



Nyoro slams the door on Gachagua's foes
Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro yesterday delivered a pointed warning to political leaders who opposed former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua during his impeachment, telling them plainly that there is no place for them in PPK.

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Ruto gives officials one week to resolve health workers' salary arrears
President William Ruto yesterday gave national and county government officials one week to resolve salary arrears owed to Universal Health Coverage health workers

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Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 Organised groups of armed civilians are attacking politicians, journalists and police officers

Opposition urges ICC to monitor Kenya's rising political violence

A broad coalition of Kenyan opposition leaders yesterday called on the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to closely monitor political developments in the country and conduct a preliminary assessment of whether the escalating pattern of violence meets the threshold for examination under the Rome Statute — a dramatic escalation in the opposition's rhetoric ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The joint statement, signed in Nairobi and attributed to leaders spanning multiple parties and movements, warned that recent attacks on political figures, journalists and civilians can no longer be dismissed as isolated incidents between rival supporters. Taken together, the signatories argued, they reveal a coordinated and disturbing pattern that raises fundamental questions about the neutrality of Kenya's security institutions and the country's preparedness for a free and credible election.



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L-R: International Criminal Court and Goon in Kenya

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Nyoro launches People's Tour with pledges on education and jobs

BY John Irungu Maina

@themtkenyetimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndingi Nyoro yesterday launched the People's Tour in Mukuyu, Murang'a County, declaring his intention to contest the 2027 presidential election while signalling openness to backing a single opposition candidate should the broader coalition agree on one.

The tour marks a significant moment in Nyoro's political career following his departure from the ruling United Democratic Alliance and his alignment with the People's Party of Kenya. Addressing residents and supporters in Mukuyu, he framed the initiative as a direct engagement with ordinary Kenyans — an opportunity to listen to their concerns, explain his political direction and test whether his appeal can extend beyond his established base in Murang'a and the wider Mount Kenya region.

His presidential declaration puts him among a growing field of politicians already positioning themselves for the country's top office. Yet his tone was notably measured. Rather than engage in the kind of public attacks that have characterised much of the opposition space in recent months, Nyoro said his focus would remain on advancing



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Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



The wife of imprisoned Ugandan opposition leader Kizza Besigye denounced his treason trial as a farce yesterday, saying the 70-year-old politician was bedridden in prison and too ill to attend proceedings. Winnie Byanyima, executive director of Geneva-based UNAIDS, condemned the continuation of the military-turned-civilian trial in her husband's absence. "This is not a trial, it's a farce, because Kizza Besigye has not refused to come to the dock. He's bedridden, he's seriously ill, he cannot talk," she told AFP. Besigye, who faces treason charges over an alleged plot against President Yoweri Museveni, was abducted in Kenya in 2024 and reappeared in Uganda facing a military tribunal. He was recently discharged from intensive care against medical advice. "It's a political and military operation dressed up as a court case," Byanyima said.



Kenya Airways is set to release its half-year financial results within days, with management warning that grounded aircraft, high fuel costs and global shortages of engines and spare parts continue to hamper its recovery. Three Boeing 787 Dreamliners were grounded for much of the first half of the year as repair timelines stretched from 60 to over 120 days. Acting chief executive George Kamal said strong demand had not translated into strong margins. "The major issue is that profit per seat is very low," he said. Despite the operational constraints, load factors on US and European routes exceeded 90 percent in March. The airline is targeting full capacity restoration by year-end and a fleet of more than 60 aircraft within three years. The government has assumed KSh63.1B in legacy debt, to be converted into equity once a strategic investor is secured, while KQ pursues a KSh64B recapitalisation and targets raising cargo revenue from 11 percent to 20 percent of total earnings.



A Homa Bay family is mourning Noreen Nalwanga, a mother of four known locally as Nya Uganda, who died after being struck by a speeding vehicle during the violence that erupted at the Linda Mwananchi rally on Sunday, making her one of two people killed during the chaos. Nalwanga, a widow and her family's sole breadwinner, had spent Sunday indoors following events on television before leaving home after hearing reports of looting, hoping to check on her belongings. "Mama heard there was looting in town, so she went to check on her things. Minutes later I was told she had been hit by a vehicle," her son Sly Steward said. Her friend Jackeline Adhiambo recalled a chilling final phone call. "She called me around 6:30 p.m. and told me town was dangerous and I should stay home. Around 8 p.m. another call came saying she was dead." Nalwanga's death has left four children without a parent. Her late husband's family has distanced itself from burial arrangements, raising the prospect that her body will be repatriated to Uganda, where she was born. "We need help," said her uncle, Kigwana Nicholus. As political leaders trade accusations over Sunday's violence, Nalwanga's children bear its irreversible cost.



Two suspects arrested in connection with the theft of a Range Rover linked to the murder of Dr Victoria Mutiso have been released on bond by Mavoko Senior Resident Magistrate Lilian Kwamboka, who declined a prosecution application to detain them for a further seven days. Lawyer Angela Mulwa and Nelson Masiga, arrested on August 2 following the recovery of the vehicle at one of Mulwa's properties in Karen, were each ordered to execute a bond of KSh1 million with one surety of a similar amount. Both must surrender their passports, remain within the court's jurisdiction and report to the investigating officer at Mavoko Police Station as required. The court is expected to rule on Mulwa's application to have the bond reviewed to cash bail today.



The Law Society of Kenya yesterday ordered a review of remarks attributed to Mukurweini MP John Kaguchia and Homa Bay Town MP Peter Kaluma, warning it will pursue disciplinary action against both legislators if evidence of professional misconduct is established. LSK President Charles Kanjama said the Practice Standards and Ethics Committee would examine publicly available records of the remarks within 14 days and file formal complaints before the Advocates Disciplinary Tribunal if the evidence warranted it. "Political office does not suspend professional obligations, and freedom of political expression does not extend to incitement to violence or hatred," Kanjama said. Kaguchia was arrested in early August over remarks made at a rally in Kieni, Nyeri County, and released on KSh100,000 cash bail. Kaluma was separately summoned by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission yesterday but asked for a postponement, citing unavoidable state duties.

Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua yesterday called on Kenya's emerging health professionals to look beyond Vision 2030, telling more than 700 graduates at Nairobi Women Hospital College that the country is already planning for 2060 and needs a skilled workforce ready to drive that ambition. Speaking at the graduation ceremony at Jamhuri Showground in Nairobi, Mutua said healthcare sits at the heart of Kenya's long-term development agenda. "One of the key pillars of our nation is healthcare, and the responsibility lies squarely on building and supporting health professionals," he said. He challenged the new graduates — awarded diplomas and certificates across various health disciplines — to take calculated risks and question the status quo as they enter an increasingly competitive global market. The remarks come as Kenya continues implementing its Vision 2030 agenda while laying groundwork for the country's next phase of growth.



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Politics The People's Tour itself is a deliberate strategic choice

Nyoro launches People's Tour with pledges on education and jobs

The Kiharu MP takes his grassroots campaign to Murang'a, declaring his 2027 presidential ambitions while leaving the door open for opposition coalition talks

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He called for free basic education to be delivered by January 2028, framing it not as a distant aspiration but as a non-negotiable commitment that any serious government must honour. Healthcare, he said, must sit at the top of the national agenda — a declaration that resonated in a county where public health facilities remain chronically underfunded and the roll-out of the Social Health Authority has been met with confusion among ordinary citizens. Job creation through the right policy environment was the third priority, a call that speaks directly to a generation of young Kenyans whose economic frustrations have already spilled into the streets.

The People's Tour itself is a deliberate strategic choice. In a media environment dominated by social media clips and controlled press conferences, a sustained series of county-level grassroots engagements signals a commitment to direct voter contact. Murang'a was a carefully chosen starting point. The county



Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro

sits at the political and cultural heart of Mount Kenya and contributed heavily to President William Ruto's 2022 victory — with Gachagua's presence on the ticket then serving as the guarantor of regional support. That political architecture has since shifted, and the battle for Mount Kenya's loyalties ahead of 2027 is now wide open.

Nyoro's positioning within that battle is evolving. His move from a prominent figure on the government side to an opposition politician with presidential ambitions places him in genuinely new political territory. He acknowledged the complexity of the opposition landscape, noting that while he intends

to pursue his presidential ambitions, he would be willing to support another candidate if the opposition reaches consensus on a single flag bearer to face Ruto.

The balancing act he describes is familiar to opposition politics everywhere. Several leaders are expected to declare presidential ambitions in the months ahead, making questions of coalition architecture, candidate selection and party strength the dominant conversation before August 2027. How those negotiations unfold — and whether the opposition can avoid the fragmentation that has historically undermined its competitiveness — will shape the election's outcome

as much as any individual campaign.

For Nyoro, the People's Tour is the opening move in what he hopes becomes a genuinely national political network. The Mukuyu launch provides a platform; converting that platform into durable organisation across different communities and regions is the harder task that lies ahead. Whether Mukuyu marks the beginning of that wider journey will depend, ultimately, on how convincingly his message connects with Kenyans who are watching — and waiting — for someone to make good on their promises.

KEMSA more than doubles medicine fill rate in public hospitals



KEMSA chief executive Waqo Ejersa addressing a high-level session at the Kenya Health Summit yesterday

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyentimes

The Kenya Medical Supplies Authority has raised its order fill rate from roughly 40 percent in 2022 to more than 90 percent, signalling a significant turnaround in the availability of medicines and health products across public facilities.

KEMSA chief executive Waqo Ejersa told a high-level session at the Kenya Health Summit yesterday that the improvement was not simply a matter of buying more supplies. The authority had instead restructured its entire approach around demand forecasting, efficiency, technology and data — ensuring the right health products reach the right facilities at the right time.

The session, chaired by Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale and moderated

by Medical Services Principal Secretary Ouma Oluga, brought together governors, hospital chief executives and healthcare industry leaders to examine system-wide performance across service delivery, health workforce and local manufacturing.

The fill rate improvement is consequential. When medicines are unavailable at the point of care, patients either go without treatment or purchase drugs privately at costs many cannot afford. A fill rate above 90 percent means that for the first time in years, a nurse or clinical officer ordering essential supplies from KEMSA can expect to receive them.

Whether that reliability holds as the Social Health Authority scales up — and as patient volumes in public facilities grow — will be the real test of how durable the turnaround is.

