



Kindiki: Common African standards are the key to Africa's \$3.4 trillion market
Deputy President Kithure Kindi yesterday told African standards regulators meeting in Mombasa that the continent's economic freedom depends less on ports, roads and railways than on a system most citizens never see

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Gachagua's rigging claims: Are Kenyans listening or simply tired?
As Kenya inches closer to the 2027 General Election, the political conversation is becoming increasingly dominated by one familiar question: will the election be free and fair?

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Countdown 2027 **We do not want hostility, we do not want war, and we do not want chaos - Ruto**

Ruto's goon reckoning

President William Ruto yesterday pledged again to personally confront the wave of political violence sweeping Kenya, but with two voters already dead, the ICC watching and the 2027 election approaching at speed, the country is beginning to ask whether his words will ever be matched by action.

Speaking at Emurua Dikirr in Narok County yesterday during a development tour, Ruto was unambiguous. "We want peace in this area. We want unity among the people here so that we can plan and pursue development together. We do not want hostility, we do not want war, and we do not want chaos," he said. Then, in the phrase that has since dominated national commentary: "As for the issue of goons, we will deal with it. We are saying we want peace so that we can move forward together."

It was not his first such vow. It will likely not be his last. And that, precisely, is the problem.

Every time political violence has erupted in Kenya, Ruto has tended to be abroad. When he returns, the assurances follow — that his administration will end goonism, that the police have been directed, that law and order will prevail. The words have become so familiar that they carry the cadence of ritual rather than resolve. Yet the violence keeps coming. The rallies keep being disrupted. The bodies keep being counted.



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President William Ruto

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Ruto pays KSh2.6B to 13,000 Mau Forest evictees

BY Jacob Ng'ang'a

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Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto yesterday disbursed KSh2.6B to 13,000 families evicted from the Narok Mau Forest six years ago, paying each household KSh200,000 directly through M-Pesa at a ceremony in Sogoo, Narok South Constituency, on the final day of a two-day county visit.

"We are today officially closing the long and painful chapter of people who were removed from the Mau Forest," Ruto said. He added that in 2023 his administration had separately paid KSh300,000 each to 2,000 families living in tents within the forest to enable them to exit and purchase land elsewhere. The Mau Forest will now fall under the management of the Narok County Government. Ruto also announced the purchase of 5,800 acres of the former Cheluget farm to settle families that had been squatting on the privately owned land, with title deeds currently being processed. Separately, he allocated KSh1.2B for the construction of Johana Ng'eno University in Emurua Dikirr Constituency and launched an 18km road linking Mogondo, Cheramgoi, Mogor and Soit to improve regional connectivity. The Trans Mara East Kenya Medical Training College hostels also received a foundation stone laying.

Narok Governor Patrick Ntutu described the Mau resettlement as one of the administration's defining achievements. "The resettlement of Mau Forest evictees is a clear indication that this government has delivered," he said.

With the 2027 election approaching, Ruto used the occasion to challenge his critics directly. "Kenyans will elect leaders based on their development record. Sloganeering will not make Kenyans vote for them," he said.

For 13,000 families who have waited six years, the money arrived before the politics.



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Embakasi East MP Babu Owino yesterday dismissed reports of a rift between himself and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, insisting the two Linda Mwananchi movement co-principals remain firmly united and warning that attempts to divide the opposition would only hand President William Ruto a second term. Speaking while meeting youth on Wednesday, Owino said claims that he had abandoned Sifuna's presidential ambitions were government-orchestrated disinformation. "Hold on to Sifuna as my brother, hold on to Babu Owino too — that way we push things forward," he said. He argued that a divided opposition guaranteed Ruto's re-election, urging leaders to set aside personal differences and consolidate ahead of 2027. Owino also accused the government of deploying bloggers and ground operatives to fracture the opposition from multiple directions, but struck a defiant tone. "They will come against us with violence, but we will face them in the name of God Almighty — He will fight for us," he said.



ICT and Digital Economy Cabinet Secretary William Kabogo yesterday dismissed criticism over his lack of technical qualifications, telling Inooro TV that his job is to manage resources and coordinate experts, not write code. "I was not made CS to write code or do programming. My job is to coordinate resources, including human beings, to ensure they do what they are supposed to do," he said, drawing a parallel to health ministers who are not necessarily doctors. Kabogo signalled a hardening regulatory stance on unlicensed betting platforms and digital lenders, describing betting apps as socially destructive and warning that illegal fintech operations would face enforcement action. He disclosed that his office had tracked one unlicensed firm, Eyecoin, to Germany to have Kenyan data it held deleted. The Communications Authority, he added, would soon release regulations governing ethical artificial intelligence use to combat deepfakes and AI-generated disinformation targeting Kenyan citizens.



Democratic Party of Kenya leader and former National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi yesterday demanded that Parliament debate the Elections Amendment Bill 2024 before any contract is signed for the IEBC's new election technology system, warning that 17 months of committee inaction on recommendations from the National Dialogue Committee process bordered on sabotage. "How can a Bill arising from such a process remain in committee for 17 months? At what point does prolonged inaction cease to be ordinary legislative delay and become a glaring question of sabotage?" Muturi asked. He urged MPs to press National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula to bring the Bill to the floor immediately, and challenged President William Ruto to assent to it if passed. "The country does not need another explanation for delay; it needs action. The Bill must come to the floor now, while there is still time to strengthen the electoral framework before 2027," he said.



Deputy President Kithure Kindiki yesterday said eight County Aggregation and Industrial Parks — in Embu, Meru, Wajir, Garissa, Kirinyaga, Busia, Kisii and Migori — are on course for commissioning before the end of the year, following a morning meeting at his Karen residence with Industry Cabinet Secretary Lee Kinyanjui, relevant governors and agency officials to assess progress. "CAIPs are the first step towards industrialisation. All the countries we look up to — South Korea, Malaysia and China — grew their economies through value addition and cottage industries," Kindiki said. He announced a centralised equipment procurement programme to fast-track the parks' readiness and directed agencies to urgently put in place water, electricity, road and waste management infrastructure. Kindiki also urged remaining counties to accelerate construction, describing the parks as the engines that would drive Kenya's industrial competitiveness and help unlock quota-free and tariff-free export markets secured through recent trade agreements.



Agriculture and Livestock Development Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe yesterday challenged Kenya to stop exporting live animals and start exporting finished meat products, warning that the current approach was shipping jobs to Europe and the Middle East rather than creating them at home. Speaking at the Kenya Meat Expo 2026, Kagwe said the country produced 613,627 tonnes of meat in 2024, valued at KSh397B — a 10.2 per cent rise in volume and 30.5 per cent rise in value compared with 2023. He called for investment in processing, branding, cold chain logistics and the Animal Identification and Traceability System, which will give every Kenyan livestock animal a traceable identity from birth to slaughter. Kagwe also cited Algeria's standing demand for one million goats during Ramadan as evidence of untapped export opportunities, urging counties, the private sector and young entrepreneurs to treat livestock as a commercial industry rather than a traditional livelihood.



A farm hand was charged yesterday before the Embu Law Courts with the murder of a fellow worker whose body was allegedly found buried beneath a banana tree on a farm in Gichaverere Village, Itabua, Embu County. Josephat Kamenchu denied killing Lawrence Muriuki Njiru, contrary to Section 203 as read with Section 204 of the Penal Code, and told the court he had been assaulted while in police custody. Principal Prosecution Counsel Peninah Mwaniki told the court that the two men had been working on the same farm when Kamenchu allegedly hacked Njiru to death, then buried the body and planted a banana tree over the site. The concealed grave was discovered only after the ground above it sank. The court directed that Kamenchu undergo a medical examination, with a report to be filed before the next mention on 29 September.

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IEBC The IEBC said it had identified the performance security mistake and was preparing an addendum to correct the requirement in line with the law

Kenya's election technology tender: A KSh10B procurement under fire

The IEBC has admitted an error in its flagship elections system tender — but the deeper question is whether a flawed process can still deliver a credible 2027 election

BY James Mwangi

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The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission yesterday admitted to an error in its KSh10B tender for Kenya's next election management system, conceding it had incorrectly set performance security at 20 per cent of the contract price when the law caps it at 10 per cent, even as it dismissed broader allegations that the procurement was designed to favour South Korean firm Miru Systems Company Limited.

The admission came during proceedings before the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board, where Nairobi-based Galadirel Investment Limited has challenged the tender — advertised on 11 August with a 1 September submission deadline — on grounds that it is discriminatory, legally defective and a violation of Article 227 of the Constitution, which requires public procurement to be fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective.

The IEBC said it had identified the performance security mistake and was preparing an addendum to correct the requirement in line with the law. It is a concession that hands the challengers at least a partial victory — and raises uncomfortable questions about

the care with which a multi-billion-shilling contract for the country's most sensitive infrastructure was drafted.

Yet the commission held its ground on everything else. On the KSh30 million tender security, IEBC argued that because the procurement is structured as a framework contract, the law allows the security to be set as an absolute figure rather than a percentage of the contract value. On the accusation of favouring Miru Systems, the commission was emphatic. "The tender is strict. It's either you are compliant or not. For the bidder to succeed, it should be 100 per cent," the commission argued, adding that the allegations were speculative and that Galadirel had not pointed to any specific requirement giving Miru Systems an unfair advantage.

The commission also defended its local participation provisions. IEBC said it had included a 40 per cent local content requirement for the successful bidder, which it described as a measure to promote local participation and facilitate skills and technology transfer.

Through lawyer Julius Miiri, Galadirel has painted a different picture. The firm argues the tender document is riddled with omissions, contradictions and undefined requirements that make it impossible



for bidders to prepare comparable, responsive proposals on a level playing field. "The aforesaid omissions, contradictions and ambiguities are material and have the potential to affect competition, responsiveness, evaluation, comparability of tenders and equal treatment of tenderers, thereby rendering the procurement process procedurally defective," the firm argued.

The stakes could hardly be higher. The technology package carries an estimated KSh10B price tag and is intended to replace 45,353 kits judged obsolete, with additional contingency units, ahead of an election in which

registered voters are projected to climb from roughly 22 million in 2022 to 28 million by 2027. A flawed procurement process at this stage does not merely represent a legal irregularity — it feeds directly into the corrosive narrative, already being amplified by Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, that the 2027 election is being engineered from the inside.

