Kenya's 2027 political map takes shape as Ruto pushes new vision

Kenya's political temperature climbed several degrees this weekend as President William Ruto pushed a new long-term development agenda while fault lines widened within both the ruling coalition and the opposition

Page 8

Kenya's diaspora lifeline shows its first cracks in 17 years

Kenya is staring down the possibility of its first annual decline in diaspora remittances since the 2008 global financial crisis after inflows fell 3.03 per cent to KSh315.74B in the first half of 2026

Page 12

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The Mt. Kenya Times

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Countdown 2027 Kenyatta warned political leaders against blocking rivals from holding public meetings

Uhuru steps out of the shadows

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday delivered his most direct and consequential political intervention since leaving State House in 2022, warning against intimidation, dismissing allegations that he is bankrolling the opposition, and declaring in unambiguous terms that Kenya's next leader will be chosen by the people — not engineered by any individual, including himself.

Speaking in Kitale, Trans Nzoia County, at the 23rd annual memorial service for former Vice-President Michael Kijana Wamalwa, Kenyatta warned political leaders against blocking rivals from holding public meetings, saying such tactics would push Kenya backwards. He appeared alongside Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and DAP-K's Eugene Wamalwa in what was, by any measure, a statement of opposition solidarity — even as Kenyatta insisted he was not interfering in active politics.

The speech was vintage Uhuru: layered, carefully calibrated and entirely deniable — yet unmistakably pointed. Every sentence was directed at a specific audience. Every pause carried weight. And the crowd in Kitale, like the political class back in Nairobi, understood exactly what was being said and what was being left unsaid.

Page 9

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta

Gachagua takes the war home to Kirinyaga

The former deputy president returns to Mt Kenya's heartland with his sharpest assault yet on the man he once served

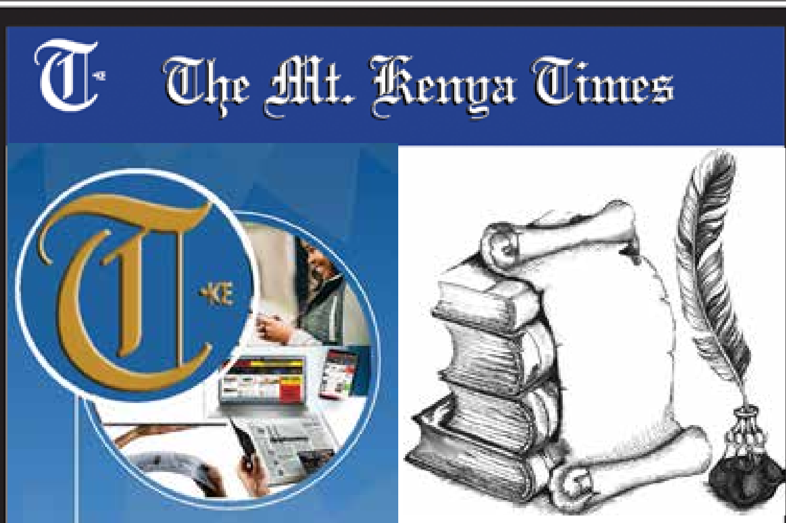
BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday carried his most direct attack on President William Ruto into Ndia constituency in Kirinyaga County, accusing the head of state of damaging Kenya's international reputation, mismanaging the economy and running early campaigns instead of governing — all from the pulpit of ACK Church Kimathi, deep in territory that was once loyal to the establishment he now actively opposes.
Speaking at the Ndia rally, Gachagua rejected Ruto's claim that the opposition was responsible for tarnishing Kenya's image abroad. "We heard the president say that we in the opposition are spoiling the name of the country. We want to tell him it is not us, it is him," he said, pointing to what he described as abductions, extrajudicial killings and foreign policy controversies that had drawn criticism from the international community.
The Kirinyaga visit was part of an escalating DCP mobilisation sweep across Mt Kenya that

Contd page 13

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Editor's Desk



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NEWS IN BRIEF

The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union yesterday rejected the Medical Practitioners and Dentists Act Amendment Bill No. 10 of 2026, warning that critical legal, policy and regulatory gaps in the proposed legislation posed a direct threat to healthcare standards and patient safety across the country. The union said the Bill, if passed in its current form, would weaken the existing regulatory framework governing medical practice in Kenya, exposing patients to unacceptable risks while undermining the professional standards that doctors and dentists are legally obligated to uphold. KMPDU called on Parliament to withdraw the Bill pending comprehensive stakeholder consultations, insisting that any amendments to legislation governing medical practice must be grounded in evidence, developed transparently and subjected to rigorous professional scrutiny before being presented for enactment.

Efforts to professionalise East Africa's creative industry gained fresh momentum yesterday as MEMA Africa and the organisers of the East Africa Gospel Music Award and Festival moved to establish a formal cross-border strategic partnership that could reshape how the region's creative talent is identified, supported and celebrated. The proposed collaboration between MEMA Africa and the East Africa Gospel Music Award and Festival brings together two organisations with established networks across the region, with the partnership expected to create structured pathways for artists, producers and industry professionals seeking recognition and commercial opportunities beyond their national borders. Both parties said the initiative reflected a shared conviction that East Africa's creative economy had long outgrown the informal structures currently governing it and required institutional frameworks capable of sustaining its growth.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen yesterday broke his silence on the violence that disrupted a Linda Mwananchi rally in Homa Bay, blaming the opposition for ignoring advance police intelligence that warned of a credible security threat ahead of the gathering. Murkomen said security agencies had identified and communicated specific risks to the rally organisers in sufficient time for precautionary measures to be taken, but that the warnings were disregarded. He defended the subsequent police response as proportionate and intelligence-led, pushing back against opposition claims that the intervention was politically motivated. The CS's statement came as pressure mounted on the government to account for the events in Homa Bay, with opposition leaders demanding an independent inquiry into what they described as a state-sanctioned attempt to suppress political assembly ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro yesterday declared he would take a nationwide campaign for national transformation directly to Kenyans as he moved to formalise his positioning for the 2027 presidential race. Speaking with unusual candour about his ambitions, Nyoro said his interest in the country's top seat was anchored in a desire to address what he described as persistent failures in education, healthcare, youth empowerment and unemployment — challenges he argued had been inadequately confronted by successive administrations. The MP, who has emerged as one of the more consequential political voices in the Mt Kenya region, said Kenya needed leadership defined by commitment to tangible outcomes rather than political rhetoric, and that he intended to make that case to voters in every corner of the republic before August 2027.

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday joined former President Uhuru Kenyatta, DAP-K leader Eugene Wamalwa, former Attorney General Justin Muturi, former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i, and former ministers Martha Karua and Charity Ngilu at the Wamalwa Kijana Memorial Home in Kitale to mark 23 years since the death of Kenya's eighth Vice-President, Michael Kijana Wamalwa. The gathering, which drew leaders from across the political spectrum, was framed not merely as a commemoration but as a renewed commitment to the democratic and unifying values Wamalwa embodied during his lifetime. Kalonzo described the occasion as a call to complete the work Wamalwa began — building a Kenya that is united, just and prosperous for every citizen. "Kijana Wamalwa, your stars still light our sky," Kalonzo said.

The family of Emurua Dikirr MP Johana Ng'eno is mourning for the second time in recent memory after his only brother died in hospital, deepening the grief of a household that has endured significant personal loss in a short period. The death, which was confirmed by those close to the family, has drawn an outpouring of condolences from political colleagues and constituents across the country who have expressed solidarity with the legislator during what those around him describe as an extraordinarily painful moment. Ng'eno, known for his outspoken presence in Parliament and his fierce independence in political matters, has not yet issued a public statement. Friends and allies have asked that the family be accorded space and privacy as they come to terms with their loss and make burial arrangements.


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Politics The numbers were designed to land before the sermon ended. Fertiliser at KSh2,000. Maize seed at KSh150. KSh18B for schools. KSh12B in housing

Ruto puts development at the heart of his 2027 pitch

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto President William Ruto (second left) in Taita Taveta County

President William Ruto yesterday used a Sunday church service in Taita Taveta County to unleash the most concentrated package of development announcements of his presidency in a single sitting, cutting fertiliser prices, halving the cost of maize seed, pledging KSh12B in affordable housing projects and releasing KSh18B in school capitation — all while insisting, with barely concealed electoral intent, that Kenya cannot be transformed by political noise.

Speaking at AIC Makutano Church in Taveta Constituency on Sunday, 23 August, Ruto announced that the price of a standard bag of maize seed would be subsidised by 50 per cent, dropping from KSh300 to KSh150, effective from September ahead of the short rains planting season. He went further still. "I am making an announcement to all our farmers that from next month, in the next two weeks, we are going to subsidise maize seeds by 50 per cent and reduce the cost of fertiliser by another 500 shillings. So that the bag that was selling at 2,500 is going to be sold at 2,000," he told the congregation.

The numbers were designed to land before the sermon ended. Fertiliser at KSh2,000. Maize seed at KSh150. KSh18B for schools. KSh12B in housing. One hundred thousand teachers recruited. Twenty thousand more to follow. These are not abstractions — they are the figures that households weigh when they decide whether an administration is working for them or against them. Ruto knows this better than any politician in Kenya today, and his performance in Taita Taveta was a masterclass in translating policy into lived arithmetic.

The President linked the announcements directly to his administration's development philosophy, declaring: "Kenya cannot be changed by mischief or mere political talk, but by new projects and development." He pointed to the KSh12B in affordable housing under construction across the county — a 458-unit project in Voi at KSh1.4B already 60 per cent complete, 831 units in Taveta at KSh2.3B at 14 per cent complete, 385 units in Wundanyi at KSh930M already awarded, and an integrated project in Mwatate comprising 580 housing units alongside a Level 4 hospital at an estimated KSh1.7B. The list was delivered not as a briefing but as evidence — a documented rebuttal to every critic who has questioned his record.

The church setting was not incidental. Ruto has made Sunday services a consistent feature of his political calendar since long before he became president, and he has refined the format into something that blurs the line between pastoral visit and campaign rally with practised ease. He receives the warmth of a congregation, delivers the substance of a cabinet meeting and departs with the imagery of a president among the people — all before noon. It is a formula that works, and yesterday's performance in Taita Taveta was among its most polished iterations.

On education, Ruto confirmed that KSh18B in school capitation had been released ahead of the reopening of schools yesterday, outlined a new higher education financing model to support university and TVET students and said the government had recruited 100,000 teachers over the past four years, with plans to hire more than 20,000 additional teachers next year. The education figures require scrutiny — independent analysts have noted that the majority of the 100,000 teachers are on contract under an internship programme that has generated court cases and sustained protests from teachers' unions demanding permanent terms. But in a church in Taita Taveta on a Sunday morning, the headline figure is what registers.

The political context within which all of this was delivered is impossible to separate from the content itself. Kenya is twelve months from a general election fixed for 10 August 2027. Ruto is the incumbent, which means he carries both the advantages of office and the full weight of its failures. The cost of living remains the defining political grievance of his administration. Diaspora remittances have just recorded their steepest first-half decline since the global financial crisis of 2008. The Gen Z protests of 2024 exposed the depth of public frustration with economic conditions in ways that no subsequent announcement has fully extinguished.

Against that backdrop, Ruto's Taita Taveta strategy is coherent and deliberate. He is not attempting to change the conversation about the economy. He is attempting to reframe it — to move Kenyans from asking whether things are hard towards asking whether things are improving, and to provide them with enough specific, verifiable evidence of improvement that the answer leans toward yes. A bag of fertiliser at KSh2,000 instead of KSh2,500 is not a transformative economic shift. But for a farmer calculating the cost of the coming planting season, it is real, immediate and attributable to a named decision by a named president.

Ruto has been explicit about his re-election strategy. "As leadership, we have raised the bar. It is no longer about insults but track record, agenda and plan," he said at a separate event in Machakos on Saturday, urging Kenyans to judge their leaders by what they had delivered rather than by political rhetoric. It is a frame that suits an incumbent who commands the resources of the state and can announce on any Sunday morning what his opposition can only promise.

What the Taita Taveta address also revealed, between the figures and the pledges, is Ruto's acute awareness of the opposition gathering strength around him. Without naming specific opponents, he warned that "anyone propagating evil vices does not deserve any leadership position," adding: "We no longer want politics of exclusion and division. We want a government that unites all Kenyans. That is why I formed the broad-based government and included even those we opposed during the elections, because unity is strength." The message was directed at those who were, at precisely that moment, assembling in Trans Nzoia — a pointed reminder from a president who monitors his opponents as closely as he monitors his own polling numbers.

Taita Taveta is not a swing county in the conventional sense. But Ruto is not campaigning county by county. He is campaigning nationally, using every platform — every church, every road launch, every school reopening — to build a cumulative image of an administration that delivers. The risk in that strategy is that the image must eventually be measured against the reality that ordinary Kenyans experience in their homes, not in government press releases.