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Politics Nyoro has emerged as one of the most vocal and energetic voices in that project. His rhetoric is deliberate and combative

Nyoro slams the door on Gachagua's foes

The Kiharu MP's blunt warning at Murang'a rally signals that the People's Party of Kenya is drawing hard political lines sixteen months before the General Election

BY James Mwangi

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Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro yesterday delivered a pointed warning to political leaders who opposed former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua during his impeachment, telling them plainly that there is no place for them in the People's Party of Kenya — a declaration that sharpens the fault lines running through Mount Kenya politics with the 2027 General Election now firmly in view.

Speaking at a rally in Mukuyu, Murang'a County, Nyoro left little room for ambiguity. Those who stood against Gachagua when it mattered most, he said, cannot now present themselves as allies of the movement the former Deputy President is building. The message was directed at a political class that has shown a well-documented tendency to recalibrate loyalties as electoral winds shift — and it was received by a crowd that understood exactly whom he meant.

The rally in Murang'a was no ordinary political gathering. It was a signal — carefully chosen in location, timing and tone — that the People's Party of Kenya is moving from the margins of opposition into the organised centre of a serious electoral contest. Murang'a sits in the heart of Mount Kenya country, the region that delivered President William Ruto some of his most commanding vote margins in 2022. That the party chose this terrain to draw its membership lines is not incidental. It is a declaration of intent.

Gachagua's political journey since his impeachment by the National Assembly and

Senate in October 2024 has been one of the most closely watched in Kenyan politics. Removed from office on grounds his allies described as manufactured and politically motivated, he moved swiftly to organise rather than retreat. The Democracy for the Citizens Party gave way to the People's Party of Kenya as the vehicle for his 2027 ambitions, and the party has been steadily building structures across the Mount Kenya region and beyond.

Nyoro has emerged as one of the most vocal and energetic voices in that project. His rhetoric is deliberate and combative — calibrated to consolidate a base rather than expand a tent, at least for now. By warning off leaders who abandoned Gachagua at his lowest point, he is doing something strategically important: establishing loyalty as the entry price for political partnership. In a political environment where opportunism is the norm, that is a message with real resonance among supporters who remember who stood firm and who did not.

The political arithmetic behind the warning is worth examining carefully. Mount Kenya, comprising roughly ten counties, accounts for approximately 2.9 million registered voters — a bloc substantial enough to determine the outcome of a presidential race if mobilised with discipline and directed with clarity. Ruto carried this region in 2022 with Gachagua as his running mate, a partnership that delivered the electoral margin needed to defeat Raila Odinga. The removal of Gachagua has since fractured that alliance, and the question

now dominating political conversation in the region is simple: where does Mount Kenya go in 2027?

Nyoro's answer, delivered in Mukuyu, is that it goes with Gachagua — and only with those who earned the right to stand alongside him. That framing serves multiple purposes. It positions the People's Party of Kenya as the authentic voice of a community that feels it was betrayed by Nairobi's political machinations. It draws a clear contrast with leaders in the region who backed the impeachment, collaborated with Ruto's administration thereafter, or have since attempted to hedge their bets by maintaining cordial relations with State House while quietly reaching out to the Gachagua camp.

Those leaders now find themselves publicly named as unwelcome — not by Gachagua himself, who has tended to speak in broader, more presidential language, but by Nyoro, who appears comfortable playing the role of enforcer. It is a division of political labour that mirrors the dynamics of many serious electoral campaigns: the principal projects statesmanship while lieutenants handle the harder edges of mobilisation.

The timing of the Murang'a rally also matters. Kenya's political cycle is accelerating. With the General Election constitutionally due in August 2027, parties are entering the period in which organisational decisions made today will determine ballot positions, coalition negotiations and candidate selections tomorrow. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission is simultaneously working through its own preparedness



Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro

processes, including voter registration exercises that will shape the final electoral map. Every rally held now, every membership line drawn, every alliance rejected or embraced, is being made with that August deadline in clear view.

The opposition landscape itself is complex. Kalonzo Musyoka continues to build a coalition anchored in Ukambani and reaching into other regions. The Linda Mwananchi movement, associated with Edwin Sifuna and drawing on Western alliance networks, adds another di-

mension. Fred Matiang'i's positioning within the Jubilee Party signals yet another potential candidacy. Into this crowded field, Gachagua is inserting a Mount Kenya-anchored movement with the organisational energy that Nyoro's appearances — and warnings — are designed to project.

Whether the exclusions Nyoro announced will hold is another matter. Kenyan politics has a long memory but a short attention span for political purity tests when the stakes of exclusion become real. Leaders shut out today

may find back channels tomorrow, and movements that begin with strict membership criteria often find pragmatism overtaking principle as election day approaches.

But for now, the message from Mukuyu is clear, deliberate and on the record. The People's Party of Kenya knows who its friends are — and, more pointedly, who they are not.

In Kenyan politics, that kind of clarity, delivered this early, is rarely accidental.



Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro Mukuyu tour

ICC The statement's language was notably unsparing. It declared that no Kenyan should lose their life, liberty or livelihood because of politics

Opposition calls on ICC to monitor Kenya as political violence escalates

A coalition of opposition leaders has urged the international court's prosecutor to assess whether attacks on political figures and civilians meet the threshold for investigation under the Rome Statute

BY David Kimani

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

A broad coalition of Kenyan opposition leaders yesterday called on the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to closely monitor political developments in the country and conduct a preliminary assessment of whether the escalating pattern of violence meets the threshold for examination under the Rome Statute — a dramatic escalation in the opposition's rhetoric ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The joint statement, signed in Nairobi and attributed to leaders spanning multiple parties and movements, warned that recent attacks on political figures, journalists and civilians can no longer be dismissed as isolated incidents between rival supporters. Taken together, the signatories argued, they reveal a coordinated and disturbing pattern that raises fundamental questions about the neutrality of Kenya's security institutions and the country's preparedness for a free and credible election.

The statement cited three incidents in particular. The first involved former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua in Rongai Constituency, Nakuru County. The second was an attack on Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i at Mulot in Bomet County. The third involved violence targeting Linda Mwananchi movement activities in Homa Bay and Keumbu in Kisii County. Of particular concern to the signatories were accounts suggesting that some of the attacks occurred in the presence or within the operational reach of police officers — a claim that, if substantiated, would point to either institutional failure or deliberate complicity.

"The Government must explain how organised groups of armed civilians can repeatedly mobilise, move openly, attack political leaders, journalists, citizens and even police officers, and apparently operate with such confidence," the statement read.

The call for ICC involvement is significant and politically charged. President William Ruto was himself a former ICC indictee before charges



A coalition of opposition leaders

against him were withdrawn in 2014 following the collapse of the prosecution's case. The opposition statement explicitly named Ruto as the person they believe bears the greatest responsibility for the violence and called on the ICC Prosecutor to review and determine the status of previous charges against him. The signatories were careful to note that the call was not intended to prejudge individual criminal responsibility but to invoke accountability as a de-



The call for ICC involvement is significant and politically charged. President William Ruto was himself a former ICC indictee before charges against him were withdrawn in 2014 following the collapse of the prosecution's case. The opposition statement explicitly named Ruto as the person they believe bears the greatest responsibility for the violence and called on the ICC Prosecutor to review and determine the status of previous charges against him.

terrent — arguing that political office confers no immunity where the legal thresholds of the Rome Statute are met.

Under Article 15 of the Rome Statute, the ICC Prosecutor has the authority to initiate an investigation on the basis of information received, including from states, organisations and individuals. A preliminary examination does not constitute a formal investigation but allows the court to assess whether a situation meets the criteria of gravity, complementarity and jurisdiction. Kenya ratified the Rome Statute in 2005 and remains subject to the court's jurisdiction.

The opposition coalition also directed calls at domestic institutions. It urged the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to work closely with all relevant bodies to ensure that every Kenyan can vote freely, peacefully and without fear. It called on religious leaders, civil society organisations, the legal fraternity, professional bodies, the media, youth organisations and the international diplomatic community to stand united in defence of the Con-

stitution and to resist any normalisation of militia activity or politically sponsored intimidation.

The statement's language was notably unsparing. It declared that no Kenyan should lose their life, liberty or livelihood because of politics; that no journalist should fear death for carrying a camera; that no police officer should be forced to choose between the Constitution and political interests; and that no citizen should be denied the right to campaign, assemble or vote because armed groups have been mobilised against them.

Beyond the immediate calls for accountability, the coalition announced a concrete organisational initiative. It invited Kenyans of goodwill to participate in a People's Forum for Electoral Preparedness, to be coordinated by former Chief Justice David Maraga, former Attorney General Justin Muturi and Azimio Coalition Secretary General Caroli Omondi. The forum is scheduled for October 9, 2026 — a date that carries its own symbolic resonance as Kenya's national holiday marking the detention

of independence leader Jomo Kenyatta in 1952.

The signatories represent a wide cross-section of the opposition. Kalonzo Musyoka, the Wiper Democratic Movement leader and veteran of three presidential contests, anchored the declaration. Martha Karua, the senior counsel and former presidential running mate, added her name, as did Matiang'i, now leading the Jubilee Party. Muturi signed on behalf of the Democratic Party. Eugene Wamalwa represented DAP-Kenya, Maraga the United Green Movement, James Orendo — the Siaya Governor — the Linda Mwananchi Movement, Omondi the Azimio Coalition, and James Kilonzo the Umoja Na Maendeleo Party.

The breadth of the coalition is itself a political statement. It brings together figures from different ideological traditions, ethnic constituencies and institutional backgrounds — a deliberate attempt to signal that concern about political violence is not the preserve of any single faction but a cross-cutting alarm raised by leaders who have not always agreed with one another.

Whether the ICC Prosecutor will act on the call remains to be seen. The court has consistently emphasised that it acts as a court of last resort and that its intervention depends on whether national institutions are genuinely unwilling or unable to investigate and prosecute. The Kenyan government had not formally responded to yesterday's statement at the time of going to press.

What is clear is that the political temperature in Kenya is rising sharply with sixteen months to go before the General Election. The opposition has now placed its concerns on the international record, in terms that are difficult to ignore and that carry the weight of names with significant institutional credibility.

The 2027 election, the statement concluded, must be a contest of ideas, not intimidation — ballots, not bullets. Whether that aspiration can be protected will depend on choices made by institutions, leaders and citizens in the months ahead.

Disaster Peruvian fishermen noticed the phenomenon centuries ago, observing unusually warm coastal waters around Christmas and naming it El Niño

El Niño and Kenya's 2027 election: Why preparedness must begin before the rains



BY Paul Kinyanjui
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El Niño is a recurring climate phenomenon in which ocean surface temperatures rise unusually across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific, weakening trade

winds and disrupting atmospheric circulation across the globe. Though it originates thousands of kilometres from East Africa, its consequences arrive with force — altered rainfall patterns, extreme temperatures and, in Kenya's case, devastating floods. Events occur irregularly, generally every two to seven years, and typically last between nine and twelve months.

