The price of a job: How Kenya's public employment system became a political marketplace

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Ruto fires 2027 warning shot at opposition: Prepare for a tough battle

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Wednesday, August 26, 2026 No. 01621 KSh 60 (TSh 1,700 : USh 2,700 : RFr 900)

themtkenyatimes Voice of the People

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The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 The green tide: How Gachagua is reshaping Kenya's political landscape ahead of 2027

Gachagua's green tide rises

Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party received Kamukunji MP Yusuf Hassan and eleven Jubilee branch chairmen into its ranks yesterday, in the most symbolically charged defection yet as Kenya's pre-election political realignment accelerates toward what promises to be the most fiercely contested general election in a generation.

Hassan, who has served Kamukunji constituency since 2011, announced his defection from Jubilee at DCP's Nairobi headquarters yesterday, pledging his support for Gachagua's presidential ambitions. "We are now in DCP, and we have decided to support Rigathi Gachagua in his 2027 presidential ambitions," he said.

The declaration was significant on multiple levels. Hassan is not a fringe figure. He is a veteran urban legislator with deep roots in one of Nairobi's most politically active constituencies, and his departure from Jubilee — the party that once dominated Kenyan politics under former President Uhuru Kenyatta — is the latest evidence that the old political architecture is being torn down and rebuilt around new centres of gravity.

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Rigathi Gachagua receiving Kamukunji MP Yusuf Hassan at DCP Hqs

Kanja puts recruits through their paces ahead of Kiganjo passing-out

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Inspector General of the National Police Service Douglas Kanja yesterday presided over a full-dress rehearsal parade at the National Police College main campus in Kiganjo, Nyeri County, ahead of the passing-out ceremony scheduled for Thursday.

The rehearsal marked the culmination of a nine-month training programme for the latest recruit cohort — one that Kanja described as having demonstrated exceptional discipline and endurance throughout.

"Policing is a sacred calling," Kanja told the assembled recruits. He urged them to serve as professional, accountable ambassadors of change, committed to upholding the rule of law and to protecting the lives and property of all Kenyans, residents and visitors alike.

He also used the occasion to address mental health — a subject that has gained increasing attention within the service — encouraging the young officers to make use of support services available to them as they transition into active duty.

Kanja expressed gratitude to College Commandant Nyale Munga and the instructing staff for the quality of training delivered. Among senior officers present were Deputy Inspector General Eliud Lagat, GSU Commandant Johana Tonui and Director of Corporate Communication Muchiri Nyaga.

The passing-out ceremony takes place tomorrow.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative.
It is published by **Exponential International Limited**, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Murang'a Woman Representative Betty Maina yesterday dismissed Ndindi Nyoro's recent overtures toward former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua as politically calculated, accusing the Kiharu MP of using the "big brother" framing as cover for a broader agenda. "If he is genuine, why not join his so-called 'big brother' and help strengthen the party?" Maina said. "It's better to have an open enemy than a fake friend." Maina argued that Nyoro's public embrace of Gachagua was less about party loyalty than personal positioning — a deliberate attempt to exploit the relationship for visibility while quietly sowing division within Mount Kenya's increasingly fractured political landscape. The remarks sharpened an already tense rivalry between two of the region's most prominent political voices.

Human rights organisations yesterday cast serious doubt on the official account surrounding the death of Rosemary Koech, the head of ICT at a leading financial institution, insisting her death was not suicide. The groups claim Koech was killed because she had uncovered — or was connected to — a fraudulent banking transaction involving millions of shillings, and that her elimination was deliberate. "She did not commit suicide," the organisations said in a statement, calling for an independent investigation into the circumstances of her death. The allegations raise troubling questions about financial crime, institutional accountability and the safety of whistleblowers within Kenya's banking sector. Koech's family and colleagues have not publicly commented, but pressure is mounting on authorities to treat the case as a potential homicide.

Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro yesterday delivered a sharp public rebuke to Kikuyu MP Kimani Ichung'wah, telling him bluntly to keep his name out of political conversations — a striking reversal that came just days after Ichung'wah had appeared to endorse Nyoro's decision to form a new party. The fallout suggests Nyoro is now actively distancing himself from government-aligned figures whose support, he appears to calculate, carries more political cost than benefit. The warning was pointed and deliberate: association with operatives seen as doing State House's bidding risks undermining Nyoro's carefully constructed image as an independent Mount Kenya voice. The public spat lays bare the increasingly complicated dynamics within the region's political establishment as loyalties shift ahead of 2027.

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday expressed confidence that his Democracy for the Citizens Party would dominate Nairobi's ward politics, projecting victory in 62 of the city's 85 wards while vowing to contest every remaining seat. The declaration signals an aggressive urban electoral strategy by Gachagua, who has been methodically building DCP's organisational footprint in the capital since his impeachment. The target is striking in its specificity — not a general claim of strength, but a ward-by-ward calculation that suggests detailed ground intelligence and structured mobilisation. "We will secure 62 wards and fight for the remaining ones," Gachagua said. If the projection holds, DCP would emerge as a formidable force in Nairobi County politics well ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Former Nandi Hills MP Alfred Keter yesterday trained his sights on President William Ruto, demanding an explanation for what he described as a glaring political double standard. Keter questioned why Ruto had labelled former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua a tribalist while apparently tolerating Tharaka Nithi Senator Geoffrey Ruku's efforts to divide Mount Kenya into eastern and western blocs. The implication was pointed: that the tribalism charge against Gachagua was a political weapon rather than a principled position. "Why is Ruto comfortable with Ruku splitting Mount Kenya into East and West while calling Gachagua a tribalist?" Keter asked. The remarks added fresh fuel to the widening fault lines within Mount Kenya's political establishment as 2027 calculations intensify across the region.

Former nominated MP David Ole Sankok yesterday called for the dismissal of Interior Cabinet Secretary Olekina Murkomen, arguing in unsparing terms that the minister lacks the intellectual and administrative capacity the docket demands. Sankok did not soften the blow. "That village mentality cannot run the Interior Ministry," he said, in remarks that landed with the bluntness of a man with nothing to lose politically. The attack is significant coming from within the broader circles that have historically supported President William Ruto's administration, suggesting that frustration with Murkomen's performance at one of government's most consequential ministries is spreading beyond the usual opposition benches. Sankok did not elaborate on specific failures but the weight of his language made the message unmistakable: he believes Murkomen must go.


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Politics **“We continue our engagements, strengthening the unity of the opposition as we work together to restore hope and deliver the Kenya that our people deserve,” Kalonzo said**

Three at the table: Kenya’s opposition narrows its road to 2027

As Kalonzo, Wamalwa and Gachagua meet again, the question is no longer whether the opposition can unite — it is who will lead it

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Opposition leaders, from left to right: Eugene Wamalwa, Rigathi Gachagua and Kalonzo Musyoka.

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka, DAP-Kenya leader Eugene Wamalwa and Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday held fresh consultations in Nairobi, deepening a political convergence that is rapidly reordering Kenya’s opposition landscape one year before the general election.

The meeting came a day after members of the United Alternative Government signed a memorandum of understanding committing themselves to work together and field a single presidential candidate in 2027. The sequencing was deliberate — handshakes on paper one day, face-to-face consolidation the next.

“Unity of purpose,” Kalonzo posted on social media after the meeting, adding the hashtag #WANTAM. Wamalwa offered a sharper formulation: “Umoja ni nguvu” — unity is strength. The messages were brief. The implications are not.

“We continue our engagements, strengthening the unity of the opposition as we work together to restore hope and deliver the Kenya that our people deserve,” Kalonzo said, adding that the three leaders had discussed “the way forward” for the country. The language was measured, as it always is at this stage. But the direction of travel is unmistakable.

Kalonzo has been mandated by the Azimio la Umoja coalition to spearhead talks with like-minded political formations, including Gachagua’s DCP, Martha Karua’s People’s Liberation Party and the Linda Mwananchi movement, as part of efforts to build a broad opposition coalition. Yesterday’s meeting was therefore not a spontaneous gathering. It was a structured step in a process that opposition leaders are now pursuing with genuine urgency.

The arithmetic driving that urgency is well understood. In the 2022 presidential election, Mount Kenya accounted for approximately 5.7 million registered voters, with President William Ruto winning overwhelmingly across the region with Gachagua as his running mate. The three traditional Ukambani counties provided a sizeable opposition vote, with Raila Odinga receiving around 768,000 votes in Kitui, Machakos and Makueni combined. The opposition’s calculation is that combining Gachagua’s Mount Kenya reach with Kalonzo’s Ukambani base creates a foundation that Ruto would struggle to overcome — provided the coalition holds.

That proviso carries the full weight of Kenya’s electoral history. The opposition currently has several senior figures with presidential ambitions or national political influence, including Gachagua, Kalonzo, former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang’i, Wamalwa, Martha Karua and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna. Each carries a constituency. Each carries an expectation. Reconciling those expectations into a single candidacy is the task that will define the coming months.

At a meeting of opposition principals on 11 August, Gachagua declared that the leaders had renewed their commitment to fielding one presidential candidate. “One year to the 2027 General Election, we met this afternoon and renewed our commitment that no matter what, we shall have one single presidential candidate,” he said, thanking People’s Liberation Party leader Martha Karua, whom he described as “the mother of our liberation,” for convening the gathering.

Yet the fractures are visible beneath the solidarity. Reports of a bilateral DCP-Wiper deal reached independently of other principals prompted a swift denial from Wiper, which clarified that a meeting at Gachagua’s Wamunyoro residence had been called simply to thank the party’s MPs and senators for their support during his impeachment. The clarification may have been accurate. But the sensitivity surrounding it illustrated how quickly the perception of backroom deals can destabilise a coalition still defining its own rules.

Gachagua departs for an extended tour of the United States today, leaving his allies to sustain the momentum domestically. The diaspora engagement is part of a broader strategy to project DCP’s reach beyond Kenya’s borders. Whether the party’s growth at home — its support rising from nine per cent in September 2025 to 16 per cent by May 2026 according to a TIFA Research poll — can be converted into the sustained national coalition the opposition needs remains the defining question of Kenya’s pre-election year.

For now, the three leaders are still talking. In Kenyan politics, that is further than most alliances get.


NEWS PAPER
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Jobs When appointment letters pass through politicians' hands before reaching the teachers who earned them, merit itself is on the line

The price of a job: How Kenya's public employment system became a political marketplace

BY Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyatimes

A trained teacher in Bomet County sold land and took out a bank loan to pay for a job that never came. Elsewhere, Members of Parliament have described appointment letters — handed to them in batches at State House — reportedly changing hands for as much as KSh400,000 before they ever reach a classroom.

These are not isolated failures of a bureaucracy. According to National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula, they point to something far more troubling: a system in which access to public employment has become entangled with money, political connections and loyalty.

For a trained teacher, an appointment letter should be the reward for years of study, qualification and patience — the moment at which education finally translates into a career. Instead, the latest allegations suggest that for some desperate job seekers, that letter has become something to be bought, borrowed for or pursued through political networks.

Speaking to MPs at a legislative retreat in Naivasha, Wetang'ula described a practice that teachers' unions had previously alleged but that his remarks brought into unusually sharp political focus. MPs, he said, travel to State House, where they are handed batches of Teachers Service Commission appointment letters — sometimes 20 at a time — to distribute to constituents. He further alleged that some legislators sell those opportunities.