For now, the fertiliser is cheaper. The school capitation is released. The houses are under construction. And a president who knows he must win on his record has made his opening argument — loudly, specifically and with a congregation as his witness.


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Politics In Mt Kenya, the fallout surrounding Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro has added another layer to an already complicated struggle for political influence in the region

Kenya's 2027 political map takes shape as Ruto pushes new vision

From State House to the grassroots, the battle for Kenya's next political order is already well under way

BY Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's political temperature climbed several degrees this weekend as President William Ruto pushed a new long-term development agenda while fault lines widened within both the ruling coalition and the opposition — all of it playing out against the lengthening shadow of the 2027 General Election.

At the centre of the debate is Ruto's proposed "Beyond Vision 2030" framework, which he argues is essential to prevent Kenya from entering its next development cycle without a clear long-term destination. In an exclusive interview with the Sunday Nation at State House on Friday, Ruto made the case that the country cannot afford to wait for Vision 2030 to expire before deciding what comes next. The proposed framework is expected to inform Medium-Term Plan Five, covering 2027 to 2032 — a planning horizon that would, by coincidence or design, extend well beyond any single electoral term.

The proposal has immediately acquired a political dimension, as most things do in Kenya at this stage of the electoral cycle. Opposition figures have questioned the timing and portrayed the initiative as part of the groundwork being laid for 2027 rather than a straightforward exercise in national planning. That criticism places Ruto in a familiar dilemma: how to pursue a long-term national project without having it read, at every turn, through the lens of the next election. It is a dilemma he will find difficult to escape.

While the President talks about what comes after 2030, politicians across the country are already in full campaign mode for 2027 — and the manoeuvrings are growing more intricate by the week.

In Mt Kenya, the fallout surrounding Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro has added another layer to an already complicated struggle for political influence in the region. Nyoro has rejected suggestions that his positioning amounts to a direct contest with former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua for control of Mt Kenya. Gachagua has offered a rather different reading of events, accusing Nyoro of helping fragment the opposition vote in a way that could ultimately work in Ruto's favour.

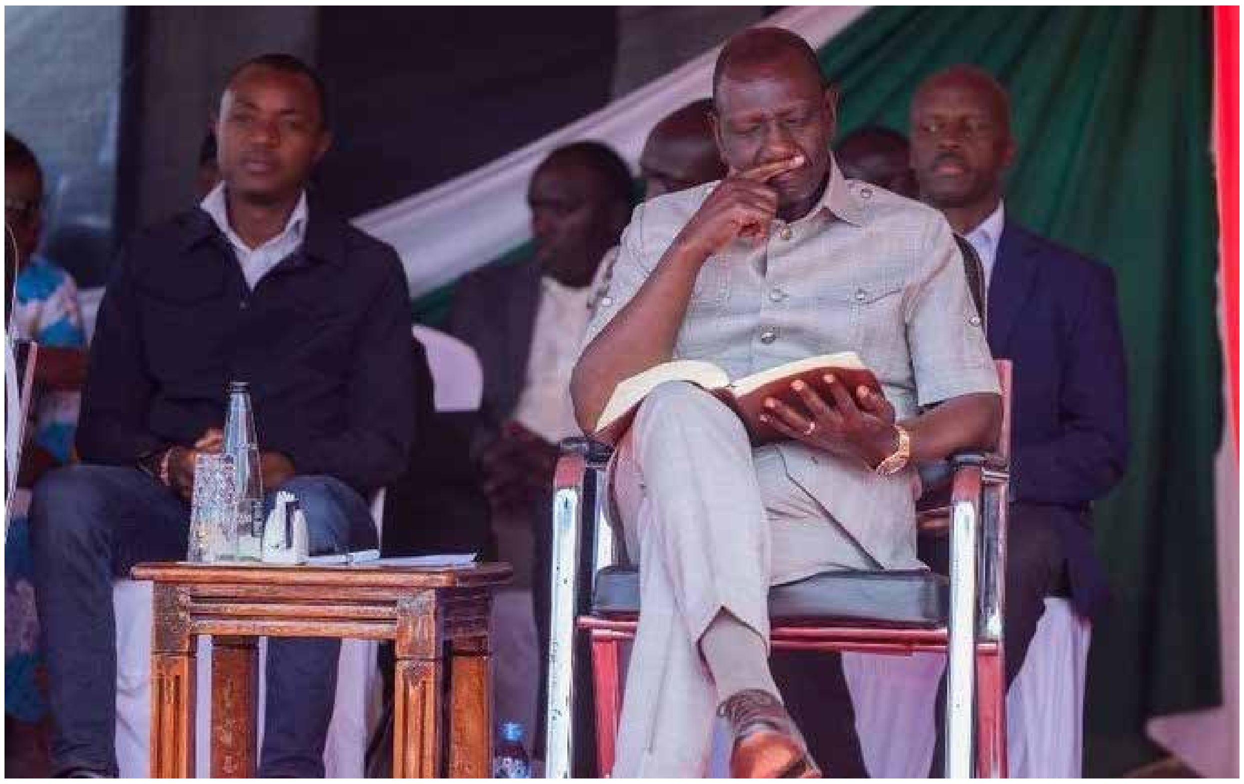
The dispute exposes a deeper and more consequential question confronting Mt Kenya politics: whether the region will consolidate behind a single political force, or fracture among competing leaders, parties and presidential ambitions. That question has grown more urgent as Gachagua moves to expand his reach beyond his traditional strongholds.

The former deputy president has been taking his Democracy for the Citizens Party message into different parts of the country, including Emurua Dikirr, where he has appeared alongside supporters and political allies. His wider mobilisation follows an extended period of political consultations as he works to build a broader national network capable of competing for influence well beyond the Mt Kenya region. The significance of that strategy lies in what it signals about his ambitions: Gachagua is not positioning himself as a regional politician seeking accommodation within someone else's coalition. He is attempting to build a vehicle that can compete on the national stage.

He is not, however, the only opposition figure wrestling with the gap between regional support and national viability.

Inside ODM, rival political camps continue to wrestle over the party's direction, with tensions becoming increasingly visible at rallies in Nyanza. The divisions matter because ODM remains central to the broader calculations surrounding 2027, particularly as its complicated relationship with the Kenya Kwanza administration continues to generate friction within its own ranks. The party's ability to maintain internal cohesion while navigating those tensions will have a significant bearing on the shape of the broader opposition.

For the opposition collectively, the challenge is therefore not simply one of defeating Ruto. It is the far harder task of deciding who should lead the challenge, which parties should form the coalition, how competing regional interests should be balanced and whether individual ambitions can be subordinated to a single, credible presidential ticket. That remains one of the biggest unanswered questions on the road to 2027 — and the clock is ticking.



President William Ruto

The ruling coalition is facing its own pressures from within. Internal disagreements inside Kenya Kwanza continue to expose the difficulty of maintaining a broad political alliance as individual leaders make their own calculations ahead of the next election. The disputes may appear containable for now, but they point to a broader reality: alliances forged around the conditions of 2022 are already being tested by the very different demands of 2027.

This is what makes Ruto's Beyond Vision 2030 conversation politically layered. The President is attempting to define Kenya's development trajectory beyond the current national plan at precisely the moment when the country's political leaders are negotiating the terms of the next political order. Whether the two conversations can remain genuinely separate is another matter.

Ruto is looking beyond Vision 2030. Gachagua is building a national opposition network. Mt Kenya leaders are negotiating their positions. ODM is confronting internal tensions. And the wider opposition is still searching for a formula capable of producing one formidable challenger to the incumbent.

Kenya's next General Election is scheduled for 10 August 2027 — a fixed point on the calendar that gives all of these political manoeuvres a hard deadline, regardless of how far away it still feels.

The country is now debating two futures simultaneously: the economic and development future that Ruto says must extend beyond Vision 2030, and the political future that competing leaders are already working to control. Both conversations are real. Both carry consequences. And both are accelerating.

The question is no longer whether Kenya's political map will be redrawn.

It is who gets to hold the pen.

United Alternative Government

Politics Kenyatta warned political leaders against blocking rivals from holding public meetings, saying such tactics would push Kenya backwards

Uhuru steps out of the shadows — and Kenya's election war begins

The former president breaks his silence in Kitale, and every word lands like a political grenade twelve months before the ballot

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday delivered his most direct and consequential political intervention since leaving State House in 2022, warning against intimidation, dismissing allegations that he is bankrolling the opposition, and declaring in unambiguous terms that Kenya's next leader will be chosen by the people — not engineered by any individual, including himself.

Speaking in Kitale, Trans Nzoia County, at the 23rd annual memorial service for former Vice-President Michael Kijana Wamalwa, Kenyatta warned political leaders against blocking rivals from holding public meetings, saying such tactics would push Kenya backwards. He appeared alongside Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and DAP-K's Eugene Wamalwa in what was, by any measure, a statement of opposition solidarity — even as Kenyatta insisted he was not interfering in active politics.

The speech was vintage Uhuru: layered, carefully calibrated and entirely deniable — yet unmistakably pointed. Every sentence was directed at a specific audience. Every pause carried weight. And the crowd in Kitale, like the political class back in Nairobi, understood exactly what was being said and what was being left unsaid.

"If you want votes, ask Kenyans politely; they will give them to you or deny you. I asked them at first and I was denied. I came back again and they voted for me," he told the gathering, a remark widely read as a gentle rebuke to those who believe political power can be assumed rather than earned. Then, in a moment that crystallised the entire political mood of the afternoon, the crowd erupted when Kenyatta mentioned the name of Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna. Rather than capitalise on the cheers, Kenyatta quickly cautioned the crowd: "Jameni chungeni, sitaki kuitwa sponsor" — roughly translated as "Careful, I don't want to be called a sponsor" — drawing laughter but also making a pointed reference to President William Ruto's repeated public claims that Kenyatta is funding opposition activities.

"I am not interested in any seat," Kenyatta said plainly, attempting to draw a clear line between political engagement and personal ambition. "It is time for other people, and Kenyans will decide. Do not agree to be divided."

Whether that disclaimer is accepted at face value depends entirely on where one sits in Kenya's current political landscape. For Ruto's Kenya Kwanza administration, Kenyatta is not a neutral commentator but an active opposition architect — a man who chairs Azimio's coalition council, who has endorsed former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i as a presidential candidate and who recently convened Azimio's top organ to discuss rebranding the coalition into a broader opposition front capable of challenging Kenya Kwanza in 2027. For the opposition, Kenyatta is the one figure with the institutional weight, the Mt Kenya credibility and the political network to stitch together a coalition capable of defeating an incumbent president.

The significance of his Kitale appearance extends well beyond the words spoken at a graveside in Trans Nzoia. It represents the most visible and public alignment yet between Kenyatta and the broad opposition formation that is coalescing around Kalonzo's Wiper Patriotic Front, Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party, Matiang'i's presidential ambitions and the Linda Mwananchi movement. Representatives from Wiper, Jubilee, Kanu and other parties have been in discussions about accommodating these emerging formations into a single political vehicle, with Kalonzo proposing a National Rainbow Coalition-style model that would allow parties to retain their identities while backing a common presidential candidate.

The problem, and it is a significant one, is that the opposition has been here before. Kenya has a well-documented history of broad opposition coalitions that fracture under the weight of competing presidential ambitions at precisely the moment they are most needed to hold together. The question of who carries the coalition's presidential ticket — Kalonzo, Matiang'i, Gachagua or someone else — remains entirely unresolved, and each of those names brings both assets and liabilities to the table.

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta is welcomed by Eugene Wamalwa in Kitale, Trans Nzoia County

Kenyatta himself has addressed this directly, warning at a Jubilee Party delegates' meeting in Kiambu earlier this year against the return of tribal politics, noting that rising living costs and a monthly salary of KSh20,000 that can no longer cover rent, fuel, food and school fees had placed enormous pressure on ordinary households. "You are now in leadership, deal with the problems Kenyans are facing," he said on that occasion — a remark aimed squarely at the Ruto administration and the economic conditions that have defined its middle years in office.

Those economic conditions are the true terrain on which 2027 will be fought. Kenya's diaspora remittances have recorded their steepest first-half decline since the 2008 global financial crisis. The cost of living remains a defining political grievance. The Gen Z protests of 2024, which shook Ruto's administration to its foundations and forced a cabinet reshuffle, demonstrated that economic discontent can translate rapidly into political mobilisation. Ruto enters the campaign period as an incumbent who retains the considerable advantages of the state — resources, patronage networks and the machinery of government — but who must also defend a record that many Kenyans find wanting on the issues that matter most to daily life.

Kenyatta's influence remains particularly acute in Mt Kenya, a region that feels increasingly alienated by the Kenya Kwanza administration, and where recent murmurs on the ground suggest that the electorate is beginning to re-evaluate the choices made in 2022. That re-evaluation is precisely what Kenyatta is cultivating — not by announcing candidates or issuing directives, but by appearing at the right events, in the right company, with the right words, at the right moment.