Peruvian fishermen noticed the phenomenon centuries ago, observing unusually

warm coastal waters around Christmas and naming it El Niño — Spanish for “the Little Boy” or “Christ Child.” Scientific understanding deepened considerably after the catastrophic 1982–83 and 1997–98 events demonstrated just how far-reaching its effects could be. In East Africa, El Niño is most commonly associated with enhanced rainfall during the October to December short rains season, raising the risk of flooding, landslides and waterborne disease. Its precise effects de-



Elonino

pend on the strength of each event and its interaction with other climate systems, particularly the Indian Ocean Dipole.

Kenya experienced this most recently and most painfully during the 2023–24 event. By December 2023, more than 545,000 people had been displaced by El Niño-enhanced floods. The United Nations reported that over half a million people were eventually displaced and more than 100 lives lost during the broader flooding crisis. Communities saw homes destroyed, roads submerged, livestock and crops lost, schools closed and clean water supplies cut off. The floods of March to May 2024 — driven partly by a strong Indian Ocean Dipole operating alongside El Niño — underscored a critical lesson: Kenya must prepare for compound climate hazards, not simply monitor El Niño forecasts in isolation.

The danger acquires a sharper political dimension as Kenya approaches the 2027 General Election. Severe flooding can destroy roads and bridges, disrupt electricity and telecommunications, displace voters and damage polling infrastructure. Economically, households can lose homes, businesses, crops and livestock while government is forced to divert scarce resources from development towards emergency relief and reconstruction. The social consequences are equally serious — displacement intensifies competition for land, food, water and public

services. Politically, poor disaster response breeds public anger, fuels accusations of discrimination or corruption in relief distribution, and can deepen tensions during an already charged electioneering period.

Preparedness must therefore move well beyond emergency food parcels and rescue operations. National and county governments should map flood-prone settlements now, enforce risk-sensitive land-use planning, expand drainage and water-storage systems, and strengthen bridges and roads before the next crisis arrives. Hospitals, schools and critical public infrastructure need flood protection built in. Reliable early-warning and evacuation systems, delivering alerts in accessible local languages through multiple channels, are not optional extras — they are the difference between a managed emergency and a catastrophe.

Innovation must become central to Kenya's adaptation strategy. In areas where relocation is impractical, authorities and engineers should explore flood-resilient and amphibious housing — raised structures, buildings designed to float or rise with floodwaters, elevated sanitation systems and community shelters positioned above projected flood levels. Such solutions must be professionally engineered, properly assessed and carefully piloted rather than introduced as experimental construction in already vulnerable locations. Climate-resilient design should

be embedded into public procurement standards and county development plans as a matter of routine, not exception.

The scale of what Kenya faces becomes clearer when set against a familiar benchmark. COVID-19 delivered a nationwide economic shock through movement restrictions, business closures and disrupted trade — Kenya's real GDP contracted by 0.3 percent in 2020 after years of consistent growth. El Niño operates differently: it does not shut down the entire economy simultaneously, but it destroys the physical foundations on which economic activity depends. The 2024 floods severely constrained household livelihoods and private consumption, with independent analysis estimating that they shaved approximately 0.3 percentage points off that year's economic growth. The lesson is sobering: a climate event does not have to be a pandemic to inflict pandemic-scale damage.

Kenya has been given advance notice. The science is available, the historical record is documented and the consequences of inaction are well understood. What remains is the political will to act before the waters rise — not after they do.

Paul Kinyanjui is an independent Researcher, Analyst, Critic, Writer on Emerging Issues and Trends with an aim to Create Awareness, Educate, Enlighten, Empower and Inspire

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Violence The pattern is becoming grimly familiar. Citizens assemble to raise concerns about taxes, governance, corruption, the cost of living or the conduct of those in power

The untouchable goons: Why Kenya's protest violence keeps disappearing into the crowd

When peaceful demonstrations are hijacked by violence, the bigger question is not only who caused the chaos — but who benefits from it

BY Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyatimes

They do not arrive with placards. They arrive when the crowd is already gathering, when the chants have found their rhythm and the cameras have begun rolling. Then, almost without warning, the mood shifts. Men carrying clubs or crude weapons materialise among people who came to demonstrate peacefully. Stones fly. People scatter. Journalists are attacked. Bystanders are swept up in the confusion. And then the story changes.

The citizens who came into the streets to demand answers become the story. The violence becomes the headline. The original grievance is pushed into the background. That is the part Kenya should be paying far closer attention to — because the uncomfortable question is no longer simply whether violence occurs during protests. It is who brings the violence into otherwise peaceful demonstrations, and why those responsible so consistently seem to vanish once the damage is done.

This is not a question that can be dismissed as political gossip. In June 2025, the Judiciary itself raised concern over rising incidents of police brutality and what it described as the growing infiltration of peaceful protests by hired goons. The warning

carried weight precisely because it acknowledged a pattern Kenyans had repeatedly witnessed: the line between a peaceful demonstration and organised violence can be crossed by people who appear to have come for an entirely different purpose. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights later reported credible accounts of alleged hired goons infiltrating demonstrations in several counties during the June 25 protests. That finding should have triggered a sustained national conversation. Instead, Kenya has largely waited for the next protest.

The pattern is becoming grimly familiar. Citizens assemble to raise concerns about taxes, governance, corruption, the cost of living or the conduct of those in power. The demonstration begins peacefully. Then violence enters. The public sees destruction, confrontation and frightened crowds. By evening, the original question has been displaced. A demonstration about government accountability becomes a story about insecurity. A citizen demanding answers becomes a suspected rioter. A journalist covering events becomes a target. And a government facing uncomfortable questions suddenly has an easier question to answer: who is responsible for the chaos?

This is where the politics of the goon matters far more

than the goon himself. A violent group can do more than attack people — it can change the narrative entirely. Once a protest has been reframed from a political grievance into a security problem, almost everyone has a reason to stop talking about the grievance. There is a quieter effect as well. When citizens begin to associate demonstrations with attacks and uncertainty, some simply stay home. A government does not necessarily have to ban a protest to weaken it. Fear can do much of the work.

That is why the question of the goons cannot be separated from the question of police conduct. The difficult issue is not simply who these groups are. It is what happens when they appear. Do police intervene? Do they protect protesters and journalists? Do they arrest those committing violence? Or, as rights groups and observers have alleged in some instances, do officers sometimes stand aside? Such allegations demand investigation rather than political convenience — but they cannot simply be brushed aside either.

When violence is carried out by unidentified civilians rather than uniformed officers, responsibility becomes harder to establish. The uncertainty creates space for everyone to point elsewhere. The goon points to the crowd. The crowd points to the police.



The police point to criminals. Politicians condemn the disorder. Somewhere between all those explanations, accountability disappears.

The numbers behind this pattern are stark. Amnesty International reported that at least 38 people were killed and more than 500 injured during one wave of demonstrations in 2025, with unlawful use of lethal force documented across more than 20 counties. Human Rights Watch separately raised concerns about the failure to investigate or prosecute security forces in most cases of excessive and lethal force documented between 2023 and 2025. These figures are not about isolated clashes. They describe a recurring national problem in which violence and accountability consistently move in opposite directions.

The more uncomfortable reckoning begins after the streets have emptied. Who gets investigated? Who gets prosecuted? Who is convicted? Kenya is not short of institutions designed to answer those questions — the Independent Policing Oversight Authority, the Internal Affairs Unit and the National Police

Service Commission exist precisely because accountability cannot depend on political speeches after each crisis. But having institutions is not the same as making them work. Witnesses fear retaliation. Investigations stall. Evidence becomes difficult to secure. Cases move through the courts for years while public attention drifts to the next crisis.

Each failure can be explained individually. Together, they construct something far more dangerous: a system in which accountability rarely reaches the people who matter most. A case does not have to be deliberately killed for accountability to fail. Sometimes delay is enough. Sometimes fear is enough. Sometimes the public simply forgets. That is how impunity becomes ordinary.

There is a political dimension that also deserves careful examination. If those in power view protests primarily as threats to be contained rather than constitutional rights to be protected, there may be limited appetite for aggressively pursuing everyone responsible for surrounding violence. That does not prove that every violent group is

state-organised — it would be irresponsible to assert that without evidence. But it raises a harder question: whether the recurring presence of violence around protests produces outcomes that benefit those who would rather see a demonstration discredited than its demands answered.

Kenya needs to stop treating every protest as an isolated episode. When violence occurs, investigators must establish who committed it, who enabled it and, where evidence exists, who organised or financed it. Witnesses must be protected. Evidence must be preserved. Investigations must not lose momentum because the cameras have moved on.

The most disturbing thing about Kenya's protest violence may not be that goons keep appearing. It may be that they can appear, change the character of a peaceful demonstration, bury its message beneath chaos — and then disappear into the crowd before the country seriously asks who sent them.

That is the question Kenya must not allow the next protest to bury.

Health The summit, convened to assess health reforms undertaken during the first four years of Ruto's administration, was intended as a showcase of progress

Ruto gives officials one week to resolve health workers' salary arrears

The Kenya Health Summit closed with a presidential ultimatum — but the crisis it exposed raises deeper questions about whether devolution can deliver the healthcare reforms Kenya needs

BY Grace Wanja

@themkenyatimes

President William Ruto yesterday gave national and county government officials one week to resolve salary arrears owed to Universal Health Coverage health workers, issuing the directive at the close of the inaugural Kenya Health Summit after striking nurses confronted him directly at a presidential town hall in Nairobi.

The summit, convened to assess health reforms undertaken during the first four years of Ruto's administration, was intended as a showcase of progress. Instead, it became an uncomfortable reckoning with one of the most persistent failures undermining Kenya's healthcare ambitions — the chronic mistreatment of the workers upon whom every reform ultimately depends.

Seth Panyako, Secretary General of the Kenya National Union of Nurses, used the town hall platform to state the crisis in unambiguous terms. "Nurses are currently on strike. Our Collective Bargaining Agreement has not been implemented," he told the President directly. The words landed in a room full of senior officials and exposed a contradiction that has haunted Kenya's devolved health system since counties took over responsibility for health services in 2013: the architecture of reform has advanced while the people delivering care

have been left behind.

