



Archbishop Ole Sapit condemns Homa Bay political thuggery, warns of escalation ahead of 2027 polls
Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit has condemned the political violence and thuggery witnessed in Homa Bay County

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Gachagua dares NCIC: Come to Wamunoro
The Democracy for the Citizens Party yesterday dismissed National Cohesion and Integration Commission summons against its leader Rigathi Gachagua over alleged inflammatory remarks

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Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 The foundation of a credible election is a clean, accurate and verifiable register of voters - Ethekon

Kenya's 2027 electoral countdown

Kenya's electoral clock began counting down in earnest yesterday when the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission formally gazetted the commencement of the 2027 General Election period, publishing Kenya Gazette Notice No. 13497 and bringing the Electoral Code of Conduct and the Election Offences Act into immediate legal force — placing every political party, aspiring candidate and campaign operative in the country under binding regulatory oversight with exactly twelve months to go before polling day.

The announcement, made by IEBC Chairperson Erastus Edung Etheke, was more than procedural. It was a starting gun. In a country where political competition has historically been intense, unpredictable and occasionally violent, the formal commencement of the election period carries weight that extends well beyond the gazette pages. Kenya will go to the polls on Tuesday, August 10, 2027, to elect a president, members of the National Assembly, senators, governors, county women representatives and members of county assemblies. The country that emerges from that election will in many ways be shaped by what happens during the twelve months that now lie ahead.

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Inside the 12-month countdown to the 2027 general election

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Gachagua plants DCP flag in Nyoro's backyard

The former deputy president's push into Murang'a sends a pointed message to PPK's new leader — and to Ruto

BY Grace Wanja

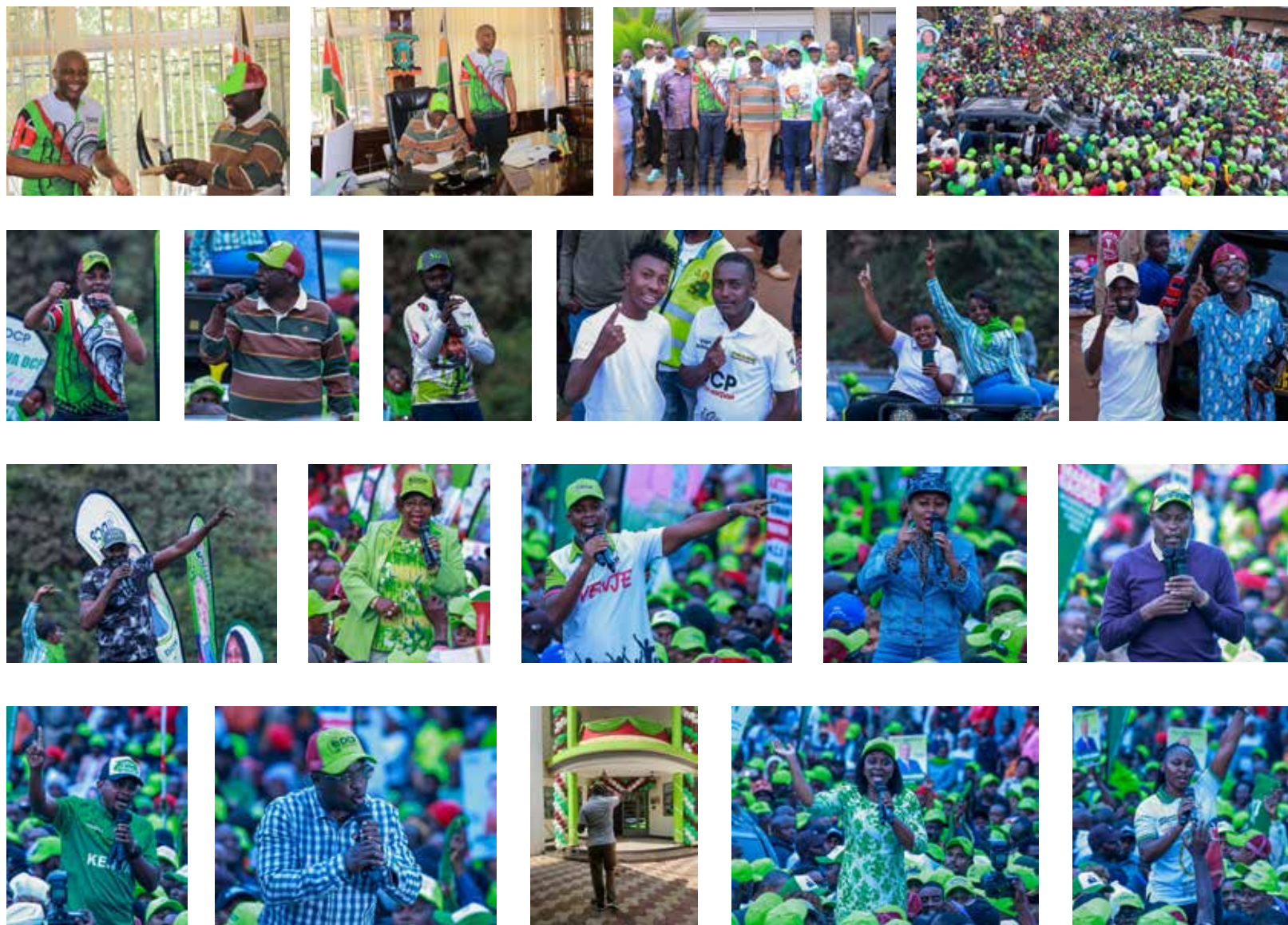
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Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday opened a Democracy for the Citizens Party office in Murang'a town, planting his political flag squarely in the constituency of Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro days after Nyoro launched the People's Party of Kenya and declared himself an opposition figure.

The timing was deliberate. Gachagua made no mention of Nyoro by name — a studied silence that communicated dismissal more effectively than any direct attack could have. Instead, he rallied supporters around DCP's core message of regional solidarity, urging them to resist the pull of new political formations now emerging across Mount Kenya. "What party is this in Mountain Kenya? Is it DCP? Harambee DCP," he told the gathering, framing the region's political identity as settled and non-negotiable.

The office opening, accompanied by a march through Murang'a town, signals that DCP intends to contest every corner of the mountain — including territory where rival politicians believe they hold sway. With the 2027 election period now formally under way, the battle for Mount Kenya's soul has begun in earnest.



Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has proposed splitting the collection and management of hotel and restaurant levies under the Tourism Amendment Bill, recommending that the Tourism Fund continue collecting the two percent revenue levy while the Cabinet Secretary assumes oversight of how the funds are managed and disbursed. Tourism Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano, appearing before the Departmental Committee on Tourism and Wildlife chaired by Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki, said the amendments were necessary to align the sector with emerging realities and enable more effective funding of tourism institutions. Under the proposal, the Cabinet Secretary would formulate the Fund's operational policy and determine disbursement conditions — responsibilities currently bundled within the Fund itself, which channels collections to institutions including the Kenya Tourism Board, Tourism Research Institute, Bomas of Kenya and Kenya Utalii College.



Wiper Patriotic Front has moved to quash reports of an exclusive political deal between its leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, insisting that no such arrangement was concluded following their meeting at Gachagua's Wamunyoru residence on August 17. In a statement issued yesterday, Wiper spokesperson Ndegwa Njiru said the reports had mischaracterised the nature of the engagement between the two leaders. "We wish to set the record straight: no such exclusive deal exists," Njiru said. The clarification comes as Kenya's opposition landscape grows increasingly complex ahead of the 2027 General Election, with multiple formations engaging in consultations that observers are closely watching for signs of coalition-building. Wiper did not elaborate on what the Wamunyoru meeting did cover.



Kenya's banking sector rebounded strongly in 2025, with total assets rising 10.3 per cent to KSh8.35T — reversing the 1.6 per cent contraction recorded the previous year — according to the Kenya Bankers Association's State of the Banking Industry Report. Customer deposits grew 9.9 per cent to KSh6.38T, reflecting sustained public confidence, while net loans and advances recovered by 6.9 per cent to KSh4.35T. Non-performing loans eased to 14.7 per cent from 16 per cent in 2024, though banks raised loan loss provisions by 16.5 per cent to KSh97.87B as caution over repayment capacity persisted. Small banks recorded the fastest deposit growth at 22.3 per cent, expanding their market share. Kenya Bankers Association Director of Research and Policy Samuel Tiriongo said banks are increasingly targeting sustainable finance, with renewable energy emerging as a priority investment area across the sector.

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday formally notified Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja of his planned attendance at a DCP thanksgiving rally in Emurua Dikirr, Narok County today, citing online videos showing armed men linked to area MP David Kipsang Keter warning his entourage to stay away from the constituency.

In a pointed letter to Kanja, Gachagua — who is visiting at the invitation of DCP candidate Vincent Rotich, who finished second with 10,760 votes in the May 14 by-election won by Keter with 18,266 votes — demanded three specific assurances: that his entourage and supporters would be safe, that the police were aware of the gathering, and that lives and property would be protected. The letter drew a direct parallel with the recent violence in Homa Bay, where a Linda Mwananchi convoy led by opposition figures was met with road blockades and burning tyres. "My attention has been drawn to threats which have been recorded on videos, shared online, and reported by the mainstream and social media, that my entourage and I should not set foot in Emurua Dikirr," Gachagua said.

Kericho Governor Eric Mutai moved swiftly to call for calm, reminding residents that every Kenyan holds a constitutional right to travel freely across the country. His intervention underscored the broader anxiety gripping the Rift Valley region, where political temperatures are rising sharply as the 2027 election approaches and the contest between UDA and DCP for supremacy in the South Rift intensifies with each passing week.



The Supreme Court has temporarily frozen efforts to recover KSh1.5B paid as compensation for land occupied by Ruaraka High School and Drive-In Primary School, issuing interim orders on August 18 that halt enforcement of the Court of Appeal's July 3 ruling pending the determination of a petition by Huelands Limited. The orders bar the National Land Commission from demanding repayment and prohibit the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission from arresting, charging or prosecuting Huelands, Afrison Export Import Limited, Whispering Palms Estate Limited or their officers. The dispute centres on approximately 13.5 acres which the EACC says was surrendered to government free of charge in 1983, with a compensation claim lodged in 2017 yielding the KSh1.5B payment. The companies maintain the land remains privately registered and the payment was the first tranche of a lawful KSh3.2B compulsory acquisition award, with KSh1.769B still outstanding.



The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has suspended procurement of election technology and ballot papers for the 2027 General Election after a request for review was lodged before the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board, the commission disclosed yesterday. The halt affects two of the most critical components of the electoral process, though the commission said procurement of several other strategic and non-strategic materials remains on course. The IEBE said it had commenced General Election preparations following budget provision in the 2026/2027 financial year. "The commission is in the process of procuring General Election materials," it said, adding that the suspended processes would resume upon determination of the review application. The development raises early logistical concerns given the binding timelines gazetted this week for the August 10, 2027 polls.

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Business SBM's customer deposits grew 24 per cent to Sh94 billion, while net loans and advances increased 18 per cent to Sh54.1 billion.

SBM embarks on expansion spree after profit surge

BY James Wa Wanjiku
@themkenyatimes

SBM Bank Kenya is stepping up its national expansion drive after recording a sharp rebound in profitability, opening its 34th branch as it seeks to capture a bigger share of Kenya's growing banking market.