Yesterday was one such moment. Kitale is not Mt Kenya. Trans Nzoia is not Kenyatta country. And that is precisely the point. A former president who shows up in Western Kenya to honour Michael Kijana Wamalwa's memory, flanked by Kalonzo Musyoka and Eugene Wamalwa, is sending a message about the geographic breadth of the coalition he is assembling — quietly, systematically and with the patience of a man who no longer needs to win anything for himself.

"Hii nafasi sasa ni ya wengine. Na Wakenya wenyewe ndio wataamua ni nani" — "This opportunity now belongs to others. And Kenyans themselves will decide who," he said. It was, on its surface, a statement of restraint. In practice, it was a declaration of intent. Uhuru Kenyatta is not running for anything. But he is very much in the race.

With Kenya's general election fixed for 10 August 2027, the campaign has no formal start date — but it started yesterday, in Kitale, when a former president stood up and reminded everyone exactly how much he still matters.

Energy At the heart of the discussion was a shared frustration familiar to anyone who has followed Kenya's energy rollout closely

Wandayi meets MPs to push energy access to Kenya's margins

Cabinet Secretary holds talks with legislators from Busia and Nyatike on electricity connectivity and the pace of energy transition

BY James Kilonzo Bwire
@themtkenyatimes

Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum Opiyo Wandayi yesterday convened a working meeting at Kawi House, Nairobi, with Busia County Woman Representative Catherine Omanyo and Nyatike MP Tom Odege to discuss the pace of electricity connectivity in their constituencies, the acceleration of stalled energy projects, and the steps needed to ensure that Kenya's transition to cleaner energy delivers tangible benefits to ordinary households and communities.

The meeting, low-key in setting but substantive in intent, reflected the kind of practical, cross-institutional engagement that energy policymakers say is essential to closing the gap between government commitments and what citizens actually experience. For the people of Busia and Nyatike — constituencies where reliable electricity remains a daily struggle for many — the conversation at Kawi House carried direct consequences: whether a clinic has light when it is most needed, whether a shopkeeper can run a refrigerator, or whether a child can study after dark.

At the heart of the discussion was a shared frustration familiar to anyone who has followed Kenya's energy rollout closely. Many promising projects stall not because they lack merit or funding, but because of bureaucratic delays, fragmented responsibilities and poor coordination between the Ministry and the legislators whose constituencies host the projects. When MPs with on-the-ground knowledge of specific bottlenecks sit down directly with the Cabinet Secretary, the pathway to resolution shortens considerably. Wandayi, who has overseen Kenya's energy portfolio since his appointment in August 2024, has publicly committed to reducing such implementation gaps, and yesterday's meeting appeared designed to translate that commitment into action on specific project timelines.

CS Opiyo Wandayi with MPs Catherine Omanyo of Busia County and Tom Odege

Omanyo, who represents one of western Kenya's most densely populated counties and has a record of advocacy on livelihoods and community infrastructure, brought to the table an understanding of how energy poverty intersects with wider economic precarity. For the small traders, rural clinics and public schools in Busia, the energy question is not abstract — it is the difference between a functioning cold chain for vaccines and one that fails, between a thriving small business and one that cannot scale. Odege, whose Nyatike constituency sits along the shores of Lake Victoria and covers some of Migori County's most remote communities, faces similar realities in a constituency where grid extension has long lagged behind national averages.

Central to the discussions was the question of inclusive transition. Kenya's move toward renewable energy — through solar expansion, mini-grid deployment and grid extensions — carries genuine promise, but also carries the risk of distributing its benefits unevenly. Without deliberate planning, the gains of the energy transition tend to accrue to areas and consumers that are already better connected, while the most remote and economically vulnerable communities are left waiting. Addressing that imbalance requires more than goodwill; it demands that community needs are incorporated into project design from the outset, that financing mechanisms are structured to make clean energy services affordable for low-income households, and that local populations are equipped with the skills to participate in the green economy being built around them.

The Kawi House meeting also carried a broader signal about how governance can be made to work. Kenya's political landscape is rarely short of tension, and Wandayi, Omanyo and Odege each operate in a competitive environment. That three officials with distinct constituencies and political contexts could convene around a shared development agenda — without fanfare, without the friction that often characterises executive-legislature relations — speaks to a model of public service that places citizen outcomes above institutional rivalry. Cooperation of this kind does not erase political differences; it channels them toward negotiation around shared goals, which is precisely what constituents expect when they send their representatives to Nairobi.

The test, as always, will be in what follows. Working meetings at Kawi House have preceded both genuine delivery and extended delays in the past. For the commitments discussed yesterday to count, they must be translated into coordinated timelines, transparent procurement and clear lines of accountability. The Ministry will need to respond to legislative input with genuine flexibility, while Omanyo and Odege will need to remain active in monitoring implementation rather than treating the meeting as an endpoint. County governments, civil society and local leaders also have roles to play, bringing local knowledge that helps prevent the kind of design failures that cause projects to miss the communities they are meant to serve.

The standard against which all of it will ultimately be judged is simple: does daily life improve? Can the mother running a roadside business keep her goods fresh? Can the nurse at a rural clinic store medicines safely through the night? Can the student in Nyatike study past dusk without a kerosene lamp? Those are not rhetorical questions — they are the lived tests that energy policy either passes or fails.

Yesterday's meeting at Kawi House was a beginning, not a conclusion. Whether it becomes a turning point depends entirely on what happens next.

Soul So we now have a generation that should be building but is instead scamming, lying, stealing, selling its body and filming its own degradation for attention

Sold your soul for a price tag that won't even pay for your funeral

By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
mukphix@gmail.com

There is a new gospel being preached in our streets, in our hostels, in our lecture halls, in our WhatsApp groups and in the messages that arrive at 2 AM with offers that feel too good to examine too closely. It is simple, seductive and deadly: get money by any means necessary. It does not matter how. Just get it.

And our young people are listening.

So we now have a generation that should be building but is instead scamming, lying, stealing, selling its body, filming its own degradation for attention and, in the worst cases, taking life — because somewhere along the way we convinced them that a person without money has no value. This lie is not just corrosive. It is costing us an entire generation.

Young man. Young woman. Pause for a moment. Listen — not as a judge, but as a brother who has attended too many funerals of people who died long before they were buried.

You are running so fast after money that you have forgotten what money actually is.

Money is a terrible master but a useful servant. It is paper. It is mobile credit that can freeze. It is a currency that can lose value overnight, a car that can crash, a house that can burn. I have seen men who were millionaires on a Monday borrowing for transport by Friday. I have seen women counting dollars in December and counting coins for porridge in February. This is not folklore. This is life.

Here is the truth we have forgotten: money can be lost and regained. Markets crash and rise. Businesses collapse and are rebuilt. Currencies fall and stabilise. If you lose money today, you can weep today, work tomorrow and recover next year. Money has a stubborn habit of returning to those who are patient, diligent and honest in their dealings.

Even life — as fragile and precious as it is — can be threatened and yet preserved. How many of us have been on a sickbed where doctors shook their heads, only for grace to lift us? How many survived an accident that should have ended everything, because something beyond our understanding said not yet? How many have stood at the edge of despair, only for a mother to pray, a stranger to call or an unexpected door to open? Life can be shaken to its foundations. But life can be preserved. The Psalmist understood it: he restores my soul. Your life is not over until God says it is over. Even wasted years in the pit can be redeemed by a God who specialises in restoration.

But there is one thing that does not behave like money. One thing that does not respond to prayer the way a broken body can. One thing that, when traded away, is almost never fully returned.

Character. Reputation. Your name.

When you sell that for quick money, you lose everything. And you lose it in a way that no hustle, no apology and no amount of subsequent good behaviour can completely reverse.

Scripture stated it plainly, and our grandparents understood it long before theologians wrote it down: a good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold. Not slightly better. Desirable. Better. In the economy of what truly matters, your name outweighs your net worth by a margin that no calculator can express.

Money lives in your pocket. Character lives in your blood. Money can be counted, but character is felt. People may not know your account balance, but they know what you do when no one is watching. They know whether your word carries weight. They know if you can be trusted with a secret, with a sister, with a contract, with power. And once you destroy that trust, you cannot simply download it back. There is no shortcut to restoring a name that has been burned to the ground.

This is what we are doing to ourselves. And it should cause us to weep.

A young man in his second year at university receives a laptop. He could use it to learn to code, write proposals, build a design portfolio, begin something real. Instead, someone whispers to him that he can make five hundred dollars in a single night by defrauding strangers online. He does it. He posts the money on his status. He buys sneakers. What he does not realise is that the five hundred dollars just purchased his name. From that day forward, when his name is mentioned, people whisper: that thief. That whisper will follow him into every job interview, into his marriage, into the lives of his children. He bought a pair of sneakers and sold his future.

A brilliant young woman — educated, gifted, full of genuine potential — grows tired of waiting. She watches her friends receive new phones. She scrolls through images of Dubai trips and luxury brunches and decides she cannot wait any longer. A man offers her three hundred thousand shillings for one night. She goes. She returns with the money, buys the wig, posts the brunch. But she has traded something she cannot recover. She is no longer known as that brilliant woman. She

is now known as that available woman. And men will seek her not for her mind but for what she has taught them she is willing to offer. When she eventually desires to be loved with dignity, she will ask why no one respects her. The painful answer is that she wrote the terms herself, and the world simply read them.

We are raising a generation that sells its birthright for a bowl of stew, like Esau in the ancient story — one bowl, one night, one deal, one lie, one compromised tender. We think no one will know. But the earth has a long memory. And so does the conscience.

Here is the bitter truth that hustle culture refuses to tell you: money without character is poverty wearing expensive clothes. The rich man who cannot be trusted is poor. The powerful man who must bribe to keep his position is poor. You may have cash in your wallet and emptiness in your chest — and that is the most devastating kind of poverty, because it is invisible until the moment it destroys you.

Ask any serious business person what they truly invest in. Ask any woman what she looks for beyond the surface. Ask any father preparing to entrust his daughter to another human being. Nobody invests in a person with a broken character. They may use you for a transaction, but they will never trust you for a lifetime. The sponsor pays for your hotel room but will never introduce you to his family. The corrupt boss pays you for the dirty deal but will never put your name on anything that matters. People may buy what you are selling. But they will quietly despise the seller. That is the unchanging law of human trust.

And the wound runs deeper still. Once you lose your character, you begin to lose yourself. You look in the mirror and no longer recognise the person looking back. You were once someone who had values; now you only have calculations. Something inside you dies long before your body does. That is what moral compromise does. It pays you and kills you simultaneously — slowly, quietly and with a smile.

Oh, my generation — who has bewitched us? Who told you that dignity does not pay rent? Who told you that you must be degraded to be noticed? Who convinced you that you must scam to survive?

There are those who chose the longer road. They refused to compromise. They were laughed at, called foolish, dismissed as too principled for the real world. They wore the same shoes for two years. But a decade later, their name opens doors that money cannot. Their word is their bond. When they speak, people listen. When they need support, people give — because their name is collateral. That is wealth. Not the noise kind. The lasting kind.

Consider two men who die on the same day. One dies with five hundred million in his account, but nobody at the burial speaks of him with honour. The whispers move through the crowd: he stole, he destroyed people, he never gave without extracting something in return. His children will spend the money. But they will carry the shame.

The other man dies with far less. But the entire village gathers. Market women weep. Young men and women speak of what he taught them, how he helped them when they had nothing, how his word was always good. His name will feed his children long after his body has returned to the earth.

Which of them was truly rich?

So I plead with you — young man, young woman, reading this late at night while considering something you already know is wrong, simply because you need money: do not sell your soul for a price tag that will not even pay for your funeral.

Let them call you broke today. Let them call you faithful tomorrow. Guard your character as you would guard your own breath, because once it is gone, you lose everything else with it.

Money will leave and return. Life will shake and be preserved. But your name — that is yours to protect.

As Proverbs 10:9 puts it: whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.

You will be found out. So walk uprightly, while the road ahead is still yours to choose.

Diaspora remittances **The figures, drawn from Central Bank of Kenya data, mark a sobering moment for an economy that has come to regard diaspora money as its most dependable external lifeline**

Kenya's diaspora lifeline shows its first cracks in 17 years

War in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia's tightening labour laws and rising global inflation are draining the remittance stream that Kenya has depended on for two decades

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya is staring down the possibility of its first annual decline in diaspora remittances since the 2008 global financial crisis after inflows fell 3.03 per cent to KSh315.74B in the first half of 2026 — the steepest first-half contraction since the financial crisis — wiping KSh9.87B from the foreign exchange inflows that millions of Kenyan households depend on.

The figures, drawn from Central Bank of Kenya data, mark a sobering moment for an economy that has come to regard diaspora money as its most dependable external lifeline. For seventeen consecutive years, Kenyans abroad kept sending more money home — through recessions, pandemics and political upheaval — and the numbers kept climbing. That streak is now under serious threat.

