



Gachagua appeals impeachment ruling in landmark constitutional battle
Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has appealed the High Court decision upholding his impeachment, arguing that the three-judge bench erred

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Kenya is already fighting the 2027 election
Kenya has barely settled into 2026, yet its political class is already behaving as though the next election is tomorrow. The ballot remains more than a year away, but the language of succession has arrived early.

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Voice of the People

The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 The Kiharu MP's defection to the People's Party of Kenya reshapes Mt Kenya's political landscape ahead of 2027

Nyoro takes the Kibaki path, dumps UDA for opposition

Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro yesterday formally abandoned the ruling United Democratic Alliance and joined the People's Party of Kenya in a nationally televised address at Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, placing himself squarely in the opposition camp ahead of the August 2027 general election.

The move draws immediate historical parallels with the late President Mwai Kibaki's 1991 break from KANU to launch the Democratic Party — two economists from the same region, practising the same deliberate, non-combative politics, each stepping into a fractured political landscape at a moment of popular discontent.

With Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party already commanding the Mt Kenya insurgent lane, Nyoro's entry inserts a third major vehicle into a region fracturing along lines of ambition, geography and generational impatience. Siaya Governor James Orengo, Senator Okong'o Omogeni and MP Danson Mwashako were among those present, signalling early cross-regional coalition intent.

The geographical symmetry is impossible to ignore — Kibaki came from Nyeri, Matiba from Murang'a; now Gachagua comes from Nyeri while Nyoro emerges from Murang'a, carrying the unspoken but widely understood argument that it is finally Murang'a's turn at the summit of Kenyan power.

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Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro

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Gachagua rallies grassroots base in Mathira as presidential bid gathers momentum

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyetimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday hosted 3,000 grassroots mobilisers and political allies at his Wamunyoro residence in Mathira, using the gathering to formally seek their blessing for his presidential bid ahead of the August 10, 2027 general election.

Gachagua, who represented Mathira as MP before rising to the Deputy Presidency and subsequently being removed from office in circumstances he attributes directly to President William Ruto, thanked his supporters for standing by him through what he described as his most difficult political period.

"I took the opportunity to thank them for their support throughout my political journey and for standing with me at my lowest when Mr William Ruto hounded me from office," he said. He briefed the gathering on ongoing national consultations and tasked the mobilisers with holding the fort in Mathira as he extends his campaign across the country. He also directed them to organise what he described as an unprecedented rally in Karatina Town today — one he said would be the largest political gathering the constituency has witnessed since independence.

The Karatina rally is expected to serve as a powerful public launchpad for Gachagua's presidential campaign within the Mt Kenya heartland.



Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Social media personality Mercy Nashipai Legilisho, popularly known as Mercy Masai, yesterday joined Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party and declared her intention to contest the Kajiado County Woman Representative seat in the 2027 general election. The 26-year-old, who has built a substantial following online, made the announcement with characteristic flair — "Officially DCPinated. Chama ni DCP. Wantam!!" — signalling her intention to take her grassroots campaign to the ground immediately. Gachagua welcomed her publicly, describing her decision as a demonstration of the party's growing appeal among Kenya's younger generation and declaring that "the future is green." Her entry has drawn mixed reactions online, with supporters celebrating the fresh face while sceptics question her political experience.



The National Police Service yesterday confirmed the arrest of 37 suspected gang members following deadly violence that disrupted the Linda Mwananchi rally in Homa Bay County on Sunday, leaving two people dead, one police officer among them, and scores injured. Officers recovered an array of crude weapons from the suspects, including machetes, metal rods, knives, rungus and batons. Police warned that all those found culpable — including organisers, facilitators and sponsors of the violence — would face the full force of the law, adding that a key suspect believed to have masterminded the attacks remained at large. The NPS also reminded all political actors that public rallies must be held strictly between 6.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m., with prior notification to police for security planning. The Linda Mwananchi movement, led by Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, separately claimed their supporters had apprehended an individual they identified as a National Intelligence Service officer travelling with attackers, a claim that deepened the controversy surrounding the chaotic day.



The National Land Commission has added two land parcels in Ntarshart, Kajiado County, to the compulsory acquisition schedule for the Nairobi-Naivasha Standard Gauge Railway Phase 2A project, in a supplementary process being undertaken on behalf of Kenya Railways Corporation. A gazette notice dated July 30, 2026 identifies the affected parcels as Kajiado/Ntarshart/30384 and Kajiado/Ntarshart/30385, the latter measuring approximately 6.62 hectares. Simultaneously, parcel Kajiado/Ntarshart/1651, measuring approximately 10.34 hectares, has been deleted from the acquisition schedule. Affected landowners have been invited to submit written compensation claims to the Commission, accompanied by identification documents, PIN certificates, land ownership papers and bank details. Plans of the affected parcels are available for inspection at Ardhi House in Nairobi and the NLC County Coordinator's office in Kajiado during official working hours. A further gazette notice will confirm inquiry dates.



Information, Communications and Digital Economy Cabinet Secretary William Kabogo yesterday defended President William Ruto's administration against mounting political criticism, arguing that the government deserves space to deliver on its development commitments. Kabogo pointed to infrastructure expansion, digital transformation and youth employment initiatives as evidence of an administration that is delivering results rather than empty promises. The CS, who has spearheaded the rollout of over 300 digital innovation hubs across the country and challenged the private sector to develop affordable laptop financing for young Kenyans, insisted that political noise should not obscure genuine progress on the ground. His remarks came as opposition figures intensified pressure on the government with the 2027 general election drawing steadily closer and Kenya's political temperature rising by the day.



Kenya's Registrar of Companies has moved to shut down more than 750 firms in a sweeping corporate clean-up exercise, a development that could threaten thousands of jobs across multiple sectors of the economy. Published in the Kenya Gazette on August 14, the notices confirm that 200 companies have already been formally dissolved and struck off the official register with immediate effect, under Section 897(4) of the Companies Act. The affected firms span construction, logistics, real estate, agriculture, trading and general consultancy. A further 550 companies have been flagged for intended dissolution under Sections 897(3) and 894(3) of the same Act, though those firms retain a three-month window from the date of publication to show cause why their names should not be deleted from the register. Directors of affected companies have been urged to act promptly to avoid permanent closure.



The Linda Mwananchi movement yesterday accused National Intelligence Service personnel of coordinating attacks against their convoy during Sunday's rally in Homa Bay County, claiming supporters had apprehended a man travelling with attackers in an unmarked black Toyota Prado in Nyandiwa who identified himself as an NIS officer. The outfit said the suspect's mobile phone was seized at the scene, after which senior police officers made repeated calls demanding its return — calls the movement described as deeply revealing. Linda Mwananchi demanded that NIS Director General Noordin Haji and Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja publicly explain their officers' conduct that day. The group further called on Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wangari, Homa Bay Town MP Peter Kaluma and Kwabwai Ward MCA Richard Ogindo to resign or publicly account for Sunday's violence, warning that silence would be treated as complicity. The clashes left two people dead and 54 injured, 40 of them from machete wounds.

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Business Emara Ole Sereni, perched at the edge of Nairobi National Park with the city's skyline behind it

Nairobi's diplomatic circuit becomes Ole Sereni's fastest growing business frontier

The hospitality group is transforming embassy relationships into a structural revenue pillar — and fifty missions came to see why.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Ole Sereni Group has turned Nairobi's dense diplomatic community into one of its most strategically pursued revenue streams, hosting representatives from 50 embassies and international organisations at Emara Ole Sereni Hotel on August 7 in an evening that was equal parts hospitality showcase and calculated business development exercise.

The setting was deliberate. Emara Ole Sereni, perched at the edge of Nairobi National Park with the city's skyline behind it and wildlife visible beyond the perimeter fence, offers a visual argument that no brochure fully captures. Guests were walked through the property — the conference infrastructure, the dining facilities, the security arrangements — and allowed to form their own conclusions. In the diplomatic hospitality business, that direct experience is often more persuasive than any sales presentation.

The numbers driving the strategy are significant. Milkah Kimani, the group's Head of Sales, revealed that embassies and diplomatic missions already contribute approximately one third of total group revenue — a figure anchored in recurring



Emara Ole Sereni Hotel

national day celebrations, high-level receptions, catering contracts and the steady rhythm of official engagements that define life inside Nairobi's diplomatic quarter. It is a revenue stream with a rare quality in the hospitality industry: it comes back every year, governed by the calendar rather than consumer sentiment.

Building on that foundation requires something beyond competitive pricing or superior amenities. Diplomatic clients operate within institutional frameworks where trust, discretion and verified track records carry decisive weight. Ole Sereni has spent years assembling exactly that kind of portfolio. Its existing roster of clients includes the British High Commission, the Danish Embassy, the embassies of Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, and the

Ghana High Commission — institutions whose event requirements are exacting and whose loyalty, once earned, tends to be durable.

The group has also embedded itself within Nairobi's United Nations ecosystem, a market with no real parallel elsewhere on the continent. As one of only four cities globally — alongside New York, Geneva and Vienna — to host a principal UN office, Nairobi generates a permanent current of senior international officials, multilateral delegations and high-security conferences. Ole Sereni's existing relationships with the African Union, multiple UN agencies and the United States Embassy place it inside that current rather than on its margins.

Diplomatic staff who attended the August 7 event were consistent in describing their

priorities: verified security protocols, airport proximity, professional staff, government endorsement and facilities capable of scaling from an intimate bilateral dinner to a full national day reception without losing composure. These are standards that filter out generalists and reward specialists. Ole Sereni is making a deliberate case for being the latter.

Nairobi's premium hospitality market is competitive, and the diplomatic segment within it is fiercely contested. The group's response is not to outspend rivals on advertising but to bring the right people into the building and let the building do the talking.

On August 7, fifty embassies walked through the door. The question now is how many will come back — with contracts.

Kenya bolsters cancer care capacity



BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Ministry of Health yesterday reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening cancer prevention, early detection and equitable access to treatment, with Principal Secretary for Medical Services Dr Ouma Oluga announcing progress on a national screening programme and a new regional cancer centre in Kisumu at the Nairobi International Cancer Forum.

Speaking during African Smart Cities and Townships Alliance Week 2026, Oluga said the Social Health Authority's enhanced cancer-care benefits were deepening financial protection for patients, while digital health platforms were improving screening pathways, referral systems and data-driven clinical decision-making across the country.

He welcomed partnerships for the proposed Early Cancer Screening Programme and formally endorsed the devel-

opment of the Chun Jeong-eun Nyong'o Cancer Centre in Kisumu — an institution envisioned as a regional hub for cancer care, research, clinical training and medical innovation. Kisumu Governor Prof Anyang' Nyong'o attended the forum alongside representatives from national and county governments, development partners and healthcare institutions.

The announcements signal a deliberate policy shift from Kenya's historically reactive approach to cancer — in which patients typically present at advanced, costly and less treatable stages — towards a system designed to catch the disease early, when outcomes are significantly better and treatment less burdensome on both families and the public health system.