The lender has opened a new outlet in Nanyuki, Laikipia County, in a move that underscores its strategy of taking banking services to emerging commercial centres while leveraging a stronger balance sheet to finance growth.

The expansion comes after SBM posted one of its strongest financial performances in recent years, with profit before tax soaring 171.3 per cent to Sh548 million in the six months to June 2026.

Net profit after tax rose 88.2 per cent to Sh380.2 million, while operating profit nearly quadrupled, increasing 279 per cent to Sh852 million.

The results point to a significant turnaround for the lender and provide fresh momentum for its branch expansion and lending strategy at a time when competition among Kenyan banks is intensifying.

SBM's customer deposits grew 24 per cent to Sh94 billion, while net loans and advances increased 18 per cent to Sh54.1 billion.

The growth pushed total assets to Sh109.9 billion, up from Sh105.7 billion at the end of December 2025.

The bank also recorded an improvement in asset quality,



SBM Bank Kenya chief executive Bhartesh Shah and Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu during the opening of the bank's 34th branch in Nanyuki town on August 20, 2026. | Photo: JAMES WAWANJIKU

with its gross non-performing loan ratio falling sharply to 17.3 per cent from 32.4 per cent a year earlier.

SBM Bank Kenya chief executive Bhartesh Shah said the latest expansion was part of a broader strategy to combine physical banking with digital services as the lender pursues growth across the country.

"Nanyuki is exactly the kind of market our strategy is built for. The region is a high-growth economy where relationship banking and digital convenience should work together," Shah said.

The new branch at Peak Place Building in Nanyuki will target businesses and institutions in sectors including tourism, conservancies, horticulture,

agribusiness, real estate and the SME economy.

But the lender's strategy extends beyond Nanyuki, with the branch forming part of a wider push to deepen its presence in regional commercial hubs outside Kenya's major cities.

Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu said the region's growing private-sector economy presented significant opportunities for financial institutions and investors.

The bank's expansion comes against a backdrop of increasing competition for deposits, quality borrowers and corporate customers in Kenya's financial sector.

For SBM, the stronger financial position provides room to expand its customer base

and lending portfolio while investing in a wider physical network and digital banking



infrastructure.

The Nanyuki outlet is the bank's newest branch since it opened its Kilifi outlet in July 2025, taking its nationwide branch network to 34.

The lender said its continued

investment in regional markets is intended to improve accessibility while positioning the bank to benefit from economic activity emerging outside Kenya's traditional commercial centres.

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Politics Archbishop Sapit called on the relevant authorities to take firm action against those responsible for the violence and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book

Archbishop Ole Sapit condemns Homa Bay political thuggery, warns of escalation ahead of 2027 polls

BY Elizabeth Angira

@themtkenyatimes

Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit has condemned the political violence and thuggery witnessed in Homa Bay County during the Linda Mwananchi rally over the weekend, warning that such incidents could create an unstable environment ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Archbishop Sapit called on the relevant authorities to take firm action against those responsible for the violence and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book.

Two people were reportedly killed and several others injured after goons allegedly infiltrated the rally. Six vehicles were also reportedly set ablaze during the chaos.

The Archbishop spoke to journalists in Kisii County after officiating at the annual Kenya Anglican Youth Organization (KAYO) conference held at Kisii School. The week-long conference has brought together more than 2,500 young people from Anglican dioceses across the country for fellowship, mentorship and discussions on their role in society.

Sapit said political violence undermines democracy and threatens the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, particularly the freedom of association, expression and conscience.

“We want to condemn in the strongest terms what we have been seeing—the disruption of rallies by either hired people or people who have sent themselves,” Sapit said.

He warned that the increasing disruption of political gatherings could create a volatile atmosphere as the country approaches the 2027 elections.

“We are in a democracy where our democratic right is that we are free to associate, we have freedom to interact, freedom of conscience and freedom of speech,” he said.

The Archbishop also expressed concern over reports that journalists were attacked during the Homa Bay incident, with some allegedly having their equipment damaged and personal belongings stolen.

He said attacks on the media further threaten democracy because journalists play a critical role in informing the public and documenting events.

Sapit urged the youth not to allow themselves to be used to cause vio-

lence or disrupt political meetings in exchange for small handouts.

“My urge and advice to all of us in the Church, and particularly to the youth, is to desist from being used. Shun the little handouts because they will not give you much,” he said.

He warned that young people who allow themselves to be used in political violence could ultimately pay a heavy price.

“We have seen people being used and then dumped, or even followed and killed in the name of concealing information they already have,” he said.

The Archbishop urged young people to protect themselves and become agents of peace rather than being drawn into hatred, violence and lawlessness.

“Make sure that in the environment in which you are operating, you become an instrument and an agent of peace by desisting from being lured into acts of lawlessness and being drawn into hatred and hating one another without any particular reason,” he said.

Sapit further challenged security agencies to take responsibility for maintaining public order and prevent political gatherings from being controlled by criminal elements.

He specifically called on the Interior Ministry, the Inspector General of Police and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations to act decisively against political violence.

“My call to those who are maintaining law and order, particularly the Minister of Interior, the IG and the DCI, and those who are managing public order, is to take charge of public order and remove it from the hands of goons,” he said.

The Archbishop warned that allowing political violence to continue unchecked could amount to preparing the country for chaos ahead of the 2027 elections.

“If we continue to see goonism in this country reigning without being abetted, then it is preparation for chaos and we don’t want that chaos,” he cautioned.

He said Kenya needs peace and stability for businesses to thrive and for citizens to live and interact freely regardless of their political affiliations.

“We want peace for businesses to thrive. Even whoever is looking for leadership does not want to lead a dispersed nation. You need to lead a nation that is cohesive and united, and you need to lead a nation that be-



Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit addressing the press in Kisii School has condemned the political violence and thuggery witnessed in Homa Bay County during the Linda Mwananchi rally over the weekend. |

Photo: Elizabeth Angira

longs to all of us,” Sapit said.

The ACK Archbishop also urged political leaders across the divide to exercise restraint in their public utterances and avoid statements that could deepen political divisions.

“My urge is that let us all be careful in our utterances, whether you are in the opposition or in government. Let us use our tongues to bless Kenya, not to divide Kenya; to give hope, not to create a state of hopelessness,” he said.

He stressed that political competition should be based on the presentation of ideas rather than intimidation and violence.

“Those who are using young people to disrupt one another’s meetings, that is not the way. The way of democracy is that we are free to sell the agenda that any one of us has,” he said.

According to Sapit, Kenyans should be allowed to listen to competing political views and make their own choices without interference.

“If you don’t like somebody’s opinion, the answer is not to crush them or to fight them. The answer is to leave their meeting. The answer is to project your opinion,” he said.

He called on Kenyans to protect the democratic space and allow citizens to freely determine the leadership they want when they go to the polls in 2027.

Youth as Agents of Peace

Speaking about the KAYO conference, Sapit said the gathering was also aimed at bringing together

young people from different communities and regions to promote national unity.

The conference has attracted youth from various parts of the country, providing an opportunity for them to interact, fellowship and reflect on their role in building a peaceful and cohesive Kenya.

“We are using these conferences to build one nation, Kenya, because we come from every language group and every region of this country to show that we are one in Christ, but also we are one as a nation called Kenya,” he said.

He said young people have an important role to play in transforming their communities and creating a positive environment both at home and in society.

Sapit explained that the conference theme focuses on how young people can become wholesome individuals capable of using creativity and knowledge to transform their sur-

roundings.

He said empowering young people with the right values, knowledge and skills would help them resist manipulation and contribute positively to society.

As Kenya heads towards the 2027 General Election, the Archbishop’s message was clear: political differences should not be allowed to turn into violence, and young people should not be used as tools for political confrontation.

For Sapit, protecting Kenya’s democratic space requires collective responsibility from politicians, security agencies, religious leaders, the media and ordinary citizens.

He urged Kenyans to embrace dialogue, respect divergent opinions and ensure that political competition remains peaceful.

“Let Kenya have the freedom to choose the leadership they want in the year that is coming,” he said.



Young people from Anglican dioceses across the country attending the annual Kenya Anglican Youth Organization (KAYO) conference held at Kisii School |

Photo: Elizabeth Angira

General election “The foundation of a credible election is a clean, accurate and verifiable register of voters,” Ethekeon said

Kenya’s electoral clock starts ticking: Inside the 12-month countdown to the 2027 general election

With the IEBC formally gazetetting the election period and binding timelines now in force, Kenya enters its most consequential political season in years — and the stakes could not be higher

BY David Kimani
@themkenyaintimes

Kenya’s electoral clock began counting down in earnest yesterday when the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission formally gazetted the commencement of the 2027 General Election period, publishing Kenya Gazette Notice No. 13497 and bringing the Electoral Code of Conduct and the Election Offences Act into immediate legal force — placing every political party, aspiring candidate and campaign operative in the country under binding regulatory oversight with exactly twelve months to go before polling day.

The announcement, made by IEBC Chairperson Erastus Edung Ethekeon, was more than procedural. It was a starting gun. In a country where political competition has historically been intense, unpredictable and occasionally violent, the formal commencement of the election period carries weight that extends well beyond the gazette pages. Kenya will go to the polls on Tuesday, August 10, 2027, to elect a president, members of the National Assembly, senators, governors, county women representatives and members of county assemblies. The country that emerges from that election will in many ways be shaped by what happens during the twelve months that now lie ahead.

“The foundation of a credible election is a clean, accurate and verifiable register of voters,” Ethekeon said as he laid out the commission’s preparations. It was a deliberately understated way of opening what is, in reality, an extraordinarily complex undertaking — one that will test Kenya’s democratic institutions, its political culture and its citizens in equal measure.

The political landscape into which this election period has been launched is, by any measure, one of the most fragmented and volatile Kenya has seen since the chaotic multi-party contests of the 1990s. President William Ruto’s Kenya Kwanza coalition, which swept to power in 2022 on a wave of popular sentiment from the so-called hus-

tlar movement, has spent much of the past two years defending itself against mounting public frustration over the cost of living, taxation and governance failures. The broad-based government arrangement that briefly brought opposition figures into the fold dampened political temperatures for a period — but that arrangement has since unravelled, and the opposition has reconstituted itself in new and more complex configurations that make the 2027 contest genuinely difficult to predict.

Perhaps the most striking development of recent months has been the emergence of the Democracy for the Citizens Party, led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, who was controversially impeached from office in late 2024. Gachagua has since repositioned himself as an opposition figure with a particular base in the Mount Kenya region, and his DCP has rapidly become one of the most talked-about political formations in the country. His alliance-building has been aggressive, drawing in governors, members of parliament and community leaders who have concluded that their futures lie outside the Ruto administration. DCP’s green branding, its “One Mountain, One Agenda, One Party” messaging and Gachagua’s combative public persona have given the formation a distinctiveness that few new parties in Kenya’s history have managed to establish this quickly.