The deterioration gathered pace through the second quarter, with remittances declining 5.9 per cent in April, 10.4 per cent in May and 11.2 per cent in June, making June the weakest month of the year. Against that backdrop, July offered some relief — inflows rose 16.2 per cent to KSh56.5B, as receipts from key source markets improved — but economists caution that a single monthly rebound is not the same as a trend reversal, and the cumulative damage from the first seven months remains substantial.

CBK Governor Kamau Thugge has been candid about the scale of the challenge. Speaking on 12 August, he acknowledged the depth of the problem while holding out hope for a partial second-half recovery. "We had a contraction of 2.4 per cent in the 12 months to June 2026," Thugge said. "Presuming a de-escalation in the Middle East, we expect an improvement in the second half of the year, so our projection of inflows is an increase of 0.7 per cent — which would, however, be the slowest growth we have had in many years."

That revised projection, cut from an original full-year forecast of $5.42B to $5.07B, reflects the cumulative weight of a war in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia's disruptive labour reforms and a 15 per cent value-added tax on money transfer transactions introduced by Riyadh — a combination of pressures that has squeezed the two corridors that matter most to Kenya's remittance architecture.

The United States remains the dominant source market, accounting for 54.2 per cent of total flows in 2025 at $2.73B. But North American inflows fell 11.61 per cent in the first half of 2026 — a drop of KSh21.70B — driving the overall decline and more than offsetting gains from Europe and other markets. The compression in the US corridor reflects a tougher economic environment for Kenyan workers in America, where higher inflation driven in part by the Middle East conflict has eroded disposable incomes and reduced the amounts available to send home.

Saudi Arabia presents a separate but equally serious problem. The kingdom saw a 25.06 per cent decline in remittances to Kenya in 2025, falling to $302.1M from $403.12M in 2024, as two simultaneous policy shifts reshaped the employment landscape for Kenyan workers. Starting June 2025, Saudi Arabia introduced a new skill-based work permit framework replacing the decades-old iqama system, grouping foreign workers into highly skilled, skilled and basic categories based on academic qualifications, experience, technical skills, wage bracket and age. The practical effect was to disrupt wages, delay contract renewals and complicate the onboarding of thousands of Kenyan workers, many of whom sit in the lower tiers of the new classification system.

On top of the permit reforms, Saudi Arabia began enforcing a 15 per cent value-added tax on money transfer services, effectively increasing the cost of sending money to countries such as Kenya and discouraging smaller, more frequent transfers that many migrant workers rely on to support their families.

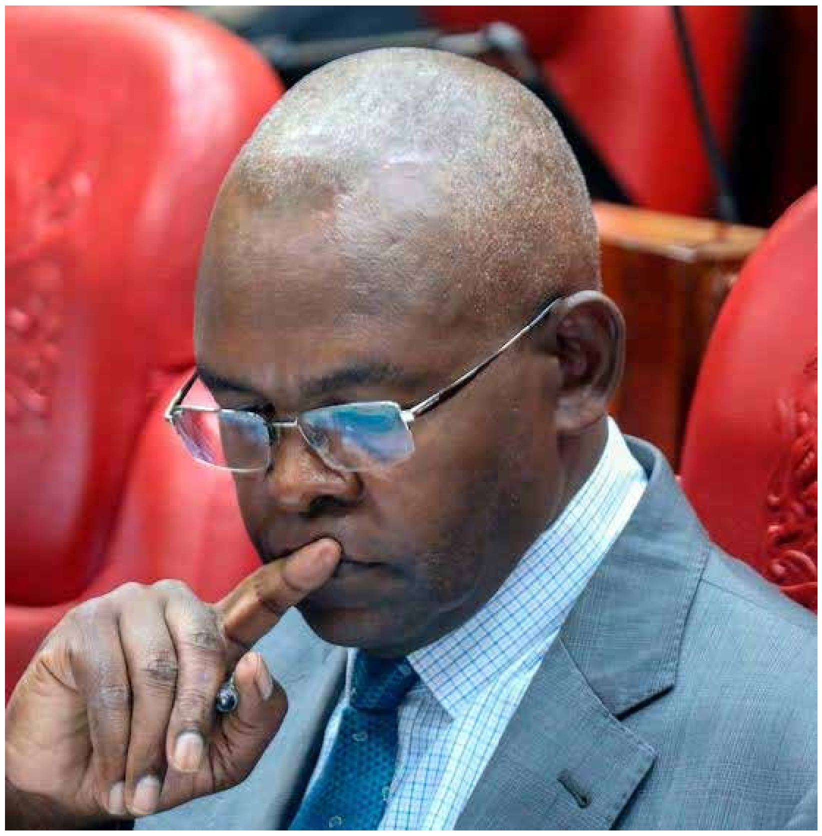
The conflict in the Middle East has compounded these structural pressures by disrupting global supply chains, increasing transport costs and fuelling inflation in the major economies where Kenyan migrants work. The CBK's Monetary Policy Committee, in its most recent assessment, noted that the current account deficit for 2026 is projected at 3 per cent of GDP, reflecting higher oil prices, low services receipts, slower growth in remittances and weaker exports — a list that captures just how interconnected these external pressures have become.

The consequences reach well beyond macroeconomic statistics. Diaspora remittances are not an abstraction. They are the school fees paid in Murang'a, the hospital bill settled in Mombasa, the small business capitalised in Kisumu. A separate Kenya National Bureau of Statistics household survey found that including informal transfers, Kenya received KSh931.8B in total diaspora inflows in the 12 months to May 2025 — 43 per cent more than official CBK figures capture — suggesting that the true scale of the contraction, across formal and informal channels alike, is considerably larger than the headline numbers indicate.

The World Bank has raised the alarm in unambiguous terms. Its April 2026 Africa Economic Update warned Kenya could face monthly losses of up to $40M from Gulf remittances due to the Middle East conflict, citing approximately 500,000 Kenyans employed in Gulf states and escalating disruptions to energy facilities and Strait of Hormuz shipping.

Thugge has maintained that some of the Saudi slowdown is temporary and will reverse once the kingdom's labour market adjusts to the new permit framework. "We expect that this trend will not be permanent and therefore there will be some recovery," he said earlier in the year. That position looks increasingly optimistic in the face of seven consecutive months of underperformance, though the July uptick provides at least some empirical basis for cautious hope.

What is not in doubt is the structural significance of the moment. The latest downturn follows a strong recovery after 2023, when remittances rebounded 19 per cent in 2024 before growth slowed to 4.4 per cent in 2025. The trajectory has moved sharply in the wrong direction, and the safety margin that Kenya once enjoyed — the comfortable cushion of double-digit annual growth in its largest foreign exchange earner — has been replaced by a more anxious calculation about whether the full year can end in positive territory at all.


CBK Governor Kamau Thugge

For an economy with a general election scheduled for August 2027, the timing carries political weight. Remittance flows shape household economic sentiment in ways that few indicators can match. A family whose relative in Riyadh or Houston is sending less money home this year will feel that reduction acutely — in what they can afford, in how they plan and in how they assess the government managing their economy. President Ruto's administration is pursuing its Beyond Vision 2030 development agenda and its affordable housing programme against a backdrop of tightening household finances, and the diaspora story forms part of a broader narrative of external pressure on ordinary Kenyans.

Whether July's recovery holds through the remainder of the year will depend on factors largely beyond Nairobi's control — the trajectory of the Middle East conflict, the pace of Saudi Arabia's labour market adjustment and the resilience of the American economy in the face of elevated inflation. Kenya can engage its diaspora, reduce transfer costs and improve investment pathways for remittance dollars. It cannot, however, control a war.

The lifeline that never failed is bending under the weight of a world in disorder. Whether it breaks is now the question.

Politics The former deputy president returns to Mt Kenya's heartland with his sharpest assault yet on the man he once served

Gachagua takes the war home to Kirinyaga

Contd from page 2

seen Gachagua hold rallies in Nakuru, Nanyuki, Embu, Nyeri and Narok within a matter of weeks — a relentless pace that signals a man who understands the geography of the 2027 election better than almost anyone in the opposition. The Kirinyaga leg followed the defection of ten county MCAs to DCP, a delegation led by deputy Speaker Jinaro Jamumo and Kerugoya ward MCA Eric Muchina — another signal that the party's grassroots penetration is accelerating in a county Ruto's camp considers critical.

Gachagua's language in Ndia was the sharpest he has used yet on home ground. He called Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru a traitor, accusing her of mobilising residents to support Ruto against the region's interests: "I've seen this woman, Governor Waiguru, trying to tell us to go to Ruto so he can take us somewhere," he said, before endorsing Woman Representative Jane Njeri Maina, popularly known as Gaceri, for another term in recognition of her loyalty to both the community and his political cause.

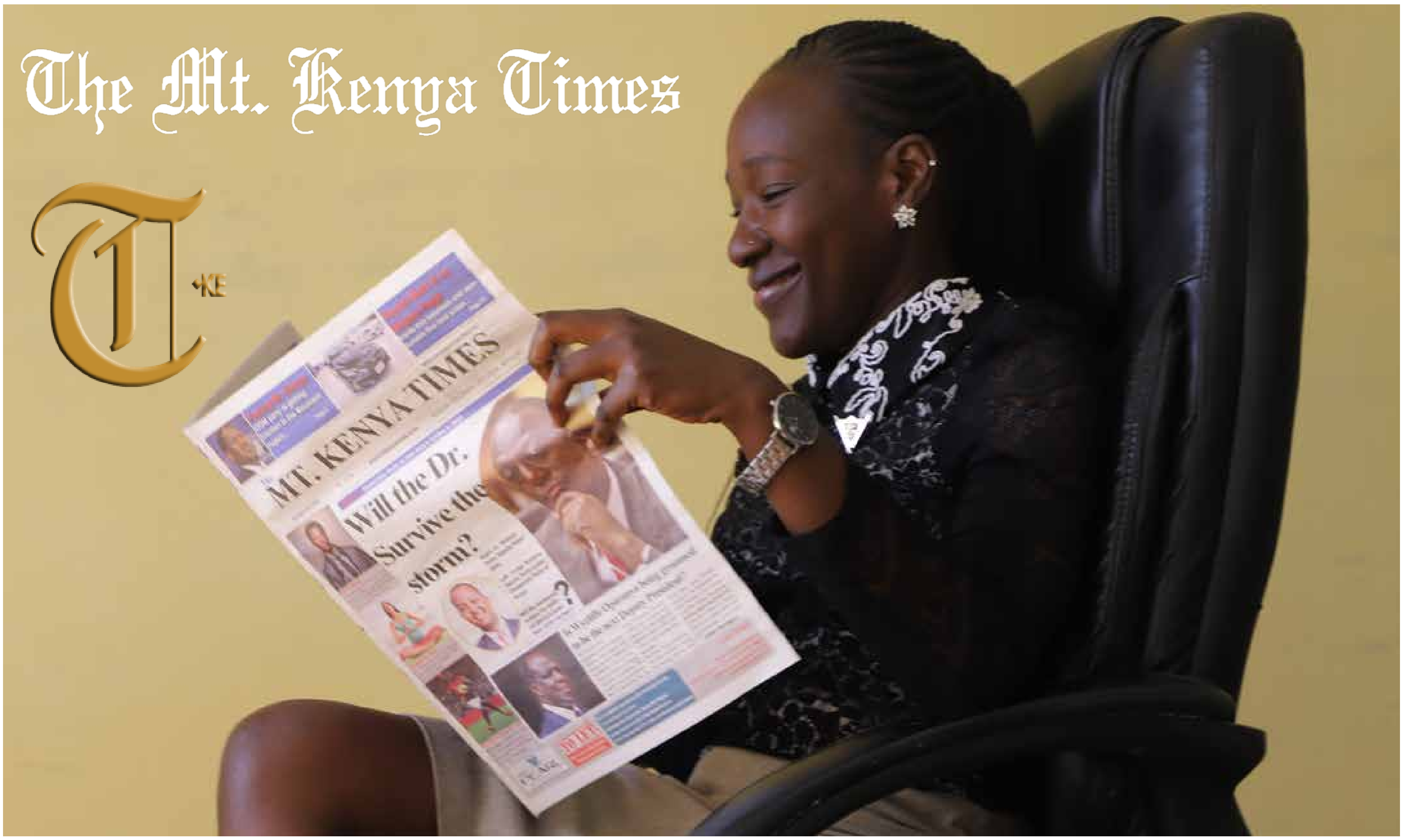
Waiguru's response has been characteristically measured. She has maintained that her support for Ruto is anchored in development rather than partisanship, arguing that no governor can deliver fully without cooperation from the national government. But in the raw arithmetic of Mt Kenya politics, her position is becoming harder to hold. The DCP wave is real, and Gachagua is riding it with the confidence of someone who beat teargas and live ammunition in Kagio earlier this year and kept going. "Despite the heavy attack by police, live ammunition, teargas, vandalism of our equipment and state-sponsored militia brutality, we have reached the very heart of Kirinyaga County," he said after that January confrontation. The memory of it — and his refusal to retreat — has become part of his political mythology in the region.

