, it offers much of the brand's premium character without carrying the same size and ownership burden. The styling, technology and road presence are unmistakably Audi, but its relatively compact dimensions make it more appealing to drivers who want something genuinely sporty without stepping into a large executive saloon.

The A6 is the more sophisticated car in many respects — more spacious, more refined and designed to compete directly with the BMW 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz E-Class. The A7 goes further still, combining executive-car comfort with a dramatic Sportback silhouette that turns heads in a way that four-door saloons rarely manage. Both are accomplished machines. Neither is what you would call modest.

But bigger does not automatically mean better in the used-car market.

The A5 occupies a sweet spot that Audi has rarely managed to replicate higher up the range. It is premium enough to feel genuinely special, yet accessible enough to attract a wide pool of buyers. It works as an everyday car while still carrying the sporty image that draws younger buyers and enthusiasts in significant numbers. That balance matters enormously when the time comes to sell. A car with a broader pool of potential buyers will almost always be easier to move than one aimed at a narrower, wealthier audience. Someone shopping for a used A5 may be seeking an affordable entry into Audi ownership. Someone shopping for a used A7 has already accepted considerably higher purchase and running costs — and that limits the field considerably.

Audi The A5 and RS3

Then there is the RS3, which is arguably one of the most interesting performance cars Audi produces precisely because it delivers something enthusiasts cannot easily find elsewhere: a compact, usable body combined with Audi's legendary five-cylinder engine. Its smaller dimensions make it agile and entirely practical as a daily car. Its performance is serious enough to embarrass much larger, more expensive machines.

The RS5 has its own considerable strengths. It is more powerful, more spacious and better suited to long-distance performance driving. It is, in many ways, the more mature machine. But the RS3 possesses something that the RS5 cannot manufacture: character. The five-cylinder engine has become one of Audi's defining signatures, and that emotional connection creates durable demand. For a buyer who wants an RS badge without accepting the higher running costs and larger footprint of the RS5, the RS3 makes a quietly compelling argument.

This is where resale becomes genuinely interesting.

Resale value is not determined simply by where a model sits in a manufacturer's hierarchy. It depends on demand, running costs, reliability, condition, mileage, specification and the number of people actively searching for that particular car at any given moment. In markets such as Kenya, buyers layer additional considerations on top of those fundamentals: maintenance costs, fuel consumption, spare parts availability and the accessibility of qualified mechanics. A smaller Audi can hold a meaningful advantage on every one of those counts.

A clean, well-maintained A5 with a sensible specification can therefore be easier to sell than a neglected A6 or A7 — regardless of where each sits on the official price list. The same logic applies in the performance range. An original, well-preserved RS3 will attract enthusiasts who care deeply about what lies beneath the bonnet. A heavily modified example, however impressive its power figures, can actually prove harder to sell, because modifications narrow the audience rather than broaden it.

The A6 sits above the A5. The A7 sits above both in price and prestige. The RS5 is larger and more expensive than the RS3. Audi's hierarchy is clear and coherent. But the market does not always follow the manufacturer's logic. Sometimes the smaller car wins because it gives buyers precisely what they want without asking them to pay for everything they do not need.

The most expensive Audi is not always the most desirable one.

Sometimes, the sweet spot is simply the one people can actually afford to keep.

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