Into this already crowded opposition landscape, Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro this week added yet another dimension, formally joining the People’s Party of Kenya as its leader and declaring his alignment with the opposition ahead of 2027. Nyoro’s departure from UDA, announced at Safari Park Hotel on Monday, was a carefully staged political moment — part policy statement, part personal reinvention. He spoke of consultations with Gachagua, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka, Jubilee deputy leader Fred Matiang’i, People’s Liberation Party leader Martha Karua, Siaya Governor James Orengo and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna. The list was designed to signal reach, seriousness and coalition potential. Within 48



IEBC Chairperson Erastus Edung Ethekeon during a past meeting in his office | Photo: COURTESY

hours, three county assembly members — two from Kiambu and one from Murang’a — had followed him into PPK, suggesting that the defection is the beginning of a process rather than an isolated act. Matiang’i offered warm public congratulations, and the speed of the early momentum has caught the attention of political observers across the country.

The opposition, for all its energy, faces the same structural challenge it has confronted in every Kenyan election cycle: unity. The country’s political history is littered with opposition coalitions that formed with great fanfare, fractured under the pressure of competing ambitions and ultimately handed incumbent administrations a pathway to victory. The 2007 election led to post-election violence. The 2017 contest produced a Supreme Court annulment and a re-run boycott. In 2022, a united opposition under Raila Odinga came agonisingly close but still fell short. The 2027 election looks set to test whether the various opposition formations — DCP, PPK, Wiper, Jubilee, the remnants of Azimio and the various Linda Mwananchi networks — can suppress their individ-

ual interests long enough to mount a coherent challenge. The signs, so far, are mixed. Gachagua’s camp has been openly critical of Nyoro’s PPK, with DCP Secretary General John Methu describing it as a “green wheelbarrow” — a pointed reference to UDA’s wheelbarrow symbolism — designed to dilute the opposition vote in Mount Kenya. The suspicion that some new parties are state-sponsored entities deployed to divide the anti-government vote is widespread and, regardless of its accuracy, politically consequential.

For the Ruto administration, the terrain is no less challenging. The government enters the election period with its economic record as both its greatest vulnerability and its most important battleground. The promise of the Kenya Kwanza manifesto — affordable fertiliser, housing, healthcare, manufacturing and the empowerment of ordinary Kenyans — has delivered mixed results. The Affordable Housing Programme has attracted both genuine beneficiaries and fierce critics who question its financing model and its prioritisation over more urgent social needs. The Social Health Authority has replaced

the National Hospital Insurance Fund amid significant controversy over implementation, access and cost. Taxation measures, including the Finance Bill that triggered nationwide protests in June 2024 and the subsequent deaths of young demonstrators, have left deep and lasting marks on the government’s relationship with the generation that will make up the largest share of the 2027 electorate. The administration will need to demonstrate, credibly and specifically, that it has delivered enough to deserve a second term.

The IEBC’s gazetted timelines add a further layer of complexity to this already charged environment. The commission has made clear that the deadlines it has published are not suggestions. “Adherence to the set timelines is non-negotiable. These are not mere guidelines, but legally binding requirements essential to the orderly and credible conduct of the electoral process,” Ethekeon said. That is a warning directed at politi-

General election “The foundation of a credible election is a clean, accurate and verifiable register of voters,” Ethekon said

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Contd from page 9

cal actors who, in previous election cycles, have treated regulatory requirements as negotiable inconveniences to be managed through court orders and last-minute interventions. The commission’s tone throughout yesterday’s announcement was firm, and deliberately so.

The timeline is structured and demanding. Political parties must submit their authorised persons and specimen signatures to the IEBC by October 15, 2026. Nomination rules must be certified by the Registrar of Political Parties by October 30, with the certified rules submitted to the commission by November 6. Party membership lists must be with the commission by March 16, 2027 — the same date by which parties must submit the names of candidates seeking to contest internal primaries, along with dates and venues. All party primaries and intra-party disputes must be concluded by May 8, 2027. Presidential aspirants face the additional requirement of submitting, by May 24, a list of at least 2,000 registered voter supporters drawn from a majority of Kenya’s counties. Candidate registration runs from May 29 to June 11, varying by position. Campaigning may not legally begin before May 29 and must cease by August 7 — 48 hours before polls open.

Any public officer wishing to contest must resign by February 10, 2027 — exactly six months before Election Day. That requirement alone will force consequential decisions from sitting governors, cabinet secretaries, principal secretaries and other senior officials who harbour presidential or gubernatorial ambitions. The six-month clock is already creating political pressure in several counties where incumbents face the choice between the security of their current positions and the uncertainty of their electoral futures. Several cabinet secretaries are believed to be weighing exactly that calculation in the coming weeks.

The commission has also been ex-

plicit about what constitutes premature campaigning — and the consequences. “Any campaigning outside this prescribed period is unlawful. This includes the display of campaign posters, caravans, billboards and other forms of campaigning,” Ethekon said. In practical terms, this warning arrives at a moment when Kenya’s political landscape is already saturated with billboard campaigns, branded vehicles and what in Kenyan political parlance are described as “civic education” tours that bear a striking resemblance to election campaigns. The IEBC’s willingness to enforce this provision against well-connected political actors will itself become a test of the commission’s independence.

The IEBC has also addressed a legal question that has been hovering over the electoral process since last year. A Malindi High Court judgment found that, on a strict constitutional reading, the presidential election was due in August 2026 — not 2027. Justice Thande’s ruling, in a petition by Owiso Owiso, Khelef Khalifa and Ashioya Biko, held that the fifth year following the August 9, 2022 election commenced on August 9, 2026. The court suspended its decision pending the outcome of the 2027 election, and the matter remains subject to appellate processes. The commission has been clear that it continues to prepare for August 10, 2027. The legal ambiguity, while unlikely to derail the process, adds a layer of constitutional uncertainty that opposition actors have already begun exploiting in political messaging, and it will continue to generate litigation as the election approaches.

On voter registration, the numbers tell their own story about the scale of the exercise ahead. The commission projects that the 2027 register will contain approximately 28.5 million voters — a substantial expansion from the 22.1 million registered for the 2022 election. Continuous registration, which began in September 2025, has so far added 2,936,516 new voters. The commission is also expanding diaspora registration from 12 to 26 countries — a recognition that the Kenyan diaspora represents both a significant electoral constitu-



ency and an important source of political financing and public opinion. The integrity of the register will be reinforced through biometric verification and a forensic audit by an independent firm before the election.

The campaign financing rules gazetted on August 7 are among the most significant regulatory developments of this election cycle. The new Election Campaign Financing Regulations 2026, together with published contribution and spending limits, are designed to reduce the corrosive influence of money in Kenyan politics — an influence that has historically made competitive participation the preserve of those with access to substantial financial resources. Whether the regulations will be enforced with sufficient rigour to actually level the playing field remains an open question. The IEBC’s track record on campaign finance enforcement has been uneven, and the political will to pursue well-connected violators has not always materialised. The existence of the rules, however, at least creates a legal basis for accountability that did not previously exist in such explicit form.

The commission has also flagged a practice that has become increasingly common in Kenyan politics: the unauthorised use of the IEBC’s logo on campaign materials. Ethekon was direct. “Such use is irregular and unlawful and may falsely imply commission endorsement, thereby

infringing on its independence, impartiality and non-partisan status,” he said, giving offenders five days to remove the materials or face action. It is a small but telling detail — a sign of how thoroughly the boundaries between institutional authority and political campaigning have been blurred in Kenya’s political culture, and a measure of how much work the commission faces in asserting its institutional independence in the months ahead.

The broader significance of what the IEBC has set in motion goes beyond the procedural. The 2027 election will take place in a country that is simultaneously more politically aware and more economically anxious than at any point in recent memory. The generation that took to the streets in June 2024 — young, digitally connected, politically unaligned and deeply impatient with the established political class — has not disappeared. It is watching. It is registering to vote. It is forming and expressing opinions through channels that traditional political structures are only beginning to understand. The party, coalition or candidate that finds a credible way to speak to that constituency will gain an advantage that no amount of political financing or regional mobilisation can easily offset. In 2027, the youth vote is not a footnote — it is the story.

The procurement challenges flagged by the commission — a temporarily

halted tender for election technology and ballot papers following a review application at the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board — are a reminder that the administrative machinery of democracy is always more fragile than it appears. Delays in technology procurement, if not resolved promptly, could create pressures later in the calendar that force corners to be cut in ways that compromise the integrity of the process. The commission’s acknowledgement of the challenge is welcome; its resolution will require urgent attention.

Ethekon’s closing appeal struck a tone that was deliberately measured given the turbulence of the moment. “Let us choose peace over violence, unity over division and issues over personalities,” he said. It is the kind of appeal that Kenyan electoral officials have made before every election for thirty years. Sometimes it has been heeded. Sometimes it has not. The difference, in 2027 as in previous years, will depend less on what the IEBC says and more on what the country’s political leaders decide to do with the space between now and polling day — and whether ordinary Kenyans hold those leaders to the standard that the moment demands.

The clock is running. The period has begun. Kenya’s next twelve months will be defined by the choices made within it.

Nuclear Local leaders carry a unique responsibility in moments like this because they are the first point of contact for ordinary citizens seeking clarity, reassurance or a voice

Local leaders at the heart of Siaya's nuclear conversation

As Siaya weighs a proposed nuclear power plant, the chiefs, elders and community officers who hold public trust are the ones who will determine whether the process succeeds or fails

BY James Kilonzo Bwire

@themkenyaintimes

The stakeholder dialogue on the proposed nuclear power plant in Siaya, convened by the National Government Administration Office under Deputy County Commissioner Ali Manduku, marks an important moment in the democratic life of the county. The gathering brought together chiefs, assistant chiefs, security officers and village elders — the essential bridge between government policy and community understanding.

These leaders are not mere functionaries. They are custodians of communal trust and the primary facilitators of informed public debate. Their presence at the dialogue signals a deliberate acknowledgement by national and county actors that decisions of this scale cannot be imposed from above without first engaging those who live daily with the consequences.

Local leaders carry a unique responsibility in moments like this because they are the first point of contact for ordinary citizens seeking clarity, reassurance or a voice. Chiefs and assistant chiefs are charged with translating broad policy language into plain terms that residents can understand — people whose livelihoods, landscapes and futures may all be affected by what is decided. Village elders bring social capital and moral authority that can temper fears and channel community sentiment into constructive questions rather than reactive op-

position. Security officers, by ensuring public order, create the conditions in which open discussion can proceed without intimidation or disruption.

Together, these actors will shape whether the discourse around the nuclear proposal becomes polarised and fearful — or informed and deliberative. Their effectiveness depends on their willingness to convey accurate information, to listen as much as they speak, and to ensure that consultation is not a one-off event but an ongoing process.

Trust is the currency of public engagement, and trust is fragile. For many communities in Siaya, nuclear energy is unfamiliar territory that prompts legitimate questions about safety, environmental impact, employment, land use and long-term benefit. Local leaders must therefore act with transparency, humility and rigour. This means acknowledging what is known and what remains uncertain, committing to seek answers from technical experts and relaying those answers faithfully. It also means resisting the temptation to silence dissent or to smooth over complex concerns with simplistic reassurances. When leaders are seen to prioritise the community's right to know and to participate, they build resilience against rumour, misinformation and anxiety. When engagement is perceived as perfunctory or biased, distrust grows and peaceful dialogue becomes harder to sustain.

