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Countdown 2027 

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Ruto launches KSh5.2B Bomet road as he rails against tribal politics

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyentimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto yesterday launched construction of a KSh5.2 billion road project in Bomet County, using the occasion to warn Kenyans against leaders who exploit ethnic divisions, as he intensified his South Rift tour ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The 91-kilometre road, running from Kapkatet through Boito, Kapset, Kaptien, Kapleleito, Kiptenden, Kapkoros, Kiplelji, Kapsimotwa and Kapkwen to Siongiroi, is designed to improve regional connectivity, open up agricultural land and strengthen inter-county trade in one of Kenya's most productive farming belts. Ruto used the launch to deliver a pointed political message. "Kenyans must reject attempts by leaders to divide the country along tribal and other bases," he said. "Divisive politics is outdated and retrogressive. We are one people with a common destiny." He pledged that no region would be favoured at the expense of another, framing equitable infrastructure spending as the centrepiece of his re-election argument.

The pledge lands at a delicate moment. His public feud with Kanu chairman Gideon Moi has unsettled parts of the Rift Valley, and opposition voices argue that development announcements are calibrated to electoral cycles rather than genuine need.

The road will be built regardless. Whether voters connect tarmac to trustworthiness is the question 2027 will answer.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Deputy President Kithure Kindiki yesterday delivered his sharpest attack yet on former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, dismissing him as a minor political figure and predicting a decisive defeat for his Democracy for the Citizens Party in the August 2027 General Election. “You are a small-timer,” Kindiki told Gachagua directly, warning that the ruling coalition would comprehensively outperform his nascent party at the polls. The remarks signal a hardening of tone from the Deputy President, who has until recently maintained a more measured public posture toward his predecessor. Gachagua, impeached in October 2024, has since built DCP into an increasingly vocal opposition vehicle, particularly in Mount Kenya — territory both men regard as politically decisive. The exchange suggests that whatever remained of diplomatic restraint between the two camps has now been set aside entirely.



East African Breweries Limited and Kenya Wine Agencies Limited remain the most targeted companies by counterfeiters in Kenya, with fake versions of their products continuing to flood informal markets and pose serious public health risks to unsuspecting consumers. The two companies, whose combined portfolio spans some of Kenya’s most recognised alcohol brands, have repeatedly flagged the scale of the counterfeiting problem to regulators and law enforcement agencies. Counterfeit spirits and beer — often produced in unregulated facilities using industrial-grade alcohol — have been linked to deaths and serious illness across the country. Industry officials say the problem persists largely because profit margins on fake alcohol are enormous and the risk of prosecution remains low. Both companies continue to invest in tamper-evident packaging and consumer awareness, but enforcement gaps mean counterfeiters stay one step ahead.



Agriculture and Livestock Development Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe yesterday launched a major electronic livestock tagging drive in Isiolo, introducing the Animal Identification and Traceability System — known as Anitrac — to pastoral communities in the region during a tour of the Isiolo International Export Abattoir. Kagwe described traceability as critical to securing livestock

and meeting increasingly stringent domestic and international market requirements, signalling that the government views the programme as essential to unlocking higher-value export opportunities for Kenyan livestock producers. Anitrac uses electronic tags to enable real-time identification and movement tracking of individual animals — a system long standard in major beef-exporting nations but only now being rolled out at scale in Kenya’s pastoral north. For Isiolo’s communities, whose livelihoods depend almost entirely on livestock, the programme could significantly improve market access and reduce losses from theft and disease.



The battle for Nairobi is quietly reshaping Kenya’s broad-based political arrangement, as parties that pledged national unity increasingly find themselves on opposite sides of local contests. In the capital, where every ward and constituency carries outsized symbolic weight, the tension between coalition loyalty and competitive self-interest is becoming harder to conceal. ODM and UDA have maintained a working relationship at the national level, but Nairobi’s political terrain is exposing the limits of that arrangement as both parties position candidates and mobilise supporters in overlapping territory. Political analysts warn that local contests often reveal what national handshakes obscure — that parties ultimately answer to their own membership. With August 2027 approaching, Nairobi may deliver the first honest measure of whether Kenya’s broad-based unity was built to last or built to look good.

Kenyan sculptor Gerard Motondi will represent Kenya’s Kisii stone-carving tradition at an international sculpture symposium in Italy, bringing one of East Africa’s most distinctive artistic heritages to a global audience. Motondi, whose work is rooted in the fine-grained soapstone quarried around Tabaka in Kisii County, is among a select group of artists invited to participate in the event, which draws sculptors from across the world to exchange techniques and present their cultural traditions through stone. Kisii soapstone carving, practised for generations by communities in western Kenya, has gained international recognition for its tactile quality and symbolic depth — yet it remains underrepresented on the global fine arts circuit. Motondi’s participation offers a rare platform to change that, placing Kenyan craftsmanship where it belongs: at the centre of the world conversation.



The debate in Kenya’s education sector has moved decisively past the question of whether schools should embrace technology, settling instead on the harder and more consequential question of whether they are using it well enough to actually improve learning outcomes. Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba made the point plainly, saying the digital revolution was no longer a horizon event. “Artificial intelligence, digital learning, online resource platforms and emerging technologies are changing the way knowledge is created, shared and applied,” Ogamba said. “The digital revolution is no longer approaching. It is already here.” The remarks reflect a growing urgency within government about the pace of adoption in classrooms, where access to devices and connectivity has expanded but pedagogical integration — the harder work of embedding technology meaningfully into teaching — remains uneven across the country.