The allegation landed at a particularly combustible moment. The TSC had just advertised 20,000 permanent teaching vacancies, drawing renewed attention from thousands of trained, unemployed teachers who have spent years waiting for an opportunity to enter the classroom. For them, Wetang'ula's remarks raise a troubling possibility: that merit is competing with a parallel, unofficial channel in which proximity to political power determines who gets through the door.

The question, therefore, is not simply who allegedly sold a teaching job or who allegedly paid for one. It is why politicians would have access to TSC appointment letters at all, and what that says about the boundary between a constitutionally established commission and the political networks seeking to control its opportunities.

If MPs were indeed receiving batches of appointment letters at State House for distribution in their constituencies, who authorised that arrangement? Who selected the beneficiaries? What criteria were applied? And why should a public appointment pass through a politician before reaching the person who earned it?

Those questions cannot be answered by blaming a few allegedly corrupt individuals. Wetang'ula's account was not the first crack in the wall.

Months earlier, Murang'a Woman Representative Betty Njeri Maina described a similar arrangement in strikingly specific terms. She said that she and 11 other MPs from Kiambu had each received 20 letters — 220 in total — to distribute in their constituencies, and that an MP's absence from State House when the letters were handed out meant their constituents would simply miss out.

The significance is not merely the number 220. It is that the allegation predates Wetang'ula's remarks and describes the same mechanism: political representatives receiving public employment letters for distribution among constituents. Taken together, the accounts demand urgent scrutiny of how appointment letters are generated, transferred and ultimately delivered.

If Maina's account raises questions about scale, Kitutu Masaba MP Clive Gisairo Arama's account raises questions about motive. Arama has alleged that he was denied letters distributed to some colleagues and, when he asked why, was told it was because he was not aligned with the government.

It is a small claim with a potentially enormous implication. If public employment opportunities can be withheld from an elected representative on the basis of political alignment, the issue moves beyond individual rent-seeking. It suggests that access to public jobs has itself become a political lever.

A public job is supposed to follow qualification, a transparent recruitment process and the needs of the institution — not the political proximity of the applicant's MP. That is where the story moves from corruption into patronage: the possibility that public employment is being used not merely for private enrichment, but to reward political loyalty.

Then there is Bomet, where the alleged mechanism is different but the vulnerability is the same. A recruitment cartel allegedly operating through TSC offices in the county is accused of taking money from job seekers for teaching positions that never materialised. Some victims reportedly sold land or borrowed money in the belief that they were paying for legitimate employment.

The promised jobs never came.

Where the alleged State House pipeline describes patronage, the Bomet case describes extortion. One allegedly turns access to genuine opportunities into political currency; the other allegedly manufactures opportunities that do not exist and sells them to desperate applicants. Different mechanisms, the same weakness: a recruitment system in which people feel that the official route may not be enough, and that finding a broker, an intermediary or a political connection is simply how things work.

The government's response has been swift in words, if not yet in consequence. Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba described the selling of employment letters as criminal and said the ministry would work with TSC to address the problem, with greater transparency in recruitment data presented as one solution.

Teachers' unions — including KNUT, KUPPET and Kethawa — have also demanded accountability and challenged political interference in teacher recruitment. Their argument is straightforward: merit, equity and transparency should determine who gets hired, not political proximity.

But condemnation is only the beginning. What Kenyans need now is evidence of institutional action.

Were appointment letters distributed outside the ordinary TSC recruitment process? If so, how many, and who authorised the distribution? Which constituencies received them? How were beneficiaries selected? And what happened to the applicants who followed the official process but were never connected to a politician?

These are not partisan questions. They are basic accountability questions. An independent investigation should establish exactly what happened, rather than leaving the country to choose between competing political accounts.

National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula

The TSC is a constitutionally established body with a specific mandate to recruit and employ teachers. That independence exists for a reason: public employment should not become an extension of whichever political network happens to control government. If appointment letters can be routed through political offices before reaching successful applicants, that independence is placed under serious strain.

And the cost is not abstract. It falls first on the trained graduates who followed the rules — the teachers who completed their studies, applied through official channels and waited, sometimes for years, while others allegedly found a faster route through money or political connections. It falls on applicants who cannot raise hundreds of thousands of shillings for a job that should never have carried a price. It falls on constituents whose access to public employment may depend not on their qualifications, but on whether their representative is considered politically acceptable.

And eventually, it falls on the institution itself.

A recruitment commission cannot retain public trust if citizens begin to believe that its formal process is merely the front door, while the real entrance lies somewhere inside the political establishment. Once that belief takes hold, every successful applicant becomes vulnerable to suspicion, every unsuccessful applicant has reason to question the process, and merit itself begins to lose its meaning.

That is the danger Kenya must confront as the 2027 General Election approaches. Political parties will negotiate alliances, politicians will mobilise supporters and candidates will promise jobs, development and opportunity. But public institutions must not become campaign machinery.

A government job is not a political gift. An appointment letter is not a constituency development project. And an MP should not have to decide which qualified citizen deserves employment. The system must decide — transparently and on merit.

The latest allegations therefore demand more than outrage. They demand an answer to a fundamental question: who controls access to Kenya's public jobs?

Because the teacher in Bomet who sold land and borrowed money for a job that never came is not a footnote to this story. She is the story.

Her experience shows what happens when a system meant to reward preparation begins to reward proximity — when desperation becomes an opportunity for exploitation, and when public employment starts behaving like private property. The greatest cost of such a system is not simply the money lost.

It is the belief that doing everything right may no longer be enough.

Politics Hassan, who has served Kamukunji constituency since 2011, announced his defection from Jubilee at DCP's Nairobi headquarters yesterday

The green tide: How Gachagua is reshaping Kenya's political landscape ahead of 2027

With defectors streaming in, by-election wins and a presidential bid hardening, the former deputy president is turning DCP into the opposition's most disruptive force

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes

Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party received Kamukunji MP Yusuf Hassan and eleven Jubilee branch chairmen into its ranks yesterday, in the most symbolically charged defection yet as Kenya's pre-election political realignment accelerates toward what promises to be the most fiercely contested general election in a generation.

Hassan, who has served Kamukunji constituency since 2011, announced his defection from Jubilee at DCP's Nairobi headquarters yesterday, pledging his support for Gachagua's presidential ambitions. "We are now in DCP, and we have decided to support Rigathi Gachagua in his 2027 presidential ambitions," he said.

The declaration was significant on multiple levels. Hassan is not a fringe figure. He is a veteran urban legislator with deep roots in one of Nairobi's most politically active constituencies, and his departure from Jubilee — the party that once dominated Kenyan politics under former President Uhuru Kenyatta — is the latest evidence that the old political architecture is being torn down and rebuilt around new centres of gravity.

Hassan cited the cost of living, unemployment and heavy taxation among his reasons for joining DCP. "I am happy to join DCP, a party which is advocating for the good of Kenyans. It is looking for the change we want since Kenyans have suffered due to high cost of living," he said.

The eleven Jubilee branch chairmen who crossed over alongside Hassan — drawn from constituencies including Starehe, Embakasi South, Langata, Kibra, Mathare, Roysambu and Kasarani — extend DCP's urban footprint across Nairobi's most contested political terrain. Their collective defection is less a statement about Jubilee's decline, which is well established, than a statement about where they believe the momentum now lies.

The timing sharpens that message further. Just a day before Hassan's defection, Nyandarua Governor Kiarie Badilisha and Murang'a Governor Irungu Kang'ata also shifted allegiance to DCP from the ruling UDA party, underlining the pace at which Gachagua's outfit is expanding beyond its Mount Kenya base.

The trajectory of DCP's rise is not easily dismissed. A TIFA Research poll recorded the party's support climbing from nine per cent in September 2025 to 16 per cent by May 2026, a period during which both ODM and UDA recorded declining figures. The party has also secured four by-election victories over the past year, in Kariobangi North, Narok Town, Kisa East wards, and the Ol Kalou parliamentary seat — results that demonstrate DCP's capacity to convert political momentum into electoral outcomes.

DCP has now taken its campaigns into Nakuru, one of Kenya's most closely watched electoral battlegrounds, with Gachagua and a team of opposition leaders touring the county as the party seeks to build a grassroots network beyond its traditional strongholds. Political analyst Joseph Omondi noted that Gachagua could find a receptive audience among Mount Kenya communities in the county, though he cautioned that intensifying mobilisation risks deepening ethnic and political divisions if campaigns fail to remain issue-based.

Gachagua himself has left no ambiguity about his intentions. Responding to suggestions within the opposition that his role should be limited to helping another leader defeat President William Ruto, Gachagua was unequivocal: "Rigathi is not a kingmaker. Gachagua is king." He dismissed as a "ridiculous proposition" the idea that his purpose was to remove Ruto and simply hand power to someone else.

He also used the occasion of Hassan's reception to reject calls for zoning within the United Opposition, insisting that all parties should field candidates wherever they enjoy support rather than agreeing to exclusive regional spheres of influence. "We do not want zoning. Every party should put a candidate where it feels it has popularity," he said.

Rigathi Gachagua receiving defectors at DCP Hqs

> **For DCP, the green tide that Gachagua invokes — "the future is green" — is no longer merely a slogan.**

That position places Gachagua at the centre of a broader tension within the opposition — between the desire for unity and the competition for dominance. Kenya's opposition is beginning to look less like a loose collection of political interests and more like a coalition in the making. But the bigger question is not whether opposition leaders can sit together. It is whether they can remain together when the difficult question of who leads finally arrives.

The emerging partnership between Gachagua's DCP and Kalonzo Musyoka's Wiper Patriotic Front has exposed a problem that could prove more difficult for Kenya's opposition than defeating Ruto at the ballot box: deciding who will lead the coalition. The two parties are betting that combining Gachagua's influence in Mount Kenya with Kalonzo's support in Ukambani will give the opposition a stronger base, pointing to the region's 5.7 million registered voters and Ukambani's reliable opposition vote as the arithmetic foundation of a winning alliance.

Gachagua has said that even if he does not secure the opposition's presidential ticket, he will serve as director of campaigns — a role he described as one that President Ruto himself fears. "If I will not be the opposition's flag bearer, I will be the director of the presidential campaigns," he said. The declaration was characteristic: framed generously as flexibility, but carrying an unmistakable undertone of supremacy.

The political landscape that Kenya is navigating toward August 2027 is unlike anything the country has encountered in recent memory. A sitting president with a broad-based parliamentary alliance faces a fragmented but energised opposition whose most prominent figure is a man he impeached from the second-highest office in the land. The personal history between Ruto and Gachagua adds a dimension of intensity to what is already a high-stakes contest, and it infuses every defection, every rally and every strategic manoeuvre with a weight that goes beyond ordinary political competition.

For DCP, the green tide that Gachagua invokes — "the future is green" — is no longer merely a slogan. It is a live political experiment, being tested ward by ward, constituency by constituency, across a country that has learned, through repeated experience, that Kenyan elections are rarely decided until the very last moment.

Whether the experiment succeeds will depend on whether Gachagua can hold the coalition together, resolve the kingmaker question on his own terms, and convert an impressive 12 months of political theatre into the one thing that ultimately matters: votes.

Politics “I can see there are some people whom we are going to give a very tough political battle, and they will be surprised, won’t they?” he said.

Ruto fires 2027 warning shot at opposition: Prepare for a tough battle

Speaking in Narok North, the President challenged rivals to move beyond slogans as Kenya’s political contest sharpens

President William Ruto

BY Collins Kibet
@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto yesterday issued his sharpest electoral warning yet to political opponents, telling them to brace for a fight they will not see coming as Kenya’s race to 2027 moves into a higher gear.