The role of these leaders extends beyond information relay — they are stewards of

social cohesion. Siaya's communities are diverse, with competing interests and histories that shape how people interpret proposed development projects. Chiefs and elders are uniquely placed to mediate between different groups, to surface underlying grievances and to ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable — youth, women, smallholder farmers and landless residents — are neither marginalised nor tokenised. Security officers, while tasked with maintaining order, must perform that role in partnership with community leaders rather than as an external force that suppresses legitimate dissent. Where social cohesion is actively nurtured, the space for reasoned discussion widens and the likelihood of constructive outcomes increases.

Effective community mobilisation requires systems as much as goodwill. Local leaders must be supported with timely, accurate and accessible information from technical and policy experts so they can answer questions with authority. Training in facilitation, risk communication and conflict resolution will strengthen their capacity to lead dialogues that are inclusive and productive. Regular, predictable engagement — town halls, information sessions and small group meetings — allows concerns to be raised and addressed before they harden into opposition. Critically, feedback gathered during these interactions must be systematically recorded and used to shape project planning and mitigation strat-



Siaya stakeholder dialogue on the proposed nuclear power plant

egies. When communities see their input reflected in decision-making, trust deepens and the legitimacy of the process improves.

Accountability flows both ways. While local leaders must act responsibly, national and county authorities must reciprocate by honouring consultative commitments, providing clear timelines and making technical resources available. Promises of development benefits must be specific and verifiable. If job creation, infrastructure upgrades or community investments are part of the proposition, the terms should be clarified and mechanisms for delivery established. Without such reciprocity, consultations risk being reduced to public relations exercises that erode rather than build civic confidence. Communities must be able to hold both their local leaders and higher-level authorities to account, and mechanisms for grievance redress should be accessible, impartial and timely.

The question of a nuclear power plant in Siaya raises profound considerations about energy security, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and intergenerational responsibility. Local leaders must not be relegated to passive roles in a process that will shape the county's future for decades. Their involvement should be substantive, with meaningful influence over how impacts are assessed, how benefits are distributed and how safe-



guards are implemented. This requires spaces where technical explanations are translated into lived terms, where questions receive full and honest answers, and where the community's consent is sought in ways that respect both democratic norms and local custom.

As the dialogues continue, the tone must remain one of mutual respect and problem-solving. Leaders should foster conversations that seek common ground and practical solutions rather than amplify differences. They should model civil engagement, encouraging community members to raise concerns constructively and to participate in monitoring and oversight should the project proceed.

Ultimately, the success of any major infrastructure project hinges not only on technical feasibility or financial backing, but on the quality of engagement with those who live closest to its impacts. Siaya's chiefs, assistant chiefs, security officers and village elders are indispensable to that task.

They are the connectors who can turn abstract policy into meaningful local deliberation, who can channel anxiety into questions that lead to clarity, and who can hold authorities to account while guiding their communities through change.

If their role is respected, reinforced with resources and embedded in a sincere process of dialogue, Siaya will be better placed to make an informed collective choice about its energy future. If their role is overlooked or undermined, social trust may fray and the path to any consensual outcome will become needlessly difficult.

The county, its leaders and its people deserve a process that treats this decision with the seriousness, transparency and inclusivity it requires. What happens next will be a test of democratic practice in Siaya — and the standing of local leaders as guardians of dialogue will be central to how that test is judged.

Politics As the election clock ticks, DCP turns a hate-speech summons into a political rally — and Mount Kenya's battle for supremacy grows fiercer by the day

Gachagua dares NCIC: Come to Wamunyoro

BY James Mwangi

@themtkenyatiimes

The Democracy for the Citizens Party yesterday dismissed National Cohesion and Integration Commission summons against its leader Rigathi Gachagua over alleged inflammatory remarks, with senior party figures publicly daring the commission to travel to Gachagua's Wamunyoro home rather than expect him to present himself in Nairobi.

The defiance was loud, calculated and choreographed. As the NCIC's summons — dated August 18 and directing Gachagua to appear at Britam Towers, Upper Hill, on Thursday, August 27 — circulated in the public domain, DCP leaders were already on the ground in Murang'a town turning the commission's legal process into a political spectacle. The message was unmistakable: this party does not come when called. It calls others to come to it.

"Rigathi Gachagua cannot go to the NCIC. NCIC, we are the ones inviting you — come to Wamunyoro on Tuesday and see Gachagua," Kiambu Senator Karungo Thang'wa declared, to visible approval from supporters gathered in Murang'a. The statement, blunt and deliberately provocative, encapsulated the posture DCP has adopted since Gachagua's impeachment from the deputy presidency in late 2024: confrontational, unyielding and contemptuous of what the party characterises as selective enforcement of the law against opposition figures.

The NCIC said its investigations relate to various utterances allegedly made by Gachagua at public forums across the country on different dates — a broad formulation that gives investigators wide scope but also invites precisely the kind of double-standards accusation that DCP leaders were quick to deploy. Kirinyaga Woman Representative Njeri Maina went fur-

thest in that direction. "When you see opposition people, you issue summons for arrest within 24 hours. When Wanga and Kaluma plan violence in Homa Bay, you stay silent," she said. Whether or not the charge is accurate, it resonates with a segment of Kenyan public opinion that has grown deeply sceptical of the NCIC's independence from political pressure — a scepticism that DCP is now deliberately cultivating as part of its broader positioning ahead of 2027.

The backdrop to yesterday's events matters enormously. Gachagua did not choose Murang'a by accident. The town sits squarely in the political heartland of Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro, who earlier this week formally took over the leadership of the People's Party of Kenya and declared his alignment with the opposition. Nyoro's PPK launch at Safari Park Hotel on Monday was the most significant political development in the Mount Kenya region in months — and Gachagua's decision to march through Murang'a town, open DCP offices there and rally supporters around the "One Mountain, One Party" message within days of that launch was a direct, if unstated, response. The choreography was deliberate: Gachagua was planting his flag on Nyoro's turf.

Gachagua himself avoided naming Nyoro directly, which was itself a form of dismissal. He did not need to acknowledge a rival to communicate his position. "What party is this in the Mount Kenya region? Is it DCP? Harambee DCP, harambee DCP," he told the crowd — a rhetorical question designed to frame PPK's presence in the region as so marginal as to be unworthy of engagement. He then reached for a metaphor that has become something of a signature: "When you begin a journey, don't be distracted. If you say you are going from here to Mombasa, focus ahead — and also watch your

back so you are not stabbed with a knife." The warning was delivered with the practised ease of a politician who understands how to communicate menace through allegory.

DCP Secretary General and Nyandarua Senator John Methu was considerably less restrained. He accused President William Ruto of attempting to replicate the political tactics of former President Daniel arap Moi — specifically the 1992 strategy of fragmenting regional political formations to prevent a unified challenge to the incumbent. "You are planning to do the Moi thing of 1992 — trying to stop people from running for the presidency here in the Mountain. Let me tell you, forget that. They want to reduce our number of MPs," Methu said. The Moi comparison is historically loaded in Kenyan politics. The 1992 election, the country's first multi-party contest after years of single-party rule, saw the opposition split into multiple formations that collectively outpolled Moi but handed him victory through division. Whether or not the parallel is accurate, it is politically potent in a region with a long memory of electoral grievance.

Gatanga MP Edward Muriu went further still, offering the most direct political indictment of the session. "You have oppressed this community for many years. You started by removing Gachagua, then brought goons to destroy our businesses. As if that was not enough, you tried to divide us into East and West. Now you are bringing many parties to divide us. Our party is one and it is called DCP," he said. The "East and West" reference speaks to a recurring tension within Mount Kenya political discourse — the sense that external actors have sought to exploit historical divisions between the Kirinyaga, Embu and Meru constituencies on one side and Murang'a, Nyeri and Kiambu on the other. Whether that division is or-



DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua

ganic or manufactured is a matter of genuine political dispute, but its invocation in Murang'a yesterday was a clear signal that DCP intends to make regional unity its central organising principle in the months ahead.

Murang'a Senator Joe Nyutu offered the most concise summary of the day's political message. "We are one mountain, under one leader and one party, DCP," he said. That formulation — simple, memorable, easily repeated — is not accidental. It is the product of a political operation that understands the value of a consistent slogan in a noisy information environment. Whether it survives contact with the complexity of Mount Kenya's actual political landscape is another question.

That landscape is, in truth, considerably messier than DCP's messaging suggests. Nyoro's PPK, whatever its detractors say, has already attracted three county assembly members — two from Kiambu and one from Murang'a — within 48 hours of its launch. Matiang'i has signalled openness to engagement. Kalonzo Musyoka, Martha Karua, James Orengo and Edwin Sifuna have all been cited as consultation partners. The suggestion that PPK is merely a government-sponsored spoiler operation may or may not be accurate, but it is not the whole story. Nyoro is a serious politician with a genuine following, demonstrated constituency-level delivery and significant name recognition. DCP's insistence on treating

him as a non-entity is as much a tactical choice as a factual assessment.

The NCIC investigation adds a dimension that goes beyond the immediate political theatre. The commission's mandate — to promote national cohesion and prevent hate speech and incitement — places it at the intersection of electoral politics and constitutional law. Its credibility depends on its demonstrated willingness to act consistently across the political spectrum. If the commission is seen to pursue opposition figures while overlooking equivalent or worse conduct by those aligned with the government, it will lose the moral authority that makes its interventions meaningful. DCP's double-standards accusation, whatever its merits in this specific case, lands in a context of widespread public scepticism about independent institutions that has been building for several years.

For the broader 2027 picture, yesterday's events in Murang'a are a microcosm of the political dynamics that will define the next twelve months. The Mount Kenya region — with its large voter population, its historical significance in Kenyan presidential arithmetic and its current state of intense political competition — is shaping up to be the decisive battleground of the next election. The region delivered a critical share of its vote to Ruto in 2022 through the UDA vehicle. If that vote splinters between DCP, PPK, UDA remnants and other for-

mations in 2027, the outcome for the incumbent could be severe. If DCP consolidates it behind a unified opposition candidate, the arithmetic changes fundamentally.

Gachagua understands this better than almost anyone. His post-impeachment political project has been built on a single premise: that the Mount Kenya vote is a bloc that can be organised, directed and deployed to determine who governs Kenya. Whether that premise holds in an era of more fragmented, individualistic political behaviour — particularly among younger voters who are less susceptible to ethnic mobilisation than their predecessors — is the central question hanging over DCP's strategy. Yesterday's rally suggested that the machinery of community-based political organisation remains powerful. It did not resolve the question of whether that machinery alone is sufficient.

What is clear is that the election period has begun, the timelines are binding and the political competition in Kenya's most contested region is already at a pitch that would normally be associated with the final weeks of a campaign rather than its opening days. The NCIC's summons will be answered or defied. The courts will adjudicate. The voters will watch. And somewhere between Wamunyoro and Murang'a town, the shape of Kenya's next government is beginning to emerge.

ICC As political violence spirals and calls for international intervention grow, Kenya’s ruling coalition hits back — hard

Ichung’wah dares ICC: Investigate the opposition too

BY Wairimu Gitau
@themtkenyetimes

National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung’wah yesterday welcomed calls for the International Criminal Court to investigate political violence in Kenya, but turned the demand squarely against the opposition, accusing its leaders of sponsoring the very lawlessness they are blaming on the government.