Gachagua has urged development partners and embassies accredited to Kenya to monitor the procurement closely, warning that the process could undermine confidence in the polls. "We appeal to our development partners and

embassies accredited to the Republic of Kenya to take note of this threat to Kenya's electoral democracy," he said. The IEBC has not responded directly to those remarks.

The PPARB is expected to deliver its ruling this Friday. The commission has asked the board to dismiss the challenge and lift the suspension on the procurement process so that it can advance to the next stage. Galadirel is asking for the opposite — that the tender be declared legally defective and the process halted.

Whatever the board decides, the damage to public confidence has already begun. After contested elections in

2017 and 2022, trust in who programmes the kits, who holds the encryption keys and where the data is hosted remains dangerously thin. An electoral commission that advertises a KSh10B contract with an acknowledged error in its own legal requirements is not in a strong position to ask Kenyans to simply trust the process.

Transparency is not a courtesy the IEBC can afford to dispense with. It is the only currency that purchases public confidence — and right now, the commission is running short.

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African Market The Deputy President's argument drew on the World Bank's 2025 World Development Report, Standards for Development

Kindiki: Common African standards are the key to Africa's \$3.4 trillion market

BY John Kariuki

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Deputy President Kithure Kindiki yesterday told African standards regulators meeting in Mombasa that the continent's economic freedom depends less on ports, roads and railways than on a system most citizens never see: a shared set of rules determining whether a product passes muster from Nairobi to Lagos.

Addressing the 32nd General Assembly of the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO), hosted by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and its managing director, Esther Ngari, Kindiki argued that Africa's free-trade ambitions will remain theoretical for as long as goods must be tested and retested at every border they cross.

The Assembly has drawn national standards bodies from all 54 African Union member states, along with international partners, for talks on building a single continental system for testing and certifying goods — from cement to pharmaceuticals to solar panels. It is the kind of gathering that rarely makes headlines outside trade circles, yet its outcome will shape whether the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) becomes a functioning single market or remains, as critics have long warned, a treaty without teeth.

Kindiki was blunt about the scale of the problem. "A market of 1.3 billion people fragmented into 54 regulatory silos is not one market. It is 54 small ones wearing the costume of a large one," he told delegates.

He pointed to the everyday absurdities this fragmentation produces: a bag of cement cleared in Nairobi must be tested again in Lagos; medicine certified safe in Cairo is recertified in Accra; a solar panel inspected in Kigali is inspected once more in Dakar. Each additional test, he said, adds cost and delay without adding safety. "Every duplicate test is a tax on African enterprise, paid not to a treasury, but to inefficiency," he said.

The Deputy President's argument drew on the World Bank's 2025 World Development Report, Standards for Development, which he quoted directly: "There is an infrastructure that no engineer draws, no contractor builds, and no photo-



Group photo

graph captures. Yet without it, any port, road or railway we build risks becoming a bridge to nowhere. That infrastructure is the standard."

It is a striking reframing of what "infrastructure" means for a continent that has spent decades pouring capital into physical connectivity — highways linking Mombasa to Kigali, railways from Djibouti to Addis Ababa, fibre-optic cable beneath the Indian Ocean floor. Kindiki's point was that none of it delivers full economic value if a truck loaded with certified goods still has to stop at every border for a fresh inspection, a fresh fee, and a fresh delay measured in days rather than hours.

Economists have made similar arguments for years, though rarely with the political weight of a sitting deputy president behind them. Studies of intra-African trade have found that non-tariff barriers — differing standards, duplicate certification, incompatible inspection regimes — cost the continent more in lost trade than tariffs themselves. Kindiki's address repositioned that technical debate as a matter of sovereignty rather than administrative efficiency.

He urged the Assembly to rally around a single organising principle for the next phase of continental integration: one standard, one test, one certificate, accepted everywhere. "When a Namibian manufacturer

tests a product once and that certificate opens doors in Kinshasa, Lusaka, Abidjan and Maseru without a second inspection, that is not a technical achievement. That is African economic sovereignty made real," he said.

As evidence that the model can work, Kindiki cited the East African Community, where a Kenyan-made good, in his words, "no longer feels foreign" in Kampala. He challenged ARSO to replicate that across the continent, rather than treat it as a regional exception confined to a handful of neighbouring states with closely aligned institutions.

The comparison is instructive, though not without complications. The East African Community's own harmonisation project, launched more than a decade ago, took years of negotiation and still faces periodic disputes between member states over non-tariff barriers and inconsistent enforcement. Delegates in Mombasa this week were candid in private conversations that scaling a regional success story to 54 countries — with vastly different regulatory capacity and levels of industrial development — will be far harder than the podium rhetoric suggested.

The summit also produced two concrete commitments from Kenya. Nairobi will host the 2028 annual meeting of the International Organi-

zation for Standardization (ISO) — a signal, Kindiki said, that Africa intends to help write the rules of global quality rather than simply comply with them. Kenya will also provide land in Nairobi for a permanent, purpose-built ARSO headquarters, expanding the organisation's footprint beyond its current premises. "This is Kenya's investment in the institutional future of African standardization," he said.

Both announcements reflect a broader pattern in Kenyan foreign policy: positioning Nairobi as the natural hub for continental institutions, from trade to climate finance. Whether that ambition translates into tangible returns for Kenyan industry, or remains largely symbolic, will depend on how quickly the harmonisation agenda advances.

Beyond the announcements, Kindiki set out five priorities for ARSO's next strategic plan, covering 2027 to 2032: accelerating harmonisation of standards in agriculture, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing; strengthening mutual recognition of certificates between member states; making certification more affordable for small and medium-sized enterprises, which often lack capital to absorb repeated testing costs; promoting a "Made in Africa" brand internationally; and reducing friction at border crossings, where inspec-

tion delays remain among exporters' most persistent complaints.

For KEBS, the summit is as much about domestic positioning as continental diplomacy. Ngari used her role as host to reaffirm Kenya's ambition to lead the continent's quality infrastructure agenda, framing it as central to unlocking the AfCFTA's projected \$3.4 trillion market. The free-trade area, in force since 2021 but still hampered by uneven implementation, has long been described by economists as Africa's single biggest opportunity for intra-continental trade growth — provided the technical barriers behind the political agreement are dismantled.

That, delegates in Mombasa were told repeatedly this week, is the unglamorous work now required: not another summit declaration, but the slow, laboratory-by-laboratory alignment of testing facilities, certification bodies and inspection regimes across dozens of jurisdictions with very different resources and traditions. Harmonising a standard on paper is one exercise; ensuring a laboratory in one country trusts the equipment, training and integrity of its counterpart in another is a considerably longer one.

Kindiki closed his address by casting the stakes in broader terms than trade statistics. "The future of Africa will not be dictated by resources we extract and export raw. It will be built by the value we add, the quality we guarantee, and the markets we open to one another," he said, formally declaring the Assembly open.

It was a line aimed as much at Africa's long-standing dependence on raw commodity exports as at the technical business of the conference — a reminder that standards, however unglamorous, are bound up with the continent's broader struggle to move up global value chains rather than remain a supplier of unprocessed goods finished elsewhere.

Whether that vision survives contact with 54 separate bureaucracies, and the political and commercial interests invested in existing certification regimes, will be the real test of this week's gathering — one that no single test, standard or certificate can settle on its own.

Goonism We want peace in this area. We want unity among the people here so that we can plan and pursue development together. We do not want hostility, we do not want war - Ruto

The goon question: What Ruto's vow to act personally really means for Kenya

With two men dead, the ICC invoked and the 2027 election eleven months away, the president's repeated promises to crush political violence are being tested against a darkening reality

BY David Kimani

@themkenyentimes

President William Ruto yesterday pledged again to personally confront the wave of political violence sweeping Kenya, but with two voters already dead, the ICC watching and the 2027 election approaching at speed, the country is beginning to ask whether his words will ever be matched by action.

Speaking at Emurua Dikirr in Narok County yesterday during a development tour, Ruto was unambiguous. "We want peace in this area. We want unity among the people here so that we can plan and pursue development together. We do not want hostility, we do not want war, and we do not want chaos," he said. Then, in the phrase that has since dominated national commentary: "As for the issue of goons, we will deal with it. We are saying we want peace so that we can move forward together."

It was not his first such vow. It will likely not be his last. And that, precisely, is the problem.

Every time political violence has erupted in Kenya, Ruto has tended to be abroad. When he returns, the assurances follow — that his administration will end goonism, that the police have been directed, that law and order will prevail. The words have become so familiar that they carry the cadence of ritual rather than resolve. Yet the violence keeps coming. The rallies keep being disrupted. The bodies keep being counted.

The most damning evidence of this gap between rhetoric and reality came on 16 July, when the Ol Kalou parliamentary by-election turned into a spectacle of organised terror. Hooded gunmen carrying assault rifles attacked unarmed voters and journalists at the AC Primary School polling station in full view of uniformed police officers. Two men — James Muigai Mwathi, 30, and Zachariah Gakinya Mukora, 42 — were killed in separate attacks at different polling stations. Muigai had stayed behind to protect the vote after casting his ballot. Gakinya was shot as he walked home from the polls.

A resident summed up what many

Kenyans now believe: "We now have police officers identified as goons, goons who work alongside police during demonstrations, and goons attached to politicians." It is a taxonomy of organised violence that cuts to the heart of the state's credibility.

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, whose party won the by-election by a landslide, has not been restrained in his response. After an attack on his convoy in Nakuru, he alleged that armed attackers used axes, stones and other weapons while police watched, and has dismissed Ruto's anti-goon directives as political rhetoric. Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen, for his part, has blamed Gachagua himself for the Ol Kalou violence — an accusation Gachagua has rejected with equal force.

The mutual accusations reveal how completely the goon crisis has become entangled in Kenya's broader political war. Both sides claim victimhood. Both sides point fingers. And in the middle of this political theatre, the families of Muigai and Gakinya are still waiting for answers.