Abdulswamad Nassir, who chairs the Health Committee at the Council of Governors, acknowledged salary delays while attempting to contextualise them. "I think probably because of this transition, I delayed salaries by a day or two," he said. He then turned the question outward, asking why a Collective Bargaining Agreement signed in 2017 had proved so difficult for successive county administrations to honour. "That CBA was signed under duress; it was an election year," he added — a comment that, while containing a grain of political truth, offered cold comfort to nurses who have been waiting years for implementation.

Ruto's response was pointed. "If today is August 19 and July salaries have not been paid, then there is a problem. It demotivates health workers. If there's anything the national government can do to help, then we will go out of our way to help," he said. He also directed that the Salaries and Remuneration Commission be brought into discussions on the unimplemented collective bargaining agreements — a significant instruction that signals the national government's growing impatience with county-level inaction.

The one-week deadline is a political intervention in a structural problem that has defied resolution for the better part of a decade. Kenya's devolved system gives county governments control over

health worker employment and remuneration, while the national government sets policy and, increasingly, funds programmes such as the Social Health Authority through which UHC is being operationalised. That split creates a governance gap — accountability diffuses across two levels of government, and health workers fall into the space between them.

The summit's timing adds political weight to the crisis. With Kenya's General Election constitutionally due in August 2027, Ruto is acutely aware that the condition of public healthcare is among the issues most viscerally felt by ordinary voters. The Social Health Authority, which replaced the National Hospital Insurance Fund as part of the administration's flagship UHC drive, has faced a turbulent rollout marked by public confusion, provider complaints and questions about financial sustainability. Addressing the human resource dimension — ensuring that the nurses, clinical officers, doctors and community health promoters who deliver care are actually paid on time — is not a peripheral concern. It is the foundation on which every other health reform either stands or collapses.

The scale of the arrears problem is significant. Health worker strikes have become a recurring feature of Kenya's county health system, with nurses, doctors and other cadres downing tools periodical-



President William Ruto hosts a town hall meeting on the sidelines of the Kenya Health Summit at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi yesterday | Photo: PCS

ly in disputes over unpaid salaries, unimplemented CBAs and deteriorating working conditions. The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union has similarly flagged persistent remuneration disputes across multiple counties. Each strike inflicts direct harm on patients — particularly the most vulnerable, who rely entirely on public facilities. Each resolution, when it comes, has tended to be partial and temporary, with the underlying structural issues left unaddressed.

Nassir's observation about the 2017 CBA is worth examining carefully. Collective bargaining agreements in Kenya's public sector have a troubled history of being signed during politically sensitive periods and then quietly shelved once electoral pressure dissipates. The pattern is not unique to health — teachers, lecturers and other public sector workers have experienced similar cycles. But in

health, the consequences of that pattern are measured in patient outcomes, in preventable deaths and in the steady haemorrhage of trained professionals to better-paying opportunities elsewhere, including abroad.

The brain drain dimension is a slow emergency that rarely receives the attention it deserves at summits. Kenya trains significant numbers of nurses and clinical officers who then emigrate to the United Kingdom, the Gulf states and other destinations offering better pay and conditions. The National Health Workforce Strategy has acknowledged this challenge, but policy acknowledgement has not been matched by the salary structures and working environments needed to retain talent at home. A health system that cannot pay its workers on time is a system that signals to its best people that they should leave.

Ruto's one-week deadline

will now be tested against this entrenched reality. The mechanism he has proposed — bringing the Salaries and Remuneration Commission into CBA discussions — has potential if it leads to binding timelines and enforceable accountability frameworks rather than another round of meetings that produce goodwill communiqués without implementation.

The inaugural Kenya Health Summit was designed to mark a milestone in the country's healthcare journey. It may instead be remembered as the moment the human cost of that journey was finally stated plainly, in the President's presence, by the people bearing it most directly.

Whether the one-week deadline produces a genuine resolution or merely a temporary reprieve will say a great deal about whether Kenya's health reforms have the institutional depth to match their political ambition.

Education The Education CS has warned school administrators to comply with regulations on reporting times, teaching hours and learner welfare as schools reopen on Monday

Back to school: Ogamba tightens rules ahead of term three

BY Angela Mwanga
@themkenyatimes

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba has issued a firm warning to school administrators across the country over compliance with regulations governing school operations, learner safety and teaching hours, ahead of the reopening of schools for the third term on Monday.

The directive covers several areas of concern. Under existing regulations, public and private day schools are prohibited from compelling learners to arrive before 7:15 a.m. — a rule designed to protect students, particularly those travelling long distances, from the fatigue and safety risks associated with very early morning journeys. Academic lessons must begin at 8:00 a.m. and end no later than 3:30 p.m., giving learners ad-

equated time for rest after classroom activities.

Ogamba's warning comes at a critical point in the academic calendar. The third term is the final stretch of the school year, and for candidates sitting national examinations, the weeks ahead carry considerable weight. The Ministry appears increasingly alert to the risk that excessive academic pressure — extended school hours, early reporting requirements and overloaded timetables — can do more harm than good, undermining the very performance it is meant to improve.

School administrators will bear the primary responsibility for ensuring compliance. Both public and private institutions will be expected to organise their timetables within the prescribed limits and avoid programmes that keep learners in school beyond the regulated hours. The task requires careful planning: teachers must make effective use of available instructional time to complete the curriculum without pushing students past the point of productive learning.

Parents and guardians have a role to play as well. They are encouraged to ensure their children travel safely and report to school on time, and to raise concerns directly with administrators whenever they encounter scheduling or welfare issues.

The government's renewed emphasis on school hours and learner welfare carries a clear message — academic success should not come at the cost of children's safety or well-being. As Monday's reopening approaches, administrators across the country will be under scrutiny to demonstrate that their institutions are operating within the rules.



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba



Dreams become reality when thoughts become actions



Dreams are a positive source of motivation for everyone.
Thoughts are only plans, but actions give shape to them.
Without action, dreams cannot succeed.
Without dreams, success will never come to you.

When your dreams turn into actions,
you will achieve a successful life.
When you try to touch the sky,
the wind will help you.
In the same way, if you are determined to
achieve what you desire, even reaching the stars
becomes possible.

So, dreams become reality when thoughts become actions.

G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

The only limits are the limits you believe



The only limits you have
are the limits you believe.

Within every human being
lies the ability to do great things.
Yet sometimes, we become confused,
and fear holds us back.

Don't let your mind control you.
Learn to control your mind.
Believe in yourself,
and you will discover
how much you are truly capable of.

Look at the tiny ant—
how busy it is,

collecting food and saving it for the future.
It never gives up,
never waits for someone to help,
and never thinks that it is too small to achieve.

Even the smallest creatures
know how to work,
prepare for tomorrow,
and live happily.

So, never underestimate yourself.
You may feel small in front of your challenges,
but within you lies a great strength.

Believe.
Act.
Move forward.
Your mind may create limits,
but your belief can break them.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
Chengalpattu district

Nature



A quiet path through fields of green,
Where silver rivers flow between,
The towering mountains touch the sky,
As fluffy clouds go drifting by.

A single bird begins to sing,
To wake the joy that day will bring,
The golden sun climbs high and bright,
And bathes the world in warm delight.
The shadows shrink upon the ground,
As vibrant life is all around,
A gentle breeze begins to play,
To bless the start of brand new day.

S.P SAAI SAMYUKKTHA
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY
SCHOOL
PANKUTI,TN

My ghost friend



A ghost came out to play at night
I gave a such big big fright!
It flew around and said boolbool!
I don't know what I should do
It went through walls without a sound
It's feet did not touch the ground
The ghost just laughed and flew away
I said that it will come on another day

S.P SAAI SAMYUKKTHA
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY
SCHOOL
TAMIL NADU

My mother



My mother is so kind,
She is always on my mind.
She loves me every day,
And helps me in every way.
She gives me hugs and care,

She is always there.
She makes me smile and sing,
She is my everything.
I love her very much,
I love her gentle touch.
My mother is the best,
She is better than the rest.

Mahisha varthini.M
Grade 7
John dewey matric hr.sec.school..
Panruti..

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling but in rising everytime we fall



If there is tomorrow there'll be an another chance
To prove our prudence.

Winners were once runners
They learnt a lesson from their plunders
They failed number of times
But their grit helped them to do wonders.

Every cloud has a silver lining
Falling gives a chance to redesigning
Our new attempts can help us in rising
Like the sun .this will make our life shining.
.....
Penned by
RANGANATHAN E
B.T.Asst(Eng)
Marwar Govt.Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

Life is like a game,
To win should be our aim.
This will lead to the hall of fame,
The world will never forget our name.

Rising or falling in a game is like a torment
Defeat canbe a chance of polishing our talent
Today our game is lost

Being a mother



The morning wakes in quiet grace,
A golden blush upon its face.

The shadows stretch and slowly fade,
As sunlight dances through the glade.
A gentle breeze begins to sigh,
Beneath an arch of sapphire sky.
The world awakes to start anew,
With every blade baptized in dew

G.PRAMILA
PG ASST IN CHEMISTRY
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY
SCHOOL
TAMIL NADU

Land Thousands of families who lived under the threat of eviction will now receive title deeds after the state took possession of the contested farm

Government ends three-decade Cheluget land dispute in Narok

“The resolution of the Cheluget land issue is part of the long list of historical land problems solved by the current administration. I thank Narok Governor Patrick ole Ntutu and Narok South MP Kitilai ole Ntutu for the huge contribution they have made in the resolution of the matter,” Korir said.

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyentimes

The government yesterday resolved the long-running Cheluget land dispute in Narok South, ending a three-decade standoff that left thousands of families living on the expansive farm under the constant threat of eviction. Lands and Physical Planning Principal Secretary Nixon Korir announced the resolution at a public gathering at Kwalela Primary School, telling residents that the government had taken possession of the land and would immediately begin processing individual title deeds for the families occupying the property.



Family receiving title deed

“The resolution of the Cheluget land issue is part of the long list of historical land problems solved by the current administration. I thank

Narok Governor Patrick ole Ntutu and Narok South MP Kitilai ole Ntutu for the huge contribution they have made in the resolution of the mat-

ter,” Korir said.