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Cliamte Residents of flood-prone areas have been warned about seasonal rains for years

El Niño is coming — and Kenya's poorest have nowhere to go

BY Lauryn Wakia

@themtkenyaintimes

Kenya has spent months preparing for El Niño, with the government repeatedly assuring citizens it is ready for the heavy rains forecast between October and December 2026 — yet for the millions living in flood-prone slums and lowlands, one urgent question remains unanswered: when the order to evacuate comes, where are they supposed to go?

The evacuation messaging is not new. Residents of flood-prone areas have been warned about seasonal rains for years, told to leave their homes and move to higher ground. And yet, year after year, many do not move — not because they are careless, but because they have nowhere else to go.

Consider what it means to have lived in a place for twenty years. To have been born there, grown up there, married there and raised your children in those same narrow alleyways. When a government notice arrives giving you a few months to vacate, it does not simply inconvenience you. It dismantles the only life you know. That psychological weight — the devastation of being told to abandon the only home you have ever known — is why so many people stay put even when the floodwaters are rising.

And then there is the economic reality. The people living beside the Nairobi River in Mathare or Mukuru, or along the banks of the



El Niño is coming

Nyando River in Ahero, are overwhelmingly engaged in informal, hand-to-mouth work. They are hawkers, casual labourers and small traders whose entire economic existence is tied to where they live. Relocating to a safer neighbourhood on higher ground is not a lifestyle choice available to them — those areas are simply out of their financial reach. When a government tells someone to move without providing them a viable alternative, it is offering an impossible choice.

This is why, after every flood season, the phrase *serikali saidia* — government, please help — echoes across the country. Citizens are not calling for government assistance out of dependence or passivity. They are calling because they have been left with no other option, because the structural support that would have allowed them to protect themselves was never put in place.

The question that Kenya's government must honestly confront is this: has it used the months of preparation to think beyond sandbags and evacuation orders? Has it

asked what displaced families will eat, where they will sleep, and how they will keep their children in school?

There is a practical and humane solution that has been discussed for years but never seriously pursued at scale — the construction of decent, affordable residential areas that can accommodate low-income families currently living in flood zones. If such housing existed, the government's evacuation orders would carry genuine authority. People would comply willingly, even gratefully, because they would know where they were going and that dignity awaited them there. Ideally, such housing should be offered to qualifying families permanently or at subsidised rates, ending the cycle of repeated emergency displacement that costs lives, erodes trust and strains public resources every single rainy season.

The cost of not acting is already well understood. Every El Niño season brings not only floodwaters but the diseases that follow them — cholera, typhoid and malaria spread rapidly through displaced and waterlogged com-

munities. The loss of life, the destruction of property, the breakdown of public health systems and the long-term trauma inflicted on affected families all carry enormous social and economic costs that dwarf whatever investment in affordable housing would require.

An organised country is a healthier country. That is not a slogan — it is a lesson Kenya has had to relearn, painfully, after every flood season.

The government must work with county administrations to identify land, fast-track planning approvals and build the kind of housing that makes evacuation orders meaningful rather than cruel. It must treat the people living in Kenya's slums not as a problem to be managed but as citizens whose safety and dignity are a constitutional obligation.

If it does not, Kenya should brace itself for the same grim cycle it has endured before: floods, disease, death, and a chorus of unanswered cries for help from people who deserved better long before the rains arrived.

Ruto attacks Gideon Moi during South Rift tour



President William Ruto

BY Cate Njoki

@themtkenyaintimes

President William Ruto yesterday took a fresh swipe at Kanu chairman Gideon Moi during a four-day South Rift tour, accusing him of keeping opposition forces politically alive through propaganda, as he urged voters in Kericho and Bomet counties to judge his administration purely on its development record.

“My competitors should be grateful to Moi for helping make them visible in the Kenyan space through propaganda, otherwise they would be nowhere. They would not feature in Kenya's politics today,” Ruto said at Kapsoit in Kericho County.

The President also signalled his 2027 campaign framing, saying the contest should centre on ideas and transformation programmes rather than personalities. “We are ready for the contest in August 2027 — a contest of ideas, issues and transformation programmes. But we are not

going to be part of a contest about positions and personalities,” he said.

The remarks mark the latest escalation in a public feud that political observers say could reshape alliances across the Rift Valley — a region central to any winning coalition — ahead of August 2027. The origins of the rupture trace to the Baringo Senate by-election following the death of Senator William Cheptumo, with growing complaints that parts of the Rift Valley have not benefited sufficiently from government projects despite overwhelmingly backing Ruto in 2022.

Moi has declined to respond publicly, though he has promised to reveal what transpired during his talks with Ruto, saying the issues are weighty and that he will address the Kalenjin community directly at the right moment.

With eleven months to polling day, the fracture in Ruto's own backyard is a problem no ribbon-cutting can easily paper over.

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Kenya's first prison mother-and-child unit breaks ground at Embu



Embu Women Prison old

BY Jacob Kinyua
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FreedomWithin Kenya yesterday broke ground on a KSh9 million Mother and Child Accommodation Unit at Embu Women's Prison — the first purpose-built facility of its kind in the country — in a project designed to improve the living conditions of young children who, through no fault of their own, share a prison environment with their incarcerated mothers.

The groundbreaking was accompanied by the commissioning of a newly completed KSh4 million water, sanitation and hygiene facility on the same site, giving the women and children at Embu access to child-friendly toilets and showers, handwashing stations, a laundry area, baby-changing amenities, disability-inclusive toilets, a water tower, two 5,000-litre water tanks and a full water reticulation system.

Together, the two projects represent a fundamental shift in how Kenya approaches one of the most overlooked populations within its criminal justice system: children who have committed no offence but who live behind prison walls because their mothers are incarcerated and they have nowhere else to go.