For a country where cancer remains among the leading causes of death, the test now is whether the commitments made in Nairobi's conference halls reach the clinics where Kenyans actually seek care.

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Court “No act in violation of the Constitution is outside the reach of the courts,” Gachagua states in his court papers

Gachagua appeals impeachment ruling in landmark constitutional battle

BY David Kimani

@themkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has appealed the High Court decision upholding his impeachment, arguing that the three-judge bench erred in finding that his removal from office could not be reversed despite violations of his constitutional rights. The appeal, filed yesterday at the Court of Appeal, sets the stage for what legal analysts are describing as one of the most consequential constitutional battles in Kenya’s post-independence history — and one whose outcome will reverberate far beyond the courtroom.

The appeal, filed on August 13, seeks to overturn portions of the High Court decision delivered on June 8, which declared Gachagua’s removal from office valid despite acknowledging procedural irregularities in the Senate proceedings. At the centre of his argument is a proposition as simple as it is legally explosive: a court cannot find that a man’s constitutional rights were violated and then allow the violation to stand.

Gachagua’s appeal contends that the High Court erred in law by failing to find the Senate’s decision null and void, arguing that the court’s ruling was “irreconcilable with the court’s findings in the same judgment and in previous rulings.” His lawyers characterise the High Court’s reasoning as internally contradictory — a judgment that reached two conclusions pulling in opposite directions and then chose the one most convenient to the political status quo.

“No act in violation of the Constitution is outside the reach of the courts,” Gachagua states in his court papers — a declaration that reads as much as a political statement as a legal submission, addressed as much to the nation watching as to the judges who will decide.

Central to the High Court’s reasoning had been its conclusion that reversing Gachagua’s impeachment after Kindiki had already assumed office would create a constitutional dilemma over dual incumbency and the validity of a completed transfer of executive power. Gachagua’s appeal confronts that reasoning directly, arguing that constitutional rights cannot be subordinated to political inconvenience or administrative tidiness. The Constitution, his lawyers insist, does not permit the courts to

look the other way because correcting a wrong might create complexity.

Among the grounds of appeal is the question of public participation. Gachagua argues that the Senate conducted no public participation after receiving the National Assembly resolution, and that participation during the National Assembly phase was inadequate. He cites the Supreme Court’s precedent in *British American Tobacco Kenya PLC v Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Health*, which established that public participation must be meaningful both qualitatively and quantitatively — a standard he argues Parliament failed to meet in the rush to remove him from office.

The appeal also targets National Assembly Standing Order 64(2), arguing that the timelines it prescribes are so compressed as to make genuine public participation structurally impossible. The court had found that Parliament provided adequate notice through advertisements published in both English and Kiswahili newspapers and had offered citizens a genuine opportunity to submit their views, ruling that it was “satisfied that the public participation conducted during the impeachment process met the constitutional threshold.” Gachagua’s lawyers dispute that conclusion vigorously, arguing the court set the bar too low and applied the wrong standard.

Perhaps the most extraordinary allegation in the appeal concerns the integrity of the judgment itself. A fresh legal dispute erupted after some petitioners claimed the version of the judgment released to parties differed from the one the judges said they had delivered in open court. Gachagua alleges that four sets of additional paragraphs, read immediately after paragraphs 484, 488, 503 and 508 during the live oral delivery, were subsequently omitted from the written version. He is asking the Court of Appeal to direct the High Court Registrar to insert the missing portions into the official record — a demand that, if upheld, would amount to a finding that a superior court improperly altered its own judgment after delivery.

The appointment of Prof Kithure Kindiki as his successor is also squarely in the crosshairs. Gachagua argues that the High Court erred in finding that public participation was not constitutionally required



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

in the nomination and approval of Kindiki under Article 149(1) of the Constitution. The High Court had held that the approval of Kindiki as Deputy President did not require public participation because Parliament exercised delegated sovereign authority on behalf of the people. Gachagua’s appeal characterises that reasoning as a dangerous precedent — one that would allow Parliament to make consequential executive appointments without any meaningful public accountability.

The KSh 50 million constitutional damages awarded to him by the High Court — a sum the Senate is simultaneously appealing against — is also challenged, but from the opposite direction. The Senate has moved to the Court of Appeal to challenge the High Court’s finding that senators breached Gachagua’s fair-hearing rights, arguing that the judges failed to properly evaluate Articles 47 and 50 and did not recognise that the Senate exercised its discretion. Gachagua, meanwhile, argues that KSh 50 million is woefully inadequate to vindicate the Constitution, restore his dignity or deter future violations — that the only remedy

proportionate to the wrong found is a declaration that the impeachment was unconstitutional, null and void from the beginning.

The competing appeals mean the dispute is no longer simply a battle over parliamentary procedure. With the 2027 general election approaching, the case has become intertwined with a wider political contest involving Gachagua’s mobilisation in Mt Kenya, Kindiki’s position in Ruto’s camp and growing demands from ODM for a bigger role in a possible pre-election coalition. The Court of Appeal will decide legal questions. But its ruling could reshape the political terrain on which Kenya’s most consequential election in a generation will be fought.

A ruling favourable to Gachagua could give him fresh political ammunition. A ruling favourable to the Senate could strengthen Parliament’s position over the impeachment process, but it would not necessarily remove Gachagua’s political influence.

Gachagua was removed from office in October 2024 on allegations that included corruption, promoting divisive ethnic politics and under-

mining the government from within — charges he has consistently and vehemently denied. His impeachment followed months of a bitter fallout with President William Ruto, during which he publicly criticised government policies and accused the National Intelligence Service of cooking up evidence to link him and former President Uhuru Kenyatta to the youth-led uprising that shook the country in June 2024.

He now leads the Democracy for the Citizens Party and has positioned himself as the principal challenger to Ruto’s re-election from within the Mt Kenya heartland. The appeal is therefore not merely a legal filing. It is a political act — a declaration that the fight is far from over and that the man who was removed from office in the middle of the night by a Senate vote intends to have the last word, one way or another, before Kenyans go to the polls in August 2027.

The Court of Appeal has not yet scheduled a hearing date. Whatever it decides, Kenya’s constitutional architecture — and the political landscape heading towards the next election — will never look quite the same again.

Politics For students of Kenyan political history, the echoes were immediate and unmistakable. The parallel to the late President Mwai Kibaki's 1991 decision

Ndindi Nyoro pulls a Kibaki stunt: The mountain stirs again as 2027 looms

Kiharu MP's dramatic defection to the People's Party of Kenya splinters Mt Kenya's political landscape and resurrects the ghost of a rivalry that defined Kenya's turbulent return to multiparty democracy.

BY Dan Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro yesterday formally abandoned the ruling United Democratic Alliance and joined the People's Party of Kenya, delivering a nationally televised address at Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi that placed him squarely in the opposition camp and ignited fresh speculation about his presidential ambitions ahead of the August 2027 general election.

The announcement was as theatrical as it was politically significant. With cameras rolling live and a carefully assembled guest list that included Siaya Governor James Orengo, Kisii Senator Okong'o Omogeni and Wundanyi MP Danson Mwashako, Nyoro spoke with the measured composure of a man who has been rehearsing this moment for months. "For the avoidance of doubt, you all know we left government a long time ago and disassociated ourselves with UDA," he said. "My people and I have joined the People's Party of Kenya. I am glad that they have given me an opportunity, and I have accepted."

For students of Kenyan political history, the echoes were immediate and unmistakable. The parallel to the late President Mwai Kibaki's 1991 decision to break from Daniel arap Moi's KANU and launch the Democratic Party is not merely cosmetic. It cuts deep into the structural DNA of Mt Kenya politics. Kibaki, an economist by training and a man of studied restraint, launched DP to offer Mount Kenya voters an alternative to Kenneth Matiba's Ford Asili, which had swept through the region on a tide of popular anger. Today, with former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party already occupying the insurgent lane, Nyoro's People's Party of Kenya inserts a third major vehicle into a regional political market that is, once again, fracturing along lines of ambition, geography and generational impatience.

The geographical symmetry is striking. Kibaki came from Nyeri; Matiba from Murang'a. Now Gachagua comes from Nyeri while Nyoro

emerges from Murang'a. The unspoken argument running beneath the surface of Mt Kenya politics — that Kiambu has produced two presidents, Nyeri one, and Murang'a none — has found its latest and perhaps most polished articulation in Nyoro's political project. Whether or not he states it directly, the arithmetic is not lost on anyone paying attention.

Nyoro entered Parliament in 2013 as the Kiharu MP on a TNA ticket, at a time when Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto were building the political alliance that would later become Jubilee. He was one of the most conspicuous young faces of the Kenya Kwanza mobilisation in 2022, defying then-President Kenyatta's endorsement of Raila Odinga and throwing his considerable local influence behind Ruto. His reward was the chairmanship of the powerful Budget and Appropriations Committee — a post that placed him at the nerve centre of the government's fiscal architecture. That position was stripped from him in a parliamentary reshuffle in July 2025, a moment widely read as the beginning of his formal estrangement from the presidency.

Nyoro made clear yesterday that he no longer considers himself part of the Kenya Kwanza administration, a position he said his sustained public criticism of the government's economic management had long since established. His economic critique has been detailed and consistent. He called for measures to prevent foreign institutions from taking over Kenyan banks, arguing that the country should protect local financial institutions and help them expand across Africa, and said Kenya's banking sector — with over 40 banks, all of them profitable — should be deliberately strengthened to ensure more wealth remains within the country. He has also criticised the government's decision to sell a 15 per cent stake in Safaricom, arguing that the telecom giant was undervalued and that strategic national assets should not be surrendered at a discount.

This is the Kibaki mirror in its sharpest form. Like Kibaki, Nyoro is an

economist by training. Like Kibaki, he practises a politics of deliberate calm — no theatrics, no inflammatory language, no chest-beating. He said the national conversation has become overly fixated on personalities rather than ideas, and declared: "I find it unfair to keep talking about what I may become. I would rather talk about what Kenya will become." It is the kind of statement that sounds humble while simultaneously positioning its author as the adult in a room full of children.

The guest list at Safari Park told its own story. Orengo, Omogeni and Mwashako represent a political geography that stretches from Nyanza to the Coast — precisely the coalition architecture that any serious presidential challenger to Ruto must construct. The presence of figures affiliated with Kenya's founding family networks — the same networks President Ruto has publicly accused of sponsoring surrogates through the Linda Mwananchi movement to destabilise his administration — added a layer of symbolism that was difficult to miss.

The announcement places Nyoro in an increasingly fluid opposition landscape, where several leaders are seeking to build alliances capable of mounting a credible challenge to Ruto in 2027. People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua has already signalled a second presidential bid, vowing to liberate Kenya from "all oppression" and declaring that she intends to try again. Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party continues to consolidate its hold on the Mt Kenya heartland. Former Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i remains a significant factor, with Jubilee deputy party leader Jeremiah Kioni having repeatedly warned that if Matiang'i is not chosen as the United Alternative Government's flag bearer, Jubilee will field its own candidate — potentially with Nyoro as a running mate.