The Kikuyu MP’s remarks came as a fierce exchange erupted between Kenya Kwanza and opposition figures over Sunday’s violence in Homa Bay, where a Linda Mwananchi convoy was attacked by armed men, roads were blocked and journalists were assaulted. Opposition leaders, including People’s Liberation Party leader Martha Karua, have called for ICC intervention and

accused President William Ruto of tolerating State-sponsored goonism. Ichung’wah was having none of it. “Something surprised me — Martha Karua was reading a statement written for her, and standing behind her was James Orengo. Orengo is the one carrying the thugs with machetes as we saw in Homa Bay. So let us not be hypocrites,” he said, directing his fire at Siaya Governor Orengo, one of the Linda Mwananchi movement’s leading figures.

He was equally direct about the ICC question. “I want to join them in welcoming the ICC to come and investigate that matter of goonism — because you plan the goonism, then you point at others,” Ichung’wah said, framing the call for international scrutiny as a double-edged instrument that would implicate opposition organisers rather than the administration.

Former Cabinet Secretary Moses Kuria added a blunter edge to the ruling coalition’s response. “It is time for each person to protect their stronghold. I have bought a power saw — let it keep cutting. Let everyone look after their people’s interests,” Kuria said, a remark that drew immediate attention for its combative imagery.

With the IEBC having formally gazetted the 2027 election period, the battle lines are drawn — and the language on both sides is growing sharper by the day.



National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung’wah





The only limits



The only limits you have
are the limits you believe.
The sky is the limit for all your aims.
So aim high.
Nothing can deter your passion.
You have the potential to do anything better.

Try to do all good.
Let no one discourage you or pull your legs.
Don't mind of anything
Let not your heart and soul be discouraged.

Swim against the waves
to achieve anything higher.
To reach there, you have to be unique and
different.
Be not one among a thousand,

but one in a thousand.
Let others turn to you for your achievements.

Jealousy and hatred will be there don't mind.
Be deaf, blind, and dumb in some situations:
Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.
Break any wall that stands in front of you.
Never say "I can't."
Say only "I can" and "I will."
Never stop trying to achieve.
Crown yourself no one will come to crown you.
The sky is the limit.
Break the shell like a chick.
Remove the word "impossible" from your
dictionary.
Aim high and walk towards the goal.
You shall reach the goal soon.

Brinda. D
Creative writers
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My ghost friend



A ghost came out to play at night
I gave a such big big fright!
It flew around and said boo!boo!

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

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The only limits you have are the limits you believe in



Do not talk too much,
as it may lead to unnecessary situations.
When you know your limits,
you earn respect from others.
Whatever you do, do it within your limits;
it will lead you towards success.
You know your limits better than anyone else,
so respect them,
stay within them,
and live your beautiful life.
It will bring you peace and happiness.

What you know and believe shapes your life.
Life has limits,
and even when you stay close to others,
you should maintain certain boundaries. When you
speak,
know when to stop.

G. YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalyanur block
Villupuram dt.

If you are in a situation where you cannot decide which decision is correct



Then with a deep breath,
Close your eyes and remember your parents.
You will get the courage to take the appropriate
decision."

Amitesh Jha
IX
DAV Public School
NH-3, NIT, Faridabad

My dreams



Sometimes I may make mistakes,
But I will learn from each one I make.

My parents guide me every day,
My teachers show me the right way.
With hope and faith, I will go on,
Until my dreams and goals are won.

I will work hard and never fear,
And make my future bright and clear.
I believe in myself each day,
And slowly, I will find my way!

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I have a dream inside my heart,
A dream that gives my life a start.
I want to learn and reach the sky,
And spread my wings and learn to fly.

I know that dreams need work and care,
With courage, I can go anywhere.

Poem-the uphill climb



A path of success is long,
In which we have to take grit along.
You might face heavy knocks,
Step right over stumbling blocks.

Stay focused every time,
As you begin the uphill climb.
Preserve your inner strength and grace,
To cross the line and win the race

By Aaradhya
Class VIII-A
DAV Public School,
NH-3, NIT
Faridabad

Aaradhya
*Class VIII
*DAV Public School
NH-3, NIT, Faridabad

Embu The council’s chairman, Andrew Ireri, was unsparing in his assessment. He said the elders who attended the Nembure gathering were not recognised members of Nyagi ya Ndiriri

Embu elders reject Kindiki endorsement as illegitimate

A disputed gathering at Nembure Stadium has cracked open a deeper question: who speaks for Mount Kenya ahead of 2027?

BY Ndwiga Jacobs
@themkenyatimes

The Embu Council of Elders, Nyagi ya Ndiriri, yesterday publicly disowned a meeting held at Nembure Stadium in which a group of elders drawn from Embu, Meru, Tharaka Nithi and Isiolo reportedly endorsed Deputy President Kithure Kindiki as the Mount Kenya region’s political spokesman ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The council’s chairman, Andrew Ireri, was unsparing in his assessment. He said the elders who attended the Nembure gathering were not recognised members of Nyagi ya Ndiriri and therefore carried no authority to issue declarations on behalf of the wider elders’ fraternity. In his view, the meeting was not a



Andrew Ireri, Chairman of the the Embu Council of Elders, Nyagi ya Ndiriri.

legitimate endorsement — it was a stage-managed political exercise dressed in community clothing. “We come here to oppose and say that the meet-

ing at Nembure had traitors. People gathered to grab money — money that comes from our taxes. We hear some were given KSh2,000 and others

KSh5,000. They were deceiving people,” Ireri said, alleging that financial inducements had been used to mobilise attendance while the funds nev-

er reached all those expected to participate.

The accusations of payment and selective mobilisation strike at the credibility of the Nembure gathering and raise uncomfortable questions about the increasingly transactional nature of political endorsements in the Mount Kenya region. Ireri went further, questioning the choice of venue itself, describing Nembure Stadium as a sacred ground whose dignity should not be compromised by politically choreographed gatherings masquerading as community consensus.

The backdrop to this dispute is the intensifying competition within Mount Kenya over political leadership as the 2027 election approaches. The region, historically a decisive bloc in Kenya’s presidential arithmetic, is currently fractured between competing figures and formations. Gachagua’s Democracy for the Citizens Party is aggressively claiming the mantle of the mountain’s authentic political voice. Kindiki, elevated to the deputy presidency following Gachagua’s impeachment, has been projected by Kenya Kwanza allies as the region’s new anchor within the ruling establishment. Into that contest, the Nembure meeting was clearly designed to provide Kindiki with an elder-endorsed legitimacy that would strengthen his standing in the region.

Nyagi ya Ndiriri’s rejection dismantles that narrative directly. Ireri was equally firm in dismissing discussions around dividing Mount Kenya into East and West blocs, describing such proposals as needlessly divisive and a distraction from the genuine concerns facing communities across Embu, Meru, Tharaka Nithi and Isiolo. The warning carries weight. Any attempt to fragment the region along sub-regional lines risks weakening its collective bargaining power in national political negotiations — a lesson drawn from decades of electoral history.

The dispute now places a fundamental question squarely before the region: who has the legitimate authority to speak for Mount Kenya’s elders? As 2027 draws closer, that question will only grow louder.

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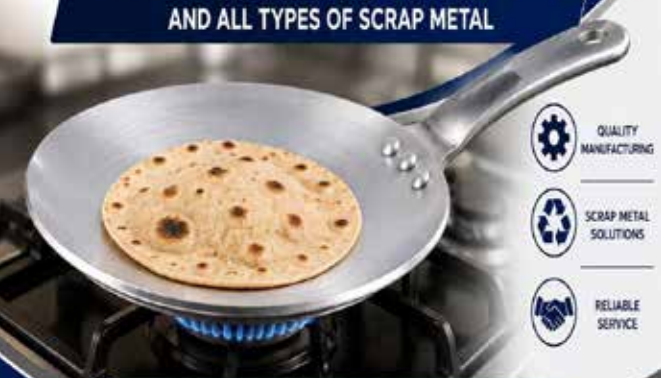
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Politics The MCAs’ defections carry particular significance. Ward-level elected representatives are closely embedded in their communities

UDA MCAs rally behind Nyoro’s PPK days after his party exit

Three Kiambu and Murang’a county assembly members cross the floor as Kiharu MP builds opposition structures ahead of 2027



Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro

BY Angela Mwanga
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya’s political realignment ahead of the 2027 General Election gathered fresh momentum yesterday when three Members of County Assembly affiliated with the ruling United Democratic Alliance crossed the floor to join the People’s Party of Kenya, led by Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro — barely two days after he formally quit UDA.

Nyoro announced yesterday that Zack Macharia, the MCA for Kiuu Ward, popularly known as Githurai 45, in Ruiru Constituency, and Winnie Wambui, a Kiambu County MCA, had crossed over to PPK. A third MCA, Naomi Nyambura of Ruchu Ward in Murang’a County, also joined

the party the same day. Nyoro described Nyambura, who chairs the Education Committee at the Murang’a County Assembly, as a “vibrant leader.”

Nyoro announced his exit from UDA on 17 August, declaring that he and his supporters had joined PPK and formally aligned with the opposition ahead of the 2027 general election. He said the decision followed extensive consultations with opposition leaders including Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka, People’s Liberation Party leader Martha Karua, former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang’i, former Cabinet Secretary Peter Munya, and Linda Mwananchi leaders Siaya Governor James

Orengo and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna.

PPK is not a new party. Its registration dates to April 14, 2012, with the slogan “Usawa Haki Uhuru” — equality, justice and freedom. Nyoro’s entry transforms it from a relatively obscure political outfit into a party with one of the country’s most recognisable young politicians at its helm.

The MCAs’ defections carry particular significance. Ward-level elected representatives are closely embedded in their communities, making their political networks a potentially valuable foundation for any party seeking to expand its grassroots reach. For PPK, their arrival signals that the party is beginning to attract elected leaders beyond its founding membership.

The development has not

been without controversy. PPK’s Democratic for the Citizens Party counterparts have been critical of its emergence, with DCP Secretary General John Methu describing it as a “green wheelbarrow” designed to dilute DCP’s influence in the Mt Kenya region, noting the similarity in colour between the two parties. Some DCP and opposition leaders have alleged that the formation of Nyoro’s party could be a state-backed effort to divide the region’s political support

and weaken the opposition.

Nyoro’s exit from UDA is part of a broader wave of departures from the Mt Kenya region, where leaders such as Murang’a Governor Irungu Kang’ata and Nyandarua Governor Kiarie Badilisha have also distanced themselves from the ruling party.

Nyoro stopped short of declaring a presidential bid, but used his Safari Park address to establish the foundations of a political alternative, accusing the government of

failing to deliver on its campaign promises. “I have come to appreciate that it is easier to campaign than to govern,” he said — a pointed message from a politician once considered one of President William Ruto’s most prominent allies.

Nyoro has indicated plans for a nationwide tour, beginning with Uasin Gishu, Kericho and Nandi — areas that have traditionally supported Ruto — where he intends to explain his decision and mobilise support for the opposition.

Whether the MCA defections mark the beginning of a broader movement or remain an isolated development will become clearer in the weeks ahead. What is certain is that PPK’s early momentum has placed it firmly in the national political conversation.