Ruto has at various points drawn a comparison between the goon threat and Kenya's previous campaigns against terrorism and cattle rustling. "The same way we dealt with terrorists and cattle rustlers is the same way we will deal with goons," he said. It is a striking analogy. Those campaigns involved systematic state operations, intelligence coordination and, at times, contested use of lethal force. If the president means it, the implication is significant: the state intends to treat organised political gangs as a security threat to be neutralised, not merely a political nuisance to be managed.

But intent is not the same as execution. Ruto has directed security agencies to deal with goons within the law and drawn a distinction between peaceful demonstrations, which are constitutionally protected, and criminal acts committed under the guise of protest. The distinction is legally correct. Whether it is being enforced is another matter entirely.

The opposition has now taken the



President William Ruto

argument to a different arena. On 19 August, a coalition of opposition leaders urged the ICC prosecutor to closely monitor developments in Kenya and undertake a preliminary assessment of whether credible information exists warranting a probe under the Rome Statute. People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua, reading the joint statement, warned that should evidence emerge of widespread or systematic attacks against civilians being organised, financed, directed or tolerated by those in authority, the prosecutor should consider investigating Ruto himself — a former ICC indictee.

The government's response was swift and dismissive. Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi rejected the calls, arguing that Kenya has always respected the rule of law and that domestic courts are fully capable of handling political violence cases. Under the Rome Statute, the ICC's threshold for crimes against humanity is high — violence must be widespread, systematic and directed against a civilian popula-

tion. A single by-election, however bloody, does not automatically meet that bar. But the opposition's move is not primarily a legal one. It is a political signal: they are framing the violence as a pattern, not a series of isolated incidents, and they are internationalising that frame deliberately.

The timing could not be more consequential. Kenya's general election is scheduled for August 2027 — eleven months away. The political temperature is already at levels that would normally be associated with the final weeks before polling day. Rallies are being disrupted. Convoys are being attacked. Journalists are being assaulted. Two voters are dead. Amnesty International Kenya has documented voter inducement, misuse of government projects to sway voters, and violent clashes that it described as a systematic assault on Kenyans' constitutional right to free and fair elections under Article 38.

For Kenya, this is a recognisable landscape. The country has been here before — in 2007, in 2017 —

when political violence and contested electoral processes combined with devastating results. The institutional memory of what can go wrong when the state fails to hold the line between political competition and organised violence is seared into the national consciousness.

What makes this moment different, and more dangerous, is the speed at which the pre-election environment is deteriorating. The 2027 polls are still nearly a year away, and the political violence already has a body count.

The pattern is clear: violence flares, the president issues a directive, investigations are announced, and the country waits. Waiting, as the families of James Muigai and Zachariah Gakinya now know, can be a very long business — and in Ol Kalou, it came at the cost of two lives.

Ruto's vow to deal with goons personally will be judged not by what he says in Narok, but by what happens the next time hooded men with guns arrive at a polling station.

Politics As rival heavyweights sign a unity accord, the coalition's most consequential question — who carries the ticket — remains unanswered

Opposition unity pact faces its biggest test: Who will lead the charge against Ruto?

BY Levis Wangamati

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Kenya's opposition has taken its clearest step yet toward confronting President William Ruto as a united force in the 2027 General Election. But the agreement reached this week has brought the coalition's most difficult question into sharper focus: who will lead it?

Principals meeting under the United Alternative Govern-

ment umbrella signed a unity accord pledging to back a single presidential candidate, establish a credible selection process, and prevent individual leaders from sponsoring rival bids.

The pledge represents an explicit attempt to cure one of the long-standing weaknesses of Kenyan opposition politics: vote fragmentation driven by competing presidential ambitions.

The coalition brings together political heavyweights with

formidable regional bases — among them Kalonzo Musyoka, Martha Karua, Fred Matiang'i, Eugene Wamalwa, Justin Muri and Peter Munya — alongside former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party.

Signing an agreement to support one candidate, however, is significantly easier than deciding who that candidate should be. That is where the coalition's structural integrity will face its first real test.



United Alternative Government

Early friction

The fault lines are already visible.

While Gachagua's party aligns with the broader push to unseat Ruto, his own political strategy has highlighted the coalition's internal contradictions. Gachagua skipped Monday's formal accord signing, sending his deputy party leader Cleophas Malala in his place, while convening a separate delegates' meeting at his Wamunyoro residence. During those consultations, he said he had been identified by those he consulted as the best-suited opposition candidate for 2027 — while simultaneously stating he would support whoever the opposition ultimately chooses.

Meanwhile, Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary-General John Methu cautioned Gachagua against attending what he described as "hotel and boardroom meetings," arguing that the party leader should not negotiate away his political leverage.

The developments expose the coalition's central paradox: every leader wants a united vehicle, but few are willing to fold their party machinery, surrender regional bargaining power or dilute their personal brand before the final political settlement is reached.

The arithmetic

Gachagua's departure for a multi-city US diaspora tour yesterday adds another layer of complexity. He is expected to engage Kenyans in five American cities, with the trip running into October as he

maps out his political road-map ahead of 2027.

While the tour gives him a platform to engage Kenyans abroad, domestic negotiations will continue in his absence — testing whether the alliance can build organisational momentum without descending into proxy battles and competing power centres.

The arithmetic facing the opposition is unforgiving. A crowded presidential field could divide the anti-Ruto vote and smooth the incumbent's path to re-election. A single ticket, by contrast, offers the opposition a far cleaner opportunity to consolidate support across regions and political networks.

But Kenyan political history offers a warning. Alliances can look formidable during signing ceremonies and still fracture once negotiations shift from broad principles to specific seats, nominations and positions of influence.

Connecting with voters

There is also the electorate itself to consider.

A political agreement constructed primarily around elite power-sharing and the objective of defeating Ruto risks failing to connect with voters whose concerns extend well beyond political alliances. Economic pressure, unemployment, the cost of living, public services and trust in government will all shape how voters assess the competing camps.

For the opposition, unity cannot end with the signing of an accord. It must eventually become a political proposition that voters can understand and

believe in.

A coalition capable of assembling regional political machines may well have the numbers to compete. But numbers alone will not translate into public enthusiasm. The opposition will ultimately have to explain what its alternative government would look like — and why voters should entrust it with power.

The road ahead

The coalition must answer three difficult questions: how will its presidential candidate be chosen, what will bind its parties together beyond shared opposition to Ruto, and can the losing contenders genuinely rally behind the eventual winner?

Getting rival political camps into the same room is a genuine tactical achievement. But the real work begins now.

If the principals can design a candidate-selection process that all partners consider legitimate, agree on a common platform and rally behind the eventual nominee, they could present a formidable challenge in 2027.

If they cannot, this week's accord risks joining the long list of Kenyan political agreements that appeared decisive in a conference room but weakened when confronted by personal ambition and competing interests.

The opposition has agreed on the destination.

The unresolved question is whether its leaders can agree on who gets the keys.

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Protest Speaking during the protest, residents said concerns raised during their earlier demonstration had not been addressed despite assurances that action would be taken within 21 days

Nkabune residents renew protests over alleged poor management at technical institute

Second demonstration in three weeks piles pressure on institute leadership over unmet 21-day pledge



A resident addresses the press during the demonstrations at Nkabune | Photo: Brian Gitonga

BY Brian Gitonga
@themkenyatimes

Residents of Nkabune staged fresh protests yesterday against the management of Nkabune Technical Training Institute, marking their second demonstration in three weeks as they pressed for government intervention over what they described as unresolved leadership and management concerns at the institution.

Speaking during the protest, residents said concerns raised during their earlier demonstration had not been addressed despite assurances that action would be taken within 21 days. They questioned claims about student enrolment at the institution, alleging that the number of learners physically attending was significantly lower than figures they had previously been given.

"When we protested last time, we were informed that

the institution had around 6,000 students, yet when you come to the ground, we have fewer than 1,000 students," the residents said.

They added that they had expected improvements following the previous demonstration, including measures to increase student numbers and address concerns affecting the institution. Instead, they alleged that relations between the institution and the surrounding community had deteriorated, with residents losing access to facilities they had previously used, including the institution's football pitch. According to the residents, the restrictions had added to their frustrations and strengthened their resolve to continue demanding change.

"We were promised that in 21 days something would be done, but nothing has been done as we speak. The intimidation has continued, and even facilities we have been using as a community have been locked, and we cannot

access the grounds," they said.

The residents also raised questions over the position of the institution's principal, alleging that she had previously been issued with a transfer letter but had remained at the college after obtaining a stay. They said they had now been asked to wait a further 21 days — a proposal they were unwilling to accept.

Malonzo, one of the protesters, questioned how long the situation would continue, arguing that the community wanted clarity from the relevant government authorities on the alleged transfer and the future management of the institution.

"She went and obtained a stay letter, and now they have told us to wait for another 21 days, which we will not accept because we know what will happen. We wonder how long she will continue being given a stay," Malonzo said.

The protesters vowed to continue demonstrating un-



Residents' address the Press outside the institution. | Photo: Brian Gitonga

til their grievances were addressed, saying the dispute was also affecting economic activity around the institution. Residents who depend on students to rent houses or support local businesses said reduced student numbers had affected their income. They further alleged that employment opportunities for members of the surrounding community had declined, claiming some local casual labourers previously employed at the institution had lost their jobs. They argued the college should benefit the surrounding community through employment and other economic opportunities while fulfilling its educational mandate.

"Even casual labourers from this community who worked at the institution have been

fired. That is why we are saying that even the presence of this institution is not helping us, because the opportunities are benefiting people from far away," said Mary, a resident.

The residents maintained that their demonstrations were not motivated by personal hostility towards the principal, saying their concerns centred on the management of the institution and its relationship with the surrounding community. They said they wanted the government to intervene and provide a lasting solution.

They also said students had taken part in the earlier demonstration, while residents had initially held back to allow time for the issues to be addressed. With the 21-day period having elapsed, they said they had returned to the

streets, believing insufficient progress had been made.

The residents appealed to President William Ruto's administration and relevant education authorities to intervene, investigate their complaints and resolve the dispute, saying prolonged uncertainty was affecting both the institution and businesses that depend on its student population.

Efforts to reach the Nkabune Technical Training Institute principal for a right of reply were unsuccessful. Repeated calls went unanswered, and by the time of publication, she had not responded to the claims.