The broader significance of Gachagua's Kirinyaga offensive lies in what it says about the shape of the 2027 contest as it enters its final twelve months. DCP scored a defining early victory when its candidate, Sammy Douglas Waweru Kamau, won the Ol Kalou parliamentary by-election in Nyandarua with 35,440 votes against UDA's Samuel Muchina's 5,450 — a margin so lopsided it sent a message that resonated far beyond the constituency. Combined with the defections of Nyandarua Governor Kiarie Badilisha and now Kirinyaga MCAs, the party is building an organisational infrastructure that other opposition formations cannot yet match on the ground.

That momentum has not gone unnoticed. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission summoned Gachagua on 18 August to appear before it on 27 August over speeches made at various political stops since July, including an alleged warning that he would cause "snakes to be killed alongside their eggs" in 2027. Gachagua has said he will not honour the summons, describing the commission's action as politically motivated. Whether the confrontation escalates will be one of the more closely watched sub-plots of the coming weeks.

He announced yesterday that he would address the country today at 3pm to present the findings of his 56-day Wamunyoro consultations, which have brought political leaders, grassroots representatives and opinion shapers to his Nyeri home in a sustained exercise designed to build both a policy platform and a coalition map ahead of 2027, before departing for the United States on Wednesday.

The picture emerging from Kirinyaga, Nyeri, Nyandarua and Nakuru is of a man building a political machine with purpose and discipline. Whether it translates into the unified opposition coalition needed to defeat a well-resourced incumbent on 10 August 2027 remains the defining unanswered question. But in Ndia yesterday, Gachagua was not asking questions — he was making statements, and the crowd was listening.



The secret garden

Behind a little wooden door,
Was a garden I had never seen before.
Flowers danced in colours bright,
And butterflies filled the morning light.

A tiny fairy waved at me,
Beside a shining silver tree.
The birds sang songs so sweet and clear,
And magical creatures gathered near.

I walked along the garden way,
And wished that I could always stay.
It was a world of dreams and fun,
Where every flower smiled at the sun.

I closed the door and walked away,
But kept the magic in my heart that day.
M R.Hanshiga
Grade 8-C
John Dewey Matric Higher Secondary school
Panruti.

Good Values

Good book to carry on
Teach how to manage
Guide us to move on
Bring happy forever

Keep them safe forever

Wear them as a jewel
Think of them ever
Follow them strictly

Bring respect to you
Provide inner happiness
Throw the negatives
Mould us as good citizens
Only joys no more tears
Good society to live on

Y.J.Ambika
B.T.ASST
GHS KAKKADASAM

The ray of hope

When dark clouds cover up the sky,
And every dream seems fair and high.
Ye tiny ray begins to glow,
And whisper softly you can glow.

When troubles make the pathway steep,
And make us lose the strength to leap.
Hope shine bright like morning light,
Turning our darkness into bright.

It gives us courage helps us cope,
And fills our hearts with dreams and hope.
So never fear the darkest night,
For hope will always being the light.

Written by:
Student of Sheeba mam
Class:7th A
School:GGHSS, pattukkottai

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment

Every step you take today
Leads to a brighter, better way.
Believe in dreams that fill your soul;
They lead you to your highest goal.
A fearless heart can touch the sky;
With faith and hope, you'll always fly.
Stand with courage, never fear;
Your brightest days are always near.
Let your heart become your guide;
Walk with faith and honest pride.
The world may change with every day,
But truth will always light your way.

A.RANJANI.
M.A.,B.Ed,. English & comm,
Soorya international hr sec school,
PONDICHERRY.

Thank you god for my special teacher

My special and favourite teacher is my Tamil mam,
She is cute,
She is kind ,
She is helpful,
She guide me in all the way,
She explains topic in a very interesting way,
Every difficult lesson become easy to understand,
She will tells about her childhood.

She does not tell about lesson she tells many information,
She told to speak truth,
Wherever I feel low I was give me confidence and strength,
He wants every student in my class to be successful in my,
Hi dedication and hard work in space me a lot,
My favourite teacher whole special place in my heart,
I love her teaching very much,

I am very lucky to have a wonderful teacher,

Thank you so much my dear God ,
I wonderful ,
I wonderful gift to me, thank you God.

P. HEMAMYA
VIII D
JOHN DEWEY MAT HR SEC SCHOOL
PANRUTI, CUDDALORE DISTRICT,
TAMIL NADU.

The only source of knowledge is experience

Knowledge helps us widen our view
Learning renews our life anew
As long as we are good listeners,
We will become great thinkers.

Knowledge diagnoses a problem
But Experience gives a perfect solution
If Knowledge is a paper work,
Experience is a practical network.

Knowledge wants an instant result
But Experience waits for a remarkable result.
Knowledge makes us clever
Experience makes us wise.
Cleverness sometimes leads to cunning,
But Wisdom leads to winning.

The more we experience, The more we gain knowledge.
knowledge is like the shoot of a tree .
But Experience is the root of a tree.

A tree can't exist without its root.
Like a tree,the root of knowledge is experience
That changes our life's appearance.
......
Penned by
RANGANATHAN E
B.T.Asst[Eng]
Marwar Govt.Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

The echo of east and west

London hides its secrets in the heavy fog,
The echo of time rings in its ancient walls.
The whole wide world reflects in the Thames,
Calmness is the core philosophy that calls.

When Big Ben chimes, it reminds us all:
In this fleeting world, seconds are pure gold.
Inspiration flows from Shakespeare's verse,
Bringing light to human hearts, bright and bold.

Oxford gardens — the sanctuary of the mind,
Silence of libraries, where thoughts softly gleam.
Adorning the world with honest, hard work,
The West's timeless pearl, like a noble dream.

But in the East, the golden sun smiles bright,
Registan's tiles — a piece of the blue sky.
Every inch of soil here is a living history,
Navoiy's verses unlock the soul up high.

In the warm bread fresh from the clay oven,
Live thousands of years of faith and loyalty.
A generous, river-like heart opens wide,
Every guest is treated like pure royalty.

Bozorboyeva Mohinur, was born in 2009 in Mangit, Amudarya District, Republic of Karakalpakstan.
She is currently studying at Secondary School No. 1 in Mangit.
Throughout her academic journey, she has participated in numerous reading competitions and has contributed to promoting a culture of reading among young people. She is the holder of more than 50 international certificates.

Politics At the top of his list was road infrastructure. He singled out the Mikinduri-Kunati road, telling the congregation that a contractor was already on site and tarmacking was actively under way

Mpuru dismisses opposition, touts Ruto projects in Tigania East

BY Brian Gitonga
@themtkenyatimes

Tigania East MP Mpuru Aburi adresses congregants at EAPC Mikinduri Town Church. | *Photo:* Brian Gitonga

Tigania East MP Mpuru Aburi yesterday rallied residents to stand firm behind President William Ruto's administration, dismissing the opposition as lacking a credible development agenda and pointing to ongoing government projects in the constituency as evidence of why the region should maintain its support for Kenya Kwanza.

Speaking at a church service at EAPC Mikinduri Town Church in Tigania East, Aburi urged residents to judge their political leaders by what they deliver on the ground rather than by what they promise from a podium.

"Let no one lie to you that you should leave a government that is giving you development projects and cross over to an opposition that does not have anything meaningful to offer the people," Aburi said.

At the top of his list was road infrastructure. He singled out the Mikinduri-Kunati road, telling the congregation that a contractor was already on site and tarmacking was actively under way, with other roads across the constituency also in various stages of development. He said the progress should give residents a tangible reason to continue supporting the administration despite the political noise from its opponents.

"Right now, the contractor is on site on the Mikinduri-Kunati road and it is being tarmacked alongside other roads that are already being developed. That is why we ask you to support the government," he said.

Beyond roads, Aburi pointed to progress on the Kenya Medical Training College project in the area, which he said had stalled under previous administrations but was now moving forward. He indicated that student enrolment would follow once the institution becomes fully operational. The MP also highlighted the affordable housing programme as another initiative being rolled out in the area, crediting Ruto's administration with driving it forward and noting that the houses would benefit residents across different economic backgrounds.

"Affordable houses, which will greatly benefit our people from different economic cadres, are being built because of President William Ruto," he said.

Aburi further revealed plans to establish a Huduma Centre at Kirindine, a facility he said would bring government services closer to Tigania East residents and reduce the need to travel to Meru town for routine administrative matters.

Turning to local politics, the MP was unsparing in his response to critics questioning his re-election prospects. He challenged opponents to identify specifically where he had fallen short rather than simply calling for his removal, and invited residents to weigh his record against that of anyone seeking to replace him.

He directed pointed criticism at former Meru Governor Peter Munya, accusing him of delivering insufficient development to Tigania East during his time in office and of being largely absent from rural areas when he held positions of power — both as governor and later as a Cabinet Secretary. Aburi said Munya and other politicians seeking the community's support should be prepared to account for what they actually accomplished during their years in government, rather than building campaigns around opposition to their rivals.

On predictions of his electoral defeat, Aburi was characteristically direct.

"Would you men and women want Mpuru to be sent home? I hear some say that I will not be re-elected, and I ask, are they God?" he said, drawing a response from the congregation.

The MP closed by appealing to residents to scrutinise the track records of every politician who comes seeking their vote — including his own — and to base their judgements on delivery rather than political rhetoric.

Business The launch covers both Kenya and Uganda and builds on Ticketmaster's acquisition of Quicket in July 2024, a deal that gave the world's largest ticketing marketplace a ready-made foothold

Ticketmaster arrives in Kenya through Quicket's digital platform

BY Joy Thuku
@themtkenyatimes

Global ticketing company Ticketmaster Friday formally entered the Kenyan market through Quicket

Global ticketing company Ticketmaster Friday formally entered the Kenyan market through Quicket, its Cape Town-based subsidiary, in a move that signals a long-term commercial commitment to East Africa's rapidly growing live entertainment industry.

The launch covers both Kenya and Uganda and builds on Ticketmaster's acquisition of Quicket in July 2024, a deal that gave the world's largest ticketing marketplace a ready-made foothold across the continent. Quicket has operated in the region since 2016, working alongside local partners and accumulating nearly a decade of on-the-ground relationships and field-services experience. Friday's announcement formalises what has long been a quiet but steady presence.

For Kenyan fans and event organisers, the practical implications are immediate. The platform brings fully digital ticketing — designed to reduce fraud and speed up fan entry at the gate — alongside local payment integrations with Safaricom's M-Pesa, MTN Mobile Money and Airtel Money, making ticket purchases more straightforward in a market where mobile payments are already deeply embedded in daily life.

The commercial logic behind the expansion is hard to dispute. Africa is home to approximately 1.6 billion people and carries the world's youngest population, where rising smartphone adoption and digital payments are reshaping how consumers discover and buy tickets for concerts, festivals, sporting events and cultural experiences. For a company processing 550 million tickets a year across more than 35 countries, the continent represents one of the more compelling remaining growth frontiers in global live entertainment.

Discovery is as central to Quicket's proposition as the transaction itself. Events hosted on the platform will be distributed across Spotify, Google, Meta, Bandsintown and Apple Music, giving organisers additional channels to reach new audiences, while real-time audience insights will allow organisers and sponsors to engage fans more precisely. The company is also developing WhatsApp-based ticketing — a deliberate nod to the messaging platform's dominance in everyday Kenyan communication — alongside AI-powered tools intended to simplify the search-to-purchase journey.

Quicket's Business Operation Director, John Masembe, said the energy of Kenya's live entertainment scene had made the expansion a natural progression. "Spend a weekend in Nairobi or head to one of Kenya's festivals and you can feel the energy immediately," Masembe said. "From packed music events and festival crowds to food, culture and social experiences, Kenya has a vibrant and growing live entertainment scene. Live experiences are deeply woven into the country's culture, and fans are showing a huge appetite for coming together. Quicket and Ticketmaster's role is to help build the infrastructure behind that momentum — making it easier for organisers, artists and venues to grow, connect with audiences and scale live experiences across Kenya."

Justin Van Wyk, Managing Director of Ticketmaster South Africa, described Kenya as one of the most exciting live entertainment markets on the continent. "Africa has a huge, young and fast-growing population, which is helping make East Africa one of the most exciting live entertainment markets," Van Wyk said. "Quicket has the local knowledge and relationships to serve it well. Our role is to back that expertise with Ticketmaster's global scale, giving event organisers, artists and fans across Kenya and Uganda the same market-leading ticketing experience audiences expect anywhere in the world."

Van Wyk also signalled that the Kenya and Uganda launches are only the opening chapter of a broader regional strategy. "Kenya and Uganda are just the beginning as we look forward to entering more markets across the region in the future," he said.

The expansion arrives at a significant moment for East African live entertainment infrastructure. Major venues in Kenya and Uganda are being upgraded ahead of the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations, while new festivals and events continue to emerge across the region. Against that backdrop, the arrival of a globally scaled ticketing platform with local payment capability and deep regional experience could meaningfully shift how events are organised, sold and attended.