In a moment that carried visible emotional weight for the gathered residents, the PS invited Julius Cheluget — son

of the land’s original owner — to confirm the settlement publicly. Cheluget told the crowd that his family had handed over the title deed to the government and withdrawn all court cases seeking the eviction of families on the land. The withdrawal of those cases removes the last legal obstacle standing between thousands of families and secure tenure on land they have occupied for a generation. “I have been sent here by the President to inform you that we have delivered on the promise he made on the Cheluget land,” Korir said. The Cheluget dispute is one of Kenya’s most protracted land conflicts. For thirty years, families who settled on the farm lived with the knowledge that a court order could upend their lives at any moment. The psychological and economic toll of that uncertainty — on investment decisions, on children’s education, on community cohesion — is difficult to quantify but impossible to overstate. Land insecurity of this kind is among the most corrosive forces in rural Kenyan life, and its resolution through negotiation rather than prolonged litigation represents a meaningful institutional achievement.

Korir also announced the resolution of the Angata Barikoi land dispute and progress on the Mau Forest boundary conflict, noting that caveats previously placed on farms located outside the forest boundary would be lifted within days following the issuance of a title deed for the forest itself. Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot, who attended the event, praised Governor Ntutu’s collaboration with the national government. “Many governments have come but none have resolved problems that affect Kenyans the way President Ruto has done,” he said. Governor Ntutu called the day historic for Narok County, adding that the region had also been earmarked for an international airport, an extension of the Standard Gauge Railway and 90 kilometres of tarmac roads in each of its six constituencies. For the families of Narok South, the promises of infrastructure can wait. Yesterday, after thirty years, the more immediate promise — a title deed, a piece of ground they can finally call their own — was the one that mattered most.

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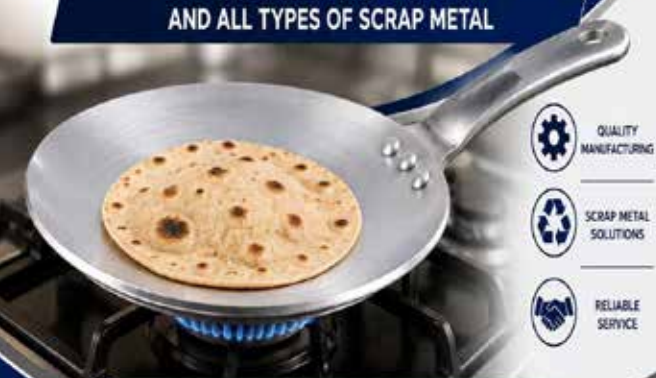
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Development The government's role in extending the grid through targeted investment is both strategic and necessary

Powering Khwisero's next chapter of inclusive development

A KSh350M government allocation to connect more than 6,000 households is more than an infrastructure project — it is a deliberate choice about who development is for

BY James Kilonzo

@themkenyatiimes

A KSh350M government allocation to connect more than 6,000 households is more than an infrastructure project — it is a deliberate choice about who development is for

By James Kilonzo

Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi's announcement of a KSh350M allocation to connect more than 6,000 households in Khwisero Sub-County under the Last Mile Connectivity Programme represents an important moment — not just for one community in western Kenya, but for the country's broader commitment to inclusive development.

Electricity is foundational. It changes what a home can be and what a community can do. For families, light after dusk means children can study in safer, more comfortable conditions. For health facilities, reliable power means vaccines and medicines are stored properly and vital equipment functions when it is needed most. For schools, it means extended learning hours and access to digital resources. For small businesses, it opens the door to refrigeration, lighted retail and productivity that can reach beyond the village market. These are not abstract benefits — they are the basic building blocks of better living, more consistent service delivery and the everyday dignity that comes with reliable access to public goods.

The government's role in extending the grid through targeted investment is both strategic and necessary. Where private returns are uncertain and markets fail to reach, public investment corrects the imbalance. The Khwisero allocation illustrates this principle in practice. It signals a



Cabinet secretary Opiyo Wandayi

commitment to bring infrastructure closer to communities whose needs are immediate and whose potential, given the right tools, is real.

Beyond direct household benefits, electricity unlocks local economic energy. Small enterprises can diversify and grow when they have dependable power. Entrepreneurs can add value to agricultural produce through basic processing. Artisans can extend their working hours. Shops can stock perishables that were previously impossible to sell. These shifts create ripple effects — incomes grow, local demand rises and a modest cluster of activity can meaningfully strengthen a community's economic fabric. The presence of electricity also changes perceptions. It signals to residents and potential investors alike that a place is ready for development and that public institutions are present and functional.

The programme's emphasis on connecting homes, schools, health facilities and businesses reflects an integrated understanding of what development actually requires. Stringing wires is not enough on its own — the value of connectivity depends

on complementary uses that translate power into improved education, healthcare and livelihoods. Training communities on productive uses of electricity and facilitating small business opportunities will determine whether these connections produce transformational change or merely add a light switch to an otherwise unchanged life.

Equally important is the equity signal this allocation sends. Rural areas have long borne the cost of uneven development. When government resources genuinely reach the last mile, they restore trust in public policy and reinforce the social contract between citizens and the state. That trust, once earned, is itself a form of governance infrastructure.

Practical considerations must guide implementation from the outset. Timely procurement, transparent contractor selection and effective community engagement are essential to ensuring the programme delivers as promised. Maintenance plans must be built in from the beginning — durability of benefit depends on ongoing upkeep and systems that allow for quick repairs. Without that, initial

gains risk being temporary.

Affordability deserves equal attention. Physical connection is only part of the story. The cost of electricity and the availability of appliances shape how households will actually use their new access. Complementary measures — subsidies, flexible payment options or programmes promoting energy-efficient devices — can ensure that price does not undercut the project's objectives after the cables are laid.

Cabinet Secretary Wandayi's visible championing of the programme demonstrates the role that political will plays in moving policy into action.

That leadership must be accompanied by accountability. Citizens have the right to demand that resources earmarked for their communities are used effectively, and officials have the obligation to deliver transparent, verifiable results.

The true measure of success will be visible in ordinary moments — children completing homework reliably by electric light, clinics running through the night without disruption, small businesses finding new customers, and households daring to imagine a different future for their children. The KSh350M allocation to Khwisero is more than a budget line. It is an opportunity to bring a quiet revolution into homes, schools and clinics that have waited long enough. With careful execution and sustained political commitment, it can mark the beginning of a genuinely new chapter for a community that deserves one.




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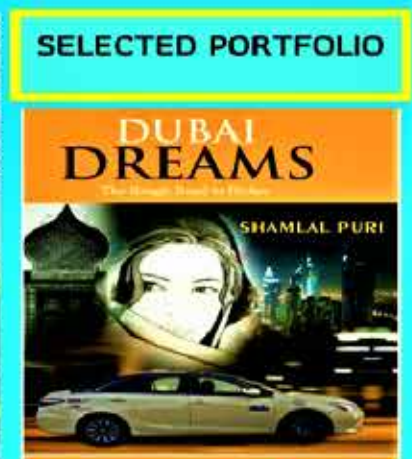
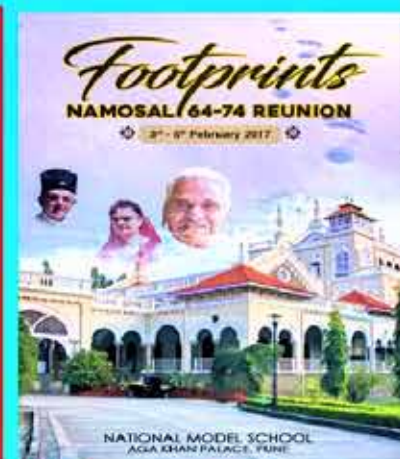
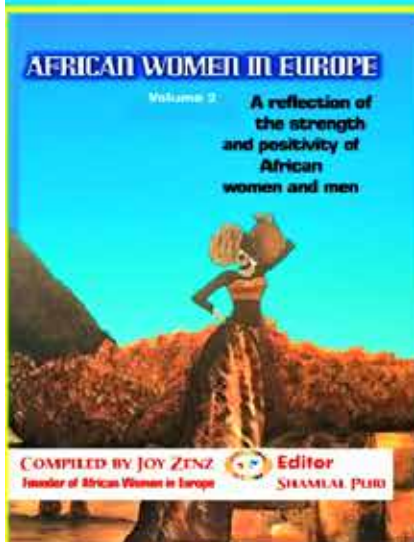
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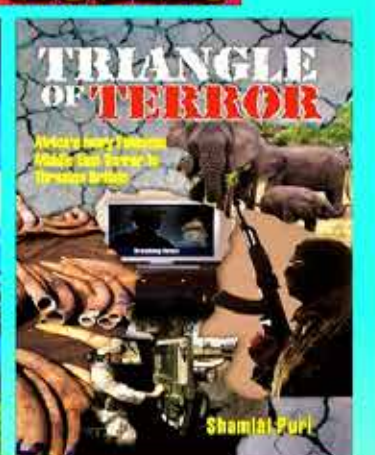
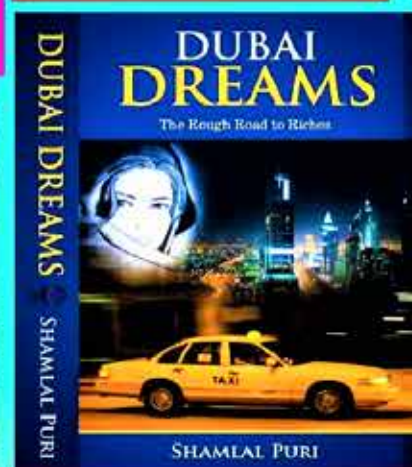
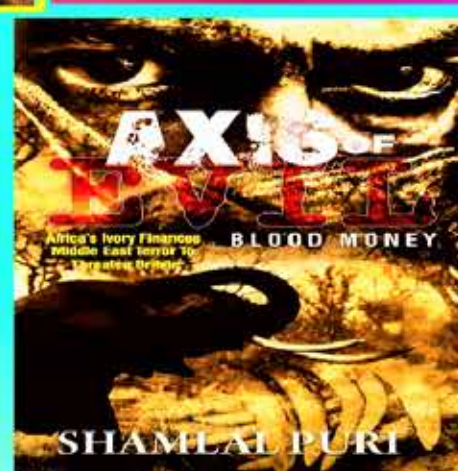
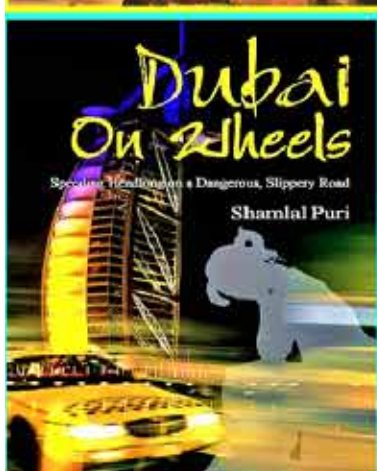
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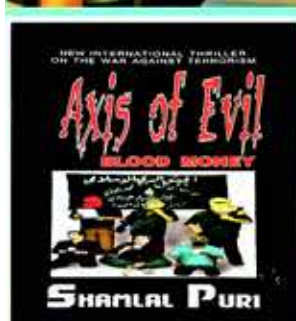
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Cohesion A cohesion body that cannot compel equal accountability becomes an accomplice to the very divisions it was designed to heal

The bark without the bite: Why Kenya's NCIC must be disbanded before it buries our democracy

In the ashes of the 2007–2008 post-election violence, when more than 1,000 Kenyans lay dead, hundreds of thousands displaced, and the nation's fragile multi-ethnic fabric torn open like a wound that refused to clot, Parliament birthed the National Cohesion and Integration Commission. The National Cohesion and Integration Act of 2008 was meant to be the scalpel that cut out the cancer of ethnic hatred and political intolerance. Nearly two decades later, that scalpel has rusted into a ceremonial knife polished for photo opportunities, waved at press conferences, yet incapable of drawing blood from the powerful. The NCIC is a dog that cannot bite. It must be disbanded.