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1	DANIEL ARAP MOI	 KANU	1,962,866	36.35%
2	KENNETH MATIBA	 FORD-ASILI	1,404,266	26.00%
3	MWAI KIBAKI	 DEMOCRATIC PARTY	1,050,617	19.45%
4	JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA	 FORD-KENYA	944,197	17.48%
5	GEORGE ANYONA	 KENYA SOCIAL CONGRESS	14,273	0.26%
6	CHIBULE WA TSUMA	 KENYA NATIONAL CONGRESS	10,221	0.19%
7	JOHN HARUN MWAU	 PICK PEOPLE'S INDEPENDENT CONGRESS OF KENYA	8,118	0.15%
8	DAVID MUKARU NG'ANG'A	 KENDA	5,760	0.11%



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Tormentors This is not pragmatism. It is political alchemy performed on a population that refuses to hold a consistent memory

The amnesia of a nation: How Kenya forgets its dead and crowns its tormentors



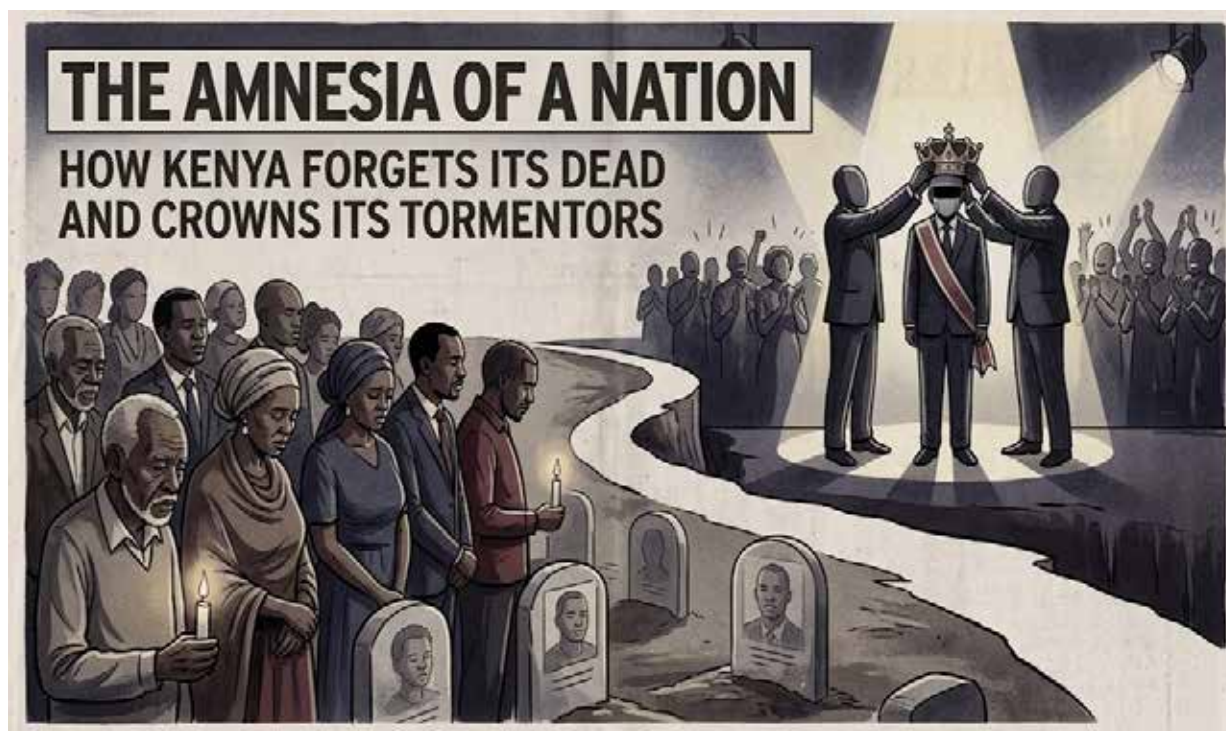
By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

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In the summer of 2024, more than fifty young Kenyans students, hustlers, dreamers were shot dead or beaten into eternity by security forces while protesting a tax bill that sought to squeeze the last drop of blood from an already anaemic public. Human rights monitors documented dozens more abductions, some of the victims still missing, others returned broken or never returned at all. These are not rumours whispered in the dark. They are the cold arithmetic of state violence under William Ruto's administration: live bullets against unarmed citizens, unmarked vans, and a presidential shrug that treated the body count as collateral noise.

That arithmetic has not changed. What has changed is the national capacity to remember it.

Kenya suffers from a peculiar, almost theatrical form of amnesia. It is not the gentle forgetting of age. It is a selective, self-inflicted erasure that allows the same man once branded the devil incarnate by large sections of the Luo nation and the urban youth to be rebranded, within months, as a legitimate partner in a "broad-based" government. The same Ruto who forced the Housing Levy down the throats of salaried workers 1.5 per cent deducted from every payslip, matched by employers, pouring over 200 billion shillings into a fund whose houses remain largely theoretical now sits at tables with former adversaries who once called him a predator. The same administration that hiked NSSF contributions, further shrinking disposable incomes already ravaged by food and fuel inflation, now enjoys the political cover of opposition figures who once vowed to resist such predation. The same government accused of reckless public spending and opaque procurement still lectures the nation



Illustration

on fiscal discipline.

This is not pragmatism. It is political alchemy performed on a population that refuses to hold a consistent memory.

History in Kenya is a carousel of elite handshakes. After the 2007–2008 post-election violence, Kibaki and Raila discovered the virtues of power-sharing. After 2017, Uhuru and Raila discovered the same virtues. Each time the people paid in blood or in lost years of accountability; each time the elite emerged richer and more secure. Ruto's 2024 manoeuvre is the latest turn of that carousel. Facing the first genuine generational revolt in decades the Gen Z protests that nearly toppled the legitimacy of his government he reached for the oldest trick in the Kenyan political playbook: absorb the opposition, dilute the anger, declare unity, and continue. The "broad-based" government is not a concession to the people. It is a bread-based government: an arrangement in which the loaves of power are shared among the same political class while the public is left to fight over crumbs.

The intellectual insult is almost as severe as the material one. Ruto once thundered against the judiciary when rulings inconvenienced him,

questioning the legitimacy of courts without offering evidence beyond political irritation. He has governed as though the Constitution were a set of suggestions rather than the supreme law. Yet the same man is now presented, by some of his former fiercest critics, as a stabilizing force. What alchemy turns a man who failed to live by the edifice of the Constitution into a saint? Only the short memory of a people who prefer the comfort of ethnic arithmetic and the theatre of elite reconciliation over the harder discipline of principle.

Consider the Luo support that once treated Ruto as the embodiment of everything to be resisted. In the run-up to 2022, the language was apocalyptic. He was the devil, the hustler who would devour the nation. Two years and a few cabinet positions later, sections of that same constituency appear ready to swallow the narrative of partnership. This is not evolution. It is the triumph of transactional politics over historical conscience. The dead of June and July 2024 do not get to renegotiate their fate. The families of the disappeared do not receive political appointments. The workers whose payslips are lighter because of the Housing Levy and swollen NSSF deductions

do not sit in the new cabinet. Only the living elite do.

There is a deeper, more corrosive insight here. Kenyan public life has trained itself to treat outrage as a temporary emotion rather than a sustained ethical posture. We rise when the pain is immediate when the bullet is still warm, when the tax is newly announced then settle into the familiar grooves of tribal calculation and elite accommodation. The result is a democracy that can generate spectacular moments of resistance and then systematically disarm itself. The protests of 2024 proved that a generation could organise without the old ethnic brokers. The aftermath proved that the old ethnic brokers still know how to close the deal once the cameras leave.

Data does not lie even when memory does. Official inflation figures may have moderated from the peaks of 2022, yet the lived cost of living fuel, food, transport, housing remains a daily assault on household budgets. Real wages have barely recovered the ground lost in previous years. Meanwhile, the machinery of extraction continues: statutory deductions that function as stealth taxes, procurement processes that invite suspicion, and a security apparatus that has shown itself willing to dis-

appear citizens when dissent grows inconvenient. Human Rights Watch and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights documented the pattern. The state responded with denial, deflection, and, eventually, the political absorption of its critics.

What makes this amnesia particularly dangerous is that it is not passive. It is actively cultivated. Every handshake, every broad-based announcement, every claim that "we must move forward" is an invitation to forget. Forgetting is not healing. It is the precondition for repetition. The same methods that produced the body count of 2024 will be available again when the next fiscal squeeze arrives or the next generation of protesters refuses to be managed. The same elite compact that now claims legitimacy will once more demand silence in the name of stability.

The question, then, is not merely why Ruto has been allowed to rehabilitate himself. The deeper question is why a people with such a vivid recent history of state violence choose, again and again, the soft comfort of forgetting. Being Kenyan has become a comedy sport only because the audience keeps laughing at the same jokes and clapping for the same performers. The script never changes; only the costumes do.

This cannot continue without consequence. Citizens must refuse the sedative of elite reconciliation. Civil society must keep the names of the dead and the disappeared in public view, not as seasonal activism but as permanent moral inventory. The judiciary must resist the political pressure that has historically bent it toward convenience. Opposition figures who enter government must be judged not by the titles they receive but by whether they use those titles to constrain the very excesses they once denounced. And the youth who faced live fire in 2024 must refuse the soft amnesia that turns their sacrifice into a footnote.

Nations are not destroyed only by tyrants. They are destroyed by the gradual acceptance that memory is optional. Kenya has paid enough blood and enough dignity for that particular luxury. The dead of 2024 are not symbols. They are citizens who expected their government to protect rather than hunt them. Their silence is not consent. It is an indictment. And the longer the living choose not to hear it, the more certain it becomes that the next generation will be asked to pay the same price, again, for the same failure of memory.

The writer is a social commentator

Politics This presents a clear lesson for Homa Bay. A dusty rural road does not have to be seen only as infrastructure awaiting tarmac

Turning Homa Bay’s dusty roads into economic assets: Lessons from the Safari Rally

Turning Homa Bay’s dusty roads into economic assets: Lessons from the Safari Rally



BY Paul Kinyanjui
@themtkenyatimes

The dusty, rocky rural road that recently featured during the Linda Mwananchi polit-

ical mobilisation entourage in Homa Bay County may, at first glance, appear to be a symbol of underdevelopment. Viewed differently, however, such roads can represent an economic opportunity. Rather than waiting for every rural road to be tarmacked before it becomes useful, Homa Bay can explore ways of turning selected rugged routes into destinations for motorsport,

adventure tourism and local enterprise. Kenya’s iconic Safari Rally began in 1953 as the East African Coronation Safari, organised to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It initially traversed Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, covering thousands of kilometres over difficult terrain. It was incorporated into the World Rally Champion-