Quicket is already working with several of Kenya's established events and experience brands. The platform counts Kilifi's Beneath the Baobabs festival and food discovery platform EatOut among its early partners, using its ticketing and distribution tools to connect them with wider audiences.

Quicket continues to operate as a standalone business unit under Ticketmaster's ownership, headquartered in Cape Town under the leadership of Managing Director James Tagg. That arrangement has allowed the subsidiary to retain the local institutional knowledge and organiser relationships that make it effective in African markets while drawing on the parent company's global infrastructure and reach.

For Kenya's event economy — long driven by informal networks, cash-at-gate transactions and fragmented promotion channels — the arrival of a platform of this scale and integration could prove to be a turning point. The question now is not whether digital ticketing will reshape the industry, but how quickly.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THAT'S LIFE!
MICHAEL MATATU AT LARGE
SHAMLAL PURI
Footprints
NAMOSAL 64-74 REUNION
SELECTED PORTFOLIO
DUBAI DREAMS
SHAMLAL PURI
BEST SELLER NOVELS
Dubai On Wheels
Shamlal Puri
AXIS OF EVIL
BLOOD MONEY
SHAMLAL PURI
DUBAI DREAMS
The Rough Road to Riches
SHAMLAL PURI
THE ILLEGALS
SHAMLAL PURI
DENIED
TRIANGLE OF TERROR
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Politics The electorate is more exposed to information, more connected to national conversations and, in many respects, more economically conscious

Kenya's political weather is changing: From voter ownership to an awake and unforgiving electorate

BY Fredrick Chelimo

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If Kenyan politics were a weather forecast, the country would be entering a season of unusual atmospheric pressure. The political temperature is rising, familiar alliances are shifting, clouds of suspicion are gathering and the occasional political thunderclap is already being heard. Beneath the rallies, defections, roadside declarations, political negotiations and increasingly theatrical displays of power, something far more consequential may be happening: the Kenyan voter is changing.

For decades, much of Kenya's political architecture has rested on a deeply transactional assumption—that politician's command constituencies and that voters, in return for development projects, appointments, handouts or political patronage, owe them loyalty at the ballot. Politicians routinely speak of "my people", "my votes" and "my constituency" as if citizenship were a form of political tenancy and the ballot were an asset held in trust by the local political landlord. But that old assumption is beginning to crack. The question emerging from an increasingly sophisticated electorate is both simple and revolutionary: Who gave politicians ownership of my vote? That question may become one of the defining questions of the 2027 election.

Kenyan voters have changed because Kenya itself has changed. The electorate is more exposed to information, more connected to national conversations and, in many respects, more economically conscious. A voter can now compare what a politician says in Eldoret with what the same politician says in Mombasa, Nairobi or Kisumu. A promise made at a rally can be recorded, circulated and examined within minutes. A contradiction can become tomorrow's political headline. A speech delivered five years ago can suddenly return to haunt its author. The smartphone has quietly transformed from a communication device into something much more consequential: a permanent electoral archive.

This creates a new kind of accountability that political machines cannot easily control. The politician may remember the road he built, the bursary he distributed, the group he supported or the appointment he facilitated. But the voter is increasingly keeping a different ledger: What did you promise? What did you deliver? What happened to the money? Who benefited? What happened to the young people you promised jobs? What became of the hospitals, water projects, agricultural programmes and empowerment funds? And perhaps the most uncomfortable question of all: What did you do when nobody was watching?

This does not mean that ethnic loyalty, patronage or political mobilisation have disappeared. They remain powerful forces in Kenyan politics. Nor should anyone romanticise the electorate as uniformly independent or immune to manipulation. Poverty can make a voter vulnerable to inducements; historical grievances can shape political choices; ethnic identity can still provide powerful political shelter. But the old idea that a political kingpin can simply assemble a community, declare it his political property and deliver it wholesale to another politician is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. The voter may attend the rally without surrendering the ballot.

He may accept the campaign gift without accepting the political instruction. He may cheer the politician on Saturday and challenge him online on Sunday. He may listen respectfully to the political kingpin and then vote according to his own calculation. That is not betrayal. That is democracy

And this emerging independence carries another important implication: politicians can no longer assume that visibility is equivalent to legitimacy. A politician can command enormous crowds and still lose the confidence of the silent majority. Social-media popularity can create the illusion of political strength, just as a massive rally can create the illusion of electoral ownership. Neither is a ballot.

The approaching election is therefore likely to be contested not merely through crowds and coalitions, but through competing claims of credibility. The electorate is increasingly capable of asking whether political rhetoric corresponds with lived experience. In an economy where many households are struggling with employment, healthcare, education, food prices and the cost of living, slogans are becoming progressively less persuasive when they are disconnected from reality.

But there is a dangerous contradiction emerging alongside this democratic awakening. While the electorate is becoming more intellectually and digitally assertive, some political actors continue to flirt with the oldest and ugliest instruments of political control: intimidation, organised violence and political goonism. Young people, who should be among the greatest beneficiaries of democracy, can instead become its most expendable instruments—mobilised to heckle opponents, disrupt meetings, intimidate citizens and, in the worst circumstances, commit violence on behalf of politicians who themselves remain safely behind security barriers.

This is perhaps one of Kenya's most painful political paradoxes. The young person holding a smartphone may be sophisticated enough to fact-check a politician, expose a contradiction and dismantle a political narrative within minutes, yet the same young person can be recruited to throw stones or defend a politician's interests in the streets. That is how democracy is deliberately dragged backwards. When political persuasion fails, intimidation becomes tempting. When intimidation is normalised, violence becomes possible. And when violence becomes an accepted component of political competition, elections cease to be contests of ideas and become contests of fear.

The role of institutions such as the IEBC and NCIC is therefore becoming increasingly important. Electoral management cannot merely be about preparing ballot papers, registering voters and announcing results. It must also be about protecting the environment in which citizens exercise political choice. Similarly, efforts to confront hate speech, incitement and political intimidation must be seen not as interference with political freedom, but as an attempt to protect the freedom that makes politics meaningful in the first place.

Yet institutions face an equally important obligation: consistency. Nothing destroys public confidence in a regulator faster than the perception that the law is applied differently depending on which political camp is involved. Political neutrality cannot simply be proclaimed; it must be demonstrated. If one politician is summoned while another making comparable statements is ignored, citizens will inevitably question whether institutions are enforcing the law or participating in political competition.

The same principle applies to the political class. Kenya does not need politicians who merely know how to win elections. It needs leaders who understand what elections are for. Public office is not an investment vehicle for personal wealth, a family inheritance or a platform for permanent political entitlement. It is a temporary public trust. A Member of Parliament does not own a constituency. A governor does not own a county. A senator does not own a political community. A party leader does not own its members. And no political patron owns a single vote. The ballot belongs to the citizen.

That distinction is more than philosophical. It is the foundation of representative government. Once voters internalise it, political power begins to change character. Politicians are no longer benefactors purchasing loyalty; they become applicants seeking renewal of a public mandate. The voter stops asking, "What did my leader give me?" and starts asking, "What did my government do with the authority I gave it?" That is a far more dangerous question for an unaccountable political class.

Kenya's 2027 political season will undoubtedly contain the familiar theatre: alliances, defections, rallies, political marriages of convenience, accusations, counter-accusations and carefully calculated declarations of popularity. But beneath that theatre may be a quieter transformation. The Kenyan voter is learning that political power does not permanently reside in the politician. It resides in the citizenry.

The emerging electorate may still be persuaded, but it is becoming harder to command. It may still be influenced, but it is increasingly capable of questioning. It may still be divided by identity, but it is increasingly united by a common experience of political disappointment. And perhaps that is the most significant change of all.

For generations, Kenyan politicians mastered the art of remembering what they had done for voters. The emerging voter is learning something more consequential: how to remember what politicians did with the power voters gave them. That memory could become the most formidable force in the 2027 election.

As Abraham Lincoln famously observed, "Elections belong to the people." The Kenyan voter would do well to remember the rest: politicians may contest for power, parties may negotiate its distribution and political patrons may attempt to influence its direction—but ultimately, the vote is not theirs to give. It is the citizens to withhold, bestow and change.

Formula 1 When the action resumed after the red flag, Antonelli made a flying start to overtake Norris for the lead and from there stretched out a commanding advantage

Race for the crown: Norris strikes but Antonelli holds firm

A dramatic finale at Zandvoort tightens the championship fight as Formula 1 enters its decisive run-in

BY John Irungu Maina
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Lando Norris wins F1's Dutch Grand Prix after a daring pass on Kimi Antonelli

The Formula 1 season has entered its most consequential phase, and Sunday's Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort — the last to be held at the iconic circuit under its current contract — delivered exactly the kind of drama that championship run-ins are built on.

Lando Norris claimed victory in an action-packed race, crossing the line ahead of Mercedes pair Kimi Antonelli and George Russell, in a result that has injected fresh tension into a title battle that had been threatening to settle too comfortably. The race was red-flagged on the opening lap after championship contender Max Verstappen suffered a heavy crash, losing the rear of his Red Bull and hitting the wall at the final corner. The Dutchman confirmed he was uninjured, but his retirement from his final home race at Zandvoort added a bittersweet note to a day that had already been charged with emotion.

When the action resumed after the red flag, Antonelli made a flying start to overtake Norris for the lead and from there stretched out a commanding advantage — but as the race entered its final third, Norris clawed back the deficit and retook the position from the Mercedes. It was a strategic masterclass from McLaren, and a reminder that Norris, when his car is working well, remains one of the most complete performers on the grid.

The championship standings heading into Zandvoort had Antonelli leading by a commanding 50-point margin. That cushion was trimmed by Sunday's result, but the young Italian retains a lead that still looks formidable with the season entering its closing stages. After the Dutch Grand Prix, Antonelli pulled 59 points clear of Russell, meaning the internal Mercedes battle has sharpened considerably even as the wider championship picture remains Antonelli's to lose.

For Norris, the victory was timely and necessary. Much faster than anyone else on the day, Norris breathed some against-the-odds life into a title bid that, mathematically, remains a difficult proposition. He also outpaced McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri by over 32 seconds at the finish, a margin that underscores just how dominant his afternoon was. Whether the gap to Antonelli is too large to close is a question the remaining races will answer, but Norris has made clear he intends to ask it at every opportunity.

Lewis Hamilton finished fourth for Ferrari, a result that keeps the Scuderia's title aspirations — however distant — technically alive. Ferrari's challenge, and that of Red Bull, has been complicated by the consistency Mercedes has shown across the season's middle stretch. The picture for the remaining races is one of an Antonelli-led championship being chased by a resurgent Norris, with Russell, Hamilton and the other leading drivers all seeking the kind of results that can reshape standings quickly.

That is precisely what makes the final phase of a Formula 1 season so compelling and so treacherous. A driver does not need to win every remaining race to become champion. Consistency, mechanical reliability and the capacity to avoid costly errors can be just as decisive as raw pace. Antonelli has demonstrated all three qualities for much of this season, but Sunday's race — in which he led comfortably before being overhauled — offered a reminder that no lead is safe until the mathematics make it so.

Zandvoort itself bid farewell to Formula 1 in a manner befitting its reputation. The circuit hosted six races back on the calendar after its return in 2021, and Norris's win was a fitting conclusion to its time on the F1 grid — dramatic, unpredictable and decided in the closing laps. The orange-clad crowd that packed the sand dune grandstands had come to celebrate Verstappen's final home race; instead they witnessed his retirement on the opening lap and a Briton driving away to victory. Formula 1 rarely delivers sentiment on schedule.

The season now moves into its final stretch, and every remaining Grand Prix carries heightened stakes. Every qualifying position secured or lost, every fastest lap banked, every podium claimed or squandered, and every mechanical retirement will feed directly into who stands on the top step when the season concludes. The margin for error has narrowed considerably on all sides.

Antonelli knows that the championship is his to manage but also his to lose. Norris knows that winning alone will not be enough — he needs others to falter as well. Russell, having delivered consistent results across the season, remains mathematically in the hunt. And Ferrari, with Hamilton and Leclerc, will be watching for any opportunity to convert pace into points at circuits that suit their car.

The race for the Formula 1 World Championship is no longer simply about being the fastest driver on any given Sunday. It is about managing pressure, making the right calls under uncertainty and sustaining performance when the season's accumulated weight begins to tell. That is the true test of a champion — not just speed, but composure when everything is on the line.

The chequered flag is drawing closer. The fight, as Zandvoort proved, is very much alive.