Mt Kenya is a deeply unpredictable political region. Former Gatanga MP Peter Kenneth failed in his 2013 presidential bid despite genuine popularity. Karua was rejected three times in succession. Kenyatta himself was punished by the very



Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro

voters who had elevated him when he endorsed Odinga in 2022. The mountain gives, and the mountain takes away. Nyoro knows this better than most.

Those close to him suggest his eyes may be fixed less on 2027 and more on 2032 — that the current manoeuvre is as much about building a national brand and a durable political infrastructure as it is about winning the next election. His development record in Kiharu, where he has twice been returned to Parliament and where his Constituency Development Fund performance has drawn consistent national recognition, gives him the kind of credible local foundation that many of his rivals lack.

While Nyoro has not explicitly declared a presidential bid, the launch of a political party, consultations

with potential opposition partners and plans for a nationwide mobilisation give him the infrastructure to make one. For now, the cards remain close to his chest. But in Kenyan politics, the man who builds the machine rarely intends to let someone else drive it.

History does not repeat itself in Kenya. But as any veteran observer of the mountain's politics will tell you, it has a habit of rhyming — sometimes with an eerie precision that makes the past feel less like prologue and more like prophecy.

Journalists With 18 journalists and two drivers attacked in two months, the Media Council of Kenya warns that impunity is the greatest threat to press freedom and democracy ahead of 2027

Kenya's journalists are under siege — and nobody is being held to account

BY Grace Wanja

@themkenyatimes

The Media Council of Kenya yesterday called on the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Inspector General of Police to urgently investigate and prosecute those responsible for a sustained wave of attacks against journalists, warning that at least 18 reporters and two drivers had been assaulted across the country in the past two months alone. The council's statement, is-

sued yesterday, described the escalating violence as the most serious threat to Kenya's democratic space ahead of the August 2027 general election — not merely because journalists were being harmed, but because the authorities tasked with holding perpetrators accountable had conspicuously failed to act.

"The council is convinced that the continued attacks, intimidation and crimes against journalists, and the reluctance by the relevant investigating agencies to prosecute the

perpetrators, is the biggest threat to the country's democracy and media freedom," the MCK said.

The latest and most alarming incidents occurred on Sunday during the Linda Mwananchi rally in Homa Bay County, where eight journalists and two drivers were attacked in scenes that media freedom advocates described as a brazen assault on the public's right to information. The roll call of victims reads like a cross-section of Kenya's entire media industry.



Media Council of Kenya CEO David Omwoyo

Francis Mwangi and Evans Okeyo of Mediamax Network were physically assaulted and their vehicle burnt. Sammy Omingo and Rodgers Otiso of the Standard Group were beaten. Fred Ooko and Brian Ongoro of the Associated Foreign Press were attacked and had their cameras destroyed. KBC's Ken Odiwuor-Mayienga was allegedly beaten and his equipment stolen. A journalist and driver from another outlet were assaulted and their vehicle destroyed. These were not isolated incidents of mistaken identity or crowd panic. They were targeted, coordinated attacks on working journalists in the course of their professional duties.

Yet Homa Bay was not the beginning of this story. The MCK has been documenting a pattern of violence that stretches back weeks and across the country's geography. On August 12, Nation Media Group photojournalist Karim Rajan was injured near the Mombasa County Assembly while covering a gathering of youth and human rights representatives, when unidentified individuals moved to disperse the group. On July 23, five journalists from Mt Elgon TV were attacked while covering a political aspirant in Kimilili, with one reporter seriously injured. During the Ol Kalou by-election, at least four journalists were physically attacked and their equipment confiscated — among them George Kieru, Brygette Ngana and Fabiola Akinyi of Nation Media Group and Enos Teche of the Star, all of

whom reported the incidents to police.

The MCK said it had documented each of these cases and formally submitted them to the Inspector General of Police, the Independent Policing Oversight Authority and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The response from those institutions, the council said with evident frustration, had fallen well short of what the severity of the situation demanded. Little progress had been made in bringing any perpetrator to account, a failure that the MCK characterised not as bureaucratic delay but as a structural problem — the normalisation of impunity in a political environment where attacking journalists carries no meaningful consequence.

That environment is becoming more dangerous, not less, as Kenya's political temperature rises ahead of 2027. The pattern the MCK has identified is telling: the attacks are concentrated in politically charged settings — by-elections, opposition rallies, political mobilisation events. Journalists are being targeted not randomly but precisely because they are recording what is happening. In that sense, the attacks are not only an assault on the individuals involved; they are an attempt to control the narrative of Kenya's pre-election political contest by removing the witnesses.

"Despite Kenya's laws and international treaties requiring authorities to guarantee a safe working environment for journalists, their safety and

protection remain elusive," the council said — a sentence that carries within it an implicit indictment of every agency responsible for law enforcement in this country.

The legal framework is not in question. Article 34 of Kenya's Constitution protects freedom and independence of the media. Article 33 protects freedom of expression. Article 29 protects the freedom and security of the person. Kenya is also a signatory to Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which obliges the state to protect journalists from interference with their work. The MCK invoked all of these in its statement, not to introduce new legal arguments but to underline how comprehensively the state is failing to meet obligations it voluntarily accepted.

The MCK's call to action is specific and unambiguous. It wants the police and prosecutors to work directly with affected journalists and their media houses to ensure that cases are properly investigated and taken to court. It wants the security agencies that have themselves been implicated in some of the attacks — particularly in Homa Bay, where security officers were among those alleged to have assaulted journalists — to be held to the same standard as any other perpetrator. And it wants that accountability to happen now, before the 2027 campaign season fully ignites and the violence becomes even harder to contain.

The stakes extend beyond the journalists themselves. A press that cannot report freely is a press that cannot hold power to account. An electorate that cannot access independent, on-the-ground information about political events is an electorate that will go to the polls in 2027 without the full picture. The camera that is smashed in Homa Bay or Kimilili is not just a piece of equipment — it is the public's eyes. When those eyes are put out deliberately and with impunity, it is not just the journalist who loses.

Kenya is running out of time to get this right. The election is twelve months away, and the pattern is already set.

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Politics The public clash between Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi and Ruth Odinga is not simply another disagreement between politicians

Kenya is already fighting the 2027 election

Alliances are cracking, communities are being mobilised and old rivalries are returning — long before a single ballot paper has been printed.

BY **Levis Wangamati**

@themkenyatimes

Kenya has barely settled into 2026, yet its political class is already behaving as though the next election is tomorrow. The ballot remains more than a year away, but the language of succession has arrived early. Alliances are being tested, communities courted, old rivalries resurrected and political parties are discovering that the closer an election gets, the harder it becomes to keep internal disagreements behind closed doors. Kenya is not merely preparing for 2027. It is already fighting it.

The tensions within the Orange Democratic Movement offer a telling glimpse of what lies ahead. The public clash between Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi and Ruth Odinga is not simply another disagreement between politicians. It reflects the pressure building inside a party navigating a transformed political landscape following the departure of its long-time leader, Raila Odinga. With ODM's grassroots strength now facing competing internal ambitions, disagreements that might once have been contained are increasingly becoming public tests of influence. The Linda Mwananchi mobilisation in Homa Bay has framed that county as an early referendum on whether ODM's traditional political grip remains as firm as it once was.

That is how an election begins long before ballot papers are printed. It begins when every disagreement acquires political meaning, every rally becomes a measure of strength and every public statement is read as either a declaration of war or an invitation to negotiate. Political

parties stop asking what is good for the country and start asking who benefits, who loses and who will remember it when the votes are counted.

The developments in Homa Bay make that transformation particularly uncomfortable. Reports of political confrontations, damaged vehicles and blocked roads illustrate how quickly competition can migrate beyond speeches and into the physical space occupied by ordinary citizens. A political contest should be a competition over ideas, leadership and national direction. It should not become a contest over who can intimidate whom, control which road or demonstrate the greatest capacity to mobilise confrontation. When politics begins to resemble a struggle for territory, democracy is already paying the price.

Nakuru and the wider Rift Valley offer another instructive lesson. The accusations involving Nakuru MPs and Rift Valley politicians, alongside the continuing fallout surrounding figures such as Oscar Sudi, demonstrate that political alliances are rarely permanent. Today's ally can become tomorrow's rival when interests, influence and succession calculations shift. The closer Kenya moves towards 2027, the more difficult it will become for politicians to maintain a common front when their individual political futures begin pointing in different directions.

The Jackson Mandago case adds yet another dimension. His acquittal in the Finland scholarship matter is fundamentally a question for the courts, and the distinction between a legal outcome and its political interpretation should remain clear. Yet the reactions surrounding the case reveal how quickly court decisions

can be absorbed into political battles. Once judicial outcomes are routinely read according to who gains or loses politically, institutions risk becoming yet another battlefield in Kenya's electoral competition rather than pillars of an independent legal order.

Kenya Kwanza, meanwhile, is already thinking about the arithmetic of the next presidential contest. Farouk Kibet's appeal for Kamba community support for President William Ruto's administration, paired with his criticism of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, illustrates how early coalition-building has already begun. The message is unmistakable: communities are being counted, alliances tested and political loyalties negotiated — eighteen months before election day.

This is where the real danger lies. There is nothing unusual about politicians preparing for an election. Democracy requires competition, parties need strategies and voters deserve choices. The problem begins when the next election becomes so dominant that it starts determining how leaders govern the present.

Kenya still has unfinished business that cannot be deferred until after 2027. The cost of living, employment, education, healthcare, public debt, devolution and the aspirations of young people will not disappear because the political class has moved on to succession calculations. A government cannot place today's problems in suspension while computing tomorrow's votes. Public policy cannot be reduced to campaign material, and citizens cannot be treated as numbers on a political spreadsheet.

Kenya has experienced the consequences of allowing



Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi and Ruth Odinga

electoral competition to displace political responsibility. Election tensions do not materialise suddenly on voting day. They accumulate through speeches, accusations, mobilisation, defections, rallies and the gradual normalisation of treating political opponents as enemies rather than competitors in a shared democratic process.

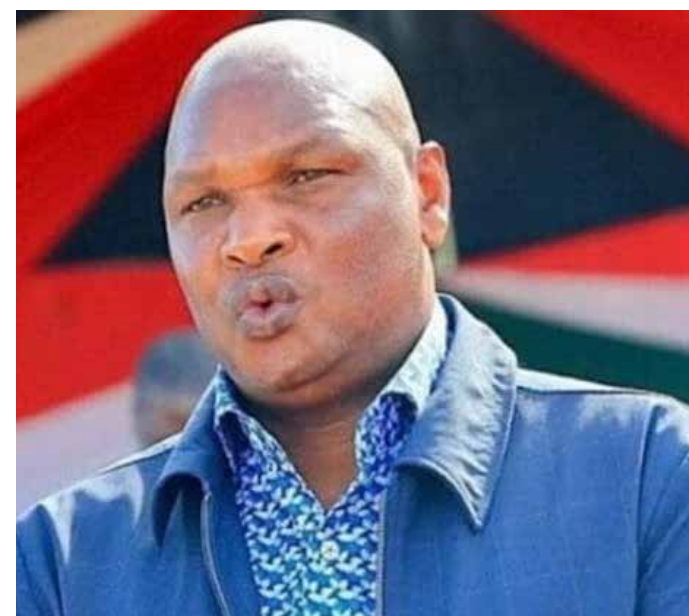
That is precisely why the developments unfolding now deserve more than passing attention. The disagreements within ODM, the contest in Homa Bay, the tensions between Rift Valley politicians, the reactions surrounding the Mandago case and Kenya Kwanza's early community mobilisation are different stories pointing towards the same destination. Kenya's political class is already positioning for the next contest, and the terrain is becoming crowded long before the official campaign has begun.