"A prison environment was never designed with an infant or young child in mind," said Mary Waceke Thongoh-Muia, Partnership Lead at FreedomWithin Kenya, speaking

at the groundbreaking ceremony. "Our responsibility is therefore to ensure that where children must live alongside their mothers, their basic needs for safety, hygiene, nutrition, play, learning and nurturing are not overlooked."

The Principal Secretary of the State Department of Correctional Services, Salome Beacco, welcomed the development and said the government was actively working to upgrade daycare and child-friendly facilities across all 46 women's prisons in Kenya — part of a broader shift from a punitive to a rehabilitative model of corrections.

"The government is committed to ensuring that every person under its care is treated with humanity, compassion and respect, in accordance with the Kenyan Constitution and international human rights standards," Beacco said. "We appreciate FreedomWithin Kenya and its partners for supporting the establishment of the Embu Mother and Child Care Unit. Your support is restoring hope, health, safety, hygiene and dignity to children while providing their mothers with a more conducive environment to undertake rehabilitation and vocational training."

The WASH facility was funded through a seed grant from the Napier Fellowship USA, awarded to

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Kenya donates 600 books on International Literacy Day in push to close learning resource gap



Kenya donates 600 books on International Literacy Day

BY Grace Wanja
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The government yesterday donated 600 books to schools in Baringo County during International Literacy Day 2026 celebrations at Eldama Ravine County Library, reaffirming literacy as a national development priority and calling for equal access to learning resources regardless of where a child lives.

The books were donated through a partnership between the Kenya National Library Service and Book Aid International, and formally handed over to representatives of participating schools before an audience of learners, teachers, parents, librarians and county officials.

Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services Hanna Cheptumo said literacy could no longer be treated as a concern for the education sector alone — it was a government-wide obligation. "Literacy today encompasses not only the ability to read and write, but also the capacity to access, understand, evaluate and apply information," she said, pointing to digital, financial and media literacy as areas of growing national importance.

Cheptumo linked literacy directly to Kenya's broader human capital agenda, arguing that it underpins education, skills development and economic participation at every

level. Her message to policymakers was clear: no child's access to quality learning resources should be determined by their postcode. "A child's location should not determine the quality of learning resources and opportunities available to them," she said.

She described the book donation as a practical investment in the future of Kenyan children and recommended Book Aid International for its longstanding partnership with KNLS, which has helped extend the reach of Kenya's public library system into communities that might otherwise go without.

The commemoration was held under the theme "Literacy for people, the planet and prosperity," marking the 60th anniversary of International Literacy Day, a milestone that gave the event added significance. Children led an International Literacy Day Book March procession through the county, toured the library and took part in reading-focused activities and entertainment that brought the day's message to life beyond the speeches.

KNLS Director General Charles Nzivo said the institution's libraries were designed to do far more than house books. They give communities "opportunities to access knowledge, develop reading habits, acquire digital skills and engage in lifelong learning," he said, encouraging learners to treat public li-

braries as a permanent part of their education rather than an occasional resource.

KNLS Board Chairman Bishop Robert Theuri Maina used the occasion to call for stronger collaboration between national and county governments and development partners. He noted that Eldama Ravine County Library already serves as a key community anchor, but that there was room — and appetite — to expand its literacy programmes further with the right support.

The event reflected a wider reckoning within government about what it means to be literate in 2026. The ability to decode words on a page, while foundational, is no longer sufficient in an economy increasingly shaped by digital platforms, data-driven work and rapidly changing information environments. The Cabinet Secretary's emphasis on digital and media literacy alongside traditional reading and writing signals an acknowledgement that Kenya's literacy agenda must evolve if it is to keep pace with the demands placed on its citizens.

For the children who marched through Eldama Ravine yesterday, the 600 books handed over to their schools represent something more immediate: shelves that were empty now have something on them.

Politics Linda Mwananchi's convoy was attacked from the moment it crossed into Homa Bay County, with roads blocked from the Kisumu-Homa Bay border as armed gangs barricaded routes

Nairobi is next: Linda Mwananchi marches into the capital under the shadow of Homa Bay blood

With two dead and dozens injured at their last major rally, Sifuna's movement tests Kenya's democratic tolerance at Jacaranda — the spiritual home of the opposition

BY David Kimani

@themkenyatimes

The Orange Democratic Movement yesterday pledged not to disrupt tomorrow's Linda Mwananchi rally at Jacaranda Grounds in Nairobi, as Kenya's most combustible new political movement prepares to hold its biggest rally yet — less than four weeks after machete-wielding attackers killed two people, injured 46 and torched six vehicles at its Homa Bay gathering.

The assurance came from ODM Nairobi chairman and Makadara MP George Aladwa, who moved swiftly to distance the party from allegations, made publicly by Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Embakasi East MP Babu Owino, that unnamed politicians were already paying gangs to storm Sunday's event. "I want to make it clear that nobody in ODM has any intention of disrupting or interfering with the Linda Mwananchi rally," Aladwa said. "We believe that political competition should be about ideas, policies and the ability to convince Kenyans, rather than confrontations between supporters of different political formations."

It was a statement that would have been unremarkable in any functioning democracy. In Kenya, eleven months before a general election, it is news.

To understand why, it is necessary to understand what happened in Homa Bay on Sunday, 16 August 2026 — and what it revealed about the dangerous direction of the country's pre-election politics.

Linda Mwananchi's convoy was attacked from the moment it crossed into Homa Bay County, with roads blocked from the Kisumu-Homa Bay border as armed gangs barricaded routes into town. The attacks had in fact begun the night before, when goons stormed the Homa Bay Tourist Hotel, shattering windows, destroying property and stealing items before escaping on motorcycles. By Sunday evening, two people were

dead — including Police Constable Jimrichardson Onkundi, struck on the head by a stone as his vehicle sped through Rangwe Sub-county, and a Ugandan woman run over by a vehicle during the chaos. Of the 46 injured, seven were in critical condition and four had sustained gunshot wounds. Six vehicles were torched.