Speaking during a public address in Narok North, Ruto accused sections of the opposition of mobilising people to reject his administration’s programmes — among them the Social Health Authority and the Affordable Housing Programme. His tone was combative and deliberate.

“I can see there are some people whom we are going to give a very tough political battle, and they will be surprised, won’t they?” he said.

He went further, challenging those opposing the housing programme to apply basic reasoning: “Even if they have been paid, even if they have been hired, even if you have been organised and sent to oppose housing, can’t you use a little common sense to understand how you are going to oppose this housing programme?”

The remarks reflect a president increasingly willing to take the fight directly to his critics rather than allowing his administration’s record to speak for itself. Ruto challenged opponents to move beyond insults and slogans and present Kenyans with alternative policies, saying opposition leaders had focused largely on criticising his government without explaining what they would do differently if elected.

“My competitors have to think beyond insults, slogans and chants. We encourage leaders to tell the country, ‘Okay, William Ruto has done this. I can do better. This is how I can make things better,’” he said.

The political environment into which those words landed is anything but calm. Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka, former Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang’i and DAP-K leader Eugene Wamalwa are among the figures positioning themselves to challenge Ruto in 2027. The opposition has discussed supporting a single presidential candidate to avoid splitting the anti-government vote, though cohesion has so far proved elusive.

Sifuna, speaking during a tour of Kakamega County, declared that Ruto has no route back to State House, saying opposition forces had locked down Western and other key voting blocs. The senator has been conducting a series of regional rallies, building what he describes as a national movement capable of denying the President a second term.

Gachagua, meanwhile, has been consolidating his own base since his impeachment as Deputy President. He has vowed to defend his right to contest the presidency in 2027, dismissing suggestions that he should settle for a kingmaker role.

On the government side, the broad-based alliance between Ruto’s United Democratic Alliance and Raila Odinga’s Orange Democratic Movement has been central to the administration’s legislative agenda. At a parliamentary retreat in Naivasha earlier this month, Ruto told UDA and ODM members they must work together to secure victory, warning that losing was not an option. “We must win the 2027 general elections not for your sake but because the alternative is difficult to fathom; the people we are facing have no agenda, no policy and no experience,” he said.

> **“My competitors have to think beyond insults, slogans and chants. We encourage leaders to tell the country, ‘Okay, William Ruto has done this. I can do better. This is how I can make things better,’” he said.**

ODM has indicated it will not field its own presidential candidate, but is pushing for the deputy president position as part of any formal arrangement to back Ruto’s re-election bid — a demand that places Deputy President Kithure Kindiki’s position at the centre of internal negotiations.

Adding a layer of legal uncertainty to the political calculations, the High Court has ruled that the date set for the next presidential election was based on an incorrect interpretation of the Constitution, finding that the poll should take place on the second Tuesday of August in the fifth year following the previous general election. The ruling has prompted fresh debate about the electoral calendar, though no definitive resolution has yet emerged.

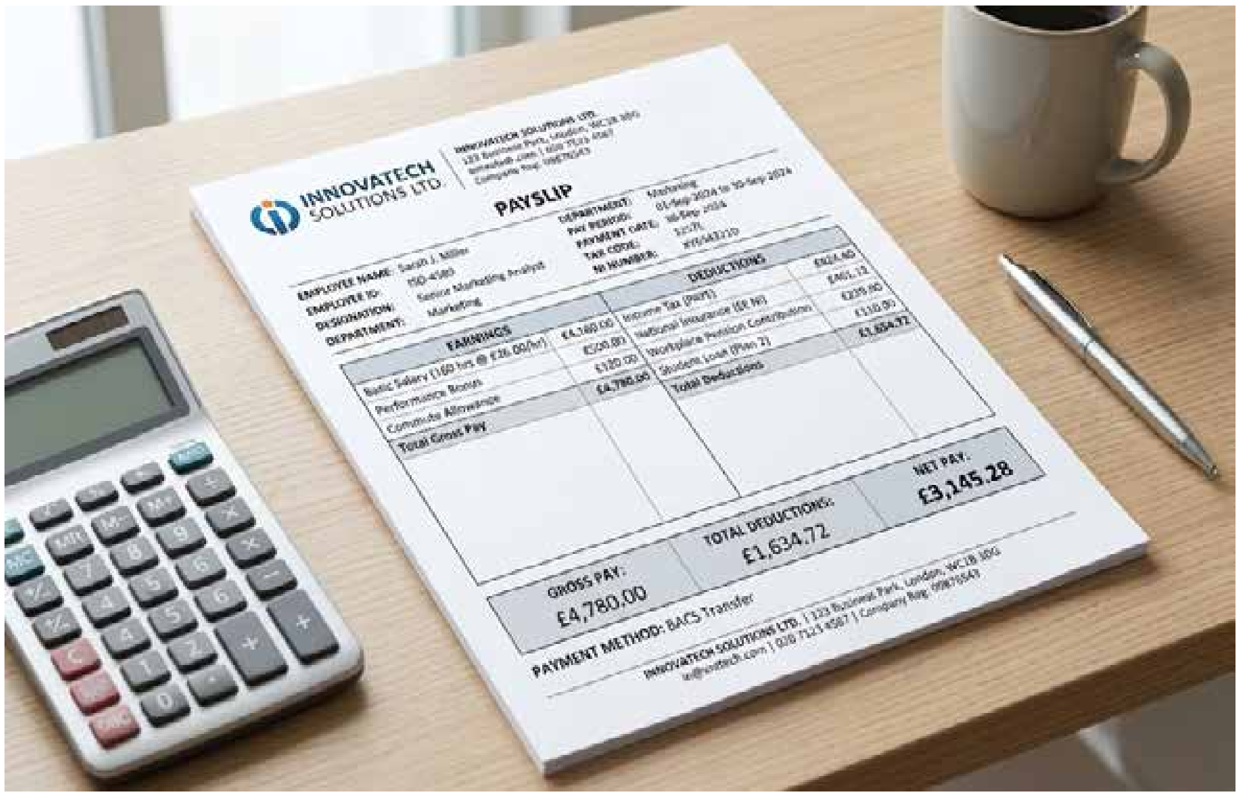
Ruto, for his part, has expressed confidence in his re-election prospects. “I am not scared at all. I trust the judgement of the people of Kenya that they can be able to see where a plan is and where an agenda is,” he told the Daily Nation.

That confidence was on full display in Narok North. Whether the opposition can find the unity and the message to match it will determine whether his warning lands as a statement of strength — or an invitation to prove him wrong.

Payslip Salary is not just money. Salary is a drug. It is the most effective contraceptive ever invented — not for your body, but for your destiny

Salary: The sweetest contraceptive ever invented

By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
mukphix@gmail.com



Payslip

Sit down for this. What follows will offend you first — and then, if you let it, it will save you.

Salary is not just money. Salary is a drug. It is the most effective contraceptive ever invented — not for your body, but for your destiny.

Consider how a contraceptive pill works. It gives you a false sense of security. It allows you to engage in the activity without bearing the consequence. It makes you feel safe today while silently closing off the possibility of life tomorrow. Biologically, it convinces your body that you are already pregnant so that you do not conceive. That is precisely what salary does to your ambitions. It convinces your mind that you are already successful, so you stop striving to become successful. You are engaged in activity — waking before dawn, sitting in traffic, enduring nine hours behind a desk — but you will never give birth to anything that truly belongs to you. You are busy. But you are barren.

And that, it turns out, is by design. You are paid just enough to keep you alive, but never quite enough to set you free.

The first economic trap salary springs on you is the oldest and most ruinous: trading time for money. The formula is brutally simple — income equals time multiplied by hourly rate. If your livelihood depends on a salary, your income is capped by the 24 hours in a day. No employer, however generous, can give you a 25th hour. Your income crawls. It can never explode.

An entrepreneur operates on an entirely different equation. Income equals value multiplied by leverage multiplied by systems. He does not sell time — he sells value. He builds systems that work while he sleeps. While you recover from a long day at your salaried job, his shop is still selling, his music is still streaming, his land is still appreciating, his poultry farm is still producing. Your salary stops the moment you stop reporting to work. His income continues even when he is hospitalised. Salary makes you forget this fundamental law of wealth — and the forgetting is expensive.

The second trap is equally dangerous. Salary is designed for survival, not wealth creation. No economist will dispute this: no one has ever become genuinely wealthy from salary alone. Wealth is built through ownership, equity and compounding assets. Salary offers none of these. You own nothing at your workplace. You hold no equity in the company you are helping to build with your intelligence and your years. And your money cannot compound because it is fully consumed before the month ends — on rent, school fees, family obligations, transport and data. Salary is linear. Wealth is exponential. A linear income cannot catch an exponential future, no matter how long you run.

The third trap is perhaps the most insidious of all. Salary systematically destroys your appetite for risk. Once the human brain becomes addicted to the predictable comfort of money arriving on the 30th of every month, it becomes allergic to uncertainty. You may have five million shillings sitting in a savings account and still be too frightened to purchase a plot of land that will double in value within two years — because you keep asking, "What if I lose it?" So you leave it in the bank, where inflation quietly and consistently erodes its value. The pill has worked. Your dream of land ownership is aborted before it is even conceived.

The pill is administered in doses. The first is the interview. They call and say, "Congratulations, you have been selected." You weep with relief. Your family celebrates. You post your gratitude online. You do not yet realise you have just swallowed the opening dose. The second dose is the first salary. Whatever the figure — eight hundred thousand shillings, one point two million, two point five million — it arrives and you feel, briefly, invincible. You buy new clothes. You take friends out. You feel rich for four days.

The third dose is lifestyle inflation. Because you are now working class, you upgrade your living situation, take out a loan for a phone, another for a car, perhaps a television. Now you must work to service the loans. Now you cannot resign even when you want to. You are fully contracepted. Your womb for dreams is sealed. You will work for four decades to pay for things that lose their value in four years.

The fourth dose is the annual increment — a five per cent raise that arrives just as inflation runs at eight per cent. In real terms you are poorer than last year, but the number on your payslip has grown, and so you applaud. The pill is sweet. The fifth and final dose is the promise of retirement. Thirty years of service, they tell you, and we will reward you with a pension and a gratuity. So you wait. You give your strongest years, your sharpest ideas, your most energetic mornings to building another person's dream. At sixty, you receive a certificate of service and a lump sum — and many who reach that day find they have never learned how to live without waiting for instructions from a boss. The data on post-retirement mortality is not comforting.

The architecture of this system is brilliant and deliberate. The colonial era left its schools behind — institutions designed not to produce thinkers, but to produce workers. To teach memorisation rather than creation. To cultivate job-seekers rather than job-creators. The result is visible everywhere: a young graduate with a first-class degree applying to be a bank teller because there is a salary attached. A young woman who bakes brilliantly, who can farm and generate real income, sitting in an office typing letters for six hundred thousand shillings a month because the salary feels safe. Her talent is quietly dying. Her business is dying. Her farm exists only in her imagination. All of it prevented by a monthly payment.

This is not an argument against work. Work is honourable and necessary. The argument is against allowing your job to become the ceiling of your ambition.

Salary should be your seed capital, not your final destination. It should be the school fees for your entrepreneurship, not your life sentence. The distinction between those who build financial freedom and those who remain trapped often comes down to a single habit: the order in which money is allocated. The salaried person pays the landlord first, feeds the family, covers transport and data, and if anything survives, considers saving. The investor pays herself first — sets aside for investment before the demands of the month consume everything. That ordering, practised consistently, determines the future.