Angry residents protest outside Nkabune TTI. | Photo: Brian Gitonga

Elections Gachagua claimed that the IEBC's procurement manager had been removed and replaced with an individual he described as a "puppet"

Gachagua's rigging claims: Are Kenyans listening or simply tired?

With a disputed election technology tender now before a procurement review board, the real question is whether alarm without evidence moves the country forward

BY Hadassah Karangu

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

As Kenya inches closer to the 2027 General Election, the political conversation is becoming increasingly dominated by one familiar question: will the election be free and fair?

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday placed that question at the centre of national debate, accusing the government and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of laying the groundwork to manipulate the polls.

Gachagua alleged that the IEBC's ongoing tender for an Integrated Elections Management System — referenced as IEBC/OIT/01/2026-2027 and advertised on 11 August — is merely a formality intended to give the appearance of a competitive procurement process, with the outcome already predetermined in favour of South Korean firm Miru Systems Company Limited.

He also alleged that IEBC Chairperson Erastus Edung Etheke, Interior Principal Secretary Raymond Omollo and Immigration Principal Secretary Belio Kipsang had held meetings with Miru Systems representatives linked to the integration of the company's technology with Kenya's voter registration database. The former Deputy President did not provide documentary evidence to support the allegations.

Gachagua further claimed that the IEBC's procurement

manager had been removed and replaced with an individual he described as a "puppet", and that the proposed system could be used to manipulate the voter register and suppress voters in regions perceived as hostile to President William Ruto's administration.

The IEBC has not been silent. The commission dismissed the claims that tender specifications were designed to favour Miru Systems, describing the allegations as speculative and arguing that no specific requirement had been identified that would give Miru Systems an unfair advantage over other bidders. "The tender is strict. It's either you are compliant or not. For the bidder to succeed, it should be 100 per cent compliant," the commission said.

The procurement is, however, on hold. A request for review was filed at the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board by Galadirel Investment Limited, which raised concerns over the tender specifications, the undisclosed contract value and requirements it argued could favour foreign suppliers. Separately, the IEBC admitted to a 20 per cent error in the tender documents, though it maintained the procurement process remained above board.

These are serious allegations. But they remain allegations.

That distinction matters in a country where election-related claims can quickly become political ammunition. Gachagua has not publicly produced evidence that Ruto has an or-

ganised plan to rig the 2027 election. Nor should Kenyans treat the IEBC tender as proof of such a plan simply because a political leader has raised questions about it.

At the same time, Kenyans should not be told to dismiss legitimate questions about the electoral system. If there are concerns about how election technology is procured, who writes the technical specifications, how voter data is protected and whether the process is genuinely competitive, those questions deserve clear answers. The IEBC should be able to explain itself. The government should be able to explain itself.

And Gachagua, if he possesses evidence of an organised plan to manipulate the election, should place that evidence before the appropriate institutions — and before the Kenyan public.

That is what accountability looks like.

But there is another question that deserves equal attention: are Kenyans becoming tired of political warnings that offer little beyond the next election?

For millions of ordinary citizens, 2027 matters — but life is happening now. Young people are searching for work. Parents are struggling with the cost of raising families. Small businesses are fighting to survive. Graduates are entering an increasingly competitive job market. Farmers are worrying about markets and production costs.

These Kenyans may reasonably ask: what are politicians

doing about these problems today?

A warning about election rigging cannot create a job. A political rally cannot lower the price of food. And repeatedly naming President Ruto cannot, by itself, offer an alternative government.

This is where Gachagua's political strategy faces its biggest test. His attacks on the Ruto administration may strengthen his position among voters already dissatisfied with the government. His warnings about electoral integrity may also resonate with Kenyans who remain deeply suspicious of political institutions.

But political relevance is not the same thing as public trust.

If Gachagua wants Kenyans to see him as a credible alternative in 2027, he will eventually have to offer more than accusations against his former boss. He will have to tell Kenyans what he would do differently. What is his economic plan? How would he create employment for young people? How would his administration tackle corruption? What would he do about the cost of living? How would he improve healthcare and education? What would his government do for farmers, small businesses and ordinary workers?

And most importantly: what kind of Kenya does he want to build?

These questions matter because elections should not simply be referendums on personalities. Kenya deserves a contest in which competing leaders present competing vi-

sions. Ruto should defend his record and explain why Kenyans should give him a second term. Gachagua and other opposition leaders should explain why they deserve the opportunity to govern. And voters should be given enough information to judge both sides fairly.

The danger is that 2027 could once again become a contest of fear, accusation and political alliance — with policy taking a back seat. That would be a disservice to the country.

There is nothing wrong with warning Kenyans about threats to democracy. In fact, vigilance is necessary. Elections must be protected, electoral institutions must remain independent and technology used in elections must be transparent and secure.

But there is a difference between raising legitimate concerns and repeatedly alarming the public without providing a clear path forward.

Gachagua therefore has an opportunity. If he believes the electoral system is being compromised, he should push for concrete reforms. If he believes the IEBC procurement process is flawed, he should submit evidence and demand an independent investigation. If he believes election technology could be manipulated, he should propose safeguards that would make such manipulation difficult — regardless of who is in power.

That would turn political criticism into political action.

The same standard applies to the government. The Ruto administration should not dis-

miss Gachagua's allegations as opposition noise. It should welcome scrutiny and demonstrate that the electoral process is above political interference. A government confident about the integrity of its electoral plans should have nothing to fear from transparency.

Kenya has been here before. Election seasons bring dramatic claims, political suspicions and promises to protect the vote. But voters are becoming more politically aware, and many are likely to demand something more substantial in 2027.

They want to know not only who will win — but what the winner will do for them.

Perhaps that is the conversation Kenyan politics needs now. Not simply "Will Ruto rig the election?" Not simply "Can Gachagua defeat Ruto?" But rather: what is the plan for Kenya?

Because Kenyans cannot build their future on accusations alone. They need action. They need accountability. They need credible institutions. They need leaders who can move beyond campaign rhetoric and present practical solutions.

And when 2027 finally arrives, they deserve an election in which their votes are protected and their choices respected.

Until then, politicians should remember that Kenyans are listening — but they are also watching. And they will judge leaders not by how loudly they speak about 2027, but by what they are prepared to do for Kenya today.



Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua and Nyandarua Senator John Methu

Politics “Choosing a single presidential candidate is the easiest of all the challenges that we have ahead of us. We can meet one day for lunch and before dinner we have a candidate,” Gachagua said

Opposition will have a candidate by April, says Gachagua

BY Jane Njeri
@themkenyentimes

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua said yesterday that the opposition will settle on a single presidential candidate by March or April next year, dismissing anxiety over the timeline as premature and urging colleagues to focus instead on mobilising voters against President William Ruto.

Speaking to journalists at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport before departing for the United States, where he is expected to engage Kenyans in the diaspora, Gachagua was characteristically direct. “Choosing a single presidential candidate is the easiest of all the challenges that we have ahead of us. We can meet one day for lunch and before dinner we have a candidate,” he said.

He drew on the 2002 precedent to argue for patience. “Mwai Kibaki

was chosen as the single presidential candidate for the opposition on October 14, 2002, when elections were to be held on December 27 the same year. We have a whole year, what is the hurry?” He added that discussions would crystallise after Christmas, expressing satisfaction with mobilisation in Western Kenya, singling out Eugene Wamalwa, Edwin Sifuna and Cleophas Malala by name.

Gachagua acknowledged his own presidential ambitions while pledging to support whoever the coalition ultimately chooses. “I have said I am the most suitable, but in case my colleagues see otherwise, whoever is agreed on has my support,” he said. That formulation — I am the best man, but I will step aside — is one Kenya’s opposition has heard before.

The field is crowded. Kalonzo Musyoka has formally launched his presidential platform. Jubilee deputy party leader Fred Matiang’i, People’s Liberation Party leader Mar-



Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua at JKIA

tha Karua and former Chief Justice David Maraga have all signalled interest. Gachagua’s own eligibility remains uncertain, with his appeal against the High Court ruling upholding his impeachment still before the courts.

The real test comes not at an airport press conference, but at the negotiating table — when the lunch he speaks of so casually must actually produce a name.



The secret path



One evening, I found a hidden path,
Behind an old green tree.
I had never seen it before,
And I wondered where it would lead me.
I walked slowly along the path,
While the quiet wind blew.

A little golden light appeared,
And I followed where it grew.

At the end, I found a small box,
Covered with dust and leaves.
Inside was just a simple note,
With words that made me think.
It said, "Do not fear the unknown.

Every new path teaches you something."
I smiled and looked ahead,
Ready to discover what came next.
Sometimes life is like a secret path,
And we cannot see the
end.
But if we walk with courage,
Every mystery can become a new beginning.

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I once followed a biryani recipe,
From one of the top chefs,
I followed all the steps with care,
But in vain, it turned out to be tasteless.

Then, with experience, I slowly learned
The magic of making the best biryani,
With the right amount of salt and spice,
And the art of cooking soft but fluffy rice.

Today, when I make biryani,
I need no recipe by my side,
My hands remember all measurements,
My instincts know which is right.

Books and knowledge may tell you how,
But experience makes you wise,
Just like my perfect biryani,
Experience can make your life perfect.

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

The hands that never turned against me



Every day my voice carried scolding,
never once a smile.
So many times my temper
fell on him like rain he never asked for.
And yet not once did he scold me back.
Not once did he raise a hand.
I used to think hurt answers hurt.
But he carried something else inside him.
Maybe it was never me he respected...
maybe it was the lesson itself

he chose to honor.
That is why my anger
never found an echo in him.
Respect doesn't need to smile to be real.
Some hearts simply say,
without speaking:
"You may scold me,

but you are still my teacher."
A teacher may forget
how many times she punished a child.
But she will never forget
the child who still reached out
his hand to help her.

M. Rekha
Teacher
Puducherry



A gift is a pleasant thing. We should not
differentiate between small and big gifts.

Even motivating words can be a gift when we
receive them from someone.
A gift can motivate us and build our self-
confidence.

A gift is not just a material thing;
it can also be a goal in life.
When you achieve your goal, that achievement
becomes a great gift to yourself.