Conference Running until 11 September at the Nasrec venue in Johannesburg, the 2026 edition will bring together more than 1,000 predominantly local exhibitors alongside international companies

Africa's industrial giants converge on Johannesburg for Electra Mining

More than 1,000 exhibitors from across the continent descend on Nasrec next month for the exhibition shaping the future of African industry

By Celeste Molapo
@themtkenyatimes

Electra Mining Africa

When the doors of the Johannesburg Expo Centre open on 7 September, they will admit what organisers are billing as the most expansive edition yet of Electra Mining Africa — a five-day gathering that has quietly grown into one of the continent's most consequential industrial events and an increasingly reliable barometer of where African mining, manufacturing and engineering are heading.

Running until 11 September at the Nasrec venue in Johannesburg, the 2026 edition will bring together more than 1,000 predominantly local exhibitors alongside international companies, country pavilions and industry organisations, with professionals drawn from mining, manufacturing, automation, electrical and power, transport and related engineering sectors all converging on a single venue. At the previous edition, industry representatives from 58 countries attended — a figure that illustrates how far the exhibition's reach has extended beyond South Africa's borders and into the broader continental market it now actively serves.

The numbers alone tell a story of sustained confidence. Electra Mining Africa has expanded its physical footprint for this edition, growing by 4,000 square metres to a record 44,000 square metres of net exhibition space spread across six indoor halls and expanded outdoor display areas. That growth mirrors demand from companies seeking practical, high-profile platforms to demonstrate technology, forge commercial partnerships and reach buyers operating across Africa's diverse industrial landscape. In an environment where face-to-face engagement still drives the most durable business relationships, the exhibition's continued expansion is a vote of confidence in the value of physical gathering at scale.

The exhibition floor will span the full breadth of contemporary industrial technology. Visitors can expect to encounter large-scale mining equipment and heavy industrial machinery sitting alongside automation systems, artificial intelligence applications, robotics, digital manufacturing platforms, predictive maintenance technologies and advanced power solutions. More specialist offerings — pumps, valves, welding and fabrication equipment, safety systems, personal protective equipment, precision engineering components and a wide range of technical services — will also feature prominently, giving the event a comprehensiveness that few regional exhibitions on the continent can match.

That breadth is entirely deliberate. By housing six complementary industrial sectors under a single roof, Electra Mining Africa is designed to demonstrate not merely what individual technologies can achieve in isolation, but how they function together within integrated operational environments. An automation supplier, a power solutions company and a mining equipment manufacturer occupying neighbouring stands are not simply adjacent exhibitors — they represent an interconnected industrial conversation that mirrors how African businesses are actually approaching and solving their most pressing operational challenges. The cross-sector configuration encourages visitors to think beyond their immediate procurement needs and consider how solutions from different disciplines can work in combination to improve productivity, safety and long-term performance.

For many exhibitors, the exhibition serves purposes that go well beyond product showcasing. It is a platform for strengthening existing customer relationships, meeting prospective buyers who are difficult to reach through other channels, appointing regional distribution partners and exploring new business opportunities in markets that are growing but often difficult to penetrate without the right connections. For visitors, it offers direct access to both globally recognised brands and locally developed solutions specifically tailored to the demands of African operating environments — a combination that distinguishes Electra Mining Africa from purely international trade events that can feel disconnected from the realities of doing business on the continent.

Africa's industrial sector is at an inflection point. Mining operations across sub-Saharan Africa are under pressure to modernise rapidly, driven by a combination of investor demands for better environmental performance, regulatory tightening around safety standards, rising operational costs and the need to remain competitive in global commodity markets. Manufacturing industries are grappling with similar pressures — to automate, to digitalise and to reduce energy intensity while maintaining output and managing supply chain complexity. The technologies and partnerships on display at Electra Mining Africa are not abstract responses to distant trends. They are practical answers to problems that industrial operators across the continent are navigating right now.

Beyond the exhibition floor itself, the accompanying professional programme carries substantial weight. The Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy will host free-to-attend seminars addressing practical operational challenges and the emerging technologies being deployed to meet them, while the Society for Automation Instrumentation Mechatronics and Computer Engineering presents specialist workshops on the latest advances in automation and mechatronics. The Lifting Equipment Engineering Association of South Africa holds its two-day National Conference during the exhibition period, drawing together professionals to share knowledge and examine developments affecting the sector, and WiMSA's Women in Mining workshop provides a dedicated forum for conversation around leadership, opportunity and professional development in an industry still working meaningfully toward greater inclusion and diversity.

New for 2026, the SA Institution of Mechanical Engineering's Skills and Career Hub introduces a structured bridge between industry and the education and training sector, encouraging substantive conversation around future workforce requirements, skills pipelines and the innovation capacity that African industry will need to remain competitive in the decades ahead. The Geological Society of South Africa's Explorers Pitch adds a compelling dimension to the programme, giving finalist student teams the platform to present their mineral exploration projects before an expert industry judging panel — with the winning team announced during the exhibition. It is a reminder that for all the scale and commercial weight of what surrounds it, the event has an eye on the next generation of professionals the industry will ultimately depend on.

The New Products and Innovation Awards, adjudicated by the South African Capital Equipment Export Council, will recognise outstanding achievements from both local and international exhibitors across the exhibition. Entries are assessed against a comprehensive set of criteria encompassing innovation, engineering excellence, research and development investment, product quality, technical expertise and the practical industrial value each solution delivers. Winners are announced during the event, providing recognition that carries genuine commercial credibility within the sector.

Charlene Hefer, Portfolio Director at Montgomery Group, which organises Electra Mining Africa, said the increasing complexity of challenges confronting industrial businesses across the continent made platforms of this nature more valuable than they had ever been. "Industrial businesses are facing increasingly complex challenges that cannot be solved in isolation," Hefer said. "Electra Mining Africa brings together the technologies, expertise and industry relationships that help organisations make informed decisions, identify practical solutions and build partnerships that support long-term growth. That is what makes the exhibition such an important meeting place for industry — not only in South Africa but for businesses operating across the African continent."

For industrial professionals across Africa, the event offers something genuinely difficult to replicate: a rare concentration of expertise, technology, innovation and decision-makers assembled in one place over five days. Standard visitor registration is available free of charge, with a Diamond Select upgrade option for those seeking enhanced access and a more tailored exhibition experience.

Africa's industrial ambitions are large, complex and — in many markets — outpacing the infrastructure and expertise available to support them. Electra Mining Africa, for five days in September, becomes the place where that gap begins to close.

School For years, private school teachers have endured low salaries, unreasonable workloads, delayed pay, job insecurity and, in some cases, treatment that can only be described as humiliating

Private school teachers deserve dignity, fairness and job security

Behind the polished gates and glowing prospectuses, Kenya's private school teachers are working in conditions that undermine the very excellence schools claim to offer

BY Ashford Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Private schools occupy an important and growing place in Kenya's education landscape. They have expanded access to learning, created thousands of jobs and, in many cases, built genuine reputations through strong academic results, discipline and innovation. Their modern facilities and impressive examination outcomes are powerful selling points — and parents, understandably, respond to them.

Yet behind the polished gates, the colourful brochures and the carefully marketed success stories lies a difficult reality that is rarely spoken about openly: the working conditions of many private school teachers.

For years, private school teachers have endured low salaries, unreasonable workloads, delayed pay, job insecurity and, in some cases, treatment that can only be described as humiliating. Many continue working in silence because they fear losing their jobs. That silence should not be mistaken for satisfaction. More often than not, it is a survival strategy.

The demands placed on these teachers are staggering. A typical day may begin before sunrise and end long after the final lesson. Beyond classroom teaching, they may be expected to supervise morning and evening preps, mark books and examinations, prepare schemes of work and lesson plans, attend staff meetings, manage co-curricular activities, run remedial classes, communicate with parents and carry out administrative duties. Some are also assigned boarding, transport, marketing or admissions responsibilities — with no additional compensation.

The workload is enormous, but the salaries are frequently disproportionate to the effort involved. Some teachers earn wages that barely cover basic needs, despite holding professional qualifications and years of experience. Others are paid irregularly, forcing them to borrow, delay rent or struggle to keep their families afloat. Delayed salaries are particularly corrosive. A school may continue collecting fees from parents while its teachers wait for payment — yet those same teachers are still expected to arrive on time, teach with enthusiasm and maintain professional standards. It is unreasonable to demand excellence while denying teachers the economic stability needed to live with dignity.

An illustration of teachers calling for better conditions

Job insecurity compounds the problem considerably. Many teachers work without clear written contracts or under arrangements that offer little protection. Their continued employment can depend entirely on the personal preferences of a school owner or administrator. Raising a salary concern, questioning an unfair decision or simply disagreeing with management can be interpreted as insubordination. In such environments, teachers learn to stay quiet. They tolerate unreasonable demands because they know that replacement is easy and opportunities are limited. The fear of unemployment becomes a management tool.

There are also deeply troubling reports of harsh treatment. Some teachers are reprimanded publicly, insulted in front of colleagues, humiliated in staff meetings or subjected to constant threats of dismissal. Constructive supervision is replaced by intimidation. Professional dialogue gives way to commands. A teacher who makes a genuine mistake may be treated as though they have committed a serious offence, with minor matters escalated into formal disciplinary cases and rules applied selectively — some staff protected, others punished harshly.

The effect on institutional culture is predictable. Teachers begin to work defensively rather than creatively. They stop expressing professional opinions, stop proposing new ideas and stop questioning decisions. Innovation suffers. Morale collapses. And the institution, for all its polished marketing, begins to hollow out from within.

The pressure around examination results adds another layer of strain. Private schools frequently market themselves through academic performance, which makes teachers central to their commercial value. But when results disappoint, teachers are often blamed, without any accounting for learner ability, inadequate resources, large class sizes, frequent curriculum changes or targets that were unrealistic from the start. Education is not a factory. Academic performance is shaped by many factors — the learner's background, motivation, attendance, parental support and access to resources among them. Holding teachers solely responsible for every poor outcome is both unfair and professionally indefensible.

The consequences extend well beyond the staffroom. Learners are affected too. An underpaid, overworked and insecure teacher carries stress and low morale into the classroom, whether they intend to or not. High staff turnover disrupts learning continuity and weakens mentorship. When experienced teachers leave, schools lose institutional memory and learners lose educators they have come to trust.

Parents who invest heavily in private schooling should understand this clearly: teacher welfare is directly connected to the quality of education their children receive. A school cannot sustainably achieve excellence while neglecting the people responsible for delivering it.

Private school owners and managers must confront an uncomfortable truth — teachers are not interchangeable workers who can be replaced at will. They are trained professionals whose knowledge, commitment and daily sacrifice build the reputations that schools trade on. Many institutions celebrate outstanding examination results without adequately acknowledging the teachers who made those results possible.

What teachers are owed is straightforward: clear employment contracts, fair and timely salaries, reasonable workloads, respectful management and access to professional development. Where performance concerns arise, the response should be support, mentorship and objective evaluation — not threats, public humiliation or sudden dismissal.

There is also a need for stronger labour awareness and collective advocacy. Many private school teachers are unaware of their employment rights. Others know their rights but are too afraid to exercise them. Labour institutions, professional associations and education stakeholders need to create safe, accessible channels through which teachers can seek advice and report exploitation without fear of immediate victimisation.

Private education has made a real contribution to Kenya's development. But its success cannot be built on the insecurity and suffering of its teachers. Financial sustainability matters, but it cannot justify exploitation. Discipline is necessary, but it must never become oppression. High standards are worth striving for, but they should not be enforced through fear.

A school that genuinely respects its teachers is more likely to retain experienced staff, build a positive professional culture and achieve the kind of sustained academic success that parents are actually paying for. Teacher welfare is not a cost to be minimised. It is an investment in educational quality.

A school may have gleaming buildings and outstanding grades, but if its teachers are underpaid, insecure, mistreated and afraid, its success rests on an unstable foundation.

Teachers deserve more than praise at prize-giving ceremonies. They deserve fairness in employment, security in their work, salaries paid on time and dignity in the workplace every single day. The future of private education in Kenya depends not only on how well schools teach learners, but on how humanely they treat the teachers entrusted with that responsibility.

Ashford Kimani is a teacher of English and Literature and writes on education and social affairs.

Sports >> *South Africa mourns as a two-time world boxing champion is ambushed and killed in Eastern Cape

Tete shot dead outside his home

By **Pascal Okoth**

Former two-time world boxing champion Zolani "Last Born" Tete was shot dead outside his home in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape, yesterday evening, in an attack that has sent shockwaves through the boxing world.

Tete, 38, had just arrived at his residence when he stopped his car and waited for the gate to open. Police said two armed suspects wearing balaclavas emerged from another vehicle and opened fire on him and a 27-year-old woman travelling with him. Tete died at the scene. The woman sustained multiple gunshot wounds and was taken to hospital for treatment.

Authorities have launched a murder investigation. The identities of the attackers and the motive behind the shooting remain unknown. Police are appealing for information that could help bring those responsible to justice.

His death marks a devastating loss for South African boxing. Born and raised in Mdantsane, Tete won world titles in two divisions — the IBF junior-bantamweight and the WBO bantamweight championships — establishing himself as one of the finest fighters the Eastern Cape has produced.