Assets versus liabilities tells the same story. A salary increment spent on a new smartphone on credit produces a device worth a fraction of its purchase price within two years. The same increment invested in one hundred chicks produces eggs, income and a business that compounds. The gap between these two choices, extended over five years, becomes a chasm.

Here is the uncomfortable truth: if your salary is your only source of income, you are one month from financial ruin. One retrenchment. One illness. One company closure. That is not security — it is the most precarious arrangement available, packaged cleverly to feel like stability. True security is a farm that feeds you when you are dismissed. A rental property that pays you when you are ill. A skill no employer can revoke. A business that generates income while you rest.

Inside you is something worth more than a monthly paycheck. A business. A solution. An idea that could sustain your family and your community for decades. But salary has been whispering to your brain: not yet, stay comfortable, you cannot afford the risk. The question worth sitting with is this — protection from what, exactly? From your own potential?

Start now, with what you have. One small poultry project. One side business. One YouTube channel. One product sold on WhatsApp. Fund that dream with your salary for two years, so the dream can fund your life for the next forty.

Because one day the salary will stop. Your employer will let you go, or your body will slow, or the company will close. On that day, what will you have given birth to?

Do not die with your dreams still undelivered. Salary is an excellent servant. It is a terrible master. Marry purpose, not a payslip.

Market East Africa sits on the supply side of that shift. The question is whether it can move up the value chain before others do it for them

Africa's green gold: The long walk from laboratory to market

East Africa has the biology, the brains and the biomass — but without finance, standards and political will, the bioeconomy will remain a brilliant idea that never quite pays its way

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Experts, policymakers and investors gathered in Nairobi yesterday issued a blunt challenge to East African governments: stop producing bioeconomy strategies and start producing bioeconomy industries.

The Africa Bioeconomy Workshop, convened against the backdrop of the newly released 2026 State of the Bioeconomy in Eastern Africa report, brought together scientists, entrepreneurs, senior officials and development partners to confront a question that has shadowed the continent's green economy ambitions for years — why does a region so richly endowed with biological resources remain a net exporter of raw materials rather than a manufacturer of the products those resources could become?

The answer, the workshop made clear, is not a shortage of ideas. It is a shortage of the institutional, financial and regulatory infrastructure needed to convert those ideas into companies, jobs and national income.

Niall O'Connor, Centre Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute Africa Centre, captured the mood precisely. "The bioeconomy in Eastern Africa is no longer a concept confined to research circles," he said. "A lot of work over the years has been done on research, but now it's actually happening across the continent." The challenge, as O'Connor and others made plain, is that happening is not the same as scaling. And scaling is what East Africa urgently needs.

"We must move from exporting raw biological resources to retaining greater value at home through local processing and manufacturing," he said — a sentence that might have been spoken at any African development conference over the past three decades, but which carries sharper meaning now that the science, the market demand and the climate imperative are finally converging.

The 2026 State of the Bioeconomy in Eastern Africa report maps the opportunity in concrete terms. Agricultural residues and organic waste — materials that are currently discarded or burned — represent potential feedstock for industries producing biofuels, organic fertilisers, biodegradable packaging, natural fibres, renewable oils, industrial enzymes and bio-based construction materials. These are not niche products. They are categories experiencing rapid global demand growth, driven by tightening environmental regulation in Europe, corporate sustainability commitments and consumer pressure that is reshaping supply chains from Amsterdam to Nairobi.

East Africa sits on the supply side of that shift. The question is whether it can move up the value chain before others do it for them.

Dr Abdou Tenkouano, Director General of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, framed the stakes in economic terms that politicians tend to understand. Agriculture, he noted, contributes between 23 and 35 per cent of GDP in many sub-Saharan African countries. That makes it the obvious platform from which to build a bio-based industrial economy. "At its core, the bioeconomy uses scientific knowledge and innovation to transform biological resources into economic and social benefits in a sustainable way," Tenkouano said. He urged governments to strengthen university-industry partnerships as a practical mechanism for turning research into revenue. "We should promote innovation and entrepreneurship in value addition and agro and bioprocessing to create jobs for young people and incomes for families, especially through university-industry partnerships," he said.

The employment dimension is not incidental. East Africa has one of the world's youngest populations, a cohort that will enter the labour market over the next two decades in numbers that existing economic structures cannot absorb. The bioeconomy, if properly industrialised, offers a credible pathway — but only if the processing and manufacturing happen locally rather than in facilities in Europe or Asia that import African raw materials and export finished products back to African consumers.

The food security dimension is equally pressing. Dr Isata Kamanda, Sierra Leone's Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, argued that bioeconomy development and agricultural investment must be integrated rather than parallel strategies. "I think the way to go is to invest in your major staples," she said. Sierra Leone's Feed Salone strategy offers a working model: farmers are being linked directly to processors, and locally produced rice is being incorporated into school-feeding programmes to create a reliable domestic market. The logic is straightforward — anchor demand, build the supply chain around it, and process locally rather than importing processed substitutes.

Niall O'Connor, Centre Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Africa Centre

Kenya's Principal Secretary for Science, Research and Innovation, Prof Shaukat Abdulrazak, drew attention to the consumption side of the equation, citing government efforts to promote traditional crops including millet and sorghum. Food security, he argued, depends not only on what farmers produce but on whether viable markets exist for what they grow. Without deliberate demand creation, production incentives weaken and the value chain never coheres.

Both officials converged on a constraint that tends to receive less political attention than it deserves: regulatory standards. "You can't do a business without certification," Kamanda said flatly, calling for standards covering the entire food and bio-product chain, from production and processing through to packaging and the consumer. Without harmonised certification regimes, businesses cannot access export markets, investors cannot underwrite scale-up, and the region's fragmented national markets work against the kind of aggregation that makes bio-based industries commercially viable.

O'Connor pressed the same point from a financing perspective. Patient capital, blended finance structures, reliable biomass supply chains, shared processing infrastructure and quality assurance systems are the scaffolding that bio-based industries require before private investment flows in at scale. Without them, the business case collapses at the point where it should be strongest. He also identified regulatory fragmentation across East Africa's national markets as a structural disincentive to investment, calling for harmonised standards, certification and trade rules across the region.

The institutional picture is mixed. Ethiopia and Kenya have developed national bioeconomy strategies. Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi are advancing their own frameworks. But O'Connor delivered the sharpest verdict on the gap between strategy and outcome: "Strategies will have little effect without financing, implementation programmes and institutions capable of supporting businesses." A policy document, however well drafted, does not build a fermentation plant or certify an organic fertiliser for export.

Yesterday's workshop is expected to contribute to preparations for the Global Bioeconomy Summit in Dublin on 20 and 21 October, where African nations will have an opportunity to shape the global agenda rather than simply respond to it. Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, East African Community Deputy Secretary General Andrea Ariik Malueth and British High Commissioner to Kenya Matt Baugh were among the senior participants.

East Africa's biological wealth is not in question. What remains unresolved is whether governments will build the institutions, mobilise the capital and harmonise the standards needed to transform that wealth from a research proposition into an industrial reality.

The continent has the green gold. The task now is learning to mint it.

Police Inspector General Douglas Kanja confirmed yesterday that the new uniform — to be worn first by the more than 6,000 graduating recruits

Out with the blue: Kenya's police get a new look ahead of a critical election year

BY Kamande Muchiri
@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto will on Friday unveil a new uniform for Kenya Police Service general duty officers at the National Police College passing-out parade in Kiganjo, Nyeri County, ending a three-year process that began when officers overwhelmingly rejected the current persian blue outfit during a 2023 public participation exercise.

Inspector General Douglas Kanja confirmed yesterday that the new uniform — to be worn first by the more than 6,000 graduating recruits — fulfils a commitment made to officers who voted against the existing attire introduced by former President Uhuru Kenyatta in 2018 without consultation. "We have been using the blue, the deep blue one, so we have just reverted back to the one that was agreed upon," Kanja said. "I must note that on Monday, I will also be in that one."

The rollout carries both institutional and political weight. The uniform change was a pre-election pledge by Ruto, and its delivery at Kiganjo — in the presence of a graduating cohort entering service one year before a general election — sends a deliberate message about government responsiveness to the concerns of a security service whose morale and conduct will be central to the integrity of the 2027 polls. "In the next few coming weeks, we should see the new uniform that was approved some time back, and I think this is also going to be a force multiplier," Kanja said.

The Administration Police and the General Service Unit will retain their existing uniforms for now, with the change applying initially to general duty officers alone.

Inspector General Douglas Kanja

Kanja also used his address to warn the graduating recruits against being drawn into political errands as the country enters its most intense pre-election period. The warning was pointed: over 6,000 newly badged officers entering service in an election year represent both a significant security asset and a potential vulnerability if their loyalties are misdirected.

A new uniform does not make a new police service — but it is a start.

The sky never asks for attention

The sky never asks for attention,
Yet everyone admires it.
Every day, the sun rises in the morning
And sets peacefully in the evening.
The moon grows gradually,
And one day, it shows its full face.
Everyone admires its beauty and grace.

In our real life, too,
We admire many wonderful people.

Our Creative Writers founder,
Our beloved Brinda Mam,
Never forces anyone to do anything.
Yet everyone admires her
Passion, kindness, and beautiful thoughts.

She always encourages others
And inspires them to move forward.
She never seeks recognition for herself,
But by God's grace,
Recognition reaches her automatically.

Just like the sky that shines without asking for attention,
She shines through her work, her thoughts, and her heart.

She truly deserves every honour,
Every appreciation,
And every recognition that comes her way.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative writer

The water park

The sun was hot but my mood was higher,
Ran straight to the pool, my feet on fire.
Sliding down waves like I'm flying free,
Screaming with laughter, wild as the sea.

Water splashed up like diamonds in air,
Every drop felt like sunshine with care.

We raced in the lazy river, round and round,
No homework, no stress, just joy all around.

The wave pool hit and we jumped so high,
Dancing with water under the sky.
Cold splashes kissed my face with glee,
Felt like the whole world belonged to me.

In the water park, worries just melt,
Happiness is something you splash and you felt.

"life is better when you dive in and play,
Because a little splash of joy can wash the stress away.

Penned By: JEGADEESWARI V
Standard:11-A
School: St. Joseph's Matriculation HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL ACHARAPAKKAM.

Stranger Things

A shadow moved across the wall
But no one was standing there
A clock stopped at a strange time
And no one knew why.

A mirror looked different for a moment
Then everything became normal.
A radio suddenly made a voice
But there was no one speaking.

Footprints appeared on a clean floor
They stopped near an empty door.
A bell suddenly rang
And nobody had touched it.

A blank envelope appeared one morning
My name was written on it.

The world is full of strange moments
Some have answers
Some do not.
That is what makes them mysterious.

D.DHANYASRI
GRADE 8
John Dewey Matric Higher Secondary School,
Panruti, Tamil Nadu, India

Some things has to end to let better things to begin

When your wardrobe is crammed,
You have to remove the older ones,
To make room for the newer ones,
And let go of what you no longer need.

Life is much like a wardrobe,
Sometimes it gets crowded with the past,
With old habits, old fears, old memories,
And things we have simply outgrown.

We hold on because they are familiar,
Even when they no longer fit.
But how can something new enter
When there is no space left for it?

So, learn to let go gracefully,
Clear the clutter from your heart.
Some things have to end,
For something better to begin.

M.Raddhika
Freelance content writer,
Creative Writers,
Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu
India

Proud to be an Indian

From the snow-crowned peak to the ocean shore,
A timeless land with a heartbeat pure.
A tapestry woven in vibrant threads,
Where hope and courage walk where wisdom treads.
A thousand voices, one united soul,
Diverse in spirit, yet completely whole.
In every harvest, tradition, and dream,
Flows the strength of an endless stream.
The tricolor flutters so brave and high,
Saffron, white, and green in the open sky.
Wherever I journey, near or far,
I am proud of the land that made who we are.