When you motivate others, they become more
active and confident.
Your small words can create a big change in
someone's life.
No gift is ever small when the heart that gives it
is pure.

__G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt.

No gift is ever small when the heart that gives is pure



Gift is a token of love
That is given to loved Ones.
When the gift is given with pure love
The size or cost of the gift doesn't matter.

In winter ,a cup of hot tea is richer

In summer, a glass of tender coconut is better
In Monsoon , a torn umbrella is safe
The size of the gift doesn't matter .

The gift shouldn't always be a material
A piece of advice can be the best
For the broken hearts.
A loaf of bread is the best food for the poor.

When the heart of the giver is pure
It is sure the broken hearts would cure
The gift is bigger
When the heart is purer.

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

Dear future



Dear Future,

I wonder about you sometimes—
usually on ordinary days,
when I see a child laughing in the rain
or an old man sitting quietly beneath a tree.

I wonder if you will still have
moments like these.

Will children still chase butterflies?
Will people still stop to help a stranger?
Will families sit together at dinner
without everyone looking at a screen?

We are busy building your world,
yet we rarely stop to think
about what we are leaving behind.

We leave you our inventions,
our tall buildings,
our endless roads and clever machines.
But I hope we also leave you
clean rivers, green forests,
quiet skies,
and hearts that know how to care.

We have made mistakes.
Some were big.
Some were made simply because
we thought there would always be
another tomorrow to fix them.

You are that tomorrow.

So forgive us for the things
we should have done better.

But remember us kindly, too.
Remember the people who planted trees
without knowing who would enjoy their shade.
Remember those who shared what little they had.
Remember the ones who chose hope
when giving up seemed easier.

And if the world you inherit
is still imperfect,
please don't wait for someone else
to make it better.

Start small.

Pick up what someone dropped.
Speak gently when anger is easier.
Protect something that cannot protect itself.
Hold someone's hand when they feel alone.

Because perhaps the future
isn't some distant place after all.

Perhaps the future begins
with what we do today.

Dear Future,
when you finally arrive,
I hope you find
that we cared enough
to leave you not a perfect world—
but a world worth caring for.

Sangeeta Khattar
TGT English
DAV Public School
NH-3 ,NIT, Faridabad

Jobs The gap between a traditional professional and an AI-augmented one is no longer theoretical, and the numbers are striking

The augmented professional: Why AI won't take your job — but someone using it will

Smart professionals are not waiting to see what artificial intelligence will do to their careers — they are already using it to leave everyone else behind.



BY David Nyaga
@themkenyentimes

Every time a new era of automation arrives, the same panic sweeps through the global workforce: the machines are coming for our jobs. But as artificial intelligence weaves itself into daily operations at remarkable speed, the picture emerging is far less frightening — and considerably more exciting. AI is not arriving as a wholesale replacement for human expertise. It is ar-



riving as a co-pilot. The real threat to career stability is not the technology itself; it is the colleagues who embrace it wholeheartedly while others stand at the sidelines, watch-

ing. The gap between a traditional professional and an AI-augmented one is no longer theoretical, and the numbers are striking. A landmark joint study by Harvard Business School and Boston Consulting Group found that professionals using AI completed tasks more than 25 per cent faster and delivered output of

more than 40 per cent higher quality than their unassisted peers. Crucially, the technology proved to be a powerful equaliser. Senior experts in the study recorded a 17 per cent performance boost; junior professionals experienced a 43 per cent improvement — a leap that dramatically accelerated their skill development and accuracy. McKinsey's projections reinforce the same trend: while a significant portion of current work activities carry automation potential, this translates far more to the augmentation of roles than to their disappearance. Leading organisations are already reporting substantial productivity gains simply by keeping humans firmly in the loop. When routine, repetitive tasks are compressed by automation, workers are freed to concentrate on high-value, complex problem-solving — and this holds true across every major sector. In engineering and infrastructure, for instance, AI can model thousands of structural variables and optimise complex blueprints in seconds. But no algorithm replaces a senior engineer's contextual judgment, their ability to navigate real-world physical constraints, or their skill in negotiating

with city planners and local stakeholders. In media and communications, algorithms can generate baseline research and synthesise vast datasets instantly, yet the human storyteller remains indispensable — injecting empathy, cultural nuance, and investigative instinct into a narrative. Even in manufacturing and industrial operations, smart factories do not run themselves. They depend on augmented technicians who can interpret predictive maintenance data, blending machine efficiency with human ingenuity on the factory floor. Adapting to this shift demands a new mindset. The Harvard researchers identified two successful approaches for the modern worker: the "Centaur," who strategically divides labour by delegating specific tasks to AI while handling the remainder manually; and the "Cyborg," who intertwines their entire workflow with AI at a granular, sub-task level. Whichever method a professional adopts, the core lesson is the same. The future of work belongs to those who treat machine intelligence not as a competitor to be feared, but as a megaphone for their own brilliance.

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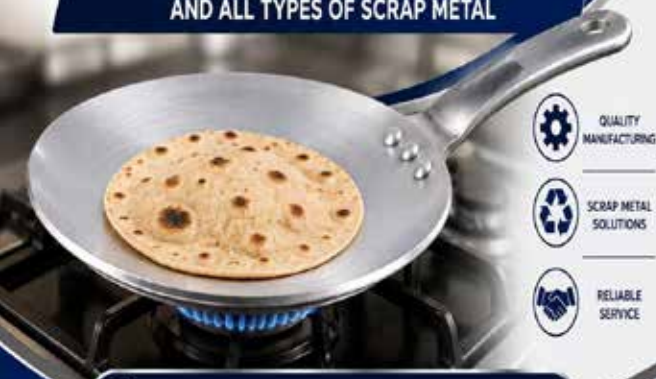
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Trade Marine cargo insurance has often been viewed merely as a document needed to complete the import clearance process

Kenya's trade ambition should be matched with smarter risk protection



BY Douglas Chepkuto
@themkenyatimes

As Kenya's trade continues to expand, the movement of goods across our borders has become increasingly central to our economy. Every container arriving through our ports, every truck crossing a border point, and every delivery reaching a warehouse carries more than its own commercial value. It carries jobs, working capital, business continuity and, in many cases, the confidence of entrepreneurs who have invested significant resources long before their goods arrive.

For years, conversations around protecting imported goods have been progressing with minimal change. Marine cargo insurance has often been viewed merely as a document needed to complete the import clearance process. That view is no longer applicable in today's world, where interruptions in the supply of goods, unpredictable shipping costs, climate-related risks, changing laws, and rising customer expectations have become a reality.

As trade volumes grow, the systems that protect cargo must also mature. Globally, more than 80 percent of trade by volume is transported by sea, making marine transport central to supply chains and economic resilience. This becomes even more significant when viewed against Africa's trade ambitions. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to create a single market covering 55 African Union countries, about 1.3 billion people, and an estimated combined Gross Domestic Product of KES 439 trillion. If fully implemented, the agreement could raise Af-



CIC Hq

rica's income by an estimated KES 58 trillion by 2035 and lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty.

Realising these gains will require more than reducing import taxes. Success will depend on how efficiently goods move across borders, how seamlessly supply chains connect and how much confidence businesses have in the systems that support trade. In this context, marine insurance is not simply an administrative requirement; it is part of the trust infrastructure that enables commerce to flourish across the continent.

The recent shift to Digital Marine Cargo Insurance (DMCI) is therefore more than a technology upgrade. It is a key milestone moment for Kenya's import, logistics and insurance ecosystem. As of July 1st 2026, all importers are required to obtain Marine Cargo Insurance digitally through providers licensed in Kenya before customs clearance. This change directly links insurance, payment confirmation, and government approvals into a more connected digital process.

Trade does not fail only because goods are unavailable. It also fails when systems are slow, disconnected or unclear. Previously, an importer or clearing agent could face multiple touchpoints when

seeking a marine insurance certificate, confirming payment, and getting authorisation. Each additional step increased the risk of delay, error, or uncertainty.

A connected and transparent digital system changes that experience, bringing insurers, regulatory platforms, payment systems and border infrastructure closer together all under one platform. This means less time chasing paperwork for importers, a predictable and faster process for clearing agents and stronger compliance for regulators.

That said, the real opportunity goes beyond making processes more efficient. It is about growing Kenya's marine insurance industry. When import risks are handled by local insurers, more money paid for insurance stays in the country, supporting local businesses, creating jobs and strengthening the economy. It also means Kenyan businesses receive faster, more accessible support while building a stronger insurance sector that can better support trade and economic growth.

The partnership behind DMCI is also significant because it demonstrates what industry collaboration can achieve. At a time when customers expect convenience and regulators expect compliance, no single institu-

tion can solve the challenge alone. Insurers, intermediaries, clearing and forwarding agents, importers, regulators

and technology platforms must work together to make the transition practical and trusted.

As insurers, our job is not simply to provide protection, but to understand our customers' realities and challenges and innovate relevant solutions for them. Clearing agents need systems that work, but they also need responsive partners. Regulators need compliance, but they also need market cooperation.

We must also avoid limiting digitization to quickening processes alone. A digital platform is only successful if it improves the user's experience and strengthens trust. The measure of DMCI success should not only be the number of certificates issued, but whether importers experi-

ence faster processing, fewer disputes, better compliance and stronger protection for their goods.

Kenya's trade ambitions are clear. The country aims to remain a regional logistics hub, support enterprise growth, strengthen formal systems and improve the ease of doing business. Achieving that ambition requires more than infrastructure at ports and borders. It requires reliable financial protection that moves at the speed of trade.

The future of trade belongs to markets that move goods quickly, protect value intelligently and build systems that businesses can trust. Kenya has an opportunity to do all three. What remains is for every player in the ecosystem to make the system work for the people and businesses whose livelihoods depend on it.

The writer is the Underwriting Manager -Technical & Risk Improvement at CIC General Insurance Ltd.




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Politics The tour, conducted under the Wiper Front banner and its rallying slogan “Pamoja Tutakombo Kenya” — Together We Shall Liberate Kenya — opens at noon in Emali, Makueni County

Kalonzo takes his campaign to the people across three counties

Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka’s three-county tour tomorrow is far more than a listening exercise — it is the opening move of what his allies say will be his most serious and best-organised presidential bid yet

BY Anne Mueni

@themkenyatimes

Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka tomorrow carries his Meet the People Tour across three southern counties — Makueni, Kajiado and Taita Taveta — in a single-day grassroots sweep that his party is billing as community engagement but which, read against the backdrop of Kenya’s accelerating political calendar, amounts to something considerably more significant: the ground-level launch of a presidential campaign that Musyoka’s allies say will be unlike anything he has attempted before.