The uncomfortable question, therefore, is not whether Kenya is preparing for 2027. It clearly is. The question is whether the country can prepare for the next election without losing sight of the one thing that should matter

before any election: governing the country it already has.

There is a difference between preparing for an election and living permanently inside one. The first is part of democracy. The second is a threat to effective governance. When leaders spend more time calculating coalitions than delivering results, politics becomes an endless rehearsal for tomorrow while today's problems remain unaddressed on the stage.

Kenya cannot afford that cycle. The election will arrive in due course, and voters will have their say. Until then, politicians still have a country to run, institutions to protect and citizens to serve. If Kenya has already started fighting the 2027 election, the least its political class can do is remember that 2026 is not a campaign trailer. It is a year in which Kenyans still expect — and deserve — to be governed.



Farouk Kibet's appeal for Kamba community support for President William Ruto

Politics Imulu said the church was closely monitoring political developments in the region and would not support individuals seeking to divide residents along political or regional lines

Meru clergy warn politicians against propaganda and division ahead of 2027

Meru clergy warn politicians against propaganda and division ahead of 2027

BY Brian Gitonga

@themtkenyatimes

Meru County clergy leaders yesterday called for peace and unity as the country heads towards the 2027 general election, warning politicians against spreading propaganda, stoking divisions or using violence to advance their political interests.

Speaking at a press conference in Gatimene, bishops and pastors drawn from across the county said the region needs visionary leaders who will drive development and promote cohesion rather than fuel political tensions. The gathering was led by Bishop Imulu, chairperson of the Meru County clergy.

Imulu said the church was closely monitoring political developments in the region and would not support individuals seeking to divide residents along political or regional lines. He said religious leaders had a responsibility to identify politicians whose conduct threatened peace and to reject them through the power of the ballot.

“We as the church in Meru do not want propaganda in Meru. We do not want someone who will bring us divisions, and we as the church are on alert against such individuals,” Imulu said.

He also condemned incidents at political rallies where supporters have allegedly insulted opponents and hurled stones, warning that such behaviour risked creating unnecessary tension as the country prepared for the next election.

Imulu weighed in on emerging political debates within the Mt Kenya region, particularly calls by some politicians to draw distinctions between the eastern and western sides of the mountain. He said Mt

Kenya had remained united since independence and warned that attempts to engineer political divisions could undermine the peace the region had long enjoyed.

He urged residents and religious leaders from both sides of the mountain to reject divisive rhetoric and work together, pointing specifically to the appointment of Prof Kithure Kindiki as Deputy President as a moment that called for regional solidarity rather than antagonism.

“Why should our brothers who are on the other side of the mountain start terming him as soprano? That is why we reject that voice and say that we should respect each other and join together in supporting Prof Kithure Kindiki,” Imulu said.

The bishop argued that political differences should not be allowed to determine who belongs to Mt Kenya, maintaining that the region remained one community regardless of political affiliations or the leaders individuals chose to support. He called on the church to take the lead in bringing communities together and encouraged religious leaders from different parts of the mountain to unite, pray together and model the peaceful political engagement they wished to see from politicians.

“Everyone is asking for that seat, and if we as the church are not together, things will go badly,” Imulu said.

He also called on residents to respect President William Ruto, arguing that his administration had recognised the region through the appointment of Kindiki to the country’s second-highest office.

Bishop Shadrack Matheta, director of the Meru County clergy, said religious leaders had agreed to work in concert to ensure that political com-

petition ahead of 2027 did not descend into violence or hostility.

“We want 2027 politics to be conducted well, such that people do not fight or insult each other. All of us should be united because of peace,” Matheta said.

The clergy urged politicians and supporters alike to embrace peaceful campaigns and avoid inflammatory statements that could deepen divisions, insisting that political competition should be anchored in development and ideas rather than personal attacks and incitement.



Bishop Imulu, the chairperson of the Meru County clergy addresses the Press. | Photo: Brian Gitonga



Bishop Shadrack Matheta, the director of the Meru County clergy addresses the Press. | Photo: Brian Gitonga



Meru Clergy adress the Press at Gatimene | Photo: Brian Gitonga

Roads The 74-kilometre road at the centre of the debate has a history that bears out her argument. First awarded in 2016 under former President Uhuru Kenyatta’s administration

Wanga turns dusty roads into a declaration: Homa Bay’s struggle is Kenya’s shame

BY Brenda Atieno
@themtkenyentimes

Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga yesterday defended the state of her county’s roads against criticism that emerged following the Linda Mwananchi rally, arguing that the deteriorating Mbita-Sindo-Kiabuya-Sori corridor reflects not local failure but the systematic marginalisation of western Kenya that successive national governments have allowed to fester for generations.

Wanga’s statement was direct and unapologetic. Rather than deflecting the images of dust-choked roads that circulated widely after Sunday’s rally, she leaned into them — reframing the controversy as an unintended public service.

“The dust on the Mbita-Sindo-Kiabuya-Sori corridor tells a story. But

it is not the story of a people who have failed. It is the story of a region that has waited far too long for the infrastructure required to unlock its potential,” she said.

The 74-kilometre road at the centre of the debate has a history that bears out her argument. First awarded in 2016 under former President Uhuru Kenyatta’s administration, the project stalled after only seven kilometres were completed due to inadequate funding allocation. Re-awarded in 2020, it again made limited progress. Wanga said 28 kilometres have been tarmacked over the past two years, with construction ongoing — but maintained that a trunk road of that scale was categorically beyond the reach of devolution funds or constituency development allocations.

“A 74km trunk road is not something that devolution or CDF can

address,” she said plainly.

Wanga anchored her defence in history, invoking the legacies of Tom Mboya and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga — leaders whose political exclusion and, in Mboya’s case, assassination she presented as the opening chapters of a story of deliberate marginalisation that the region’s roads continue to narrate in tarmac and dust.

“We are not embarrassed by that history. If images of rutted roads earned Homa Bay comparisons to conflict zones, we take that as a badge of honour to our marginalisation and resilience, not an insult requiring our silence,” she said.

It was a governor refusing to apologise for wounds she did not inflict.



Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga



The fallen leaf



A leaf let go of its ancient tree,
Not knowing where the wind would lead.
It did not cry, it did not plead—
It simply followed what must be.

Once, it had danced beneath the sun,
And whispered softly with the rain.
It thought those days would never end,
As we believe when we are young.

Now on the ground, it rests alone,
Far from the branch it used to know.
But falling does not always mean
That everything we loved is gone.

Perhaps the tree had taught the leaf
The hardest truth we learn with time:
Some things must leave the hands they love
To find a meaning of their own.

And maybe we are leaves as well—
We hold, we change, we fall, we part.
Yet even when our seasons end,
We leave a color in someone's heart.

Nigoraxon Tursunboyeva
From Uzbekistan

Silent confidence



My confidence is not always loud.
It does not seek attention.
It does not wait for applause.
It simply whispers,
“Keep going. Never give up.”
In silence,
my confidence grows stronger
with every step I take.
Not every effort
is noticed.
Not every success

is celebrated.
That does not stop me.
Some voices are loud,
but my confidence
is quiet.
It does not speak through words.
It speaks through my work,
my determination,
and my actions.
One day,
I won't need applause.
My journey
will tell my story.
My silence
will become
my greatest strength.

D.DHANYASRI
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Panruti, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu.

My wonderful school



My school is neat and bright,
It fills my heart with light.
I read and write each day,
I learn in a happy way,

Teachers are kind and wise,
They help me reach the skies.
Friends are caring too,
My school feels fresh and new,

I love my school with pride,
It is my joyful guide.
Learning is fun each day,
My wonderful school—!

Mahisha varthini, Grade 7..
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Dreams become reality when thoughts become action



Everyone dreams of a brightful future.
Working smart is its nature,
To nurture a positive attitude is its feature,
To move towards dreams is like an adventure.

Neil's dream was to land on the moon,
Kalam's dream was to send a spacecraft to the

moon,
Fleming's dream was to discover immune,
Their thoughts were full of positivity,
That made the dreams reality,
The world still glorifies their personality.

If a students wants to realize his dream,
He should have a clear vision.
This will lead him to the path of action,
Action gives him a promotion.

Penned by
RANGANATHAN E
B.T Asst.(Eng)
Marwar Govt.Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

My dream



I am a student with dreams so high,
I look with hope at the open sky.
Every new day is a chance to learn,
For a bright future that I will earn.

My books are friends that guide my way,
My teachers help me every day.
With hard work, patience, and a cheerful heart,
I know success is a wonderful start.

Sometimes I fail, sometimes I fall,
But I never give up at all.
Every mistake helps me grow,
And teaches me what I need to know.

I will be kind, honest, and true,
In everything I say and do.
With faith, courage, and dreams so bright,
I will make my future shine with light.

M.R.Hanshiga
Grade 8-C
John Dewey Matric Higher Secondary School
Panruti Cuddalore Tamil Nadu India

My Birthday



My birthday
falls on
India's Independence Day.
It is a day
of double celebration
for me.

As I celebrate
another year of life,
my nation celebrates
its freedom.
I am proud
to share
my special day
with my country.

Just as I dream
of becoming

a better person,
I also dream
of seeing
a stronger,
kinder,
and more prosperous India.

May I grow
with good values,
and may my nation
continue to grow
with peace,
unity,
and progress.
My birthday
reminds me
that I belong
to a great nation.

Happy Birthday to me,
and Happy Independence Day
to my beloved India.

V. S. NITHIYA SRI
VIII – D
John Dewey Matriculation Higher Secondary
School
Panruti, Tamil Nadu

My birthday



My birthday comes but once a year,
A day of Laughter joy and cheer.
It feels my heart with love and care,
As happiness is everywhere.

Like a party bright and fun,

Special day for everyone.
My family and friends all say,
“Happy birthday!” on my day.

Gift can never truly show
The love that helps our friendships grow.
The true love comes from the heart,
A precious gift that sets apart.

I am thankful for my family dear,
And all my friend who bring me cheer.

By:Anushree, 9A, GGHSS, pattukkottai.