Homa Bay’s dusty roads

ship when the WRC was established in 1973, remaining on the calendar until 2002, and returned after a 19-year absence in 2021. The old Safari was dramatically different from today’s event. Historically, competitors travelled enormous distances on open public roads, encountering mud, dust, rocks, wildlife and unpredictable weather. The modern WRC version uses controlled special stages, private estates and conservancies, with stronger safety and organisational standards. Yet rough gravel remains part of its identity. What began as a celebratory endurance adventure evolved into a test of driver and machine, then into an international sporting spectacle and an instrument of tourism promotion, employment creation and global branding — a reason why rural roads matter economically. A Tourism Research Institute assessment found that the 2021 Safari Rally generated KSh6.7B in direct visitor expenditure, KSh3.7B in employment income and KSh9.6B in total value addition. The benefits are not confined to the host venue. Hotels, restaurants, fuel stations, transport operators, mechanics, informal traders, tour guides and accommodation providers all benefit from increased visitor traffic. In 2025, Naivasha businesses reported full hotels and heightened activity among restaurants, campsites, transport operators and other enterprises during the rally. This presents a clear lesson for Homa Bay. A dusty rural road does not have to be seen only as infrastructure awaiting tarmac. Some roads can

become economic assets precisely because of their rugged character. The county could identify suitable stretches for county-level rally competitions, autocross, 4x4 challenges, cycling, motorbike events and adventure drives — subject to Kenya Motor Sports Federation regulations, environmental assessments, landowner consent and rigorous public-safety measures. Temporary spectator zones, parking areas and service points could be established along carefully selected routes. Such events would create demand for accommodation, food, fuel, vehicle repairs, security, transport, entertainment and locally produced goods. Small businesses could establish temporary or permanent enterprises around event corridors. Young people could develop careers in driving, mechanics, photography, event management, hospitality and tourism. The opportunity extends beyond motorsport. Homa Bay’s landscape, Lake Victoria shoreline, islands, fishing communities, cultural heritage and rural scenery could be packaged into adventure-tourism circuits, with motorsport acting as the initial draw. Homa Bay should therefore ask a different question: what can our difficult terrain produce before we transform it? Instead of seeing every rocky road only as a problem, the county can identify routes whose physical characteristics support carefully regulated sporting and tourism activities, while continuing to improve them progressively. Other counties can adopt the same philosophy. Kenya’s

rural landscapes are diverse enough to support motorsport, mountain biking, hiking, cultural tourism and off-road adventure. The Safari Rally has demonstrated that challenging terrain can become part of a destination’s selling point rather than merely an obstacle. There is also a broader strategic opportunity. Kenya’s nuclear-power planning studies have considered the Lake Victoria Basin among potential regions for nuclear development, and Homa Bay has featured in preliminary suitability assessments. Water availability alone, however, does not make a location suitable — environmental, safety, flooding, land-use, grid and other technical considerations must be satisfied before any nuclear facility could be approved. Homa Bay’s dusty roads, rugged landscapes and strategic location should be viewed not as signs of underdevelopment, but as potential economic assets. The county does not need to wait for every road to be tarmacked before attracting visitors, investment and enterprise. With deliberate planning, suitable routes could host regulated motorsport, adventure tourism and sporting activities, creating opportunities across accommodation, transport, food, mechanics, entertainment and local trade. Communities and landowners should be involved throughout, with strong safety and environmental standards guiding every stage of development. The key lesson is that development is not simply about eliminating challenges — it is about transforming existing strengths into competitive advantages. With vision and strategic investment, a dusty road can become an economic opportunity.

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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China The North African country has secured financing, signed manufacturing agreements and begun factory construction

China's battery strategy in Africa: Morocco takes the lead as BYD eyes South Africa

BY Njenga Hakeenah

@themkenyatiimes

China's electric vehicle technology in Africa is expanding well beyond vehicle exports and assembly. Recent developments in Morocco confirm that battery and components manufacturing is now bankable on the continent — and the money is beginning to follow.

The African Development Bank's approval of a \$114M loan for Sino-German battery maker Gotion High-Tech's gigafactory in Morocco marks one of the largest development finance commitments to an African battery manufacturing project. It signals that major institutions are prepared to back battery production, which could unlock similar funding elsewhere on the continent.

The bank's support comes as Chinese companies, working with a range of partners, increasingly invest in battery manufacturing and materials alongside their vehicle exports and assembly operations. Battery components production is already under way, with Abu Dhabi-headquartered Falcon Energy Materials commissioning a 25,000-tonnes-per-year anode materials pilot project in Jorf Lasfar, near Casablanca. The company holds technical and strategic partnerships with Chinese firms Shanghai Shanshan New Material Co. and Hensen for the Morocco project.

Further south, the continent's most sophisticated vehicle market is also emerging as a distinctive opportunity. South Africa has attracted the attention of BYD, the world's largest producer of battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles — and indications are that its ambitions there go well beyond selling cars. Rather than following rivals into local vehicle assembly, BYD is exploring battery manufacturing, betting on the core technology that built its global dominance.

Several key lessons from Morocco are already apparent. The North African country has secured financing, signed manufacturing agreements and begun factory construction while South Africa is still assembling the policy framework needed to attract



An aerial view of BYD's largest battery production base, Nanning Fudi Battery Co., Ltd., in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China | Photo: Courtesy

comparable investment. The contrast between the two is instructive: policy, more than mineral wealth, will determine which African countries capture industrial activity in the electric vehicle value chain and which are left behind.

Morocco has moved fast. Post-COVID, it rapidly established itself as Africa's leading battery manufacturing destination by combining Chinese industrial investment with government backing and development finance. In 2024, the country signed a \$300M agreement with China's BTR New Material Group to build a cathode materials plant in Tangier. Cobco, a Chinese-Moroccan joint venture, has also opened a battery components factory expected to produce enough materials for nearly one million electric vehicles annually once fully operational. Together, these investments complement Morocco's growing vehicle manufacturing sector, creating an integrated ecosystem where battery materials, components and vehicle production reinforce one another.

BYD's approach to South Africa tells a different story. The company's

interest in battery manufacturing became clearer during the July launch of its BYD Finance joint venture with South African banking group Absa, where executives outlined ambitions that extend well beyond

vehicle sales. Long before BYD became one of the world's largest EV makers, it built its business on battery technology. Manufacturing batteries in South Africa would allow the company to leverage that

expertise while supplying electric vehicles, energy storage systems and potentially other industries.

South Africa's evolving policy direction could support those ambitions. The government has updated its Critical Minerals and Metals Strategy and proposed expanding automotive incentives so that half the value of critical minerals sourced from Southern Africa counts as local value addition in EV battery production. The measures are designed to encourage regional mineral processing while attracting battery manufacturers. Should BYD proceed with local battery production, it could reduce reliance on imported components while benefiting from existing and future incentive programmes.

The two countries together offer a snapshot of where Africa's battery industry is heading. Morocco demonstrates how Chinese manufacturers, government policy and development finance can combine to establish battery production at scale. South Africa is working to create the conditions for similar investment but has yet to secure a major battery manufacturing commitment.

For other African countries hoping to move beyond vehicle assembly, mineral resources alone will not be sufficient. Building a battery industry also requires coordinated, stable industrial policy capable of attracting investors and opening access to long-term financing. The African Development Bank's backing of Gotion's factory suggests that development finance institutions are broadening their support to include battery manufacturing — not just EV deployment or charging infrastructure. That shift could significantly improve the bankability of future battery projects across the continent.



Morocco Becomes Africa's Top Automaker | Photo: Courtesy

Greed Consider something as ordinary as a farmer producing milk. He works the land, feeds his cattle and delivers his product to a buyer

At what point does ambition become greed?

When the appetite for more begins to destroy the very system that sustains us

BY Levis Wangamati

@themkenyetimes

There is nothing wrong with wanting more. Ambition is one of the forces that pushes human beings to build, create, compete and improve. A farmer wants a larger harvest, a student wants a better career, a business owner wants a bigger enterprise and a leader wants to leave a greater mark. Without ambition, much of what humanity celebrates as progress would never have existed.

But there is a point at which ambition quietly crosses a line. It stops being about building something better and becomes an appetite that must be fed, regardless of what it consumes along the way. That is where ambition begins to resemble greed.

The difficult part is that greed rarely announces itself. It does not always arrive looking like wrongdoing. Sometimes it comes disguised as survival. Sometimes it calls itself opportunity. Sometimes it wears the language of family, loyalty, success or even public service. A person may convince themselves they are only taking what they deserve, while another person sees the same action as exploitation. In a society where almost everyone is competing for something, the line between legitimate ambition and destructive appetite can become remarkably thin.

Consider something as ordinary as a farmer producing milk. He works the land, feeds his cattle and delivers his product to a buyer. Suppose he has promised a full container but his production falls short. Instead of accepting the smaller quantity, he adds water to make it appear full. The buyer, concerned about his own margins, does the same. The retailer repeats the process. By the time the milk reaches the person ordering tea in a restaurant, it has been diluted several times over. The customer complains that the tea barely tastes of milk. Yet somewhere at the beginning of that chain was the very same farmer who may later sit in another restaurant and make precisely the same complaint.

That small story carries a much larger lesson. Problems rarely remain where they begin. Dishonesty travels. Greed travels. Favouritism



Ambition

travels. Once one person decides that a small compromise is harmless, the next person finds it easier to make another. Eventually, what began as one person's shortcut becomes a system in which everyone expects everyone else to cut corners. The milk becomes diluted, the service becomes weaker, institutions become less trusted and the economy pays the price. By the end, everyone is complaining about a problem that almost everyone has helped reproduce.

This is where Kenya's challenge runs deeper than corruption statistics and political speeches. The Constitution gives us a remarkably clear moral and institutional framework. Article 10 places values including integrity, transparency, accountability, equality, human dignity and the rule of law at the centre of public life. Yet the existence of good rules does not automatically produce good behaviour. A constitution can tell us what should happen; it cannot force every person to want what is right. That gap between what we have agreed to and what we are willing to practise is where many of our problems begin.

We have become remarkably skilled at adjusting the meaning of wrongdoing depending on who benefits from it. When someone else receives a favour, we call it corruption. When the favour reaches us, we call it connection. When another person employs relatives, we call it nepotism. When our own relative gets the position, we call it helping the family. When someone takes what belongs to us, we call them a thief. When we benefit from something that was nev-

er fairly ours, we find explanations.

That contradiction is dangerous because it makes morality dependent on advantage. We no longer ask whether something is right in itself — we ask whether it has worked in our favour. The same behaviour can be condemned in the morning and celebrated in the afternoon simply because the person on the receiving end has changed. In such an environment, corruption does not need to disappear. It only needs to become useful enough for people to tolerate it.

Perhaps this is why abnormality can eventually become normal. Imagine Kenya waking tomorrow to find public money being used exactly as intended, graduates finding opportunities without needing connections, government services delivered without favour and officials treating citizens equally. Would we simply accept it as the way things should be? Or would some of us wonder what had suddenly changed? When dysfunction persists long enough, functioning properly begins to look unusual. The abnormal becomes familiar, and the familiar becomes difficult to challenge.

The same principle applies to the way we talk about ambition. We admire the person who rises, but rarely stop to ask what was stepped on during the climb. We celebrate wealth without always asking how it was accumulated. We praise political influence without asking what compromises produced it. We admire connections when they open doors for us, then condemn the same connections when they close doors in our faces. Somewhere along the

way, success becomes separated from the methods used to achieve it.

This is where the metaphor of the hyena becomes instructive. The hyena is often described as greedy because of its appetite. But an animal feeding itself is not necessarily greedy — it is surviving. The problem begins when the appetite exceeds what survival requires and becomes destructive. Human beings have something animals do not have to the same degree: the ability to examine our own appetites and decide whether they are justified. We can ask not only, "Can I take this?" but also, "Should I take this?"

That distinction matters enormously. Ambition asks, "What can I build?" Greed eventually asks, "What else can I take?" Ambition can create value. Greed can consume it. Ambition can make a person work harder. Greed can make a person believe that everyone else exists merely as an obstacle or a resource. Ambition seeks growth; greed loses the ability to recognise a stopping point.