The tour, conducted under the Wiper Front banner and its rallying slogan “Pamoja Tutakombo Kenya” — Together We Shall Liberate Kenya — opens at noon in Emali, Makueni County, where Musyoka will address residents on development priorities and national cohesion. The convoy moves to Kimana, Kajiado County, at 2.30pm for a rally centred on youth empowerment and cross-county cooperation, before concluding at Njukini, Taita Taveta County, at 4.30pm, with discussions focused on regional infrastructure and agricultural recovery. The tagline for the tour — “Tukutane, Tujuzane, Tusemezane” — translates simply: let us meet, let us share, let us talk.

It is a deliberately human framing for what is, at its core, a political offensive.

Kenya is now exactly one year away from its next general election, and Musyoka marked that milestone earlier this month with a pointed declaration of intent. “As we begin the election year, I share a glimpse of my plan for Kenya,” he wrote, framing his emerging presidential platform around what he described as the urgent need to fix the nation’s policies, systems and leadership. Tomorrow’s tour is where that abstract vision meets tarmac, dust and the hard reality of voter expectations in communities that have heard similar promises before.



Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka

The choice of counties carries its own political logic. Makueni is Musyoka’s home territory, governed by his Wiper ally Mutula Kilonzo Jnr, and a county where the party’s support has historically been deep enough to take for granted — which is precisely why it cannot be taken for granted. In a competitive multi-candidate race, margins in your own backyard matter enormously. Kajiado presents a different calculation. The county sits at the intersection of Maa community politics and the expanding Nairobi metropolitan area, making it a constituency that no presidential candidate can afford to cede without a fight. Taita Taveta, meanwhile, is coast-adjacent territory where alliance politics and ethnic arithmetic have historically determined outcomes more than party loyalty.

Musyoka’s campaign strategists have been modelling their approach partly on former United States President Barack Obama’s 2008 grassroots campaign. At the heart of the

strategy is a people-funded campaign built around small online donations, an expansive volunteer network and a professional secretariat already operating independently of the Wiper Party headquarters. The Meet the People Tour is the offline expression of that same philosophy — reach people where they live, listen before speaking and build loyalty that cannot be bought by a rival campaign distributing cash on polling day.

On 6 June, Musyoka formally launched his presidential campaign platform in Nairobi before supporters, governors, lawmakers, diplomats and business leaders, promising to rescue Kenya from what he described as state capture, corruption and economic hardship. He simultaneously unveiled a 13-point presidential agenda identifying agriculture, small and medium-sized enterprises and tourism as the key pillars of economic recovery, pledging to modernise farming through expanded irrigation, improved productivity and direct support for

smallholder farmers. For the residents of Njukini in Taita Taveta — a constituency where agriculture is the economic backbone and where markets and input costs dominate dinner-table conversations — that agenda will be put to a direct test tomorrow afternoon.

Musyoka has also moved to sharpen his party’s organisational machinery, unveiling a new Wiper leadership team that places former Cabinet minister Jamleck Kamau at the helm as party chairman, Nyali MP Mohamed Ali as deputy party leader designate and constitutional lawyer Ndegwa Njiru as the party’s first official spokesperson. In announcing the appointments, Musyoka described integrity as a defining credential of his new team — “a quality this regime cannot buy and will not intimidate,” he said. The restructuring signals that Wiper is transitioning from coalition-building mode into full campaign operations.

His allies are building the campaign narrative around his more than 40

years in public service, positioning him as a seasoned statesman who understands the mechanics of government and has accumulated diplomatic and administrative experience that his rivals cannot match. Particular emphasis is being placed on his tenure in former President Mwai Kibaki’s administration, which many Kenyans remember as a period of economic growth and meaningful public sector reform. Whether that record resonates with a younger electorate that was not yet born when those reforms were implemented is one of the central questions his campaign has yet to answer convincingly.

Musyoka has run for president three times. Twice he has stepped aside at the last moment, playing kingmaker and watching other men enter State House on the back of his supporters. He has said openly that sacrificing his presidential bid again in 2027 would mean retiring from active politics. That is not a small statement. It is the kind of declaration that transforms a campaign from an exercise in political positioning into something with genuine personal stakes — and voters, who are shrewd readers of sincerity, will be measuring him against it.

Tomorrow’s itinerary — three counties, three rallies, one day — is the kind of schedule that tells its own story. It says that Musyoka is not conserving his energy. It says he is not waiting for the coalition arithmetic to settle before showing up. It says he believes the presidency is won in Emali and Kimana and Njukini as much as it is won in Nairobi boardrooms and television studios. “We must fix the nation — from the policies, to the systems, to the leadership that serves the people. This is the work ahead,” he has said.

For the communities receiving him tomorrow, the question is simpler and more immediate: what does Musyoka bring beyond a campaign poster and a microphone? Emali wants roads. Kimana’s youth want jobs. Njukini’s farmers want markets and fair prices. The conversations that happen tomorrow, away from the cameras and the slogans, will matter as much as the rallies themselves.

Musyoka has spent four decades in Kenyan politics. He knows, better than most, that listening tours only count if someone is actually listening — and that voters have long memories for leaders who listened, then forgot.

Dolly Parton Born into a large, poor family in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, Parton grew up knowing hardship intimately

Dolly Parton: A life that gave more than it took

The country icon’s seven-decade career proved that fame is most meaningful when used to lift others

BY Ashford Kimani
@themkenyentimes

The world lost more than a country music legend yesterday. It lost a storyteller, philanthropist, actress, entrepreneur and extraordinary human being whose life demonstrated that fame becomes most meaningful when it is used to lift others.

Dolly Parton died after a brief battle with cancer at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in Nashville, surrounded by loved ones. She was 80.

Her family’s official statement said: “A rhinestone life that shone bright enough for the world to see, Dolly will forever stand as an inspiration not only through her timeless music and prolific songwriting, but also her wit, warmth, and kindness that made us all feel like family.”

Born into a large, poor family in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, Parton grew up knowing hardship intimately. Yet poverty did not define her ambitions. Music became her language and songwriting her route into a world that initially seemed impossibly distant. Her rise from rural Tennessee to international stardom remains one of popular music’s great stories.

What makes Parton’s story especially compelling is the contrast between the public image and the person behind it. Beneath the flamboyance — the towering wigs, sparkling costumes and infectious humour — was a disciplined songwriter who understood human vulnerability with quiet precision.

She wrote about heartbreak, poverty, ambition, loneliness, family and resilience. Songs such as Jolene, Coat of Many Colors and I Will Always Love You became cultural landmarks because they were rooted in genuine emotion. Her songwriting gave ordinary experiences extraordinary



Dolly Parton

nary dignity. I Will Always Love You, in particular, became a global phenomenon through Whitney Houston’s celebrated interpretation — though Parton wrote and recorded it first, and collected the royalties that funded much of what followed.

Her singular performing career spanned seven decades and only grew in prominence over all of that time. She came to fame as a star in country music and went on to become one of its most recognisable and universally adored ambassadors to broader popular culture. She moved confidently between country, pop, bluegrass, gospel, film and television, and her career demonstrated remarkable business intelligence. She understood her brand without allowing the brand to completely define her.

But perhaps her greatest achievement was what she did with her success.

Parton transformed personal memories of deprivation into a lifelong commitment to education and literacy. Her Imagination Library, established in honour of her father, has distributed hundreds of millions of books to young children around the world. A musician can leave behind recordings; a philanthropist can leave behind buildings. Parton left be-

hind readers.

Her generosity extended to healthcare and communities affected by disaster. During the Covid-19 pandemic, she donated \$1 million to Vanderbilt University research that contributed to the development of the Moderna vaccine — and repeatedly insisted that her contribution was only one small part of a much larger scientific effort. That humility was characteristic.

Parton was preceded in death by her husband, Carl Dean, whose death at age 82 was announced in March 2025 after 58 years of marriage. Those who knew her well said grief had weighed heavily on her in the months that followed.

There was something profoundly democratic about Parton. She could speak to a farmer, a factory worker, a child, a celebrity or a billionaire without appearing to change who she was. Her humour disarmed. Her warmth invited people in. Her music crossed social and generational boundaries.

Since her death, Parton has been mourned across the political spectrum — from the White House to the Democratic Socialists of America — underscoring the breadth of her appeal.

Her influence will survive through the artists she in-

spired. Contemporary stars across country and popular music owe something to the path she helped create. She demonstrated that a woman could be commercially successful, creatively independent, unapologetically distinctive and still remain connected to her roots. She also challenged the assumption that appearance and intellect exist on opposite sides of a divide, playing brilliantly with her image while ensuring that her songwriting and business acumen remained at the centre of her achievements. The glitter was part of the performance; the substance was the woman underneath it.

Her death invites a recon-

sideration of what constitutes a successful life. Is success measured by records sold, awards won and millions earned? Parton had all of these. But her deeper achievement lies elsewhere: in the child who received a book, the student who received educational support, the family helped after disaster and the countless people who found comfort in her songs.

Dolly Parton once hoped she would ultimately be remembered as a good songwriter and that her songs would constitute her legacy. She achieved that — and considerably more.

Her music will continue to play. Her stories will contin-

ue to be told. Her books will continue arriving in children’s homes. But perhaps the most enduring lesson of her life is beautifully simple: success means little if it ends with you.

She came from very little and acquired much. Yet she spent much of what she acquired giving to others. That is why Parton will not merely be remembered as the Queen of Country. She will be remembered as a woman who turned talent into opportunity, fame into service and hardship into compassion.

The lights may have gone down on one of music’s brightest stars — but the light she created, in songs, books, opportunities and acts of kindness, will continue to shine.

Rest well, Dolly. Your songs remain. But your greatest song was the life you lived.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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Cities According to United Nations data, more than half of the world's population already lives in cities today, and by 2050 this share is expected to reach nearly 70 percent

Towards a green future: How do cities find balance between people and nature?