Accidents The authority’s data suggest that consistent, visible enforcement can shift behaviour — at least in the short term

Kenya’s pedestrian death toll falls but 146 still die on roads in a single month

Intensified enforcement cut fatalities by nearly 18 per cent in July, but authorities warn that compliance gaps continue to cost lives.

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyetimes

Pedestrian deaths on Kenya’s roads fell by nearly 18 per cent in July 2026, with the National Transport and Safety Authority recording 146 fatalities compared to 178 in the same month last year, as intensified enforcement operations targeting non-compliant road users began to show measurable results.

The 17.98 per cent reduction, which the authority attributed to stepped-up operations by NTSA and the Traffic Police, offers a rare moment of statistical encouragement in a country where road carnage has long resisted sustained

improvement. Enforcement efforts concentrated on compelling pedestrians to use designated crossing points, including footbridges, at high-risk junctions and busy urban roads where the habit of crossing outside marked zones remains deeply entrenched.

“Pedestrian fatalities declined in July 2026 as the authority and Traffic Police intensified enforcement and compliance checks targeting road users who fail to use designated crossing points, including footbridges,” NTSA said in its monthly road safety update.

The figures carry weight because pedestrians consistently rank among the most

vulnerable categories of road users in Kenya, accounting for a disproportionate share of annual fatalities. Unlike vehicle occupants, they have no structural protection between themselves and the consequences of a collision, making their exposure to reckless or speeding drivers particularly lethal. Busy junctions in Nairobi and other major towns, where pedestrians routinely weave between fast-moving vehicles rather

146
Road Deaths

than use available crossings, have long been identified as concentration points for preventable deaths.

The authority’s data suggest that consistent, visible enforcement can shift behaviour — at least in the short term. The challenge Kenya has repeatedly faced, however, is sustaining that pressure beyond enforcement campaigns that tend to be intensive but episodic. When officers move on, old habits frequently return.

NTSA was candid on that point, welcoming the July improvement while stressing that the gains remain fragile. The authority called directly on pedestrians to take greater personal responsibility for their safety, urging them to use designated crossing points, obey traffic signals and treat road discipline not as an externally imposed obligation



Road accidents

but as a matter of self-preservation.

“To further reduce fatalities among vulnerable road users, we urge all pedestrians to always use designated crossing points including footbridges, obey traffic signals, and prioritise their safety on the roads,” the authority said.

That message, however earnest, points to the structural limitation of enforcement-led road safety strategies. Rules obeyed only when an officer is watching are rules that will be broken the moment

attention shifts. Kenya’s road safety crisis — which claims thousands of lives annually and leaves tens of thousands more with life-altering injuries — ultimately requires a cultural shift that enforcement alone cannot produce.

One hundred and forty-six people died on Kenya’s roads in a single month, and that figure is being reported as progress. It is progress. But it is also a measure of how far this country still has to travel.

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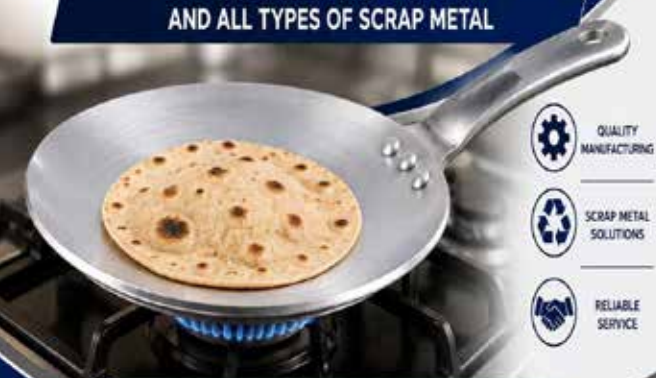
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Safety A site heading towards disaster rarely collapses without warning. The red flags are usually hiding in plain sight, written into daily behaviours and the structural shortcuts

The non-negotiable jobsite: Why compromising on construction safety costs more than you think

Cutting corners on site safety does not save money — it destroys lives, reputations and balance sheets.

BY David Nyaga

@themkenyaintimes

A construction site is a dynamic, high-stakes environment where raw materials, heavy machinery and human labour intersect. In this world of steel and concrete, safety cannot be relegated to an afterthought, a rushed toolbox talk or a checkbox on a compliance form. It is the absolute, non-negotiable bedrock of any successful project. When profit margins shrink and deadlines loom, the temptation to cut corners can be powerful — but treating site safety as expendable overhead is a severe miscalculation that destroys lives, reputations and bottom lines.

Recognising the red flags

A site heading towards disaster rarely collapses without warning. The red flags are usually hiding in plain sight, written into daily behaviours and the structural shortcuts that management tolerates. The most glaring indicator is a casual attitude towards Personal Protective Equipment. When hard hats are discarded in the midday heat or workers operate grinders without safety goggles, it signals a systemic failure in supervision. Compromised or uninspected scaffolding, exposed temporary electrical panels and chaotic housekeeping — debris left strewn across active walkways — are direct precursors to serious accidents.

Beyond the moral imperative, the financial and operational fallout is immense. A serious incident halts construction immediately, triggering prolonged investigations that paralyse project timelines. Under



A construction site

ter waiting to happen. So too is the absence of a properly stocked, accessible first aid kit or trained first-aiders on site — both signs of a management team unprepared for the inevitable emergencies of heavy physical labour. When a site allows unregistered, un-accredited workers to handle high-risk tasks, it ceases to be a controlled engineering project and becomes a hazardous gamble.

The brutal outcomes of negligence

When these red flags are ignored, the consequences are predictably catastrophic, beginning with the irreversible human cost. A fall from height, a trench collapse or an electrocution leaves families devastated and communities shattered. Every worker has the fundamental right to return home in the same physical condition in which they arrived.

Beyond the moral imperative, the financial and operational fallout is immense. A serious incident halts construction immediately, triggering prolonged investigations that paralyse project timelines. Under

Kenya's Occupational Safety and Health Act 2007, failure to maintain safety standards carries severe consequences enforced by the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health Services, including prohibition orders that stop all site activities, heavy fines and prosecution of contractors. The reputational damage sustained by a firm associated with a fatal site accident can permanently lock it out of future tenders.

The regulatory backbone: NCA and DOSHS

Regulatory bodies exist not to stifle construction but to safeguard it. In Kenya, safety compliance rests on two pillars: the National Construction Authority and the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health Services. The NCA acts as the principal gatekeeper of construction quality, requiring every site to be registered and to display an official site board detailing approved professionals and project approvals. It strictly regulates the accreditation of site supervisors, safety officers and skilled tradespeople to ensure only competent per-

sonnel manage critical tasks.

The Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health Services, meanwhile, enforces the health and safety protocols defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2007. These legal frameworks demand rigorous structural design, risk assessments and occupational safety protocols. Contractors who attempt to bypass mandatory compliance checks face not only immediate site closure but the risk of permanent deregistration — effectively ending their business.

Measures for a zero-incident site

Transforming a hazardous

site into a zero-incident zone requires proactive, relentless intervention. It begins with comprehensive risk assessments conducted before a single excavator breaks ground. Site managers must identify potential hazards and implement firm engineering controls to mitigate them.

Communication and emergency preparedness must be institutionalised. Safety signage is not decorative — it must communicate hazards quickly and effectively, using simple language ideally in both English and Swahili, as well as universally recognised symbols. Signs must be positioned at eye level in high-traffic areas and made from weather-resistant mate-

rials to ensure lasting visibility.

First aid readiness is equally non-negotiable. Depending on workforce size, contractors must provide fully stocked occupational first aid kits in designated, clearly marked locations. A box of bandages is not sufficient. The law requires appointing and training adequate first-aiders, regularly auditing kit contents and maintaining meticulous records of all first aid incidents.

Finally, safety must be fiercely democratic. Every worker, regardless of rank, must be empowered with stop-work authority. If a labourer spots an unbraced trench or a frayed hoist cable, they must be able to halt operations without fear of retaliation.

Safety is not a competing priority against time and budget — it is the very framework that makes successful project delivery possible. A contractor who masters site safety through proper signage, emergency readiness and strict regulatory compliance demonstrates operational excellence and the ethical grounding to build responsibly. In the modern construction industry, a safe site is simply non-negotiable.

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Politics Kaluma was captured on video days earlier instructing supporters to conduct door-to-door and hotel-to-hotel searches for “infiltrators.”

When stones replace ideas: Homabay’s descent into the shadow of 2007



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor
Odhiambo

@themkenyentimes

On 16 August 2026, the roads into Homabay County were not arteries of democracy but barricades of fear. Stones, logs, burning tyres, and youths armed with pangas and rungus turned a political rally into a theatre of intimidation. Journalists were beaten and robbed. Hotels were raided and vandalized. Convoys were stoned. Police lobbed teargas not to protect free assembly but to clear paths that should never have been blocked. This is not contested opinion. It is recorded fact, captured on video, reported by multiple independent outlets, and confirmed by arrests of young men carrying crude weapons. The Linda Mwananchi movement’s attempt to hold a peaceful gathering was met with organised violence. That violence did not erupt spontaneously. It followed days of open agitation by local leaders, chief among them Homabay Town MP Opondo Kaluma and, by association and atmosphere, Governor Gladys Wanga.

Kaluma was captured on video days earlier instructing supporters to conduct door-to-door and hotel-to-hotel searches for “infiltrators.” He warned hotel owners. He declared that anyone chanting “one term” would be “crossed with.” He framed political difference as invasion. Words like these are not metaphor. They are matches. When a Member of Parliament, sworn to uphold the Constitution, treats opposition supporters as enemies to be flushed out, the subsequent appearance of goons is not coincidence. It is consequence. Wanga’s earlier claims that outsiders were importing violence, while herself part of a political ecosystem that tolerated or failed to restrain local mobilisation, only thickened the air of hostility. Leaders who claim to protect their people by turning their county into a no-go zone for rival ideas are not guardians. They are arsonists of the public square.

Politics, at its highest, is the contest of visions. It is the disciplined clash



Tyres set a blaze at Oyugis town ahead of Linda Mwananchi Homabay Bay rally. PHOTO/Hempstone Kadiri/Fb

of arguments about roads, hospitals, jobs, debt, and dignity. It is the quiet, stubborn belief that a better idea can persuade without a club in its hand. What we witnessed in Homabay was the opposite: the substitution of muscle for mind. Stones do not refute policy. Pangas do not answer questions about the cost of living. Threats do not constitute a manifesto. When leaders reach for goons, they confess, louder than any speech, that their ideas have grown thin. Intimidation is the last refuge of the intellectually bankrupt.

Kenya has walked this road before, and the scars remain. In the 2007–2008 post-election violence, more than 1,100 people died, hundreds of thousands were displaced, and property worth billions was destroyed. The Waki Commission and subsequent human-rights accounts documented how political rhetoric, ethnic mobilisation, and organised gangs turned neighbourhoods into killing fields. One in three Kenyans was affected in some way injury, loss of home, loss of livelihood, or the death of someone close. That horror produced a national vow: never again. Constitutional reforms, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, and a generation’s trauma were supposed to inoculate us. Yet here we are, less than a year from another general election, watching the same vocabulary of exclusion return. “They are already here.” “Flush them out.” “We shall cross with them.” These are not the words of a mature democracy. They are echoes from the brink we once stepped away from.