And perhaps that is the true meaning of enough. Enough is not the absence of ambition. It is the presence of restraint. A farmer can seek a better harvest without destroying his soil. A business can pursue profit without deceiving its customers. A politician can seek power without treating public resources as personal property. A successful person can accumulate wealth without believing that another person's poverty is the price of their success.

The tragedy is that greed eventually harms the greedy as well. The farmer who dilutes milk does not only cheat the customer — he helps create a market in which nobody trusts the product. The official who steals public resources does not only hurt strangers — he weakens the roads, hospitals, schools and institutions that his own family will one day depend on. The person who uses connections to bypass a fair process may celebrate today, only to discover tomorrow that the same system has become so compromised that it can no longer protect anyone.

In that sense, greed is almost self-defeating. It consumes the very foundation on which its own success depends.

This is why leadership should not be measured only by how much a

person can acquire, control or influence. The deeper test is what someone does when they have the power to take more. Anyone can appear principled when there is nothing to gain. Character becomes visible when something valuable is within reach and nobody seems capable of stopping you from taking it.

A leader who understands this does not confuse public office with personal ownership. A businessperson does not confuse profit with permission to exploit. A citizen does not confuse opportunity with entitlement. A family does not confuse loyalty with the right to demand privileges. In each case, ambition remains — but it is restrained by responsibility.

Kenya does not need a society without ambition. Such a society would stagnate. What we need is a society where ambition understands its limits — people who can pursue success without believing that somebody else must lose for them to win, institutions strong enough to make fairness more rewarding than manipulation, and citizens willing to condemn wrongdoing even when that wrongdoing happens to benefit them.

Because the greatest danger is not simply that bad people exist. Bad choices will always exist. The greater danger is when ordinary people begin defending bad choices because those choices have finally become useful to them. That is the moment corruption stops being someone else's problem and becomes part of the social fabric.

Perhaps, then, the question Kenya should be asking is not simply, "Who is stealing from us?" It should also be, "What are we willing to steal from one another in order to get ahead?" The answer may reveal more about the country than any political speech ever will.

Ambition becomes greed at the point where getting more matters more than what getting more destroys. And when enough people cross that line, the damage is no longer individual. It becomes national.

We dilute the milk, then complain that it has no taste. We weaken the system, then wonder why it cannot serve us. We reward shortcuts, then complain that nobody respects the rules.

Perhaps the first step towards changing Kenya is not demanding that everyone become perfect. It is simply learning to recognise the moment when enough should finally be enough.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *The £51M move addresses an injury crisis at the back as Arteta moves to bolster his defensive options ahead of the title defence

Arsenal agree deal to sign Konsa from Villa

By Pascal Okoth

Arsenal yesterday agreed a deal worth £51M to sign England defender Ezri Konsa from Aston Villa, with the 28-year-old set to undergo a medical before completing his move to the Emirates Stadium.

The Gunners had a £30M bid rejected earlier in the summer, with Villa holding out for £60M, but the two clubs found a compromise with a significantly improved offer containing add-ons. Personal terms have been agreed, paving the way for Konsa to make the move to north London.

The transfer is driven by an urgent need for defensive cover. William Saliba is sidelined for an extended period due to a back injury, while Jurriën Timber remains several weeks away as he works to overcome a groin problem. Arsenal had previously explored a deal for Bayer Leverkusen's Jarell Quansah before returning to Konsa as their primary target.

Konsa made 286 appearances for Villa since joining from Brentford in 2019, helping the West Midlands club evolve from relegation battlers to consistent European contenders. His performances earned him a call-up to the England squad in 2024 and he has gone on to win 28 caps, scoring two international goals. He played a key part in England's run to the World Cup semi-finals this summer and scored in the third-place play-off victory over France — their best finish since 1966. He also won the Europa League with Villa last season, starting in the 3-0 final victory over Freiburg.

Konsa is valued for his ability to operate at both right-back and centre-back, and won more ground duels than any other Premier League player last season — finishing ahead of Virgil van Dijk and Gabriel. That versatility



Ezri Konsa

ity and defensive authority align precisely with what Arteta demands from his backline.

Because Konsa missed the Thursday midday registration deadline, he will not feature in Arsenal's Premier League opener against Coventry City today. He could instead make his league debut for the club at As-

ton Villa on 31 August.

Arsenal are also expected to allow Ben White to leave once the Konsa deal is finalised, with Everton understood to be ready to move for the defender. White is contracted until 2028 but is open to a move for more regular first-team football.

For Villa, losing Konsa rep-

resents a significant departure. The club is understood to be exploring replacements, with Fikayo Tomori and Tosin Adarabioyo among the names under consideration. The £51M fee, however, provides substantial funds to reinvest in the squad.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Arsenal kick off their title defence against promoted Coventry City as England’s top flight roars back to life

Premier League returns today as new season promises another thrilling campaign

By Pascal Okoth

The wait is over. The English Premier League returns today, Friday, with defending champions Arsenal hosting newly promoted Coventry City at the Emirates Stadium to open the 2026/27 season — ushering in another campaign of intense competition, dramatic storylines and the world’s finest footballers battling for domestic supremacy.

After months of transfer activity and pre-season preparations, supporters will once again turn their attention to England’s top flight. Arsenal enter the season with considerable confidence after ending their long wait for the Premier League title last season. Manager Mikel Arteta now faces the considerable challenge of keeping his side at the summit while managing the weight of expectation that comes with being champions. Their opening fixture against Coventry carries immediate intrigue — the visitors return to the top flight after 25 years away and will be determined to make a statement on one of football’s grandest stages.

The opening weekend also promises several compelling encounters involving the traditional giants of English football. Manchester United begin their campaign away to newly promoted Hull City, while Liverpool travel to Newcastle United. Tottenham Hotspur face Brentford and Manchester City open against Bournemouth. Chelsea start their season away to Fulham on Monday.

Beyond the fixtures, the new campaign arrives loaded with questions. Can Arsenal become champions in consecutive seasons? Can Manchester City reclaim the title following a period of transition? Will Manchester United sustain their resurgence? Can Liverpool remain among the leading contenders after significant changes to their squad and



coaching structure?

The managerial landscape adds another layer of intrigue. Several clubs enter the campaign under new leadership, creating uncertainty about how quickly sides will adapt to fresh tactical ideas. City begin a new era following Pep Guardiola’s departure, while Chelsea are now under Xabi Alonso.

The three promoted clubs carry entirely different objectives. For Coventry, Hull and Ipswich Town, survival is the immediate priority — though the opening fixtures offer little respite, with all three facing established Premier League opposition early in the campaign.

The 2026/27 season also arrives in the wake of the FIFA World Cup, with players and clubs having carefully managed fitness and preparations during a truncated pre-season. The delayed start has only sharpened the anticipation among supporters hungry for competitive domestic football.

For fans, the Premier League’s return means more than league tables and trophies. It means packed stadiums, fierce rivalries, unexpected results, breakout young stars and moments that will be replayed for years. Every weekend will offer fresh drama.

Arsenal will want to begin their title defence with victory. Coventry will arrive at the Emirates hoping to announce their return to the top flight in style. One thing is certain: another unforgettable English football season starts today.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



The unmistakable identity of a Range Rover

Across six decades and countless rivals, one silhouette has never needed a badge to announce itself

By: John Irungu Maina
@themkenyentimes



Worth Noting:

- Since the original Range Rover arrived in 1970, the design has evolved considerably — but the fundamental character has held firm. The upright stance, commanding height, clean body lines, distinctive roofline and assured proportions have continued to define the vehicle across every generation. Range Rover has never needed excessive styling to announce itself. Its presence comes from proportion alone.
- The design has traditionally relied on simple, confident surfaces rather than complicated creases. There is a sense of restraint to the shape. Even as newer generations have grown more sophisticated, the essential idea remains instantly recognisable — and that continuity is one of Range Rover's greatest strengths.

There are vehicles you identify by their badge, and then there are vehicles you recognise before you ever see one.

The Range Rover belongs firmly in the second category.

Across generations, changing technologies, evolving tastes and an increasingly crowded luxury-SUV market, Range Rover has maintained something remarkably difficult to achieve in the automotive world: a distinctive visual identity that endures. You can spot one approaching from a distance and, in most cases, know immediately what it is.

That recognition is not accidental.

Since the original Range Rover arrived in 1970, the design has evolved considerably — but the fundamental character has held firm. The upright stance, commanding height, clean body lines, distinctive roofline and assured proportions have continued to define the vehicle across every generation. Range Rover has never needed excessive styling to announce itself. Its presence comes from proportion alone.

The design has traditionally relied on simple, confident surfaces rather than complicated creases. There is a sense of restraint to the shape. Even as newer generations have grown more sophisticated, the essential idea remains instantly recognisable — and that continuity is one of Range Rover's greatest strengths.

The roofline is perhaps its most distinctive feature. The floating-roof effect, particularly pronounced on modern generations, gives the vehicle a profile unlike anything else on the road. Combined with the raised ride height and characteristic rear treatment, it creates a silhouette that reads clearly even when finer details are difficult to make out.

Then there is the side profile. A Range Rover does not try to look like a sports car masquerading as an SUV. It embraces its size and height without apology. The proportions communicate luxury through confidence rather than aggression — a deliberate choice in a market crowded with vehicles designed to compete loudly for attention.



Range Rover

Range Rover has largely taken a different approach. It does not need enormous grilles, aggressive creases or fussy bodywork to establish its identity. The simplicity is the identity.

Inside, the same philosophy holds. Range Rover cabins have moved steadily towards clean dashboards, premium materials, minimalist controls and an atmosphere built around deep comfort. The objective has never been simply to make the interior luxurious — it has been to create a particular feeling. And that feeling has always been central to what the Range Rover name means.

It is a vehicle designed to occupy an unusual space between luxury and genuine capability. The original concept was quietly revolutionary: a machine that combined serious off-road ability with a level of refinement that was extraordinary for a vehicle designed to leave the road.

That dual personality became the foundation of its identity. A Range Rover could pull up to a luxury hotel without looking out of place, then leave the tarmac entirely and handle terrain that would defeat most rivals wearing a prestige badge.

Over the decades, competitors have copied parts of the formula. Luxury SUVs multiplied. Performance SUVs appeared. Premium manufacturers developed their own large off-road models. Yet Range Rover remained visually distinct throughout — and that is the real power of a coherent design language.

The latest generations are sleeker, more technologically advanced and more aerodynamic than their predecessors. But they still carry the visual cues that connect them to the Range Rovers that came before. This is where the brand has been particularly successful: it has modernised without abandoning its past.

The challenge for any iconic vehicle is knowing how much to change. Change too little and it becomes outdated. Change too much and it loses the identity that made it famous. Range Rover has spent more than five decades walking that line with unusual discipline.

Its evolution has never been about preserving individual design elements. It has been about preserving the character behind those elements. That is why a current Range Rover can look entirely different from a model produced thirty years earlier and still feel, instinctively, unmistakably like a Range Rover.

The badge may confirm what you are looking at. But the silhouette tells you first.

And that, perhaps, is the greatest achievement of Range Rover's design philosophy: it built an identity strong enough to be recognised before the name is even visible.