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

Presence of mind

Mind is an active one
Always rocks with its energy
Never fails to work
Without one's order
Does its regular work

But presence of mind is important
Where we are and how to deal
Is a matter of discussion
All things are not alike

Presence of mind shows our real tendency
Brings us pleasure of satisfaction
Adds stamina to our thoughts
Never lets us be away

Saves us from the danger
Pushes to move to the next level
Guides us when we are in trouble
Just like a friend to keep it near

Y.J.AMBIKA
G.H.S.KAKKADASAM

Politics Sifuna was characteristically direct about what is at stake. “What we are fighting for is not a party. We have parties.

A name worth fighting for: The legal battle that could define Sifuna’s 2027 ambitions

The Linda Mwananchi brand dispute is more than a registration squabble — it is a test of whether Kenya’s opposition can convert street momentum into durable political infrastructure

BY Jane Njeri
@themtkenyatimes

The Political Parties Disputes Tribunal yesterday allowed Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna’s Linda Mwananchi movement to reserve the name “The Mwananchi Party” and the acronym LINDA pending a full hearing scheduled for 14 September, while restraining the Registrar of Political Parties from granting either name to any rival claimant in the interim.

The orders, issued through a virtual proceeding, also permitted the continued reservation and registration of the Liberty National Democratic Alliance — which trades under the LINDA acronym — creating a temporary legal holding position in which both parties proceed under their respective names until the tribunal determines who holds the stronger claim.

The ruling preserves Sifuna’s political options at a moment when the clock is running. Under the IEBC’s election preparations schedule, political parties must submit the names of their authorised persons to the electoral commission by 15 October 2026, with nomination rules certified and submitted to the IEBC by early November. For a movement that has spent months building grassroots momentum, the registration dispute represents an administrative threat to a much larger political project.

Sifuna was characteristically direct about what is at stake. “What we are fighting for is not a party. We have parties. We are fighting for our brand, our name,” he said at an event in Nairobi on Tuesday. He accused the Registrar of unfairly denying the movement its identity, adding pointedly: “We have many, many options because this Kasongo thinks he’s dealing with children.”

The dispute has a layered history. The movement’s lawyers applied to reserve the name Linda Mwananchi Movement on 4 June 2026, but the Registrar rejected the application on public interest grounds, citing similarities with already reserved slogans. A third claimant subsequently emerged — Charles Wanyonyi, who asserts he applied to reserve the Linda Mwananchi Party of Kenya name as early as 24 February 2026, predating the movement’s application entirely, and accusing the Registrar of reviewing the matter without his participation.

The confusion deepened when the Office of the Registrar approved the registration of the Liberty National Democratic Alliance under the LINDA acronym, reigniting the brand battle at the very moment Sifuna’s allies were attempting to formalise their structures.

The episode carries uncomfortable echoes of a crisis that scarred an earlier generation of Kenyan politicians. ODM’s founders still recount how failure to promptly secure the party’s name nearly derailed the movement ahead of the 2007 General Election. Two decades later, history is repeating itself — with one of ODM’s own breakaway factions. The Linda Mwananchi movement’s digital platform had attracted more than 55,000 self-subscribed members and over 13,000 volunteers by mid-August. That grassroots energy now depends, in part, on a legal ruling about four words and an acronym.

The tribunal reconvenes on 14 September. A movement built on defending the citizen must first defend its own name.

Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna

Politics "We will recommend to the IEBC those individuals who are not fit to run for office based on their track record of promoting or perpetrating violence in Kenya," Masengeli said

Name, shame, ban: Police put violent political actors on notice ahead of 2027

With Homa Bay's bloodied rally fresh in memory, security agencies have drawn a line — and warned that crossing it may cost a candidate their ballot paper

BY Brenda Atieno
@themtkenyatimes


Deputy Inspector General of the Administration Police Service Gilbert Masengeli

The National Police Service yesterday told political actors linked to violence that it will submit their names to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission for potential disqualification from the 2027 General Election, marking the sharpest warning yet from security agencies as Kenya enters its most politically charged pre-election year in a decade.

Deputy Inspector General of the Administration Police Service Gilbert Masengeli, speaking at the launch of the Roadmap to a Peaceful General Election 2027 in Nairobi, said recommendations would target individuals whose track records show they have promoted or perpetrated violence. "We will recommend to the IEBC those individuals who are not fit to run for office based on their track record of promoting or perpetrating violence in Kenya," he said.

The announcement lands at a moment when the connection between organised political violence and electoral ambition has rarely felt more direct. Nine days earlier, violence disrupted a Linda Mwananchi political rally in Homa Bay County, prompting the National Police Service to intensify investigations and arrest 37 suspected gang members found in possession of crude weapons, including machetes, metal rods, knives, ropes and rungus. Police vehicles were attacked, journalists were targeted, and one officer died when a vehicle lost control during the incidents. Eight officers were injured across two days of operations.

The Homa Bay episode was not an isolated flashpoint. It was a preview. As political mobilisation accelerates toward the August 10, 2027 election date, the use of organised criminal groups to intimidate opponents, disrupt rallies and silence critics has emerged as one of the defining security threats of the electoral cycle. Masengeli's language yesterday was calibrated to confront that threat directly. "Investigation, arrests, prevention of crime, and instances of political-instigated violence — we will deal with goons firmly and their sponsors," he said. The inclusion of sponsors in that formulation was deliberate. Financiers and organisers, not merely foot soldiers, are now explicitly in the crosshairs.

IEBC Chairperson Erastus Ethekon has separately indicated that the commission could act on police recommendations, stating that sanctions could include fines and, in serious cases, disqualification from contesting. "We will take appropriate action, including fining them and if it is really tough we will even disqualify some of them from contesting," he said.

Chief Justice Martha Koome added institutional weight to that position at the launch of the IEBC's Strategic Plan in June, urging the commission to enforce the Electoral Code of Conduct without hesitation. "If someone breaches the code of conduct, then you must disqualify them from participating in the general election. There is a growing trend of goonism in this country to silence opponents. We must reject it in totality," she said. She questioned pointedly why politically linked protests frequently turn violent while demonstrations by teachers and doctors remain peaceful — a distinction that pointed an uncomfortable finger at deliberate orchestration rather than spontaneous disorder.

The legal architecture supporting these warnings is now formally in place. The IEBC gazetted Notice No. 13497 on August 20, bringing the Electoral Code of Conduct and the Election Offences Act into operation for the election period, placing political actors under a binding legal framework governing campaigns, nominations, voter registration and conduct. The window of informal impunity that characterises pre-formal campaign periods has effectively closed.

Masengeli was careful to define the boundaries of police authority. The NPS does not possess the power to disqualify candidates directly. Its role is to gather evidence, build records and refer cases to the IEBC, which retains the final determination of eligibility under the electoral and legal framework. He also called for cooperation among independent commissions and security agencies, noting that institutions may be independent in their mandates but remain interdependent in protecting Kenya's peace and stability.

The roadmap was launched under the campaign hashtag #UchaguziBilaNoma — elections without trouble — and NCIC Chairperson Bishop Kepha Omae Nyamweya described it as a deliberate shift from reacting to electoral violence to preventing it before tensions escalate. He said peaceful elections could not rest with any single institution, calling on political leaders, security agencies and civil society to share the responsibility.

The stakes are high and the calendar is unforgiving. With exactly one year separating yesterday's launch from polling day, every rally, every ward meeting and every act of political intimidation now occurs within a framework in which consequences — legal, electoral and institutional — are being actively assembled.

Kenya has heard warnings before. What distinguishes this moment is the specificity: names will be gathered, records will be checked, and the ballot paper may yet become the price of political violence.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Aviation **Kenya signed. Kenya ratified. Kenya now sits among the “champion states” of the Single African Air Transport Market launched in 2018**

Shackled wings over the savannah: Kenya’s legal hypocrisy in bilateral chains and the betrayal of Yamoussoukro

By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
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Africa aviation

In 2015, a joint study by the African Civil Aviation Commission and IATA projected that full air transport liberalisation among just twelve African states including Kenya would inject 1.3 billion dollars annually into their combined GDP and generate more than 155,000 new jobs. Yet more than two decades after the Yamoussoukro Decision became binding, Kenya’s own bilateral air service agreements remain only 18 percent compliant with that Decision. This is not a statistic of delay; it is the cold arithmetic of deliberate obstruction. The skies above the continent are not open; they are latticed with paper walls, each bilateral treaty a bar in a cage that African carriers themselves helped forge.

The Yamoussoukro Decision of 1999, endorsed by African heads of state in Lomé in 2000 and fully binding from August 2002, was never a polite suggestion. It was a legal instrument that declared itself superior to any incompatible bilateral or multilateral agreement between State Parties. It granted free exercise of first through fifth freedom traffic rights, abolished capacity and frequency ceilings, and insisted on multiple designation of airlines. It was Africa’s answer to the closed-sky inheritance of colonial bilateralism the very system European powers once used to ration routes between their possessions and later between the newly independent states. Where Europe dismantled its own restrictive bilaterals in the 1990s and created a single aviation market, Africa wrote a better document and then refused to live by it.

Kenya signed. Kenya ratified. Kenya now sits among the “champion states” of the Single African Air Transport Market launched in 2018. And still, the overwhelming majority of its bilateral air service agreements with fellow African nations cling to the old restrictive grammar: limited frequencies, protected national-carrier privileges, withheld fifth-freedom rights. The Decision’s own text is unambiguous its provisions take precedence. Under Article 2(6) of Kenya’s 2010 Constitution, ratified treaties form part of the law of the land. The legal implication is therefore categorical: every non-compliant bilateral that Kenya continues to enforce is not merely outdated policy; it is an ongoing breach of both continental obligation and domestic constitutional duty.

This is not bureaucratic inertia. It is the stubborn defence of a narrow sovereignty that treats airspace as private fiefdom rather than public artery. The historical parallel is cruelly precise. Just as post-independence governments sometimes retained the economic structures of the colonial state while waving the flag of freedom, so too do they retain the restrictive bilateral architecture while proclaiming African integration. The result is a continent whose airlines control a fraction of intra-African traffic while foreign carriers dominate intercontinental routes. African passengers pay inflated fares, endure circuitous itineraries, and watch opportunity evaporate into the thin air of protectionism. The correlation is stark: closed skies correlate with closed markets, thinner tourism flows, slower trade, and the quiet starvation of secondary cities that never see a direct flight.

Consider the vivid absurdity. A Kenyan traveller wishing to reach a West African capital may still be forced through European hubs because fifth-freedom rights remain hostage to reciprocal bargaining. Cargo that could move overnight sits in warehouses while negotiators haggle over seat quotas. National carriers, shielded from competition, grow neither efficient nor expansive; they merely survive. The Decision warned against precisely this outcome. It foresaw that without fair competition rules and a genuine dispute mechanism, the strong would still dominate and the weak would still hide behind bilateral walls. Kenya’s low compliance rate among the lowest on the continent reveals that the warning was ignored.

The intellectual failure is deeper still. Legal dualism has become a national posture: one face turned toward the African Union, solemnly affirming Yamoussoukro and SAATM; another face turned toward bilateral partners, quietly inserting capacity limits and route restrictions. This dualism is not sophisticated statecraft; it is intellectual dishonesty dressed as pragmatism. True mastery of the subject would recognise that sovereignty in the twenty-first century is exercised most powerfully through pooled arrangements that enlarge, rather than diminish, national capacity. Europe understood this. ASEAN has moved toward it. Africa wrote the text and then chose the cage.