Linda Mwananchi did not hesitate in its assessment. In a statement issued after the tour, the movement described the events as a coordinated, premeditated campaign of violence and intimidation, alleging the involvement of police officers and individuals it believed were state security operatives. The government denied orchestrating the violence. The National Police Service subsequently arrested 37 suspected gang members found in possession of machetes, ropes, metal rods, knives, rungs, batons and torches.

The shadow of Homa Bay now falls directly over Jacaranda.

Linda Mwananchi is the political vehicle of Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, who has framed it as an insurgent grassroots movement capable of wresting ODM's traditional western and Nyanza constituencies from the party's current leadership. The movement has been on a nationwide tour since February 2026, building county-by-county structures ahead of 2027, and after Nairobi, it plans to head to Turkana County, where it intends to seek support from communities that have traditionally backed ODM and the late Raila Odinga.

That ambition is precisely what makes Jacaranda both symbolically loaded and politically electric. The historic grounds have long been the spiritual home of ODM, endeared to Orange Party supporters since the party's inception and closely associated with the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. For Sifuna to plant his flag there is not merely a logistical choice. It is a declaration of inheritance — a claim that his movement, not the current ODM leadership aligned with the broad-based government, carries the true spirit of Kenya's opposition tradition.



Linda Mwananchi leaders

ODM, through Aladwa, has made clear it intends to maintain its dominance in Nairobi and is not willing to cede ground quietly. Yet officially, the party's position is one of democratic tolerance. Aladwa called on Inspector-General of Police Douglas Kanja to ensure adequate security and said Kenyans were "intelligent enough to listen to different political messages and make their own decisions."

The broader political context is one of accelerating fragmentation. Kenya's broad-based arrangement — the governing coalition between President Ruto's UDA and Raila Odinga's ODM, sealed in 2023 — has produced a peculiar political landscape in which the official opposition barely exists at the national level, yet deep discontent continues to find expression through movements like Linda Mwananchi, through Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party and through the persistent undercurrent of civic protest that defined the Gen Z uprisings of 2024.

Embakasi East MP Babu Owino, one of Linda Mwananchi's most prominent faces, raised security concerns ahead of Sunday's rally, claiming that some Nairobi MPs were planning to disrupt the gathering by paying gangs to storm the event and injure attendees. He threatened to name those behind the plot during the rally itself and to campaign against them in 2027.

Whether or not that threat materialises, it illustrates a deepening pattern: political actors in Kenya are increasingly willing to deploy or threaten violence as a tool of competition, and the line between political rally and security operation is narrowing at an alarming rate.

Among the notable figures attending the Nairobi chapter is former Law Society of Kenya president Faith Odhiambo, who is yet to announce which seat she intends to contest in the 2027 General Election. Her presence alongside movement regulars signals that Linda Mwananchi is attracting credentialed profes-

sionals beyond its core Luo Nyanza and Western base — a development that, if sustained, could make it genuinely formidable across Nairobi's middle-class constituencies.

That is precisely the calculation that makes tomorrow's rally consequential. Nairobi is not just a political prize — it is a signal. A movement that can demonstrate mass mobilisation in the capital, in safety, having survived the trauma of Homa Bay, sends an unmistakable message to potential candidates, donors, and allied parties: it is a vehicle worth boarding.

A movement that is attacked again sends a different message — one about the state of Kenyan democracy itself.

Aladwa's pledge of non-interference is welcome. But a pledge made on Friday is only as meaningful as the Sunday it precedes.

The people of Nairobi will be watching. So will the rest of Kenya.

Foreign acquisition Investment figures look impressive on paper; the harder question is whether they are reaching the households that need them most

Kenya is attracting billions — but when will ordinary people feel it?

BY Collins Kibet

@themkenyatimes

Kenya is positioning itself as a magnet for local and foreign investment, with billions of shillings flowing into major business deals, infrastructure, energy and other strategic sectors. To policymakers, these flows represent confidence in the country's economic potential. But for the ordinary Kenyan wrestling with rising household costs, unemployment and shrinking purchasing power, the

headline figures raise a more pressing question: when does the money actually arrive in their lives?

Investment matters. Done well, it creates jobs, expands industries, improves infrastructure, grows government revenue and introduces new technologies. But the announcement of billions does not automatically translate into better living standards. For most Kenyans, economic progress is measured in far more immediate terms — whether a graduate can find a decent job, whether a parent

can afford school fees, whether a small trader can keep the lights on, whether a family can put food on the table and pay rent without crisis.

This is where Kenya's investment story deserves harder scrutiny.

A major foreign acquisition may run into billions of shillings without a single extra billion reaching Kenyan households. A large infrastructure project may transform a region on the map while leaving surrounding communities with limited access to meaningful employment. A mul-



Billions in Investment vs. Local Reality

Illustration

tinational corporation may expand its footprint while absorbing only a fraction of the young people entering the labour market each year. The national numbers can look impressive while remaining largely invisible at kitchen-table level.

Kenya must therefore begin measuring investment not only by capital committed but by economic opportunity created. Every major deal should prompt basic questions: How many decent jobs will it generate? How many Kenyan businesses will participate in its supply chains? How much revenue will the government collect and deploy? What skills will transfer to Kenyan workers? What technology will remain in the country when the project matures? And, most directly, how will ordinary citizens benefit?

The urgency is sharpened by Kenya's demographic reality. Thousands of young people enter the labour market every year into an economy that cannot always absorb them. Many graduates carry qualifications but remain unemployed or trapped in temporary, poorly paid work. Meanwhile, the small and medium-sized enterprises that form the backbone of most communities continue to face high operating costs, punishing tax burdens, limited access to affordable credit and weak consumer spending. These are not peripheral concerns. They are the daily economic experience of the majority.