The pattern is not confined to one

side or one county. Opposition figures, including former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, have repeatedly reported attacks on their convoys and meetings by organised groups of youths. The consistency of the method hired muscle, crude weapons, sudden roadblocks, selective police response suggests a deeper disease: the normalization of violence as political currency. When every camp can point to its own scars from goon attacks, the problem is no longer partisan. It is systemic. Democracy becomes a protection racket. The public square shrinks until only the loudest and most violent claim space.

Consider the correlation. Where political competition is healthy, leaders invest in policy documents, town halls, and patient persuasion. Where it is diseased, they invest in logistics for youth groups, fuel for motorcycles, and coded language that later becomes alibis. Homabay’s tragedy is that a region with a proud democratic heritage home to voices that once expanded Kenya’s political imagination was reduced, for one ugly weekend, to a stage for the lowest form of power. The late Raila Odinga’s long struggle for multiparty democracy and the right of every Kenyan to organise without fear sits in silent judgment over those who now treat their county as private property.

There is a deeper insight here that should unsettle every citizen. Violence in politics is never merely tactical. It is pedagogical. It teaches the young that the way to settle disagreement is to break things and people. It teaches the poor that their bodies are

disposable tools for someone else’s ambition. It teaches the ambitious that ideas are optional. Once that lesson is absorbed, the next election cycle inherits not just candidates but a culture of fear. The stones thrown in Homabay did not only bruise journalists and damage vehicles. They instructed a generation that the ballot is secondary to the barricade.

Leaders who claim to love their people must be called to account with the same clarity they demand of opponents. Kaluma’s recorded instructions were not private counsel. They were public incitement. Wanga’s responsibility as governor includes ensuring that the county remains

open to lawful political activity, not a fortress for one faction. Silence or deflection in the face of such events is complicity. The Constitution does not grant any party a monopoly on any region. Freedom of assembly and association are not privileges to be rationed by local power brokers. They are rights. When those rights are suspended by organised force, the state itself is diminished.

The path forward is not complicated, only difficult. Prosecute those who planned and executed the violence, including any leaders whose words lit the fuse. Insist that political parties discipline their own. Demand that security agencies protect the right to assemble rather than merely manage the chaos after the fact. Most of all, elevate the currency of politics back to ideas. Let candidates compete on the quality of their diagnosis of Kenya’s problems and the coherence of their solutions. Let voters reward persuasion and punish intimidation. History has already shown us the cost of the alternative.

Homabay did not have to become a war zone. No Kenyan county does. The men and women who turned stones into arguments have revealed not strength but poverty of imagination. True power lies in the ability to change minds without breaking bodies. Until that truth is reclaimed, every election will carry the risk of sliding toward the abyss we swore never to revisit. The words spoken and the weapons raised on 16 August 2026 were not merely local excess. They were a national warning. We ignore them at our collective peril.

The author is a social commentator.



Linda Mwananchi convoys were stoned in Homabay

Education By the time morning assembly ends, several issues may already be waiting. A teacher is absent. A classroom window is broken

A year in the life of a Kenyan primary school principal

Behind the office door lies one of the most demanding and underappreciated leadership roles in Kenya's education system.

BY Ashford Kimani

@themkenyatimes

The life of a primary school principal is often misunderstood. To many, the principal is the person who sits in the office, signs documents, chairs meetings, presides over assemblies and occasionally addresses parents. Yet behind that office door lies something far more complex.

A primary school principal is an instructional leader, administrator, financial manager, counsellor, disciplinarian, community mobiliser, child-protection advocate and crisis manager — all at the same time. The work is deeply rewarding, but it is also relentless. A year in the life of a principal is not defined merely by school terms and examination results. It is a continuous journey of leadership, adaptation, difficult decisions and countless human encounters.

The school year often begins long before learners report. During the holiday, the principal is already thinking about staffing, enrolment, classrooms, textbooks, school fees, infrastructure, timetables and academic targets. In public schools, this means following up on capitation funds, preparing financial records, responding to ministry directives and ensuring the school is ready to receive learners. In private schools, the pressure may include enrolment targets, fee collection, staff recruitment and maintaining the institution's reputation.

When schools reopen, the gates become the first leadership station. The principal welcomes learners, speaks with parents, reads the mood of the school and picks up on details that official reports rarely capture. A child arriving late, a learner in a damaged uniform or a parent asking to speak privately can each signal a challenge re-



Illustration of a school

quiring immediate attention. The principal is constantly reading the emotional temperature of the school.

By the time morning assembly ends, several issues may already be waiting. A teacher is absent. A classroom window is broken. A parent demands an explanation. A learner has fallen ill. A supplier is waiting for payment. The school bus has a mechanical fault, or a water shortage threatens the normal running of lessons. The carefully prepared programme for the day can unravel within minutes.

This is one of the least understood aspects of school leadership: the principal's timetable is often only a working draft. Education leaders plan, but they must also pivot. A meeting on curriculum implementation may be interrupted by an emergency. A lesson observation may be postponed because a learner requires urgent support. A strategic discussion may give way to a dispute between parents, teachers or pupils. These interruptions are not separate from the principal's work. They are the work.

The principal must become the stabilising presence in the institution. When teach-

ers are anxious, parents frustrated or learners unsettled, the principal is expected to remain calm. Leadership is sometimes less about having immediate answers and more about creating confidence that a solution will be found.

At the centre of the role is learning itself. A principal must understand what is happening in classrooms. Are teachers adequately prepared? Are learners acquiring the expected competencies? Are assessment results improving? Are struggling learners receiving support? Are gifted learners being challenged? Are teachers interpreting the curriculum correctly?

Under Kenya's Competency-Based Education system, instructional leadership has become even more critical. The principal must support teachers as they navigate competency-based learning, continuous assessment, differentiated instruction, projects and learner-centred approaches. This demands more than checking lesson plans. It requires professional conversations about pedagogy, assessment and learner outcomes. A principal who rarely enters classrooms may know the school's statistics but fail

to understand its learning culture.

The academic year also brings the pressure of assessment. Examination results are often treated as the ultimate measure of a school's effectiveness. Parents compare schools. Boards demand improvement. Teachers are expected to raise performance. Yet a responsible principal understands that education cannot be reduced to grades alone.

The principal must balance academic excellence with character formation, creativity, discipline, wellbeing and inclusion. A school may produce strong examination results yet still fail if learners are unsafe, teachers are demoralised or vulnerable children are overlooked.

Beyond academics lies the demanding work of managing people. Teachers have different strengths, personalities, ambitions and challenges. Some require encouragement. Others need professional guidance. Some may be experiencing personal difficulties that affect their work. The principal must build a staff culture in which accountability and support coexist.

Staff meetings are therefore

more than administrative gatherings. They are opportunities to clarify vision, solve problems, recognise achievement and renew commitment. Motivated teachers are among the strongest foundations of a successful school.

Parents are another essential part of the principal's year. They are partners in education, though relationships can sometimes be difficult. A parent may question a school decision, challenge a teacher, complain about fees or seek special consideration for a child. The principal must listen carefully, communicate respectfully and protect the best interests of the learner. The strongest schools do not treat parents as customers or outsiders. They build genuine partnerships grounded in trust and shared responsibility.

The principal's responsibility also extends beyond the school gate. In many Kenyan communities, the school is a centre of public life — hosting meetings, sports activities, cultural events and community programmes. The principal may work alongside local leaders, education officers, religious organisations, sponsors and development partners. In rural communi-

ties, this can mean mobilising support for classrooms, water projects, school feeding programmes or learner welfare. In urban areas, the principal may confront overcrowding, insecurity, poverty and intense competition among schools. In both settings, the principal becomes a civic leader.

Yet some of the most important moments in a principal's year are the smallest. A principal notices a quiet learner sitting alone during break time. They remember the name of a child who has been absent. They congratulate a teacher after a successful lesson. They provide lunch to a learner who came to school hungry. They visit a sick member of staff or comfort a bereaved family. These acts may appear ordinary, but they shape the culture of the school. They carry a powerful message: you are seen, you matter, you belong here.

By the end of the year, the principal may look back on meetings attended, reports completed, budgets managed, classrooms repaired and academic targets pursued. But the true measure of leadership is found in people — in the learner who gained confidence, the teacher who became more effective, the parent who began to trust the school and the community that came together around education.

Primary education is not merely preparation for secondary school. It is where children develop identity, values, curiosity, confidence and the foundations of citizenship. The primary school principal therefore carries a responsibility that reaches far beyond administration. Every morning greeting, every classroom visit, every difficult decision and every act of kindness contributes to the kind of society Kenya will become.

A year in the life of a primary school principal is demanding, unpredictable and often exhausting. But it is also an extraordinary form of nation-building. The principal is not simply managing a school. They are helping shape children, strengthen communities and build the future — one school day at a time.

Together as one nation, one people, we will build a new life and a new future!



By: Elbekova Shohsanam Ne'matjon @themtkenyetimes

Introduction

Independence is one of the greatest, most precious, and sacred blessings in the life of a nation and a people. Wherever independence exists, people have the opportunity to determine their own destiny, preserve their national values, and freely develop their native language, history, and spiritual heritage. Independence is not merely a political status of a state; it is the opportunity for a people to understand their national identity, strengthen their sense of pride, and look toward the future with confidence.

For Uzbekistan, independence was such a great historical event. On August 31, 1991, the state independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan was proclaimed, fulfilling the long-standing aspirations of our people for a free and independent life. September 1 became a national holiday — Independence Day.

As Uzbekistan celebrates the 35th anniversary of its independence, we look back at the historical path our country has travelled and recognize even more deeply the invaluable significance of independence in the life of our people. Thirty-five years is not merely a date; it represents a historical period marked by construction, renewal, development, and aspirations for a better future.

Main Part

Independence first and foremost gave our people the opportunity to understand and appreciate their national identity. Thanks to independence, we have been able to look at our history from a new perspective and study more deeply the enormous contributions of our great ancestors to science, literature, art, and spiritual development. Our national values, customs, and traditions have been restored. The status of our native language as the state language has been strengthened. Our rich spiritual heritage, passed down from generation to generation for centuries, has come to be valued as an important factor in shaping our national identity.



United in diversity, building one future together.

Today, seeing the national flag of Uzbekistan flying on the international stage and hearing our national anthem performed in different countries of the world fills every citizen with a sense of pride and honor. These symbols are not merely signs; they represent the independence, national dignity, honor, and aspirations of our people.

During the years of independence, significant changes have taken place in various areas of our country's life. New opportunities have been created in education, science, culture, healthcare, the economy, sports, and other fields. The appearance of our cities and villages has changed, while modern educational institutions, industrial enterprises, social facilities, and infrastructure have been constructed. All these developments demonstrate the ongoing efforts to improve the well-being of our people and ensure the progress of our country.