The emotional cost is paid daily by ordinary Africans. Families separated by distances that should be a few hours’ flight become months of logistical ordeal. Entrepreneurs who could link Nairobi’s markets to Accra’s or Lusaka’s are throttled by ticket prices that mock the promise of continental free trade. Young pilots and engineers trained at great public expense find their industry stunted by artificial scarcity of routes. The sky, which should be the one domain free of the borders that scar the land, has been colonised by the same protectionist instincts that once guarded colonial monopolies.

This cannot stand. The Government of Kenya must move beyond rhetorical championship. Every existing bilateral with African partners must be audited against the Yamoussoukro Decision within twelve months and amended or terminated where incompatible. The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority must refuse to issue operating authorizations that contradict the Decision’s primacy. Parliament must domesticate the Decision’s competition and dispute-settlement annexes with the same urgency once reserved for trade agreements. Kenya Airways and other Kenyan carriers must stop seeking shelter behind residual restrictions and instead demand the full market the Decision already grants them.

The African Union and AFCAC cannot remain polite monitors. They must name non-compliant states without diplomatic euphemism and activate the dispute mechanism that has too long gathered dust. Regional economic communities EAC, COMESA must treat non-aligned bilaterals as breaches of community law. International partners who fund African aviation infrastructure should condition support on demonstrable Yamoussoukro compliance. Civil society, travel associations, and the travelling public must treat closed skies as the economic injustice they are, not as technical aviation arcana.

History will not be kind to those who possessed the map and chose the labyrinth. The Yamoussoukro Decision was Africa’s clearest statement that the colonial bilateral order had expired. Kenya’s continued reliance on restrictive agreements is not caution; it is betrayal of that statement. The data is merciless, the legal hierarchy is clear, the human cost is measurable in missed connections and vanished livelihoods. Open the skies or admit that the borders remain closed by choice. There is no third path that still claims intellectual honesty or continental solidarity. The wings are ready. The chains are political. Break them.

The writer is a social commentator

Small words A single word may touch an old memory, awaken a buried emotion, restore hope, challenge a painful belief or redirect the course of a life

The power of small words

Why the sentences that stay with us longest are rarely the ones we expected

BY Ashford Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

The words that change our lives are not always spoken from grand podiums. They are not found in famous quotations, bestselling books or carefully crafted speeches. Often, the words that remain with us longest are ordinary ones, spoken in ordinary moments — uttered quietly in a classroom, whispered beside a hospital bed, shared across a kitchen table or offered during a difficult conversation.

A single word may touch an old memory, awaken a buried emotion, restore hope, challenge a painful belief or redirect the course of a life. Its power rarely lies in length, sophistication or literary beauty. It lies in the meaning it carries and the place it finds within another person's heart.

Two deeply human experiences illustrate this truth. In the first, a young man overwhelmed by grief hears a small child cry out: "Mama." The word is simple and familiar, spoken countless times every day in homes, schools, markets and playgrounds. Yet for the grieving young man, it becomes something far more. It awakens memories of his late mother and reconnects him to words his therapist had once spoken about her.

In that brief moment, the ordinary becomes deeply personal. The child does not know the emotional weight carried by the word. The cry is spontaneous and innocent — yet it reaches into a place of memory the young man may have struggled to access on his own. It is a reminder that words can travel beyond the moment in which they are spoken. They can cross the distance between the present and the past, between loss and love, between grief and healing.

The second story is equally revealing. A woman recovering from years of abuse is unexpectedly confronted by a simple question: "Where is your home?" To many, the question appears practical, even harmless — the kind asked while filling out a form or making casual conversation. But for someone whose life has been marked by fear, displacement and emotional pain, it carries a far deeper meaning.

Where is home?

The question forces her to confront a painful reality: she no longer feels she belongs anywhere. Home is not merely a house, a town or an address. It is also a place of safety, acceptance, identity and belonging. When those foundations are damaged, the word can become emotionally complicated — evoking comfort for one person and loneliness for another, security for someone who has always belonged, and loss for someone who has been forced to leave.

This is why small words can possess such extraordinary power. Their meaning is never entirely contained in a dictionary. Words gather significance from the lives we have lived, the people we have loved, the places we remember and the experiences we carry. A word such as mother may hold tenderness, sacrifice, grief or longing. Home may contain childhood memories, family, safety, exile or loneliness. Failure may sound like a temporary setback to one person but feel like a permanent verdict to another.

Language is personal because memory is personal.

The same sentence may pass unnoticed by one listener and become life-changing to another. The words themselves may be small, but the emotional worlds they awaken can be immense.

For teachers, parents, leaders and friends, this truth carries a real responsibility. We may never know which words another person will carry for years. A teacher who quietly tells a struggling learner, "You can do this," may forget the conversation by the end of the day. The learner may carry those words through entire seasons of doubt — dormant in the mind like a seed beneath the soil, waiting for the right moment to grow.

A parent who says, "I believe in you," may provide an anchor during failure. A coach who says, "Try again," may keep a young person from giving up. A friend who asks, "Are you all right?" may open a door someone has silently kept closed for years. A colleague who says, "I appreciate what you do," may restore dignity to a person who feels unseen.

We often assume that meaningful communication must be elaborate. We search for impressive language, profound advice and perfect answers. Yet people do not always need speeches. Sometimes they need to know that someone has noticed their pain. Sometimes they need permission to speak. Sometimes they simply need a reminder that they are not alone.

Words do not always reveal their impact immediately. Like seeds, they may remain hidden beneath the surface for months or years. Then a particular experience, memory or crisis causes them to rise. A sentence spoken by a teacher in adolescence may return during adulthood. A parent's encouragement may become meaningful only after the parent is gone. A simple act of kindness may be remembered long after the person who offered it has forgotten.

This delayed power makes every conversation significant. It reminds us that language is not merely a tool for exchanging information. It is also a means of shaping identity, strengthening relationships and influencing how people understand themselves.

There is also a challenge here to society's fascination with famous quotations. Walls are decorated with the words of philosophers, poets, presidents and celebrated leaders. Inspirational statements are shared on social media; wisdom is sought in books. There is genuine value in those words. But the sentences that shape us most deeply may come from people whose names will never appear in history.

They may come from a mother stirring porridge in a kitchen. From a teacher standing before a classroom. From a colleague passing in a corridor. From a friend sitting quietly beside us during grief. From a child calling for a parent.

Great wisdom does not always arrive with applause. Sometimes it enters quietly, without ceremony, and takes root in the human heart.

The lesson is simple but demanding: speak carefully, and do not withhold genuine words merely because they appear too ordinary. Tell people that they matter. Encourage those who are discouraged. Ask the quiet person how they are doing. Thank those whose efforts often go unnoticed. Recognise progress, however small. Remind a struggling learner that one poor result does not define an entire future.

At the same time, words can wound. A careless insult may remain in someone's memory for years. A label repeated often enough may become part of a person's identity. A harsh sentence spoken in anger may leave a deeper mark than the speaker intended. If small words can heal, they can also harm. Kindness in language is not weakness. It is a form of responsibility.

We may never discover the full consequences of the words we speak. A sentence we barely remember may become someone else's source of courage. A question asked with genuine concern may interrupt loneliness. A brief expression of faith may help someone continue when giving up seems easier. A small word, spoken sincerely and at the right moment, may help another person return to hope, to purpose — or even to life.

The power of language does not always lie in grandeur. Sometimes it lies in a single word spoken by an ordinary person in an ordinary moment. The words may be brief, but their echoes can travel across years.

Because we do not know which words another person will carry into the future, we should choose our language with care — speaking truth without cruelty, offering correction without humiliation and giving encouragement without pretending that life is easy.

Our words are seeds. Some may fall unnoticed. Some may take years to grow. Some may become shelter for a weary heart.

So let us plant them carefully.

Profile Priscilla's entrepreneurial journey reflects determination, strategic thinking, adaptability, resilience, and a strong understanding of the realities of building and developing businesses

Humbelani Priscilla Nemanzemba — Building Businesses, Creating Opportunities

By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

There is a particular kind of entrepreneur who does not simply build a business. They build the conditions in which other businesses can succeed. Humbelani Priscilla Nemanzemba is that kind of entrepreneur.

As the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Allpro Business Solutions and Allpro Chloe Tech Holdings, the South African business strategist has spent her career helping entrepreneurs, organisations and enterprises do something that sounds deceptively simple: become ready for opportunity. In practice, that means transforming promising ideas and existing operations into structured, credible, professionally positioned enterprises capable of competing for larger markets, stronger partnerships and sustainable growth.

Her journey has not followed a straight line. Building businesses from the ground up rarely does. But it is precisely that experience — of navigating uncertainty, refining strategy under pressure and making consequential decisions with limited resources — that has shaped both her philosophy and her method. She has learned, firsthand, that the distance between a good idea and a viable enterprise is not always bridged by talent alone. It requires structure, discipline, professional visibility and the strategic capacity to convert potential into measurable progress.

"Entrepreneurs often require more than a good idea to build successful and sustainable enterprises," Nemanzemba has said. "They need strategic direction, professional positioning, strong business documentation, credible presentation, effective processes and the confidence to approach opportunities at a higher level."

That insight is the foundation of everything Allpro Business Solutions does.

Through the platform, Nemanzemba provides practical business support across a wide range of disciplines: business strategy, corporate support, proposal development, company profiling, project management, brand development, business process advisory and strategic growth solutions. The common thread running through all of it is a focus on positioning — helping businesses not only deliver value, but communicate that value clearly and compellingly to the clients, partners and markets they want to reach.

It is an approach born from a clear-eyed understanding of the African entrepreneurial landscape. Across the continent, capable entrepreneurs with strong ideas frequently lack access to the strategic resources, professional networks and positioning support needed to scale. The gap between potential and progress is often not a question of talent or ambition. It is a question of infrastructure — the business infrastructure that helps an enterprise present itself with authority, pursue larger opportunities with confidence and sustain growth over time.

Nemanzemba has made bridging that gap her professional purpose.

Her second enterprise, Allpro Chloe Tech Holdings, reflects the forward dimension of that purpose. Combining business development with innovation and forward-thinking approaches, the company explores how businesses can remain relevant and competitive as economic conditions, technology and consumer expectations continue to evolve. The vision is not simply to establish companies, but to create business platforms capable of generating long-term value and supporting wider economic participation. Where Allpro Business Solutions strengthens what already exists, Allpro Chloe Tech Holdings looks ahead — anticipating where markets are moving and helping businesses position themselves to meet the future rather than merely react to it.

Across both businesses, a consistent philosophy emerges. Strategy without execution is merely aspiration. For Nemanzemba, meaningful results require action — practical solutions connected to strategic ideas, professional tools linked to actionable growth opportunities, and a commitment to helping businesses move beyond planning and take concrete steps toward becoming stronger, more sustainable enterprises.

That philosophy has been tested across engagements with individuals, companies and organisations in multiple markets, including international ones. Each engagement has deepened her understanding of how businesses across different professional environments operate, where their common vulnerabilities lie and what kinds of support create the most durable results. She brings an entrepreneurial mindset — not a consulting one — to every interaction, recognising that each organisation carries its own distinct objectives, challenges and growth potential. No two engagements are identical, and she approaches each one accordingly.