Kenya cannot afford a model in which impressive investment figures coexist comfortably with widespread financial hardship. Growth must eventually show up in people's lives — in employment numbers, stronger local businesses, better wages, improved public services and greater purchasing power. If it does not, growth risks becoming a statistic celebrated in official reports while remaining a distant abstraction to the households it was supposed to serve.

Government policy must therefore ensure that local communities and Kenyan enterprises participate meaningfully in major investments. Foreign investors should be welcomed, but investment agreements must also require local sourcing, skills development, technology transfer and employment of Kenyan workers. Kenyan companies should not stand on the pavement watching billions circulate through the economy. They should be inside it — as suppliers, contractors, partners and beneficiaries.

Transparency is equally non-negotiable. Kenyans have a right to know what the country gains from large investments, particularly where those investors receive tax incentives, public infrastructure support, land concessions or other government support. Investment must generate measurable public value, and citizens should be able to draw a clear line between the billions announced and the improve-

ments delivered in their communities.

None of this requires a choice between foreign investment and the interests of ordinary Kenyans. The two can work together — but only if investment is structured to produce broad-based economic benefits rather than narrow returns. The objective should not simply be to attract capital. It should be to attract capital that builds industries, creates decent employment, strengthens local businesses and generates sustainable revenue for the state.

The success of any investment should not ultimately be judged by the billions in the headline. It should be judged by what those billions accomplish. If they create jobs, raise household incomes, strengthen local enterprises and improve productivity, investment becomes a genuine engine of national development. If they do not — if unemployment stays high, businesses keep closing and families continue to struggle — then Kenya must ask honestly whether the benefits of growth are being distributed fairly.

For the ordinary Kenyan, growth cannot remain an abstraction. It must be visible in the payslip, the business account, the supermarket basket and the school fees receipt.

Kenya may be attracting the billions. But until ordinary people can feel their impact, the most important economic question remains open.

Politics The case was brought by former Nyeri Town MP Ngunjiri Wambugu, a Jubilee member who has been one of the party's most persistent internal critics

Tribunal voids Kenta's appointment as Jubilee secretary-general, deepening party's pre-election crisis

The ruling exposes months of procedural failures within a party already struggling to project unity ahead of 2027

BY James Mwangi

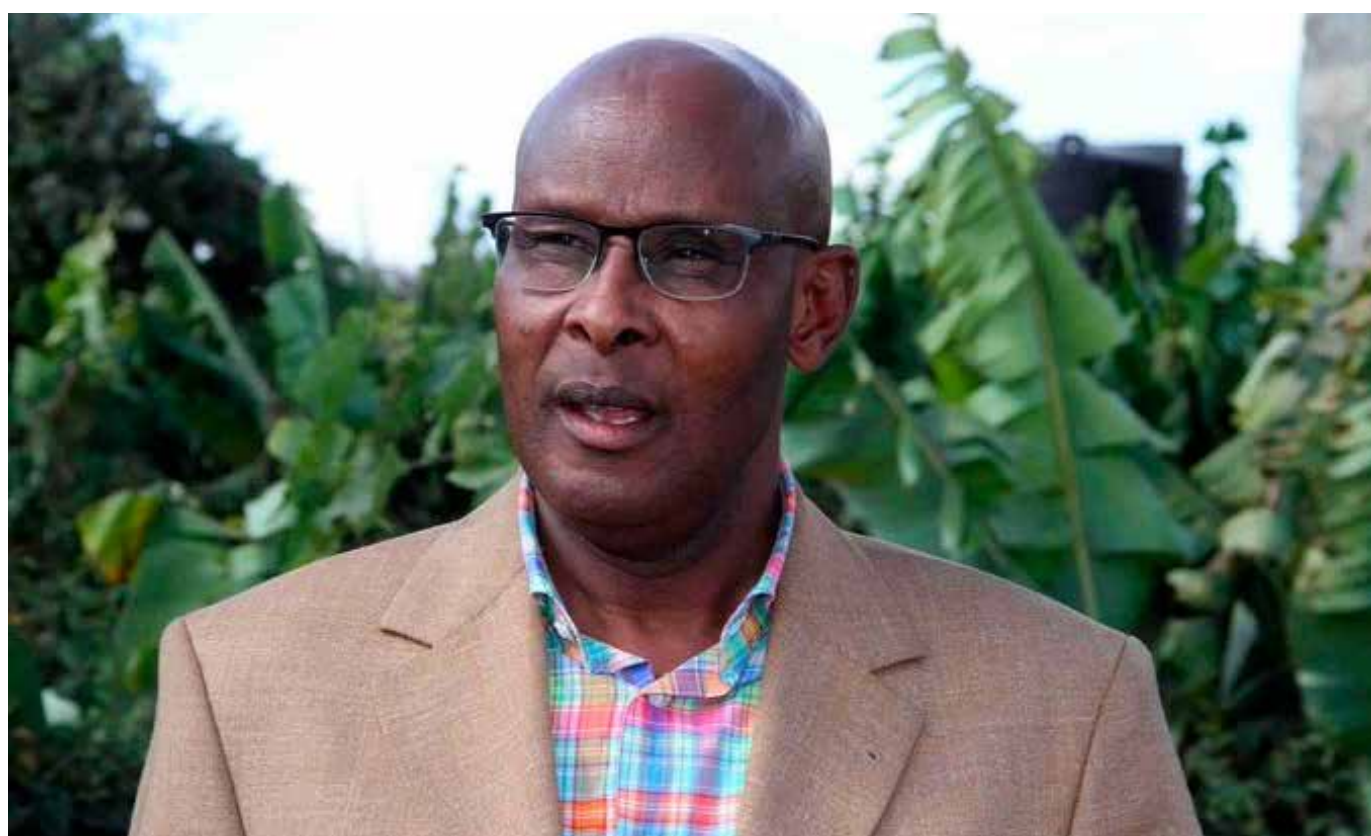
@themkenyatimes

The Political Parties Disputes Tribunal yesterday nullified the appointment of Moitalel Ole Kenta as Jubilee Party secretary-general, finding that he was not a registered member of the party when he was nominated and appointed to the position — a ruling that strips Jubilee of a key official at one of the most critical junctures in the party's turbulent recent history.