BY Kocherova Umida
@themtkenyatimes



Green city

Ecological development is not about giving up nature — it's about living in harmony with it.

It is hard to imagine today's world without cities. Millions of people are drawn to cities in search of education, jobs, healthcare, and other opportunities. But as cities expand, the pressure on nature grows as well. Concrete and asphalt areas are increasing, the number of cars is rising, waste volumes are growing, and green spaces are shrinking. That is why one of the most important questions facing the 21st century is this: how can humanity develop modern cities while still protecting nature? Finding an answer to this question is not just the job of ecologists — it is the responsibility of governments, scientists, entrepreneurs, urban planners, and ordinary citizens alike.

Cities are growing, and so is ecological pressure

According to United Nations data, more than half of the world's population already lives in cities today, and by 2050 this share is expected to reach nearly 70 percent. This figure points to one thing: most of the future's ecological problems will need to be solved in cities.

Cities can be the center of human progress. But a poorly planned city can intensify problems such as air pollution, traffic congestion, noise, waste, water shortages, and excessive heat. So the issue is not whether we build cities or not — the issue is how we build them.

Air — a city's invisible wealth

A person may think about water or food every day, but rarely thinks about air. Because breathing is a natural process. Unfortunately, the fact

that air is invisible does not mean it is safe.

According to the World Health Organization, 99 percent of the world's population breathes air that does not meet WHO air quality standards. Air pollution is linked to millions of premature deaths every year. Vehicles, industrial plants, electricity generation, construction, and poor waste management can all negatively affect air quality. This means that for the city of the future, one of the most important pieces of infrastructure is not just roads or buildings — it is clean air.

A tree is not a city's decoration. It is part of its ecological infrastructure

Green spaces help clean the air, reduce urban heat, manage rainwater, and preserve biodiversity. As cities expand, removing trees for construction may seem like the easy solution. But you cannot instantly replace a tree by planting a new one somewhere else — a mature tree is part of an ecosystem that has taken years to form. That is why urban planning needs to move away from the principle of "build first, plant trees later" and adopt an approach where "buildings and nature grow together."

Green roofs, vertical gardens, city parks, tree-lined streets, and even small green patches can all become part of a larger ecological system.

Cities should be built for people, not for cars

Another major problem of modern cities is transport. As population grows, so does the number of cars, leading to traffic jams, fuel consumption, air pollution, and noise. The solution is not simply building more roads. Developing convenient public transport, pedestrian walkways, and cycling infrastructure can reduce people's dependence on private cars. Switching to electric buses and other clean transport is also one way to improve urban air quality. The city of the future should be one where people think, "I don't necessarily need a car" rather than "life is hard without my car."

Every day, humanity generates a massive amount of waste. According to the UN Environment Programme, global municipal waste is projected to rise from about 2.1 billion tonnes in 2023 to 3.8 billion tonnes by 2050 — a figure that shows just how serious this ecological problem is. Simply collecting waste and hauling it out of the city is not a complete

solution. We need to change our relationship with waste: reducing plastic waste in particular, using single-use products responsibly, and holding manufacturers accountable for a product's entire life cycle are all essential.

The ecological future of cities cannot be separated from the issue of water

Climate change, population growth, overuse of water resources, and pollution of water bodies are threatening water security in many parts of the world. Future cities need to pay more attention to collecting rainwater, reusing wastewater, adopting water-saving technologies, and protecting water bodies. Valuing every drop of water is one of the simplest yet most important expressions of ecological culture.

Climate change is no longer a distant future risk — its effects are already being felt today. According to the UN, cities generate a large share of global greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time being highly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change, such as heat waves and extreme rainfall. This means cities must perform two tasks at once: reduce their own emissions and

strengthen their resilience to climate impacts. This requires energy-efficient buildings, renewable energy, green transport, water-saving systems, and more green spaces. Building an ecological city is not just about installing more solar panels or electric cars.

If people stop littering, stop wasting water, protect trees, use energy wisely, and treat nature responsibly, even the most advanced technologies can produce far stronger results.

That is why ecological education should begin in childhood. A single ecology lesson at school can sometimes be the starting point for thousands of right decisions in the future. The city of the future should be judged not by how tall its buildings are, but by how healthy and comfortable it is for people to live in. In such a city, clean air, safe pedestrian paths, convenient public transport, abundant trees and green spaces, waste sorting and recycling systems, water-saving technologies, renewable energy, ecological education, and respect for nature should all become an ordinary part of city life. Most importantly, an ecological city should not be a project reserved only for wealthy countries or major metropolises. Every city, every neighborhood, and every individual can contribute to building a green future.

In conclusion

Humanity does not need to conquer nature — it needs to learn to live in harmony with it. The cities we build today will become the living environment of future generations. Every space we fill with concrete, every tree we cut down, every river we pollute, and every harmful substance we release into the air today increases our responsibility toward the future. But there is still hope. If we put nature at the center of urban planning, make transport convenient for people, treat waste as a resource, value water, and instill ecological culture in the younger generation, cities can become nature's partner rather than its enemy. A green future is not a distant dream — it begins with the choices we make today.

Kocherova Umida
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Parenting This must be said plainly, because too many of our sisters are suffering quietly. This is not about all men — good men exist, men who protect, provide and stay

The generation of fatherless children: How a group of men are manufacturing single mothers

He gave her a baby, not a future — and like a sweet painkiller that slowly destroys the liver, she thought it was love until it began to kill her



By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
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There is a quiet crisis moving through our towns, villages, churches and universities. It is not HIV. It is not unemployment. It is the deliberate manufacturing of single mothers by a group of men who have perfected the art of creating life, then walking away from it.

Visit any neighbourhood in Kampala, Nairobi, Mbarara, Gulu or Kigali today and you will find her. She is twenty-three, hardworking, carrying a child on her back and a heavier burden in her heart. She was never married and is not a widow. She is a single mother, not by choice or accident, but by design — the design of a man who set out to trap her, use her and leave.

This must be said plainly, because too many of our sisters are suffering quietly. This is not about all men — good men exist, men who protect, provide and stay. This is about a smaller group that has turned the pursuit of women into something closer to a hunt.

It begins with selection. A man like this never announces his intentions; he arrives in disguise. He watches from the corner of a club, a direct-message inbox, a church youth group, a campus canteen — patient, studying vulnerability rather than character. He rarely targets the strongest woman. He looks for the loneliest one: the recent graduate without a job, the daughter never told she was beautiful, the woman nursing a fresh heartbreak, the newcomer who left her village for the city and knows no one. He notices a wound and offers himself as the bandage, avoiding women surrounded by protective friends, because isolation makes the pursuit easier.



A fatherless home

Once she has been chosen, camouflage begins. He becomes whatever she needs him to be — suddenly devout if she is spiritual, her loudest supporter if she is ambitious, affection itself if she is starved of it. This is not kindness; it is bait. A fisherman does not feed the fish out of love — he feeds it to catch it.

In the early weeks, he seems more attentive than her own father: calling morning and night, sending transport money, small gifts, small lunches. He tells her she is not like other girls, that she is already his wife in his heart. He speaks of children they will raise, land he will buy, fees he will pay — the language of marriage without its commitment. For a young woman starved of love, the performance feels real, and her guard begins to drop.

The final stage is isolation. He gradually turns her against friends who warn her, encourages small lies to her mother, and convinces her that intimacy is proof of love. “If you love me, prove it,” he says, or “We

are getting married anyway — what are we waiting for?” Wanting to hold on to what feels like a rare kind of love, she gives in, believing she is securing a husband. In truth, she is signing herself into single motherhood.

Then comes the disappearance. The moment a pregnancy is confirmed, the same man who once said he could not live without her stops answering her calls. For him, the pursuit is over.

He disappears first because fathering a child was never about love for him — it was about ego and conquest, something to count among friends. A baby was never part of the plan; she was a prize, not a partner. He disappears, too, because responsibility frightens him: school fees, medical bills and sacrifice leave little for alcohol, betting or other women. He wants freedom without consequence, so he questions whether the child is his, or insists he simply is not ready.

Often, he disappears because another

woman is already waiting, hearing the very same lines that once won her over. He was never pursuing one woman at a time — she was simply the current one.

And he disappears because society lets him. Our culture is unkind in this respect. A pregnant young woman is often pushed out of school or church and labelled as spoiled, while the man responsible remains the youth leader, the star footballer, the respected son, facing no consequence even after fathering children with several women in the same year. Until we hold irresponsible men to the same standard as young mothers, this pattern will continue. He built no home, saved no dowry, never spoke to her parents. He was borrowing her affection, and that loan always comes due.

This kind of love behaves like a substance many mistake for harmless — the painkillers and unregulated tonics found in nearly every household. A headache, a backache: two tablets and within minutes the

discomfort eases, so it is trusted and kept close at hand. What is not visible is what a doctor would recognise immediately — that daily, unsupervised use quietly damages the liver, kidneys and stomach lining, bringing instant comfort while silently raising blood pressure that could prove fatal years later. The relief felt today is borrowed against tomorrow's health, and that is precisely how this kind of man operates.

When he enters her life, he offers immediate relief from loneliness and financial strain, and she grows dependent on his calls, his money, his presence. Then the effects show: her confidence fades, her focus slips, her family ties weaken. When the child arrives and he leaves, the full cost becomes clear — depression, hardship, stigma, and a child who will one day ask where their father is. She believed she was being loved. In truth, she was being slowly harmed.

Genuine love, like sound medicine, does not sacrifice someone's future for temporary comfort. It protects her wellbeing, her education, her family ties and her dignity. A man who damages those things is not offering love — he is offering harm dressed as affection.

To every young woman reading this: love is not measured by how quickly a man wants intimacy, but by how willing he is to wait, protect your future, meet your family, and build something lasting with you. A man who wants your body before he has earned your trust does not love you.

To every man who has fathered a child and walked away: fathering a child is not proof of manhood — biology alone can achieve that. Manhood is shown in raising that child and being present when that child needs you most.

And to every single mother reading this: you are not a failure. You stayed when he chose to leave. You are both mother and father, rising early to provide for your child, and your story is far from finished.