Humbelani Priscilla Nemanzemba

Central to her professional identity is a belief in the power of African enterprise. Nemanzemba does not accept a narrative of African businesses as perpetually emerging, perpetually catching up. She believes African entrepreneurs should be strategically positioned to compete, scale, collaborate and access opportunities in larger markets — not simply to survive difficult economic conditions, but to define new ones. This is not optimism for its own sake. It is a conviction grounded in what she has observed, repeatedly, when entrepreneurs are given the right tools, the right frameworks and the right professional support: they do not merely improve. They transform.

This conviction carries a social dimension that reaches well beyond commercial performance. Nemanzemba views entrepreneurship as a driver of employment, innovation, community development and economic participation. When individual businesses become stronger, they create ripple effects — jobs filled, knowledge transferred, communities served, partnerships formed. Helping a single entrepreneur build a more credible company profile or a more compelling proposal is therefore not a small act. It is a contribution to something considerably larger: an economy in which more people participate meaningfully and the fruits of enterprise are more widely shared.

"Business growth should create impact beyond the balance sheet," she has said — and her work consistently reflects that belief.

Professional visibility is another theme she returns to repeatedly. In today's competitive environment, a strong business must not only deliver valuable products or services. It must also communicate its value clearly and position itself with authority. Through company profiles, proposal development, brand development and strategic positioning, Nemanzemba helps businesses articulate who they are and why they matter — giving them the professional presence needed to pursue partnerships, clients, projects and new markets with genuine confidence. In a business environment where first impressions carry significant weight, that kind of professional credibility is not a luxury. It is a necessity.

Her leadership philosophy rests on several interconnected principles: consistency, resilience, strategic planning and continuous learning. She understands, from direct experience, that entrepreneurship demands the ability to navigate uncertainty, respond to shifting markets and make informed decisions even when resources are constrained. Those demands have not diminished as her businesses have grown. They have simply become more sophisticated, requiring a broader perspective and a deeper capacity to anticipate rather than merely respond.

Collaboration is another pillar. Strong businesses are rarely built in isolation. They are developed through relationships, partnerships, shared expertise and access to wider professional networks. Nemanzemba has seen, repeatedly, how the right connection at the right moment can alter the trajectory of a business entirely. Her work reflects a genuine appreciation for collaboration as a mechanism through which entrepreneurs discover new markets, exchange knowledge and create mutually beneficial opportunities that neither party could have accessed alone.

Her vision extends across Africa and toward international opportunity. She represents a growing generation of African business leaders building enterprises capable of competing beyond traditional boundaries — leaders who view the continent's entrepreneurial landscape not as a constraint, but as an extraordinary platform for what comes next.

At the heart of her work lies one fundamental conviction: a business that is stronger, more credible, professionally positioned and better prepared for opportunity does not only succeed for itself. It contributes to a broader vision of an entrepreneurial, empowered and economically active Africa — one in which the next generation of founders inherits not only ambition, but the infrastructure and knowledge to act on it.

Nemanzemba's story is not simply the story of two companies growing. It is the story of what becomes possible when one determined entrepreneur decides that helping others succeed is itself the most powerful business model of all.

Disability "The greatest injustice against a person with a disability is not the disability itself, but a society that sees the barriers, possesses the power to remove them, and chooses to walk away."

Kenya's disability betrayal: When a nation closes its windows and leaves millions in the dust

BY Fredrick Chelimo
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"The greatest injustice against a person with a disability is not the disability itself, but a society that sees the barriers, possesses the power to remove them, and chooses to walk away."

President Ruto assents to persons with disabilities bill

There is something profoundly wrong with a country that remembers persons with disabilities when it needs their votes, photographs them when it wants to demonstrate compassion, invites them to conferences when it needs to display inclusion, and then quietly forgets them when budgets are prepared, opportunities distributed and decisions made. Kenya has perfected the language of inclusion. What remains painfully unfinished is the practice of it.

For decades, persons with disabilities have been told that their country is changing. We have heard the vocabulary of empowerment, equality, participation, dignity and "leaving no one behind." We have watched politicians arrive in convoys, lower their windows, wave at communities, make generous promises and disappear into the distance. Then the dust settles—and the person with a disability remains exactly where they were: outside the school, outside the job market, outside the public building, outside the procurement opportunity and, too often, outside the political conversation. This is no longer simply a failure of charity. It is a failure of justice.

Kenya cannot claim ignorance. The Constitution recognises equality and freedom from discrimination and gives specific protections to persons with disabilities. Article 54 speaks to dignity, access to education, reasonable access to places, public transport and information, political representation and assistive devices. Kenya has also enacted disability legislation and ratified international obligations that recognise disability as a matter of human rights rather than benevolence. The country therefore does not suffer from a shortage of laws. It suffers from an implementation deficit.

And there is perhaps no more devastating evidence of that deficit than the distance between political rhetoric and the everyday experience of a Kenyan with a disability. A constitutional right cannot pay school fees. A policy document cannot make a staircase disappear. A parliamentary speech cannot purchase a hearing aid. A registration certificate cannot create a market for a disability-owned enterprise. A political appointment cannot become meaningful representation if the person appointed forgets the citizens whose struggles placed them in that position. Rights must become lived realities.

That is where Kenya continues to betray its citizens. The contradiction becomes even more disturbing during political and economic empowerment programmes. Government and political leaders can identify women, youth, farmers and other constituencies with remarkable precision when mobilisation is required. They can locate voters village by village, ward by ward and constituency by constituency. Yet persons with disabilities somehow remain invisible in many of the very programmes supposedly designed to empower vulnerable citizens. This cannot simply be explained by numbers.

Democracy must never become a competition in which the largest crowd automatically receives the greatest attention while the most vulnerable are abandoned because they cannot mobilise in equal numbers.

A person with a disability may already be confronting unemployment, poverty and limited access to capital. But those challenges can be compounded by inaccessible transport, buildings, digital platforms, education systems, healthcare facilities and workplaces. The starting line is not the same. Giving everyone the same opportunity while leaving the barriers intact is not equality. It is the institutionalization of inequality.

This is why Kenya must stop placing persons with disabilities into broad political baskets and declaring the work finished. Inclusion requires deliberate design. It requires accessibility, reasonable accommodation, targeted financing, inclusive procurement, employment pathways, assistive technology, representation and accountability. A grant is not empowerment if the beneficiary cannot reach the market. Training is not empowerment if employers discriminate against the graduate. A wheelchair is not empowerment if the public office has stairs.

AGPO registration is not empowerment if disability-owned businesses remain spectators while contracts circulate elsewhere. Representation is not empowerment if the representative speaks for power rather than for the people. And legislation is not empowerment if nobody is held accountable for failing to implement it.

There is also a painful betrayal that deserves particular scrutiny: the betrayal by those entrusted with disability leadership who eventually become more comfortable inside political institutions than with the citizens outside their doors.

To be clear, many leaders have made genuine contributions to disability inclusion, and their efforts deserve recognition. There are politicians, public servants, professionals and advocates who have defended disability rights even when doing so offered little political reward. Their work demonstrates that leadership is possible. But positions created to advance disability interests cannot become personal political trophies.

The person occupying such a position carries the expectations of citizens who may be unable to enter the boardroom, afford assistive devices, access employment, navigate public transport or make their voices heard. When representation becomes detached from those realities, the betrayal is deeper precisely because the representative knows what the people are experiencing. Kenya must therefore move beyond the culture of pity.

Persons with disabilities are not waiting to be rescued. They are asking for systems that stop obstructing their ability to contribute. They want accessible schools, hospitals, roads, transport systems and government offices. They want digital services they can use. They want jobs for which they are qualified. They want procurement opportunities that are real rather than ceremonial. They want financial institutions that recognise enterprise rather than disability. They want political spaces where their views are considered before decisions are made about their lives.

Above all, they want the freedom to succeed without repeatedly having to prove that they deserve to be treated as full citizens. And something is changing. Persons with disabilities are becoming more informed, organised and unwilling to remain silent. They are asking questions that cannot forever be answered with handshakes and photographs.

Where is the budget? Where are the jobs? Where is accessibility? Where are the contracts? Where is representation? Where is accountability? Where is implementation?

These are not unreasonable questions. They are constitutional questions. The political class should understand that the era of symbolic inclusion is approaching its limits. The disability vote is not merely a number to be harvested during elections. It represents citizens who remember who stood with them, who ignored them and who appeared only when their votes were needed.

The political convoy may continue speeding through communities with its windows closed. But the people left standing in the dust are no longer simply waiting for the window to open. They are asking who closed it. And why.

Kenya has already written the promises into its Constitution, laws and international commitments. The country now needs the courage to write those promises into budgets, institutions, buildings, workplaces, procurement systems and everyday life. Because a nation that possesses the law, resources and knowledge to remove disability barriers, yet repeatedly chooses not to act, is not merely failing persons with disabilities. It is deliberately preserving the conditions that exclude them. And that is no longer an oversight. It is a national choice.

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Sports >> *The Manchester United captain claimed the award yesterday after a historic assists record and a remarkable United comeback

Fernandes crowned PFA Players' Player of the Year: A record-breaking season rewarded

By **Pascal Okoth**

Bruno Fernandes

Bruno Fernandes was yesterday named the PFA Players' Player of the Year at the 53rd annual PFA Awards ceremony in Manchester, completing a remarkable clean sweep of English football's major individual honours after one of the most influential midfield seasons the Premier League has ever seen.

The 31-year-old beat competition from Arsenal trio Declan Rice, David Raya and Gabriel Magalhães, as well as Manchester City's Erling Haaland and Rayan Cherki to claim the prize, which is voted for by fellow professional footballers.

The win caps a personal campaign that Fernandes himself could scarcely have scripted. Before yesterday's ceremony, he had already collected both the Premier League Player of the Season award and the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year prize. The PFA honour, decided by peers rather than journalists or fans, makes the treble complete — and, in many ways, the most meaningful of the three.

The centrepiece of his season was a Premier League record of 21 assists, surpassing the previous mark of 20 jointly held by Arsenal's Thierry Henry and Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne. That his record came while United were not the dominant force in English football only sharpens the achievement. Arsenal won the Premier League title, with United finishing third — a recovery engineered in no small part by Fernandes himself after a difficult opening to the campaign under manager Michael Carrick.

The nature of the award adds particular weight to the recognition. The PFA prize is voted for by nearly 1,000 fellow professionals — players who understand better than anyone the demands of performing week after week at the highest level. For Fernandes to win it in a season when three nominees came from the title-winning Arsenal side speaks to the scale of his individual impact.

His influence at Old Trafford has grown in proportion to his responsibilities. Since arriving from Sporting CP, Fernandes has developed from creative talisman into undisputed captain, and his ability to create chances, score from midfield and impose himself on decisive moments has made him the axis around which United's attacks are built. This season, those qualities were distilled into their purest form.

The 21 assists alone place him in rare company. Henry and De Bruyne are players who defined their eras at Arsenal and City respectively, clubs built around sustained success. Fernandes broke their record at a United side still finding its way back to the summit of English football — a distinction that makes the statistic harder to dismiss as a product of circumstance.

There is also a broader context worth noting. Fernandes accumulated 3,203 club minutes last season, fewer than eight Arsenal players, yet still managed to reshape the Premier League's creative record. The efficiency of his contribution underlines a point that statistics alone can struggle to capture: Fernandes does not simply accumulate numbers. He produces in the moments that matter.

For United supporters, yesterday's ceremony was a reminder of what they have in their captain. The trophy cabinet at Old Trafford remains a work in progress, but Fernandes' performances have consistently provided reasons for optimism, even during the more testing stretches of the season. A third-place finish that once looked improbable now forms the foundation for whatever comes next.