In a ruling delivered by a panel led by tribunal chair Innocent Muganda, the tribunal found that Kenta did not meet Jubilee's constitutional requirement that its secretary-general be a card-carrying party member at the time of appointment. The consequences were immediate and sweeping. The tribunal declared the entire process leading to Kenta's appointment and his subsequent recognition by the Registrar of Political Parties invalid, ruling the nomination "unlawful and void ab initio."

The Latin phrase — void from the beginning — is not merely legal formality. It means that every decision Kenta made, every document he signed and every process he oversaw as secretary-general now exists in a legal grey zone. The tribunal quashed both the appointment and the Registrar's recognition, ordering Jubilee to restart the process of selecting a new secretary-general in compliance with its own constitution.

The case was brought by former Nyeri Town MP Ngunjiri Wambugu, a Jubilee member who has been one of the party's most persistent internal



Moitalel Ole Kenta

critics. Represented by lawyer Moses Mabeya, Wambugu argued that the Registrar of Political Parties had failed to properly scrutinise the proposed leadership changes before entering them in the party's records, and that he had been denied a hearing despite filing a formal objection. On his social media platforms after the ruling, Wambugu disclosed that the tribunal had also faulted the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties for failing to play its oversight role.

The tribunal was not, however, entirely persuaded by Wambugu's arguments. It dismissed several other grounds raised in the petition, saying certain allegations against other officials were largely based on speculation rather than evidence. "The com-

plainant's case on this ground is speculative," the panel found.

To appreciate what this ruling means, it is necessary to understand the condition Jubilee was already in before it landed.

Once the most powerful political machine in Kenya — the vehicle that carried Uhuru Kenyatta to two presidential terms and commanded parliamentary majorities — Jubilee has spent the past several years locked in an almost continuous cycle of internal warfare. Since Kenyatta and his then-deputy William Ruto parted ways bitterly ahead of the 2022 election, the party has haemorrhaged members, lost influence and struggled to define a coherent political identity.

Kenta had been appointed

secretary-general in January, replacing former Ndaragwa MP Jeremiah Kioni, who was moved to the position of Second Deputy Party Leader. Jubilee said at the time the reshuffle was intended to strengthen its grassroots structures ahead of the 2027 General Election. That stated ambition now looks considerably more complicated.

The dispute also touched on the listing of former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i as Deputy Party Leader, along with other officials entered in the party register. Matiang'i has emerged as Jubilee's presumptive presidential candidate for 2027, having formally declared his bid on a Jubilee ticket in October 2025. He has since been on a countrywide grassroots mobilisation drive, telling

supporters that "the journey to fix our nation begins at the grassroots."

But the effort to rebuild has been complicated at every turn by internal dissent and legal challenge. As far back as April, the Registrar of Political Parties had written to party leader and former President Uhuru Kenyatta flagging Wambugu's formal objection to the proposed leadership changes, directing Jubilee to resolve the dispute before any changes could be effected. By June, fresh divisions had erupted after Deputy Party Leader Kioni launched a fierce defence of the party's endorsement of Matiang'i, even as the legal challenge was still active — exposing deep cracks within the former ruling party over its political direction.

Wambugu, for his part, insisted through the period that Jubilee remained a formidable parliamentary force, pointing to 30 elected MPs and senators still operating under its banner. But his simultaneous legal campaign against his own party's leadership changes illustrated a contradiction that has defined Jubilee's internal politics for years: members who believe in the party's potential, but not always in the decisions of those running it.

Yesterday's ruling crystallises that contradiction in the most public way possible.

The latest ruling adds another setback to Jubilee's mobilisation efforts ahead of the 2027 General Elections, coming at a moment when the party can least afford distraction. With the election less than a year away, a party that needs to be signing up candidates, opening offices and building voter lists must instead turn its attention back to the basic question of who is legitimately in charge.

For Jubilee, that question has never been simple. Even Kenyatta, speaking at a delegates' meeting in May, acknowledged the party had "survived internal wrangles, court battles and political pressure," insisting nonetheless that "Jubilee is heading in the right way."

Yesterday's tribunal ruling suggests the wrangling is far from over.

The immediate practical question is whether Jubilee will move quickly to fill the now-vacant secretary-general position through a process that satisfies both its constitution and the tribunal's requirements, or whether the appointment will become yet another site of internal contestation. Either path takes time and energy the party does not have in abundance.

The deeper question is whether a party that has spent years litigating its own leadership can project the stability and credibility that Kenyan voters increasingly demand. A secretary-general appointment declared void from the very beginning is not a procedural embarrassment. It is a signal about institutional discipline — and right now, Jubilee is sending the wrong one.

Politics Mudavadi said the political arithmetic of the broad-based arrangement between the UDA and the ODM made a decisive Ruto victory all but certain

Mudavadi backs Ruto 10M vote haul and shuts down deputy president speculation

Prime Cabinet Secretary says UDA-ODM coalition makes a 2027 landslide inevitable, as government clarifies position on foreign traders

BY Brian Gitonga
@themkenyatimes

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi yesterday predicted that President William Ruto will win the 2027 presidential election with more than 10 million votes, dismissed speculation over the President's running mate and clarified that Kenya has not imposed a blanket ban on foreign nationals engaging in small-scale business.