Today, particular attention is being paid to human dignity, the protection of people's rights and interests, and the creation of favorable conditions for the younger generation. After all, the future of our country depends primarily on an educated, enlightened, patriotic, and enterprising generation.

In this regard, the noble idea "Together as One Nation, One People, We Will Build a New Life and a New Future!" carries profound meaning. One Homeland is our common and

sacred home. Its prosperity, peace, and well-being concern the destiny of every citizen. Being one people means living in harmony, regardless of nationality, language, or social background, and striving toward a common goal in the interests of our Homeland.

The unity of the people is one of the greatest forces behind development. Where peace, harmony, and mutual respect prevail, there are greater opportunities for creation and progress. When every person performs their profession conscientiously and strives to contribute positively to society, they make a valuable contribution to the development of the country.

A new life and a new future cannot be created through dreams alone. They can be built through knowledge, hard work, dedication, responsibility, and continuous effort. A pupil studying at school, a student pursuing higher education, a young scholar conducting research, and a specialist devoted to their profession — all of them are builders of the future of the new Uzbekistan.

In particular, it is important to cultivate love for the Homeland, loyalty to independence, and a sense of national pride among young people. Protecting independence is not only the responsibility of the state; appreciating and strengthening it is the sacred duty of every citizen. Studying well, working honestly, acquiring knowledge, respecting parents

and teachers, and becoming a useful member of society are all beautiful forms of service to the Homeland.

Independence is not an ordinary opportunity given to us without effort. It is closely connected with the centuries-old aspirations of our people, the noble dreams of our ancestors, and our historical memory. Therefore, it is our responsibility to value every day of independence, understand its importance, and preserve it even more firmly for future generations.

Today, Uzbekistan is moving confidently into a new stage of development. The country's international standing, economic and social potential, and the younger generation's interest in science and technology are steadily growing. The unity, diligence, and confidence of our people in the future serve as important forces in this process.

Conclusion

The 35th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence is an important opportunity to reflect on our history, appreciate the present, and deeply understand our responsibility toward the future. Over the years, our people have overcome numerous challenges and demonstrated their great potential for creativity and development.

Independence is our pride, sovereignty is our honor, and the Homeland is a sacred place for all of us.

Protecting it, making it prosperous, and passing it on to future generations in a better condition is the honorable duty of every citizen.

Today, we need unity, solidarity, knowledge, hard work, and dedication. We will create a new life and a bright future through our own efforts. To achieve this, we must unite around our common Homeland, remain one people, and move confidently toward our shared goals.

One Homeland — our pride.
One People — our strength.
A New Life — our present.
A New Future — our noble goal.

May our country remain peaceful, our people united, and our skies clear. May our independence be eternal, and may the future of Uzbekistan be even brighter!

Together as One Nation, One People, We Will Build a New Life and a New Future!

Elbekova Shohsanam Ne'matjon qizi

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

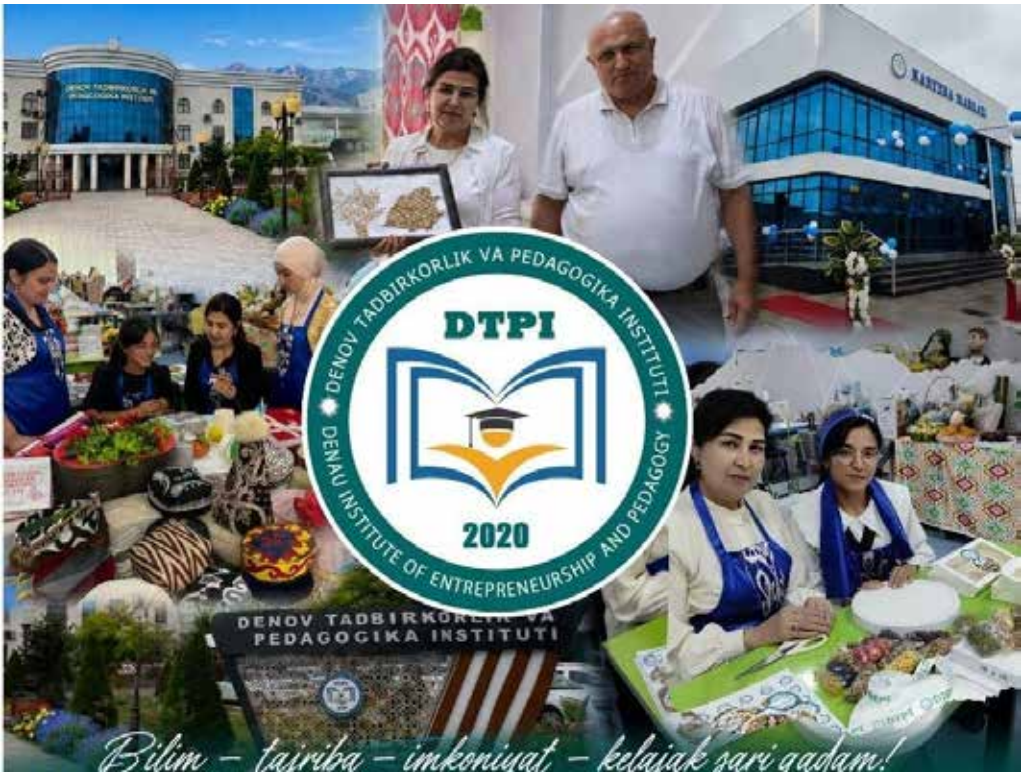


My institute — an unforgettable chapter of my life

BY Nigmatullayeva Mahfuza
@themtkenyatimes

Every day when I enter our institute, the days I have spent here, my first steps, the knowledge I have gained, and the achievements I have made come to my mind. This place is not simply an educational institution for me; it is a place that opened the way to my dreams, helped me discover my abilities, and left a great mark on my life.

I, Nigmatullayeva Mahfuza, still clearly remember the first days when I was admitted as a student to the Denov Institute of Entrepreneurship and Pedagogy. The sincere atmosphere at the institute, the trust of our teachers, the knowledge they shared, and the opportunities created for us encouraged me to develop myself. It was here that my confidence in myself grew, I gained new experiences, and discovered many abilities that I



had not recognized before. One of the greatest advantages of our institute is the wide range of opportunities created for young people. In particular, the activities of the “Career Center” are especially important to me. The head of the center, Nigora Qurbonovna Shaymar-danova, has always supported young people, especially girls, in acquiring professions and

skills and finding their place in the future.

Through this center, I also had the opportunity to start my own small business. Today, I am sharing the knowledge and experience I have gained with other girls as well. This is a great source of joy and pride for me.

The efforts and attention of the head of our institute, Oybek Roziyev, towards young people have played an important role in creating such opportunities. The conditions created for students to develop, implement their new ideas, and take confident steps toward the future are great opportunities for all of us.

Today, I deeply understand one thing: a good educational institution does not only make a person knowledgeable, but also awakens the potential within their heart.

At our institute, I discovered my talent, began to believe in my own abilities, and took my first steps toward acquiring pro-

fessional skills and developing entrepreneurship. This institution has given me not only knowledge, but also experience, confidence, opportunities, and, most importantly, the courage to create my own future.

Therefore, the Denov Institute of Entrepreneurship and Pedagogy is not simply an educational institution for me. It is the place where my dreams began, my opportunities opened up, and where I started my journey toward my future.

*Nigmatullayeva Mahfuza
Third-year student, Faculty of Philology
Denov Institute of Entrepreneurship and Pedagogy*

Mental health in our campuses: Breaking the silence

BY Catherine Wairimu
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Have you ever stopped to wonder what is really going on in the mind of a student? On the surface, campus life looks vibrant — full of new friendships, intellectual energy and the promise of a better future. Beneath that surface, however, many students are quietly carrying burdens that would buckle most adults: deadlines, examinations, financial pressure, identity crises and the relentless expectation to have it all figured out before they have barely begun.

Mary Baker Eddy once observed that health is not a condition of matter but of mind. That truth resonates deeply in the campus environment, where a student’s thoughts, fears, be-

liefs and inner peace directly shape their academic performance, their relationships and, ultimately, the person they are becoming. Mental health is not a peripheral concern for students. It is central to everything.

The pressure begins with academics. Assignments, projects and individual study demands pile up quickly, made heavier by the knowledge that others — parents, younger siblings, entire communities — are watching and waiting. Some students cry silently in bathroom stalls. Others stay locked in their rooms, too overwhelmed to face the world outside. These are not signs of weakness. They are signs of a system that too often demands everything while offering very little support in return.

University is also the period when young adults are most urgently searching for identity. Questions such as “Who am I?”, “Am I doing enough?” and “Is this even the right path for me?” are not idle thoughts — they are emotional storms that rage internally while the student smiles through lectures and group assignments. Financial strain adds another crushing layer. Fees, rent, meals and transport costs stack up fast, and many students quietly shoulder the additional burden of supporting families back home, arriving at campus already exhausted before the semester has begun.

Social pressure compounds everything further. In an age shaped by social media, students are constantly measuring themselves against curated versions of other people’s lives,



chasing a standard of perfection that does not exist. Many feel profoundly lonely, even when surrounded by peers. The fear of being judged or misunderstood keeps most from speaking up, yet that first courageous conversation — with a friend, a counsellor or a trusted adult — is often the turning point.

Campuses must build cultures of openness where students feel genuinely safe to share their struggles without fear. Accessible counselling services, peer support networks and honest conversations about mental health are not optional extras. They are as essential to a student’s education as any lecture or examination.

The silence must end. Our students deserve better.

SPORTS NEWS

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Celebrating community leadership: Unity and the power of grassroots development

By James Kilonzo

Eng. Nicolas Gumbo yesterday attended the 40th anniversary celebration of Karariw Sports, hosted by the Karariw Self Help Group at Karariw Comprehensive School in Masogo A Village, Nyandiwa Sub-location, Central Gem Ward, Gem Constituency. His presence underscored the deep connection between leadership, community and the unifying power of sport.

The gathering was far more than a ceremonial milestone. It was a vivid demonstration of how local initiative and grassroots organisation can create spaces for young people to express themselves, for neighbours to reconnect and for a shared sense of purpose to be renewed. In a society where economic pressures and political contestation can strain community relations, coming together to celebrate a long-standing local institution offered a timely reminder that continuity, cooperation and collective effort remain central to the wellbeing of communities.

Karariw Sports, nurtured over four decades by the Karariw Self Help Group, has provided a platform for athletic development while simultaneously serving as a space for social interaction and community engagement. Through sport, young people develop values that extend well beyond the playing field — teamwork, discipline, commitment and responsibility — qualities that shape responsible citizens who understand the importance of cooperation and mutual respect.

The anniversary also shone a light on the importance of recognising institutions that have remained relevant across generations. The continuation of Karariw Sports reflects the quiet, sustained commitment of community members who have invested their time, energy and

resources in an initiative that has served successive generations. Community development is not achieved solely through large government programmes. It depends equally on local people organising themselves around shared priorities and taking ownership of initiatives that improve their own lives.