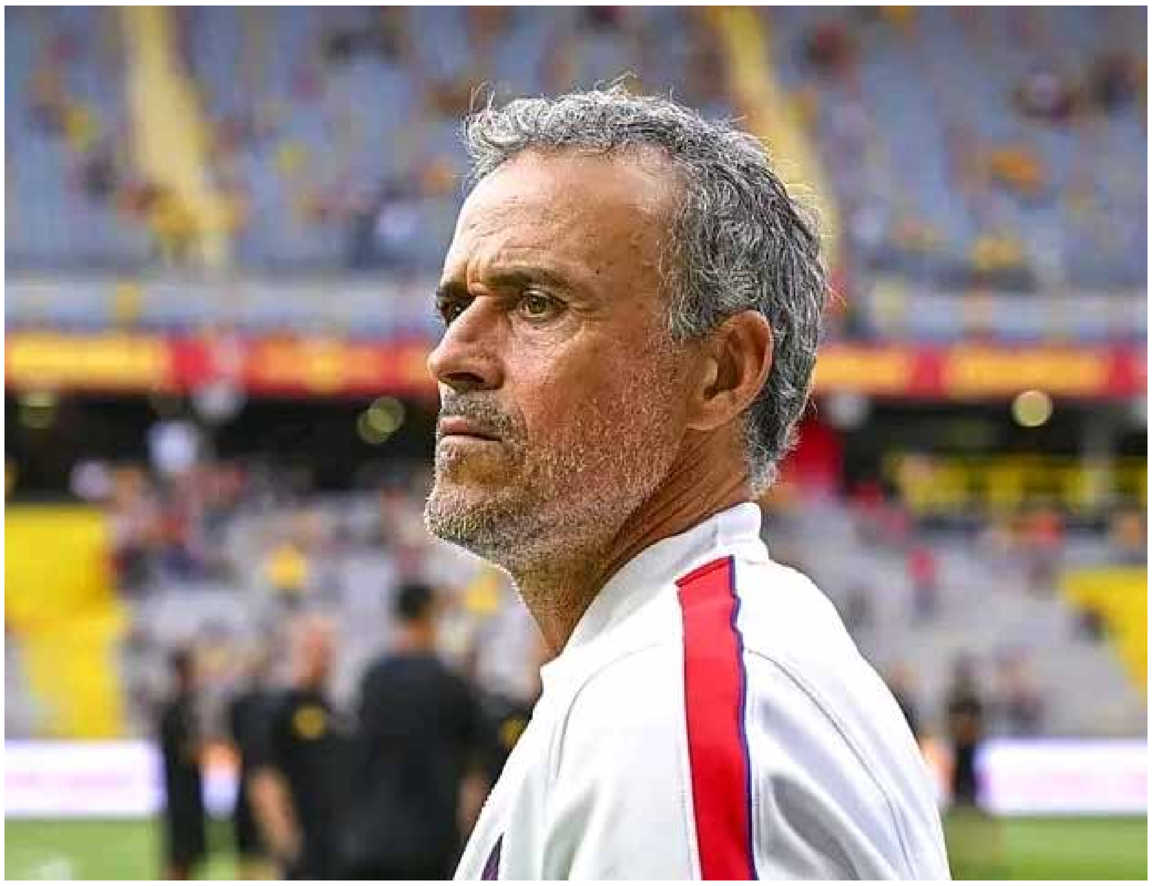
The PFA award is the latest chapter in a career that has consistently defied expectation. When Fernandes joined United in January 2020, the immediate impact he had was striking. That he has sustained and elevated his influence across six seasons — through managerial changes, squad rebuilds and periods of institutional turbulence — is the measure of a player whose contribution goes well beyond any single statistic.

For now, the honours are his. Three major individual awards. A Premier League assists record. And the recognition of nearly 1,000 fellow professionals who understand, perhaps better than anyone, exactly what it takes.

Sports >> *The Spanish coach hauled off Dembélé and Kvaratskhelia at half-time as Torres rode to the rescue in a bruising Ligue 1 opener

Enrique draws the line: PSG's past counts for nothing

By **Pascal Okoth**



Luis Enrique

Luis Enrique delivered one of the starkest dressing-room verdicts in recent French football yesterday, insisting that Paris Saint-Germain's considerable trophy haul means absolutely nothing as the new season begins — and backing his words with action before the half-time whistle had even sounded.

The PSG coach hauled off Ousmane Dembélé and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia at the interval of their Ligue 1 opener at Stade Rennais, with the reigning champions trailing 2-0 and looking a shadow of the side that had dominated European football. The double substitution was not merely tactical. It was a message.

Introduced alongside Mika Godts at half-time was new signing Ferran Torres, fresh from his match-winning heroics in the World Cup final just weeks ago. The impact was instantaneous — Torres scored twice to rescue a 2-2 draw and spare his new club an embarrassing opening-day defeat.

But it was what Enrique said afterwards that dominated the conversation.

"Football is like that. Paris Saint-Germain have won nothing, nothing," the Spanish coach stated bluntly. "If you think about what you've won, you're not going to win anything. There is no credit. You have to show every day, every match, every training session, that you're ready. Otherwise, it's easy to relax and start slipping. I wasn't brought up that way."

The words landed with force — and they were meant to. Enrique has never been a manager who traffics in comfortable language, and the context here gave his remarks particular weight. PSG enter this season defending not only their Ligue 1 title but also chasing a third successive Champions League victory — a feat that would place them among the truly elite clubs in the history of the European game. The temptation to ease into the campaign, to rely on the momentum of past glories, is precisely the trap Enrique is determined to avoid.

His decision to remove Dembélé so early reinforced that message with unmistakable clarity. The French forward is among PSG's most dangerous attackers, and his importance to the club is well established. Last season, Dembélé recorded 46 goal contributions — 33 goals and 13 assists — in all competitions, a total bettered by only seven players across Europe's top five leagues. He also became the first player to provide two assists in a Champions League final since 2018 during PSG's 5-0 triumph over Inter Milan. These are not the numbers of a peripheral figure.

Yet none of that shielded him from the hook. That is precisely Enrique's point. Reputation, history and individual brilliance earn nothing on their own. Performance, readiness and commitment to the team's cause are the only currencies that matter. A manager who has won league titles with Barcelona and guided Spain to a European Championship does not need to prove his credentials — but he clearly feels the need to re-establish his standards at the start of each campaign.

The arrival of Torres is part of a broader strategy by the PSG hierarchy to deepen squad quality and ensure healthy competition for places. World Cup winner and instant match-winner on debut, Torres has handed Enrique genuine options — and handed every established starter a reminder that their place is never guaranteed.

For Dembélé, Kvaratskhelia and the rest of the squad, the message from yesterday's encounter could not have been clearer: the history in the cabinet is irrelevant. What matters is what happens next. Enrique's philosophy rests on relentless standards, daily accountability and the refusal to allow success to breed complacency. In a squad of considerable talent and considerable ego, that is not always a comfortable environment.

But then, comfort was never part of the plan.

SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN

The MT. KENYA TIMES
The Mt Kenya Times
375778 201602

Porsche 911 GT3: The driver's car that defies the spec sheet

Why Porsche's naturally aspirated flat-six masterpiece remains the benchmark for pure driving engagement

By: John Irungu Maina
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Porsche 911 GT3

Worth Noting:

- **Power is only useful when the chassis can exploit it, and this is where the GT3 becomes particularly special. Its suspension, steering, brakes, aerodynamic package and rear-engine layout work together to create a machine designed around precision rather than straight-line performance alone. The result is a car that can be driven aggressively on a circuit but remains remarkably composed on public roads.**
- **Calling a GT3 practical might sound unusual, especially alongside ordinary sports cars. Yet compared with many dedicated track machines, the 911 GT3 is remarkably usable. It has adequate luggage space, a relatively civilised cabin, modern technology and, depending on specification, features that make everyday driving genuinely possible. You can drive it to a circuit, spend the day attacking corners and drive it home. That dual personality is one of its greatest strengths — serious enough for the racetrack without becoming impractical on the road.**

The Porsche 911 GT3 is one of those cars where the numbers only tell part of the story. Its appeal lies in a combination of power, mechanical character, usability, durability and the feeling it delivers behind the wheel.

The GT3 has never been about producing the biggest horsepower figure in the Porsche range. Instead, Porsche has traditionally focused on making the power usable and engaging. Its naturally aspirated flat-six is central to that philosophy — particularly because of its willingness to rev and its immediate response to throttle inputs. For enthusiasts, that character matters as much as outright acceleration.

The engine is, arguably, the heart of the GT3 experience. A high-revving naturally aspirated flat-six gives the car a personality that is increasingly rare in a world dominated by turbocharging and electrification. The rising engine note as the revs climb is part of the experience, while the linear power delivery allows the driver to feel closely connected to what the car is doing beneath them.

That connection is exactly what enthusiasts repeatedly praise about the GT3. It does not simply make you fast. It makes you want to drive.

Power is only useful when the chassis can exploit it, and this is where the GT3 becomes particularly special. Its suspension, steering, brakes, aerodynamic package and rear-engine layout work together to create a machine designed around precision rather than straight-line performance alone. The result is a car that can be driven aggressively on a circuit but remains remarkably composed on public roads.

Calling a GT3 practical might sound unusual, especially alongside ordinary sports cars. Yet compared with many dedicated track machines, the 911 GT3 is remarkably usable. It has adequate luggage space, a relatively civilised cabin, modern technology and, depending on specification, features that make everyday driving genuinely possible. You can drive it to a circuit, spend the day attacking corners and drive it home. That dual personality is one of its greatest strengths — serious enough for the racetrack without becoming impractical on the road.

Durability is another important part of the GT3's reputation. Porsche's motorsport-derived engineering has contributed to a widely held perception among enthusiasts that these cars are built to withstand serious use when properly maintained. That does not mean a GT3 is inexpensive to run or immune to mechanical problems — it remains a high-performance machine with demanding components and maintenance requirements. But the underlying engineering is designed for repeated performance rather than a single spectacular acceleration run. A car can be extremely powerful and still feel fragile when pushed hard. The GT3's reputation has instead been built around the idea that it can deliver its performance again and again.

And then there is the driving experience itself — the part that becomes difficult to explain with specifications alone.

Enthusiasts consistently describe the GT3 in terms of feedback rather than horsepower. The steering communicates what the front tyres are doing. The throttle allows the driver to influence the car's balance. The brakes provide confidence deep into a corner. The engine encourages the driver to explore the upper reaches of its rev range. Every component appears to have a clear purpose, and the result is a car that rewards involvement. You do not simply sit inside a GT3 and allow the car to do the work. You interact with it.

That is particularly important to the enthusiast community because the GT3 represents an increasingly rare philosophy: performance without completely removing the driver from the equation. Modern performance cars can be extraordinarily fast, but speed alone does not guarantee emotion. The GT3's appeal is that it makes the journey to speed part of the experience.

It is powerful, but not defined solely by power. Capable, but still usable. Technologically advanced, yet retaining a distinctly mechanical character. Fast enough to intimidate, while precise enough to inspire confidence.

For many enthusiasts, that combination is what makes the 911 GT3 more than another high-performance Porsche. It is a driver's car in the purest sense — a machine where the engine, chassis and driver are meant to work together, rather than simply chase a number on a specification sheet.

Published at Shashil Court Westlands & Printed at Mombasa Road, Nairobi by Exponential International Limited. P.O. Box 101675 - 00101 Nairobi.
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