Speaking in Kathwana, Tharaka Nithi County, where he presided over the opening of the new county headquarters complex, Mudavadi said the political arithmetic of the broad-based arrangement between the United Democratic Alliance and the Orange Democratic Movement made a decisive Ruto victory all but certain.

He pointed to the combined vote tallies of Ruto and ODM leader Raila Odinga in the 2022 presidential election as the foundation for his projection. "In 2022, Ruto and Raila commanded a combined 14 million-plus vote basket," Mudavadi said. "Assuming opponents take even four million votes, Ruto will still command a 10 million-plus lead under the broad-based coalition."

Mudavadi urged UDA and ODM supporters to deepen the coalition at the grassroots and said the two parties had built national structures that no new political formation could credibly replicate in the time remaining before the August 2027 polls. "Ten months

to the August polls, nobody can build another party that will have such structures expecting that it will lead them to a presidential win," he said.

He also moved to close down what he described as idle speculation about who would run alongside Ruto on the 2027 ticket. The President's decision to appoint Kithure Kindiki as Deputy President, Mudavadi said, was deliberate and final. "The seat of the Deputy President is not vacant. The decision made by President Ruto to appoint Prof Kindiki as his deputy was not child's play," he said.

Mudavadi praised Kindiki's contribution to the stability of the Ruto administration and said their working relationship was constructive. "The President knows the value Prof Kindiki is bringing to the table, and he understands that in Kindiki there is no backstabbing," he said, adding that UDA was focused on continuity with Ruto and Kindiki as its ticket.

On the broader political environment, Mudavadi urged Kenyans to reject what he called warmongers, tribalists and politicians driven by bitterness. He said the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission must be respected and protected to deliver free, fair and credible elections. "Nobody will circumvent the work of the IEBC and the will of the voters," he said. "Let us not give room to any person who preaches disrespect and hatred."

Turning to the question of foreign nationals in business, Mudavadi sought to correct

what he described as a mischaracterisation of government policy. Kenya, he said, had not banned foreigners from participating in the economy. What the government required was compliance — with the East African Community Common Market Protocol, with immigration law and with business regulations.

"You must regularise your immigration status and the government will protect you and your business," Mudavadi said. "This is the practice across the world." He added that the same expectation applied to Kenyans working and doing business abroad. "Follow the law and be disciplined," he said.

Tharaka Nithi Governor



PCS Musalia Mudavadi with Governor Muthomi Njuki | Photo: Courtesy.

Muthomi Njuki endorsed the government's position, saying Kenya was not and would not become a xenophobic country, but that knowing who was conducting business within its borders and on what legal basis was a reasonable expectation. "What we are asking is to know who these people doing business in Kenya are, and that they have the right documents," Njuki said.

Mudavadi praised Njuki's leadership of the county and described the completion of the new headquarters complex as tangible evidence of what devolution, properly managed, could deliver. "Today, as we celebrate the milestone of this new complex, it is a sign that good management continuously improves and touches the well-being of our people," he said. He cred-

ited Deputy President Kindiki, a Tharaka Nithi native, with also contributing to the stability of the national administration.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary said the national government would continue to support devolution and work alongside county governments to improve service delivery and drive grassroots development.



PCS during the official opening | Photo: Courtesy.

Prison The cost figures disclosed exclude those pro bono contributions, meaning the real value delivered to the project runs considerably higher than the stated figures

Kenya’s first prison mother-and-child unit breaks ground at Embu

Contd from page 8

Shakinar Mutulili, a co-founder of FreedomWithin Kenya. Architectural and project management support was provided pro bono by Triad Architects, with the Kenya Prisons Service supplying institutional oversight, site access and technical guidance throughout the construction process. The cost figures disclosed exclude those pro bono contributions, meaning the real value delivered to the project runs considerably higher than the stated figures.

The forthcoming mother and child accommodation unit has drawn support from the Triad Foundation and contributions from family, friends and individual donors, with Triad Architects again providing pro bono technical and architectural expertise.

The Embu project is the latest chapter in a story that began in 2018 with two teenagers and a simple act of generosity. Shakinar and her sister Naikena, then still in their teens, began rallying their peers to run food and diaper drives for children living with incarcerated mothers. What started as peer-to-peer mobilisation has grown into a registered organisation capable of raising millions of shillings, securing international grants, attracting pro bono professional support and negotiating directly with government to change conditions inside Kenya’s prisons.

That trajectory matters because it illustrates something important about how reform happens. The children at the centre of this story did not find their champion in Parliament or in a government ministry. They found it in two young women who saw something unjust and decided to act.

Eight years later, those same women are breaking ground on a facility that government officials are now publicly endorsing as a model for the rest of the country.

Kenya has 46 women’s prisons. The ambition, as stated by the Principal Secretary, is to see child-friendly upgrades across all of them. Embu is the first. If the standard it sets is maintained — purpose-built accommodation, proper sanitation, space for play and learning — the project has the potential to redefine what correctional care looks like for the country’s most vulnerable prison residents.

For the mothers at Embu, the new unit offers something beyond improved infrastructure. It offers the possibility that the time they serve need not come entirely at the expense of their children’s early development. For the children themselves,



Embu Women Prison New

it offers something more basic still: a safer, cleaner, more dignified place to grow up — even if that place happens to be inside a prison fence.

Dignity, it turns out, can be built for KSh9 million and a great deal of goodwill.



A Journey with the Wind



The wind travels softly through the sky,
Dancing with clouds as they float by.
It brings fresh air to every place,
And fills the world with life and grace.
It carries seeds from flower to flower,
Helping plants grow with gentle power.
It moves the leaves and makes them sway,
Bringing joy to every day.