As a society, we must stop admiring men who create fatherless children while facing no accountability. Behind every single mother raising a child alone, there is often a man who walked away without consequence, already moving on to someone else. That pattern deserves to end.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Kariobangi Sharks' relegation fight keeps the 2026/27 FKF Premier League on hold ahead of a critical 21 September hearing

Premier League season stalls as court battle drags on

By Pascal Okoth

The 2026/27 Football Kenya Federation Premier League season remains in limbo after the High Court at Milimani yesterday declined to grant Football Kenya Federation an urgent application to lift orders blocking the new campaign from commencing.

The latest setback is the most recent twist in a protracted legal dispute involving Kariobangi Sharks, FKF and the Sports Disputes Tribunal, with the controversy rooted in conflicting promotion and relegation regulations introduced by FKF in 2019 and revised in 2025.

The 2019 regulations provide for automatic relegation of the bottom two Premier League teams and automatic promotion of the top two National Super League sides, with the third-placed NSL team facing the 16th-placed Premier League side in a two-leg play-off. Under the 2025 rules, the bottom three Premier League clubs are automatically relegated and the top three NSL sides are promoted, with no play-off provision.

Kariobangi Sharks, who finished 16th last season, were relegated under the revised system. The club challenged the application of the 2025 rules before the Sports Disputes Tribunal, arguing the regulations had not been properly approved by the FKF National Executive Committee and that sufficient public participation had not taken place.

The tribunal dismissed Sharks' challenge, ruling that the club had not exhausted FKF's internal dispute-resolution mechanisms before escalating the matter. The ruling effectively confirmed Sharks' relegation and cleared the way for Mombasa United, who finished third in the NSL, to take their place in the top flight.

Sharks subsequently appealed to the High Court. The case,

initially heard at Murang'a, has since been transferred to Milimani, where Justice Janet Mulwa yesterday declined FKF's urgent application to lift the orders preventing the league from starting.

The court directed both parties to maintain the status quo as it existed on 10 August 2026 — the date the tribunal delivered its decision. Since the 2026/27 season had not commenced by that date, the order effectively keeps the new campaign on hold.

FKF has also raised a jurisdictional challenge, arguing that any dispute arising from an SDT decision should be referred to

the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, rather than determined by the High Court. The federation has filed a Preliminary Objection seeking to have the case dismissed on those grounds, and has separately moved to the Court of Appeal after a High Court judge rejected an earlier jurisdictional objection.

Sharks, meanwhile, continues to pursue its main application challenging the relegation outcome.

The parties are due back in court on 21 September, when the bench will hear directions on FKF's jurisdictional objection

and Sharks' main application. Until then, the league remains on hold — leaving clubs, players, coaches and supporters with no clear start date for the new season.

The dispute underscores the consequences that flow from inconsistent application of competition regulations. For clubs operating on tight budgets, promotion and relegation decisions carry significant sporting and financial weight, making the outcome of the Sharks case critical to the shape of the season ahead.

Kenyan football fans will have to wait for the courts to provide a clearer path forward.



GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Spanish side closes in on winger with deal expected to be finalised within 48 hours

Adama Traoré set to join Deportivo de La Coruña as deal nears completion

By Pascal Okoth

Deportivo de La Coruña are closing in on the signing of Adama Traoré after reaching an agreement in principle with the experienced winger. The move is now at an advanced stage, with Traoré expected to travel to Spain tomorrow as the final steps towards completing the transfer get underway.

The agreement between the player and Deportivo has already been reached on the main terms of his contract. What remains is largely administrative, with the club expected to verify the relevant documents before the deal can be formally signed and announced.

According to the latest update, the transfer is expected to be finalised within the next 24 to 48 hours, provided there are no unexpected issues during the document-checking process.

Traoré's expected arrival represents an important addition for Deportivo, who will be hoping to benefit from the winger's experience, physical strength and attacking ability. Known for his remarkable pace and powerful style of play, the forward has spent much of his career testing defenders with his direct running and ability to carry the ball over long distances.

The 30-year-old has built a reputation as one of the quickest and most physically imposing wide players in the game. His capacity to accelerate past opponents could offer Deportivo a different attacking dimension, particularly when transitioning quickly from defence into attack. For Deportivo, securing a player of Traoré's profile brings valuable experience and attacking depth. His versatility also gives the coaching staff another option when shaping the team and adjusting tactics during matches.

The transfer is not yet officially complete. Although an

agreement in principle has been reached, the documentation still needs to be checked and the contract formally signed — steps expected to follow shortly after Traoré's arrival.

His scheduled flight to Deportivo tomorrow suggests negotiations have progressed significantly, with both sides confident about completing the move.

Deportivo supporters will now be waiting for official confirmation from the club. Once the paperwork is approved and the contract signed, Traoré can begin the next chapter of his career with the Spanish side.

His arrival is likely to generate excitement among fans, largely due to the qualities he brings to the attack. His speed, strength and experience could make him an influential figure as the club looks to compete strongly in the coming campaign.

Traoré's career has taken him through several major clubs and leagues, giving him considerable experience at the highest level — a background that could prove valuable to Deportivo, both on the pitch and in the dressing room.

His playing style is particularly suited to creating space and stretching opposition defences. His ability to stay wide, receive the ball in dangerous areas and attack defenders directly can draw opponents out of position, potentially creating openings for teammates.

His physical attributes also make him a difficult player to contain when given room to run. Deportivo will hope these characteristics translate effectively into their style of play.

For now, the focus remains on completing the formalities. Traoré is expected to travel tomorrow, while the club proceeds with document checks ahead of the signing.

If all goes to plan, the transfer should be officially completed



Adama Traoré

within the next 24 to 48 hours. The latest development puts Deportivo one step away from welcoming Adama Traoré. What began as negotiations has now progressed to an agreement in principle, with only the final administrative procedures standing between the player and his new club.

Deportivo fans can expect further confirmation once the documents have been checked and the contract formally signed. Until then, the deal remains sub-

ject to completion — though all indications point towards Traoré becoming a Deportivo de La Coruña player very soon.

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Youth empowerment through education and global digital opportunities introduction



By: Jumamurodova Shabbona
@themtkenyatimes

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has profoundly reshaped global socio-economic landscapes, presenting unprecedented opportunities for youth empowerment through education. Equipping young people with essential digital skills is crucial for navigating the modern world and fostering civic engagement. However, a comprehensive understanding of how foundational education, specific digital competencies, and global digital opportunities synergistically contribute to sustainable youth empowerment, particularly across diverse socio-economic contexts, has not yet been sufficiently studied. The aim of this study is to explore this nexus. RQ1: How do educational frameworks and digital skills development contribute to youth empowerment? RQ2: What global digital opportunities are most impactful for youth economic and social agency? RQ3: How can equitable access to these opportunities be ensured?

Main Body

Foundational education serves as the bedrock for cultivating 21st-century digital skills, moving beyond mere technical proficiency to encompass critical digital literacy and media production. This involves integrating digital citizenship education, which equips youth with the capacity to navigate online spaces responsibly and ethically, fostering their agency and participation in a globalized world. Empowering youth through digital storytelling and media creation, for instance, enhances their communicative abilities and provides platforms for self-ex-



Youth empowerment .

pression and advocacy. Such educational frameworks are pivotal in developing competencies that extend to problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaborative engagement, all essential for both civic participation and future employability. The emphasis is on fostering an understanding of digital tools as instruments for social change and personal development, rather than just consumption.

The acquisition of advanced digital skills directly translates into tangible global opportunities, significantly enhancing youth economic and social agency. Remote work and freelancing platforms offer unprecedented access to international job markets, enabling young individuals to leverage their digital competencies irrespective of geographical location. This paradigm shift facilitates economic independence and fosters entrepreneurial mindsets. Furthermore, digital entrepreneurship education is crucial for equipping youth with the knowledge and

tools to innovate, create their own ventures, and contribute to the digital economy. These pathways not only provide income generation but also cultivate resilience, adaptability, and problem-solving skills, which are vital for navigating the dynamic global landscape and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Despite the transformative potential, the persistent digital divide remains a significant barrier to equitable youth empowerment. This divide encompasses not only access to reliable internet infrastructure and affordable devices but also disparities in digital literacy and skills acquisition across diverse socio-economic contexts. Ensuring equitable access necessitates multi-faceted approaches, including public investments in broadband expansion, subsidized hardware programs, and community-based digital literacy initiatives. Special attention must be paid to marginalized groups, including those in rural areas, low-income

communities, and individuals with disabilities, to prevent further exacerbation of existing inequalities. Inclusive policies must also address the quality of access and the relevance of digital content, ensuring that opportunities are truly meaningful and empowering for all youth.

To foster sustainable youth empowerment, robust policy frameworks and collaborative strategies are indispensable. Governments must prioritize integrating comprehensive digital skills training into national curricula from early education stages, ensuring alignment with evolving labor market demands. Public-private partnerships are critical for mobilizing resources, developing innovative educational technologies, and providing practical training and mentorship opportunities. Furthermore, international cooperation can facilitate knowledge exchange and the implementation of best practices, particularly in post-conflict settings where educational technology

can play a transformative role in rebuilding communities and fostering resilience. Emphasizing youth voice and participation in the design and implementation of these policies is paramount to ensure their relevance and effectiveness, ultimately charting a course for an empowered digital generation.

Conclusion

This study affirms that integrating foundational education with advanced digital skills profoundly empowers youth, enabling them to seize global opportunities like remote work and entrepreneurship, fostering economic independence and civic engagement. To ensure equitable access and sustainable empowerment, policymakers must prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, comprehensive digital literacy programs, and collaborative strategies that bridge the persistent digital divide, cultivating a resilient, digitally-enabled generation.

Jumamurodova Shabbona is an English Philology and Language Teaching student at Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan. She is an emerging educator, writer, and youth contributor with a strong interest in education, digital opportunities, youth empowerment, and cross-cultural communication.

She has experience teaching English to young learners and actively participates in academic, educational, and youth initiatives. Her academic interests focus on the role of education and digital technologies in creating new opportunities for young people and preparing them for an increasingly interconnected world.

Through her writing and academic activities, Shabbona is passionate about encouraging young people to pursue education, develop their skills, and engage with global opportunities.