This is not rhetorical flourish. It is the cold arithmetic of failure. Since its creation, the Commission has recommended thousands of individuals for prosecution over hate speech and ethnic contempt. Convictions that matter, convictions that actually change behaviour among the political class remain vanishingly rare. Files are opened with theatrical solemnity, statements are recorded, then the machinery grinds into the familiar Kenyan silence of selective amnesia. Ordinary citizens and opposition voices feel the leash tighten swiftly. Ruling-party allies often discover the leash is made of silk. The pattern is no longer perception; it is institutional character.

History does not whisper here; it screams. Kenya has walked this road before. The ethnic clashes of the 1990s, the Rift Valley massacres, the orchestrated displacements that became electoral strategy all flourished under the same culture of impunity that the NCIC was created to end. In 2007 the country nearly fractured. The Waki Commission and the Krieger Report laid the architecture of accountability. The NCIC was supposed to be the living guardian of that architecture. Instead it has become a museum piece: well-funded enough to employ commissioners and produce reports, too weak to enforce the law against those who can afford the consequences of defiance. Look at the numbers that expose the theatre. Year after year the Com-



mission returns to Parliament requesting hundreds of millions more Sh1.5 billion ahead of 2027 against allocations that hover around half that figure while admitting that a large share of its existing budget is consumed by salaries, rent, and administration. Early-warning systems remain underpowered. Digital monitoring of the toxic sludge that floods social media is reactive rather than forensic. Cases collapse for lack of witnesses, incomplete evidence, or prosecutorial hesitation. Meanwhile, the same politicians who fund and staff the Commission continue to weaponize ethnicity with the confidence of men who know the bark is loud and the bite is absent.

Political intolerance is no longer blossoming; it is fruiting in plain sight. In the months leading into the 2027 election cycle, organised groups have disrupted public participation forums, attacked political convoys, invaded churches, and left citizens and officers dead. Journalists covering opposition activities have been beaten and their equipment destroyed. Youth advocates presenting petitions have been dispersed by force. These are not isolated spasms. They form a pattern of intimidation that treats democratic

space as contested territory rather than constitutional birthright. The security apparatus; police, intelligence, prosecutors' watches, occasionally arrests low-level actors, and then allows the architects to return to the podium. When the guardians of public order treat political violence as seasonal weather rather than criminal enterprise, the message to citizens is unmistakable: power protects its own.

The correlation is brutal and clear. A cohesion body that cannot compel equal accountability becomes an accomplice to the very divisions it was designed to heal. Selective enforcement does not reduce ethnic mobilisation; it legitimizes it. When one side sees the law applied with urgency and the other side sees it applied with delay or dilution, the public concludes that cohesion is a partisan slogan rather than a national covenant. Trust evaporates. In its place grows the cynical calculation that the only reliable protection is ethnic solidarity and the capacity to mobilise force. That is the logic that turned 2007 into a national near-death experience. We are rehearsing the same script with better cameras and faster internet.

Literary imagination fails to exag-

gerate the absurdity. The NCIC issues solemn statements condemning "divisive rhetoric" while the rhetoric continues uninterrupted from the very platforms that fund the Commission's existence. It summons the powerful, then watches the summons dissolve into procedural fog. It launches peace caravans and school clubs while the political class perfects the art of coded ethnic signaling that every Kenyan understands and no court seems able to prosecute. The Commission has become the national equivalent of a watchdog that has learned to sit, stay, and look fierce only when the master points at a convenient target.

Disbanding it is not nihilism; it is realism. An institution that has exhausted public confidence, absorbed public resources, and delivered marginal deterrence no longer serves the public interest. The functions it was meant to perform investigation of hate speech, monitoring of ethnic tensions, promotion of national identity can and must be absorbed into stronger, independent mechanisms with real prosecutorial leverage and genuine insulation from political capture. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the National Police Service, and the judiciary

already possess the statutory tools. What they lack is the consistent political will and the institutional courage to apply those tools without fear or favour. Creating another layer of bureaucracy that cannot compel the powerful only multiplies the excuses for inaction.

The security apparatus must now do the work it has long claimed as its own. Political violence is not "politics by other means." It is crime. Organised groups that disrupt lawful assemblies, attack journalists, and kill citizens are criminal enterprises, not campaign accessories. Intelligence services that detect the mobilisation of goons must disrupt it before blood is spilled, not after. Police commanders who allow political actors to move freely with private armies must face professional and legal consequences. Prosecutors who receive complete files on high-profile hate speech and still hesitate must explain their hesitation in open court or resign. These are not radical demands. They are the minimum requirements of a state that claims to be democratic.

Kenya stands at a familiar and dangerous crossroads. The 2010 Constitution promised a decisive break with the politics of ethnic arithmetic and zero-sum power. That promise is being tested daily by leaders who still calculate that fear and division deliver votes more efficiently than service and inclusion. A toothless NCIC is not merely ineffective; it is actively harmful because it creates the illusion of institutional response while the real work of accountability remains undone. Illusion is the enemy of urgency.

Disband the Commission. Redirect its resources and mandate into institutions capable of enforcement. Demand that the police, the intelligence services, and the prosecutorial authorities treat political intolerance and organised political violence as the existential threats they are. History has already written the cost of hesitation in blood and displacement. The only question left is whether this generation of Kenyans will continue reading the same chapter or finally close the book.

The dog that cannot bite has had its day. Let it be retired before the next election turns its silence into another national tragedy.

The writer is a social commentator

Arabic A landmark study on native Arabic and German speakers reveals that language shapes the brain — but the science is more nuanced than the headlines suggest

What neuroscience really tells us about the brain and learning Arabic

BY Ashford Kimani
@themkenyatiimes

A fascinating video by Arabic101, titled Why Neuroscientists Are Telling People to Learn Arabic, has drawn attention to an intriguing question: can the language we speak actually shape the way our brains are wired? The answer from emerging neuroscience is increasingly clear — language is not merely a communication tool. The experience of using a language can influence the brain’s structural connectivity.

The video highlights a 2023 study by researchers at Germany’s Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences, which compared the brains of native Arabic and German speakers. Using high-resolution diffusion MRI, researchers examined white-matter connections within language networks in 94 participants. Their findings revealed meaningful differences between the two groups.

There is, however, an important distinction between what the study actually demonstrated and some of the more dramatic claims made in popular presentations of it.

The researchers did not conclude that Arabic is universally superior to other languages, nor that learning it automatically makes someone more intelligent. Rather, they found that the brain’s language network appears to adapt to the particular processing demands of the language a person grows up speaking.

Arabic and German provide an interesting comparison because of their substantially different linguistic structures. Arabic is a Semitic, root-based language in which words are frequently constructed around consonantal roots and patterns. German, meanwhile, features a complex syntactic system — including relatively flexible word order and long-distance relationships between sentence elements.



The MRI results reflected some of these differences. German native speakers demonstrated stronger connectivity within parts of the left-hemisphere language network associated with syntactic processing. Arabic native speakers, by comparison, showed stronger connectivity involving semantic language regions and stronger inter-hemispheric connections.

The most important lesson here is this: different languages may exercise different aspects of the brain differently.

That challenges the old assumption that learning a language is simply a matter of memorising vocabulary and grammar. Language is a sophisticated cognitive activity involving perception, memory, attention, sound processing, meaning, syntax and rapid decision-making. Every time learners struggle to understand a sentence, retrieve a word, recognise a grammatical pattern or distinguish similar sounds, they are engaging complex neural networks.

Arabic is particularly interesting because its morphology requires learners to recognise relationships between roots and patterns. A learner may encounter several words sharing a consonantal root but differing in meaning and grammatical function. Understanding those relationships demands pattern recognition rather than rote memorisation. Researchers suggest that such linguistic characteristics may help explain some of the connectivity patterns observed in

Arabic speakers.

The story becomes even more compelling when second-language learning enters the picture.

A subsequent study by the same research team followed Arabic-speaking adults through six months of intensive German learning. Brain scans taken during the process revealed dynamic changes in white-matter connectivity within language networks — some of which were associated with improvements in language performance. The findings provide evidence of experience-dependent neuroplasticity: the adult brain remains capable of reorganising its networks in response to sustained language learning.

That finding carries enormous implications for education.

For decades, many adults have treated language learning as something that becomes nearly impossible after childhood. Neuroscience offers a more encouraging picture. While age, exposure, motivation and learning conditions all matter, the adult brain is not a finished product — it continues adapting when challenged by demanding cognitive activity.

This should prompt schools to take multilingualism more seriously.

In Kenya, the conversation could extend well beyond Arabic. Kiswahili, English, indigenous African languages and international languages such as French, German and Chinese all offer learners op-

portunities to develop sophisticated linguistic competencies. The goal should not be to declare one language better than another but to recognise that linguistic diversity is itself intellectually valuable.

There is a broader lesson for teachers, too. Language subjects should no longer be treated as peripheral to serious academic disciplines. Language is foundational to learning itself — mathematics, science, history and technology all require learners to interpret information, understand concepts, follow instructions and communicate ideas. Strengthening language competence can therefore have consequences far beyond the language classroom. Scientific caution remains essential, however. The 2023

study involved a specific group of participants comparing just two languages. The researchers themselves described their work as an important step towards understanding how native languages shape brain connectivity — not as proof that Arabic produces a superior brain. Further research is needed across more languages, populations and learning conditions.