The fundraising activities held during the anniversary underscored that point further. Local organisations require resources, skills and partnerships to sustain their work. Fundraising gives communities the opportunity to contribute directly to projects they understand and value. Public leaders, private actors and development partners all have a responsibility to support such efforts in ways that strengthen local capacity while promoting transparency and accountability.

The sporting programme provided another memorable dimension to the occasion. A match between Siremba FC from North Gem Ward and Uriri FC from West Gem Ward drew players, supporters and residents together in an atmosphere of healthy competition and genuine community interaction. Siremba emerged victorious with a narrow win, though the significance of the event reached far beyond the final score. The contest demonstrated how sport bridges communities, encourages young people to channel their talents constructively and creates meaningful opportunities for interaction across different areas.

Grassroots sporting development should therefore be viewed as an integral component of broader community development. Young people need organised spaces to participate, develop their abilities and build lasting relationships. Properly supported sporting programmes encourage discipline, teamwork and constructive use of time while also creating pathways for



Eng. Nicolas Gumbo

talented individuals who might otherwise lack access to structured opportunities. Supporting grassroots sport is ultimately an investment in young people and in the social structures within which they live.

The role of the Karariw Self Help Group deserves particular recognition. Self-help groups remain among the most important institutions in Kenyan communities — structures through which residents organise, pool resources and pursue projects that respond directly to local needs. Their effectiveness rests on committed leadership, active participation and meaningful partnerships with other stakeholders. Policymakers and county leaders should recognise such groups as genuine development partners, providing them with access to capacity building, technical assistance and appropriate funding rather than treating them merely as beneficiaries of public programmes.

Gumbo's presence at the celebration also invites reflection on what grassroots leadership means in practice. As an aspirant for the Siaya County governor's seat, his participation in a community event of this nature demonstrates the importance of remaining genuinely connected to ordinary residents. Leadership should not be confined

to formal political meetings or major public occasions. It must also involve consistent engagement with community groups, youth organisations, sports associations and the countless other institutions that form the foundation of local society.

Communities are not passive recipients of development. They are active participants with ideas, institutions and capabilities that can contribute significantly to a county's progress. The most effective leaders understand this — and create room for local efforts to grow while ensuring public resources are distributed fairly and responsibly.

The 40th anniversary of Karariw Sports was ultimately a celebration of people: the residents who have sustained an institution across four decades, the young athletes who carry it forward and the leaders willing to show up and listen. As Siaya County considers its development priorities and future leadership, the Karariw experience offers an enduring lesson — that strong communities are built not from the top down, but through sustained participation, local ownership and leadership that places people firmly at the centre of everything it does.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The Spanish midfielder is expected to travel on Monday as the Catalan club finalises arrangements for his medical examination.

Rodri given green light to fly to Barcelona as transfer moves closer

By Pascal Okoth

Manchester City midfielder Rodri received the green light to travel to Barcelona yesterday, with the Spanish international making the journey as talks over a potential move continued to gather momentum and excitement built among supporters on both sides.

City authorised Rodri to fly, while Barcelona completed and sent the necessary documentation ahead of his arrival. The Catalan club arranged a private flight for the midfielder, with his departure confirmed for yesterday evening — a development that sent anticipation soaring among the club’s faithful.

Barcelona were simultaneously preparing for Rodri’s medical examination, a critical step before any transfer can be formally completed. The club’s internal departments had been working on arrangements behind the scenes, fuelling widespread speculation that the deal is now approaching its final stages and that an official announcement could follow within days.

Rodri, widely regarded as one of the finest defensive midfielders in world football, would represent a transformative addition to Barcelona’s engine room. The 28-year-old has spent several defining years at Manchester City, where he developed into one of the most complete midfielders of his generation — a player capable of dictating tempo, breaking up opposition play and providing the defensive protection that allows teammates to express themselves further forward.

His ability to read the game, recycle possession under pressure and control the rhythm of a match from deep would address one of Barcelona’s most pressing needs. The Catalan club has been searching for a dominant presence in central midfield, and a player of Rodri’s calibre would



Manchester City midfielder Rodri

immediately bring structure, experience and composure to a side with serious ambitions in La Liga and the Champions League. The move would also mark a deeply significant moment in the midfielder’s personal journey. Born in Spain and shaped by Spanish football, Rodri could now be returning to his homeland at the peak of his powers — a homecoming that carries considerable emotional and professional weight. For Barcelona supporters, the prospect of watching him operate in the famous blue-and-red shirt has generated enormous

excitement. Yesterday was swiftly dubbed “Rodri Day” across social media platforms, with fans tracking every update as the situation developed through the afternoon and into the evening. Yet measured caution remains appropriate. Football transfers, however advanced, can unravel quickly. Until contracts are signed and a medical examination is successfully completed, no deal can be considered concluded. Barcelona had made no official statement as of yesterday evening, and both clubs maintained their customary silence on the specifics of the negotiations.

Nevertheless, the weight of evidence points firmly in one direction. The authorisation to travel, the private flight, the medical preparations and the documentation already exchanged between the two clubs all suggest the situation has entered a decisive and potentially final phase. Should the transfer be confirmed, it would rank among the most consequential moves of the summer window — and signal Barcelona’s intent to build a squad capable of challenging at the very highest level in the season ahead.

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Renée Ambarees: The woman who turned closed doors into the smile revolution



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

At fifteen, Renée Ambarees injured her back during what would become twenty-two years of competitive sport.

She learned to override the signal. Push through. Perform anyway. Keep going.

It would take her decades to understand what her body already knew: the truth does not wait for the conscious mind to be ready.

Today, Renée Ambarees Isermann, professionally known as Renée Ambarees, is a pioneer in facial and body wellness, the creator of Yoga4Face®, and the founder of the Smile Revolution. Her work helps people reconnect with themselves through the relationship between face, body, mind, emotions, voice, nervous system, and inner identity.

Her path did not begin with a business plan. It began with a body that had carried too much for too long.

In 2010, Renée left her corporate career to prepare for pregnancy, family, and motherhood, carrying the deep knowing that a child is shaped long before birth. She wanted to give her future children a different life than the one she had known inside the corporate world.

That same year, she founded Wendepunkt, meaning “Turning Point”, a practice dedicated to body, mind, and soul.

They built a house together. They prepared for a family. A wedding was planned.

Then came the loss of the children she had already imagined. And twice, by the same man, the wedding she had prepared for never became the life she had believed in.

She had put everything on that one card. She had been so certain.

In 2015, Renée rebuilt her life in Vienna, a city where she knew almost no one. Doors closed professionally. Doors closed within her family, as some relatives distanced themselves

from a path that did not conform to expectations.

And then came the mirror. And the sentences that had taken root between her own two ears:

I am not wanted. I am not enough.

She could have stayed there for years. Instead, she took her life back into her own hands.

She refused to call it rejection. She called it an invitation to stand up for herself and to come home to herself.

That is what she now helps other women do: come home to themselves.

Their voice. Their radiance. Their beauty. Their uniqueness. Everything the outside world seemed to take from them.

No elaborate plan. Just a blank sheet of paper.

That blank page became one of the most important chapters of her life.

When Renée looked in the mirror, it was not dislike of what she saw. It was disconnection from the person looking back.

The real question was never how to change her face. It was how to return to herself.

The space she could not give her own children, she now gives to the women who come to her: a place to feel themselves again, to unfold, to recognise where they have been lying to themselves, betraying themselves, making themselves small, or carrying a smile that is not real.

That question became Yoga4Face®.

In November 2017, Renée created Yoga4Face®, a four-step method built from her own lived experience and her understanding of the connection between physical expression and inner wellbeing.

Not a beauty routine. A philosophy. True transformation begins from within.

At its centre is the S.M.I.L.E. Code: Safety, Magnetism, Inner Alignment, Liberation, and Embodiment.

For Renée, a smile is never just a physical expression. It can reveal confidence, vulnerability, joy, fear, protection, and the emotional stories a person has carried for years, often unspoken.

Her own childhood shaped this philosophy. She has described herself as a serious child who learned to smile only much later, and that early pattern — performance over joy — fol-

lowed her into competitive sport and then into her corporate career.

The rest of that story she is telling in full elsewhere. Here, what matters is where it led: to a study of how the body stores experience, how self-betrayal has consequences, and how healing means returning to a more authentic version of oneself.

In 2018, her book Yoga4Face became an international bestseller. She later co-authored Cracking the Rich Code with Jim Britt, endorsed by Tony Robbins, contributing a chapter called “The Smile Code” on wealth, receiving, and what abundance actually means.

Then, during the Covid pandemic, another business she had built disappeared almost overnight.

She listened to what the women she had worked with kept telling her: the transformation was real, but they needed practical ways to carry it into everyday life.

So Renée built a 30-day course. That course became a membership community. Later, it became a trainer certification, allowing other women to learn and teach the method themselves.

Her work has now reached more than 10,000 people worldwide. Some have worked with her for years. For Renée, ageing is not something to resist. It is an opportunity to consciously shape how you carry yourself, how you feel, and how you connect with the world.

Her vision has grown into Back-2Paradise, a movement built around helping people — especially women, and the children still living inside all of us — come home to themselves.

The 4 Magic Moves™ are the Smile Revolution in practice: a simple entry point for people to begin reconnecting with their face, body, presence, and real smile in daily life.

Renée has said for years that the face does not only show what is happening inside — it is part of the living system itself.

In 2026, a clinical study offered early scientific support for the idea that facial muscles and emotional wellbeing may be connected. The study explored a self-applied facial physiotherapy programme for people with mild to moderate depression and found preliminary evidence that the intervention was associated with



Renée Ambarees.

a greater reduction in depression severity than the control condition.

Renée was not part of the research team, but the published study acknowledged her by name for her professional perspective on facial training, aesthetics, and face embodiment. The finding did not surprise her.

She had long believed that facial work moves something in people. Not only in their appearance. In their inner state.

MSC recently named Renée one of the “10 Women Leading the Change in Their Fields.”

She never went looking for the title. Leadership found her because she kept answering what showed up in front of her.

Her message is simple:

You do not always need another course. Another expert. Another external answer.

Sometimes you need to study the book of your own life.

Renée Ambarees encourages people to listen to the quiet inner voice

they may have spent years ignoring, to recognise what life places in front of them each day, and to stop abandoning themselves in order to fit into places where they no longer belong.

Her story is not only one of resilience. It is one of return.

She transformed closed doors into new beginnings, personal pain into purpose, and the simple act of smiling into a philosophy of living.

For Renée, the journey begins in front of the mirror — not with changing what is seen, but with finally seeing oneself.

“I have never once met a woman whose real issue was her jawline.”

Her signature message is:

Your face is your business card. Your body is your message. Your smile is your key.

Be seen. Be felt. Be unforgettable. Not for someone else’s life. For your own.

To begin the Smile Revolution, start with the 4 Magic Moves™ at 4magicmoves.com.