The defining moment of his career came in 2017, when he stopped Siboniso Gonya in 11 seconds in a world title fight, earning a Guinness World Record for the fastest knockout in a world title bout. The record stands to this day.

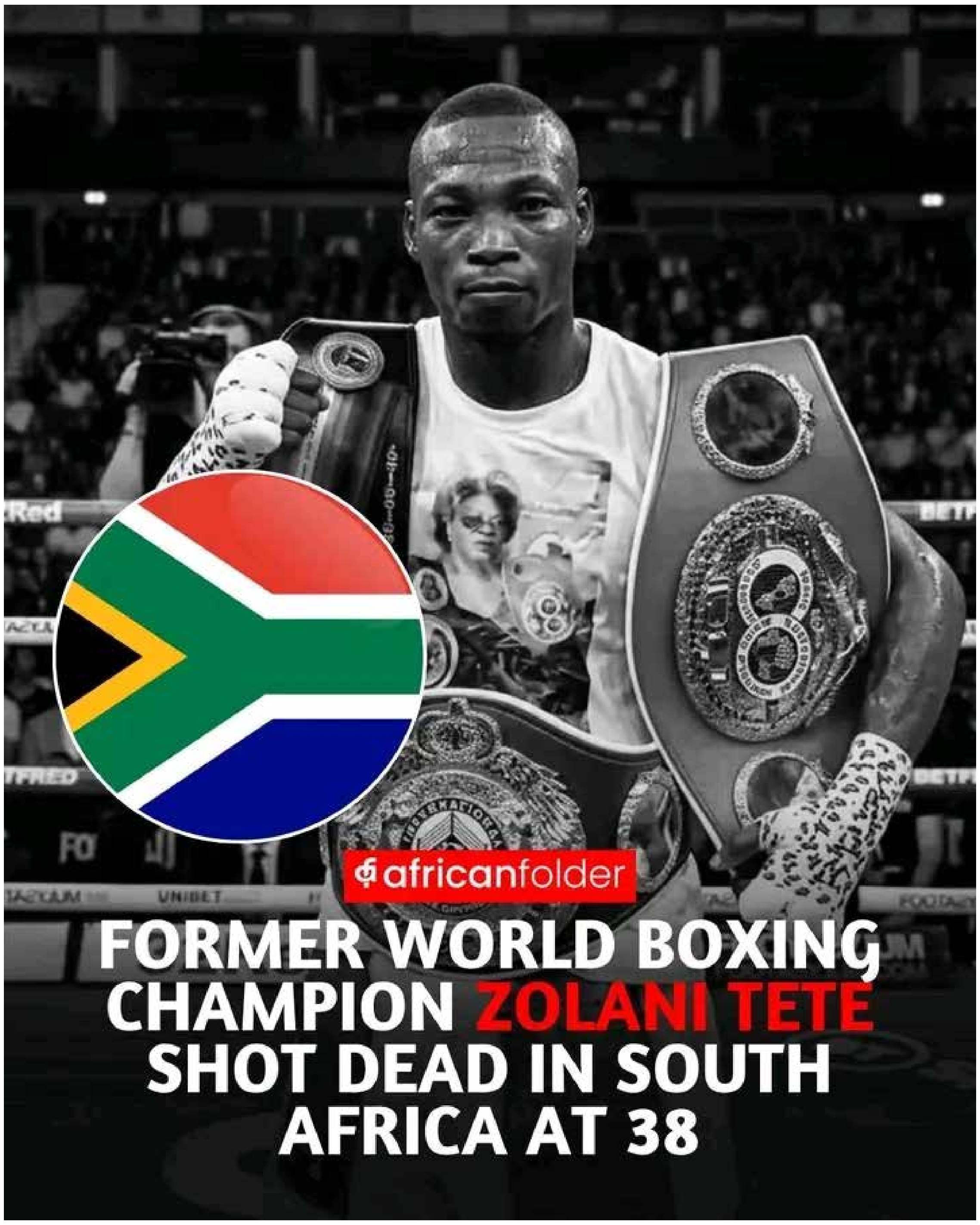
South Africa's Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, Gayton McKenzie, expressed grief at the news, describing Tete as one of the country's finest fighters. McKenzie added that Tete had been preparing for a comeback, believing he still had more to give.

Mdantsane, a township with a proud and deep-rooted boxing tradition, feels the loss most acutely. Tete was not merely a champion who carried his country's flag internationally — he was a son of the community that shaped him.

The circumstances of the shooting have renewed concerns about violent crime in South Africa. Tete was ambushed in what should have been an ordinary moment — waiting for his own gate to open.

As the investigation continues, the boxing fraternity and fans across Africa are mourning a fighter whose career produced some of the sport's most unforgettable moments. His 11-second knockout, his world championship victories and his enduring contribution to South African boxing will remain the pillars of his legacy.

He is survived by a community in grief and a sport that will not forget him.



Former two-time world boxing champion Zolani

Sports >> *Manchester City close in on Lille's teenage midfielder in a deal that could reshape their engine room for years to come

City agree €100m deal for Bouaddi

By **Pascal Okoth**

Ayoub Bouaddi

Manchester City have agreed a deal worth €100 million with Lille to sign highly rated midfielder Ayoub Bouaddi, with the transfer expected to be confirmed early next week.

The agreement, which includes performance-related add-ons, represents one of City's most significant investments in young talent in recent seasons. Bouaddi, who has been one of the standout midfielders in Ligue 1, is set to make the move to the Etihad Stadium after the two clubs finalised terms.

The 18-year-old was absent from Lille's squad yesterday as he prepared for his medical, a clear indication that the deal is at an advanced stage. Once the formalities are concluded, Bouaddi will be officially unveiled as a Manchester City player.

His emergence at Lille has been one of French football's more compelling stories of the past two seasons. Technically gifted, composed under pressure and remarkably mature for his age, Bouaddi caught the attention of several of Europe's leading clubs before City moved decisively to secure his signature. The €100 million fee reflects both his current quality and the enormous potential he is seen to carry.

For Lille, the deal is a familiar but lucrative story. The northern French club have built one of European football's most respected talent pipelines, identifying and developing elite young players before selling them on at substantial profit. Bouaddi becomes the latest in a long line of graduates to leave for a major European stage, and the reported fee would represent a significant financial windfall for a club that has mastered the art of the academy-to-elite transfer.

At City, Bouaddi steps into an environment that has produced some of the finest midfield play in Premier League history. Working under Pep Guardiola, whose possession-based philosophy demands intelligence, movement and technical precision from every player in the middle of the park, the young Moroccan will find both challenge and opportunity in equal measure. Guardiola has a well-established track record of developing midfielders into world-class operators, and there is a strong belief within the club that Bouaddi has the attributes to thrive in that system.

Competition for places will be fierce. City's squad contains experienced international midfielders, and Bouaddi is unlikely to walk straight into the starting eleven. But those close to the move suggest that the club are taking a long-term view, investing now in a player they expect to be central to their plans for the better part of a decade. In the short term, the exposure to elite training environments, Champions League football and Guardiola's methods could accelerate his development in ways that few other clubs could offer.

Bouaddi's nationality adds an intriguing dimension to his profile. A Moroccan international, he is part of a generation of North African footballers making significant inroads into Europe's top leagues, following in the footsteps of players who helped Morocco reach the semi-finals of the 2022 World Cup. Whether he develops into a mainstay of the Atlas Lions setup alongside his club career will be one of the more interesting subplots to follow.

For City, the timing of the deal also carries significance. With questions hanging over the long-term futures of some of their more experienced midfield options, bringing in a player of Bouaddi's age and profile sends a clear message about the direction the club intends to take. This is not a panic buy or a short-term fix — it is a considered, calculated investment in a player viewed as one of Europe's brightest midfield prospects.

The football world will now wait for the official confirmation. But with an agreement in place, a medical scheduled and the player already excused from Lille's duties, the only remaining question is when — not whether — Bouaddi will be unveiled in City's sky-blue shirt.

For a teenager from Lille, it is the opportunity of a lifetime. For Manchester City, it may prove to be one of the shrewdest pieces of business they have conducted in years.

SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN

The MT. KENYA TIMES

Sarah Capewell-Rive: Redefining success through confidence, courage and aligned leadership

By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

For many entrepreneurs, success has long been presented as a numbers game — higher revenue, bigger audiences, greater visibility and an ever-expanding list of achievements. Sarah Capewell-Rive thinks that definition is worth questioning. Her work begins with a more fundamental question: what happens when success is no longer measured by external expectations, but by whether a person is genuinely building a life and business that feels right for them?

Capewell-Rive is an international multi-award-winning business, marketing and self-empowerment coach, speaker and founder whose work centres on helping women reclaim their confidence, voice and sense of personal power. She is the founder of Unstoppable In Business and the creator of both Unstoppable Moms/ Mums In Business and the Biz Real Talk show — platforms that together reflect a consistent and clearly held conviction: that authentic leadership begins from the inside out.

At the heart of her philosophy is alignment — a word she uses deliberately and practically rather than as a motivational flourish. Her approach recognises that ambitious leaders can become quietly disconnected from themselves while pursuing professional growth. The pressure to perform, meet expectations and keep achieving can gradually displace the deeper reasons a person entered business in the first place. Her work therefore goes beyond conventional business strategy. It explores the relationship between confidence, identity, decision-making and meaningful growth — and what gets lost when those things fall out of step with one another.

Her message carries particular resonance for women who have experienced adversity or spent years quietly doubting their own abilities. Capewell-Rive combines practical business and marketing guidance with personal empowerment, helping clients move from overwhelm and self-doubt toward clarity, confidence and leadership. That combination — tactical and emotional, strategic and deeply human — is one of the defining features of her work. Rather than treating confidence as something that arrives only after achievement, she encourages people to reconnect with who they are before deciding what they want to build.

This philosophy finds its most structured expression in her Becoming Bold & Brave framework, which brings together business strategy with personal empowerment tools designed to help women rebuild confidence, establish boundaries and take what she calls aligned action. The framework is rooted in honesty, resilience and lived experience, with an emphasis on creating greater freedom, voice and choice — not only in business, but in life more broadly.

Her public speaking work reflects the same thinking. Earlier this year, she appeared on the Personal Development Trailblazers Podcast for a conversation focused on building confidence and breaking the habit of playing small in life and business. The episode positioned confidence not as a professional skill acquired after enough experience, but as a foundation for making bolder choices and pursuing growth that is genuinely meaningful. In a separate 2026 talk titled Rewrite Your Identity & Reclaim Your Confidence, she challenged the idea that doing more leads to feeling more confident. Instead, she argued, confidence emerges when people reconnect with who they genuinely are — and allow their actions to follow from that identity rather than precede it.

That perspective sits within a broader shift in how modern leadership is being understood. Business leaders are increasingly expected not only to deliver results, but to understand their own values, communicate with authenticity and make decisions in environments that rarely offer certainty. Capewell-Rive's work occupies this evolving space, where personal clarity and professional performance are no longer treated as separate disciplines — and where the most effective leaders are often those who have done the harder internal work first.

Sarah Capewell-Rive

Her emphasis on self-trust is especially significant in this context. Entrepreneurs make consequential decisions without guaranteed outcomes every day — which opportunities to pursue, which boundaries to hold, which clients to serve, which direction to take next. No strategy eliminates uncertainty entirely. What can change is the leader's relationship with that uncertainty. Capewell-Rive's work helps leaders develop the confidence to make decisions from a place of internal clarity rather than from a constant need for external validation. The aim is not to reject ambition, but to redefine what ambition actually means.

For Capewell-Rive, ambition does not have to come at the cost of fulfilment. Her philosophy holds that a successful business should support the person building it rather than gradually consume them. Growth should be intentional. Leadership should be authentic. Decisions should reflect values. And achievement should ultimately contribute to a life that feels meaningful — not merely impressive from a distance.

This perspective also explains the particular appeal of her work to women navigating multiple responsibilities and identities simultaneously. Through Unstoppable Moms/ Mums In Business, she has connected entrepreneurship with the realities of women's wider lives, creating conversations that hold space for business growth and personal fulfilment together rather than treating them as competing priorities.

Her influence, then, is not limited to conventional business mentoring. She works at the intersection of entrepreneurship, marketing, confidence and self-empowerment, bringing together the external mechanics of building a business with the internal work required to lead one well and sustain it over time.

Capewell-Rive's story is ultimately about more than becoming successful. It is about becoming intentional. In a culture that routinely rewards people for doing more, she encourages leaders to pause long enough to ask whether what they are building actually belongs to them. In an environment that often rewards conformity, she advocates for authenticity. And where self-doubt holds ambitious people back from acting on their potential, she focuses consistently on confidence, courage and self-trust.

Her message is straightforward but carries real weight: success does not need to be inherited from someone else's definition. It can be designed. And for the leaders she works with, that design begins with clarity about who they are, the courage to act on what matters and enough self-trust to build a business — and a life — that are genuinely their own.

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