That caution matters because neuroscience is increasingly vulnerable to sensationalism. A finding that Arabic speakers show stronger connectivity in certain inter-hemispheric pathways can easily become a social-media headline claiming that Arabic makes you smarter. That is not what the evidence establishes.

The genuine discovery is more fascinating than the exaggerated claim: the human brain adapts to the linguistic environment in which it operates.

Learning Arabic can therefore be worthwhile for many reasons — cultural understanding, communication, access to literature and religious texts, professional opportunities and intellectual enrichment. Emerging neuroscience adds another compelling dimension: mastering a demanding new language gives the brain another complex system to work through.

The real message is not that everyone must learn Arabic because it is supposedly the best language for the brain. It is that every serious language-learning journey is an exercise in neuroplasticity, cognitive flexibility and intellectual growth.

That is a message education systems everywhere — including Kenya’s — would do well to take seriously.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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Survival These are not lazy people. They are not waiting for handouts. They have given their time, their minds, their strength and their years

I heard him whisper: “Will I survive this month?”



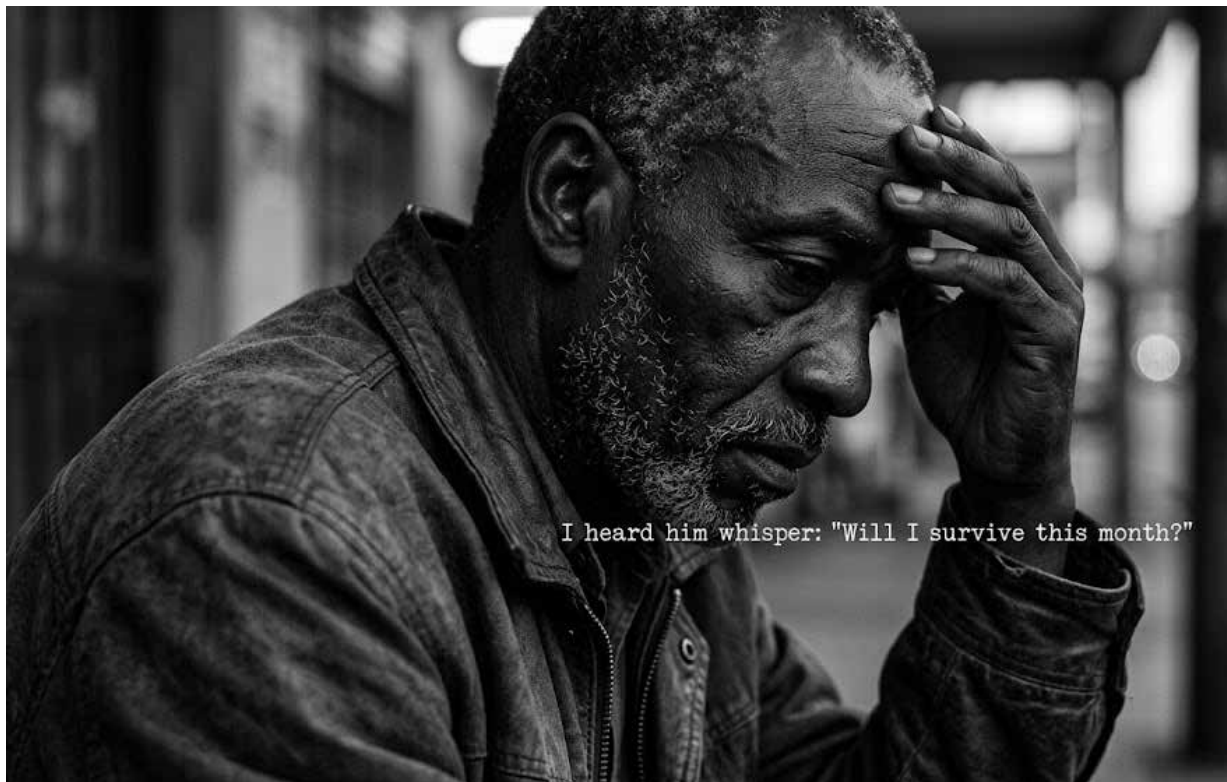
By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
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There is a grief moving through our cities that no official report will ever fully capture. It wakes up at 5:00 a.m. in Kampala, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Juba and Kigali with the boda boda rider who pedals through the rain for fares that will not even cover his fuel. It lingers at 8:00 p.m. in the glass-walled office where the cleaner wipes the same floor the chief executive walked across in leather shoes. It sits in the classroom with the teacher facing sixty children without chalk, then goes home to count coins for the evening meal. It stands in the hospital corridor with the nurse who pulls people back from death by day, then returns at night to an empty cupboard. It keeps watch with the security guard who protects millions in property, and sleeps on one meal.

These are not lazy people. They are not waiting for handouts. They have given their time, their minds, their strength and their years. And yet when the month ends, the question in their hearts is not what they will build with their earnings. The question is whether they will survive this month. That is not a wage. That is a ransom — a system telling a human being that their life is worth only enough to keep them from dying.

We did not receive this idea of work from God. In the beginning, work was not punishment. It was partnership. “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it,” Genesis 2:15 records. Work was designed to be fruitful — to provide, to create, to multiply and to leave room for rest. It was meant to reflect a God who works and then calls it good. But somewhere along the way, we traded Eden for an economy built on a cruel lie: that a person’s life is worth the cheapest price we can justify paying.

Heaven does not keep books that way. “Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty,”



I heard him whisper: “Will I survive this month?”

A worried man

James 5:4 states plainly. God hears wages. He hears when they are late. He hears when they are inadequate. He hears when they stretch only halfway through the month. Because work was never meant simply to keep a body alive. Work is about keeping the soul human. The moment we reduce a person to survival, we do violence to the image of God within them.

If we are going to use the word minimum, let us be honest about what the bare minimum for a human being must actually cover. A just wage must answer three cries. Anything less is not employment. It is extraction.

The first cry is for bread. This is the argument we have most often, and still get most consistently wrong. Bread means food that does not force a mother to choose between lunch and supper. It means rent that does not consume seventy percent of a salary. It means medicine at two in the morning when a child has a fever, and school fees paid without visiting a loan shark. “The worker deserves his wages,” Luke 10:7 says plainly, and 1 Timothy 5:8 is sharper still: “Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” God expects provision, not pity. If a full-time job cannot keep a fam-

ily out of hunger, we have not created work. We have created a poverty programme and given it a uniform.

The second cry is for joy. This is where the conversation becomes uncomfortable, because the market taught us that rest belongs to the wealthy. God taught otherwise. “By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work,” Genesis 2:2 records. The Sabbath was not a privilege for kings. It was a command covering masters and workers alike. A human being is not a machine. An employee should be able to take their child to the park without running mental arithmetic ten times over. They should be able to have music in the house, a cold drink on a hot afternoon, a film once in a while and laughter that does not carry guilt. When a wage buys only survival, joy has been stolen. And joy is not a luxury. Joy is part of bearing the image of a God who celebrates, who feasts, who dances. A wage that extinguishes joy whispers to a person: you may exist, but you may not live.

The third cry is for tomorrow. This is the one that cuts deepest, because it is the cry of a stolen future. “A good person leaves an inheritance for their children’s children,” Proverbs 13:22 says. How does a man leave an inheritance when he cannot

save ten thousand shillings? How does a woman dream of starting a small business when every coin disappears into rent and transport? How does a graduate hold onto hope after five years of faithful work with nothing to show but exhaustion? A wage without savings is a life sentence. It says: you will work until you die, and end where you started. That is not God’s heart. God is a God of seed, of generations, of increase. “The Lord your God will bless you in all the work of your hands,” Deuteronomy 28:12 promises. If a salary cannot produce seed for tomorrow, it is not a salary. It is a trap.

I will speak plainly here, and without apology. I have watched a father work twelve-hour shifts and be told there are no salary advances when his daughter needs shoes for school. I have watched a nurse save a life and go home hungry. I have watched a guard protect a warehouse he could never afford to shop in, paid an amount that insults his sacrifice. And then we call it entry level. We call it market forces. We say: be grateful you have a job. The Bible has another name for it. “Do not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy,” Deuteronomy 24:14 commands. “Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing,” Jeremiah

22:13 warns. When we pay a wage that cannot cover needs, rest and savings, we are not being strategic. We are standing where Pharaoh stood — demanding bricks without straw, and excellence without dignity. God is watching. And God remembers.

To employers: margins are tight and competition is real. But examine your business in the light of Scripture. If your company survives only by underpaying the people who build it, your profit rests on someone else’s pain. Pay justly. You will be surprised what happens when fear leaves the room and loyalty, creativity and excellence walk in.

To governments and policymakers: minimum wage is not an economic debate. It is a moral baseline. It is a nation declaring that every human hand matters. Set it at a level where a full-time worker can feed their family, rest with dignity and save for the future. Anything less is state-sponsored poverty. Anything less is complicity.

To the Church: we cannot sing of a provider God on Sunday and sign payslips on Monday that guarantee lack. The offering plate and the payroll must preach the same gospel.

Every employee — from the boda rider to the executive’s assistant — deserves to hear three things from their wage: you will not go hungry, you will not live without joy, and you will not work without hope. Without those three, what we have is not employment. It is exploitation.

God never called us to build a civilisation where people work only to stay alive. He called us to build one where people work to live — fully, freely and with dignity. “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,” Colossians 3:23 instructs. And the Lord who sees in secret, who counts every tear and every coin, will also require an account of every payslip.

So the question that haunts the late hours in Kampala, in Gulu, in Nairobi remains unanswered: will they survive? Or will we finally find the courage to let them live?

Let us pay people in a way that heaven can applaud.

Seven killed as helicopter crashes near Mount Ololokwe

A Eurocopter carrying six tourists and a pilot came down in rugged Samburu terrain yesterday morning, leaving no survivors

BY Collins Kibet
@themtkenyatimes

A helicopter crash near Mount Ololokwe in Samburu County yesterday morning killed all seven people on board — six tourists and the pilot — in one of Kenya’s most devastating aviation accidents in recent memory.

The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) identified the aircraft as a Eurocopter EC130 B4, registration 5Y-GYM. It went down at approximately 9:13 a.m. near Kirish, close to Mount Ololokwe, during a flight from the Loisaba area to-

wards the Ewaso Nyiro region. Smoke and flames were visible at the crash site, which lies in terrain that is difficult to access and complicated recovery efforts.

Emergency and response teams, including the Kenya Red Cross, were deployed to the scene. Aviation authorities launched investigations into the circumstances of the accident shortly after.

The cause of the crash has not yet been established. The Air Accident Investigation Department, operating under the Ministry of Roads and Transport, is leading the technical inquiry alongside other relevant authorities. Investigators are expected to examine the aircraft wreckage, flight records, weather conditions at the time of the crash and the helicopter’s maintenance history.

Mount Ololokwe is among the most recognisable landmarks in northern Kenya — a dramatic rise above the surrounding dry landscape that draws visitors for its scenery, wildlife and cultural significance to the Samburu people. Its rugged surroundings, while spectacular, present serious challenges for emergency operations.

The deaths are a painful reminder of the risks inherent in low-altitude tourist aviation, particularly in remote conservancy areas where helicopters



serve as the primary link between visitors and lodges far from roads and airports. The victims had travelled to Kenya to experience its celebrated wilderness; instead, their journey ended in tragedy.

The KCAA has extended condolences to the families and loved ones of those who died.

Recovery and identification of the victims remain the immediate priority as the investigation gets under way.

Kenya to import 25 million bags of maize as drought bites

BY Koech Joshua
@themtkenyatimes

The government will import 25 million 90-kilogramme bags of maize to bridge an anticipated food deficit caused by drought and climate-related production failures across major growing regions, Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe announced yesterday.

Kenya consumes approximately 75 million bags of maize annually. Reduced harvests across key food-producing areas have created a projected shortfall of nearly a third of that total, prompting the government to intervene before the gap translates into price spikes that hit ordinary households hardest. “We will import maize. We have already made arrangements for that. We will manage the country. The country is not



Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe

going to go hungry,” Kagwe said.

The imports address the immediate crisis, but Kagwe was equally emphatic that the government is pursuing structural reforms designed to reduce Kenya’s chronic dependence on rainfall. The expansion of the Galana Kulalu irrigation scheme featured prominently among those interventions — a project that, if delivered at scale, could meaningfully shift the country’s agricultural risk profile away from the seasonal uncertainties that have repeatedly triggered food emergen-

cies.

The government also plans to work with the National Treasury to streamline taxes and reduce bureaucratic obstacles affecting farmers and agribusinesses, with the aim of making the sector more commercially competitive.

Youth employment emerged as a parallel priority at the Fifth Joint Consultative Meeting of County Executive Committee Members, where the Ministry launched consultations for the AgriConnect Compact Programme — a successor to the Food Systems Resilience Program and the National Agricultural Value Chain Development Project, both supported by the World Bank. Kagwe said the programme has the potential to create thousands of jobs by repositioning agriculture as a modern, technology-driven commercial enterprise rather than a subsistence activity.

With the 2027 General Election drawing closer, food security carries political weight that extends beyond agricultural policy. A government that fails to keep staple food affordable risks paying an electoral price among urban and peri-urban voters for whom maize meal is a daily household cost. Kagwe’s swift public assurance — that arrangements are already in place and hunger is not on the horizon — reflects that awareness.

The imports will buy time. Whether the structural reforms can deliver before the next drought is the question Kenya has been asking, and largely failing to answer, for decades.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *The Cameroon midfielder has wanted the Old Trafford move since last summer — and United are now preparing a fresh offer to Brighton

Carlos Baleba’s Manchester United dream edges closer to reality

By Pascal Okoth

Carlos Baleba’s long-standing ambition to play for Manchester United appears to be moving closer to fulfilment, with reports indicating that the Cameroon international remains firmly committed to making the switch to Old Trafford.

Baleba has reportedly wanted to join United since last summer, when the Premier League club first expressed serious interest in the 22-year-old midfielder. According to those reports, he gave his approval to the proposed move immediately and personal terms were agreed between his representatives and the club. A transfer did not materialise at the time, however, with Brighton and Hove Albion holding firm on their valuation and forcing United to bide their time.

Now the situation appears to have shifted. United are reportedly preparing a fresh proposal for Brighton as they look to finally conclude a deal for one of the Premier League’s most exciting young midfielders.

Baleba has established himself as a standout talent at Brighton since his arrival, attracting interest from several top clubs with performances that blend physical strength, ball-carrying ability, defensive awareness and composure under pressure. His capacity to win possession and drive forward through midfield addresses a specific need for United, who have been working to improve the balance and depth of their midfield unit.

At his age, there is also considerable room for development. United would not be acquiring a finished product but a player with the profile and potential to grow into one of the division’s leading midfielders — exactly the kind of long-term investment the club has been pursuing.

Brighton will not make the process straightforward. The club



Carlos Baleba

has built a well-earned reputation for extracting substantial fees when parting with its most valuable players, having previously benefited from selling several key men after developing them into established Premier League performers. While personal terms are reportedly already settled, the two clubs must still agree on a transfer fee and payment structure — and that negotiation is likely to test Unit-

ed’s resolve.

Baleba’s own preference could nonetheless prove significant. When a player has made his desired destination clear, it can shift the dynamic of negotiations in ways that are difficult for a selling club to ignore entirely.

The road to this transfer has already stretched beyond a year. But with United preparing a new offer and the player’s intentions well established, the latest

developments suggest the two clubs are approaching a moment of decision. If agreement can be reached, Baleba would begin a new chapter at one of the game’s most iconic clubs — and turn a year-long dream into reality.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *European football’s two biggest competitions have become central to how South African fans experience the game — on screen and online

Why the Premier League and Champions League continue to shape football in South Africa



Football fans in South Africa watching TV

By Victor Obare

Football remains one of the most followed sports in South Africa, with major European competitions drawing supporters throughout the season. The Premier League and UEFA Champions League have built international audiences that extend well beyond their home markets, helping to shape a football culture that thrives far from the stadiums of England and Europe. For South African fans, following European football has become part of a broader digital entertainment experience — one that involves not just watching matches but sharing results, tracking standings and staying updated on clubs competing across multiple competitions. The Premier League offers a competitive calendar in which clubs are tested against different opponents week after week. Every round carries consequences for the title race, European qualification and relegation — giving fans genuine reasons to watch from August through to May.

That relentless schedule also generates continuous conversation. South African supporters can follow their clubs through live broadcasts, digital coverage and social media, making the Premier League a constant presence in the modern football viewing experience. The competition’s global reach means its clubs are household names for fans well outside England. The UEFA Champions League adds another dimension to European football, bringing together the leading clubs from national leagues across the continent. It offers supporters the opportunity to witness clashes between teams from different countries and footballing cultures — matches that carry weight for clubs and players competing at the highest level. For fans, the Champions League has become a fixture on the calendar in its own right. It provides fresh matchups, new storylines and a level of competition that complements the domestic leagues. Alongside the Premier League, it gives European foot-

ball a breadth and variety that sustains interest throughout the season. How supporters consume football has shifted significantly. Smartphones and connected devices allow fans to follow fixtures, receive updates and engage in football discussion at any hour. That connectivity has created an atmosphere that surrounds matches — before kick-off, during play and long after the final whistle. Digital sports platforms have made it easier than ever for supporters to engage with competitions they care about. The relationship between football, digital access and online interaction reflects a broader evolution in how fans experience the sport. One of the enduring strengths of European football is the variety it offers. Domestic leagues provide regular fixtures through the week; continental tournaments introduce different opponents and higher competitive stakes. Together, they present a schedule capable of sustaining viewer interest across the entire season.

The Premier League and Champions League have become central to the international football conversation — and African fans are firmly part of that audience. Digital platforms have widened access to both competitions, connecting supporters across the continent with clubs, players and moments that define the global game. The Premier League and Champions League have established themselves as essential fixtures in the worldwide football calendar, offering fans a varied and competitive season to follow. Their international audiences demonstrate football’s enduring capacity to bring people together across borders through shared teams, players and sporting experiences. For South African fans, digital platforms have opened additional avenues to connect with the football they love — part of a growing entertainment landscape that continues to evolve alongside the sport itself.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Happy Birthday: Tribute to Rev Roux Malan



By: Paula Otukile
Gaborone, Botswana
Correspondence

Every child deserves someone who believes in them.
And truth is, adults need that the most too.

I met Rev Roux Malan on the eve of 2019, just before Covid.
I was searching. Searching for a nearby Unitarian Universalist congregation in Africa. I reached out to four people across the continent. Only one responded.
He did.

I was looking for a faith that felt like home.
As a Baha'i, I loved the concept of the oneness of religion. But I still carried a hollow feeling. I was seeking a faith that would let an African be African. A faith that would not judge ancestral beliefs or worship, but walk with them.

After months of searching, Rev Roux answered.
And what started as messages became a year-long "Umkholo Apprentice" — our equivalent of a Level One Lay Leader course.

The biggest highlight for me was learning social action. Service to others, without expecting anything back.

We did a deep study of the Book of Mark. Through Mark the disciple, I gained knowledge of faith that I later translated and shared with others.

That season opened doors for me. I started Alison short courses, Ude-my, and Coursera. Learning without losing a single pula. My mind was stretching.

From there I began my formal quest in theology with World Christian University. That's where I began to understand what Christianity truly is.

In 2022–2023 I did my first official Unitarian lay leader course with Rev Nima, and together we began building a solid Unitarian group right here in Botswana.

Through it all, Rev Roux was there. Quietly. Steadily. Guiding.
Even when I started writing books,

he was there — holding my hand through the process.

What began as mentor and mentee became family.
In 2024, we made it physical. I traveled to Cape Town with my friend Otsile Pule to meet the congregation for the first time. To feel, touch, and experience the Unitarian community in person.
It was sacred. And after that, we never lost touch.

Mentorship only works when the learner is willing.
I think of my GBV Mulher Forte projects — born out of my love for writing and community work. Women and children need to be safe. But talking about it and acting on it is what makes the difference. That fire came from the seeds Rev Roux planted in me.

Sometimes when an athlete wins a big championship, no one remembers the coach.
So today I'm putting it on record: I give credit to my mentor, Rev Roux.

Because of him, I felt heard.
I found a leader.
I found a father.

He is exactly one day older than my mother, born in the same year. And I never had a biological father.
So to have someone who nods, who guides, who holds your hand even when he's not physically there — that means everything.

"Thank you" will never be enough.
But I am proud of the woman I have become because of his leadership and guidance.

Today, on your birthday, I wish you nothing but more life, more health, and more joy, Rev Roux.

May you continue to coach, to guide, and to believe — because it changes lives.

With love and gratitude,
_From your mentee in Botswana
Ze Paula



Rev Roux Malan, Capetown Unitarian.

Worth Noting:

- The biggest highlight for me was learning social action. Service to others, without expecting anything back.
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