The wind blows over land and sea,
Cool and fresh, wild and free.
It helps the birds and butterflies fly,
And makes kites dance in the sky.
But smoke and dust can make air unclean,
Especially where busy roads are seen.
So let us keep our air fresh and clean,
And protect the Earth, our beautiful green.
The wind is precious, strong and free,
A gift of nature for you and me.
Let us care for nature every day,
And keep our world safe in every way.

Written by:
R. Dharani
IX – A
GGHSS, Pattukottai
Thanjavur District

Do not hand over your freedom



To men, dear women.
Waiting for a prince on a white horse,
Do not lose yourselves in dreams.
Sharing a single pillow,
The one you wake up to becomes your husband.
If he betrays your trust,
Your hopes and dreams turn to dust.
Sometimes he is your close friend,
Sometimes your warmth and your love.
When you fight, is there any other
Worse enemy than him?
Intervening in between,
Neighbors, relatives, and kin
Begin to hate one another,
Looking at each other with cold eyes.
Oh my God, oh dear me!
Raisins don't ripen in winter, they say.
When husband and wife fall out,
Nothing seems to go right at all.
Children crying at home,
The pot burnt at the bottom,
The cow and calf left unfed,
And the wife's tongue never stops.
Giving free rein to words,
And putting a restraint on reason,
The husband strikes a sudden slap,
Losing his patience entirely.
Now look at all the weeping and wailing,
Two souls filled with resentment.
If only this scene were just a nightmare,
Ending in a single moment!

Glares of disdain, hostile looks,
Exchanging curses, fighting for affection...
As soon as the kerchief dries on the line,
Reconciliation comes in a flash.
Eyes met eyes once again,
Feelings awakened anew.
By the time the kerchief dried,
Words were no longer needed.
"After all, this is my own beloved,
My soul, my whole world...
I want to kill him, yet—
He is my lawfully wedded mate!"
Then peace settles over them,
The entire universe smiles,
The sun rises upon the world,
And hearts beat fast again.
Now faces turn red with blushes,
Apologies spoken through words.
Only those who have fought

Truly know the value of love.
Therefore, dear girls,
He is both your honor and your spouse.
Should you ever end up fighting,
Bittersweet is your destiny.
Do not lose your true self
By becoming a burden to your husband.
Do not forget your independence
While devoting yourself to him.
Education, knowledge, and beauty—
Let them not leave your days.
Keep meeting with your friends
Along your journey of life.
May you have a husband you love,
And may your individuality thrive.
Praise be to the Life
That has raised and shaped us!

By: Amirova Nodira
A student of the Psychology program at the
Faculty of Social Sciences, Alfraganus University,
Republic of Uzbekistan.

Nightmare



One late night at eleven thirty
After completing the household duty
Sat on the dinning chair
Heard the anklet sound very clear.
As all my family members
Half way on their sleep
Ran to my bedroom with a temper
As he came late but now snoring deep

The pulsation of my heart quickened
After a long time, the moment I just curled
Alas! woke up as I was hardly stricken
It was Hubby so; consoled
As he was answering the
(nightmare) solely
My children humorously told that it might be the
dinner made dad so to be unfair.
I replied I never fear
As practiced living with beasts mere.
It's not just the night mare
Dragging us to scare
Its our soul we bear.
With a fiction creating fear.
G.Sarala.
Creative writers
India

Laugh today and tomorrow



Lose all your sorrow.
No need to lend or borrow,

Let it grow in its flow.

Start laughing, start healing,
Spread delight, erase darkness.
A magical tool of happiness
Lies in our lovable laughing.
Sheeba.S

Graduate teacher
Gghss, Pattukkottai
Thanjavur

Hardest climb for a best view



The best view comes after a hardest climb
A top view is here a special one ,
Getting applauds of every one ,
The beauty of the eagle sight,
seems a very pleasant delight,
to me in life with great fight, We transand to a
knight , Geting up at the fall of light,The top view
may be interesting ,in spite, A view from the top

venue is inspiring, A dazlling delight for the eyes
,The angle of inclination may be a risky one,
but it is here a thrilling fun
Can't release your eyes from you ,lucky are a very
few, It's not so easy to reach the best view ,The
client should be very hard for a crew, Similar in
life ,a person's success suffers a great struggle
to reach the height with extraordinary tumble
and stumble with sad panic stories ,overcome our
problems standing like towers get into blooming
flowers when we reach the surprising heights
,Walking on the path of thorns with squeezing
blood as footprints
A best view comes from the hardest climb!!!!
Vijayalakshmi graduate teacher cw writers
group, Kanchipuram district Tamil Nadu, India.

Think less. Live More.



Wake up from your dreams and enjoy the present .
Don't spend your time dreaming.
Act according to your thoughts.
And build your dreams into reality.

Engaging always with your task.
And making your time effectively.
Connect your ideas into actions.
And build your desires with confidence.

May all your efforts into your alternates
And build your own life with colours.
Take advantages from your well wishers
Getting blessings to your life will be more
colourful.

Rajesh Kanna B N

RAJESH KANNA .B N
M.Sc.,M.A.,MM,
PGDG&C,B.Ed., CELT.
BT Asst.
GMHSCHOOL, TIRUR.
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT.
Tamil Nadu
India.
Creative Writers.
Educationist.

Good evening all



Good evening all, I am delighted to share that
I presented my book Euphoria in Ink today to
Kabir Sir, CEO Chennai, in the State Level Science
Seminar Event conducted in CSI Ewart School,
Chennai.

Politics Party chairman says government must tackle youth unemployment through policy, not inflammatory statements

DP warns against anti-foreigner rhetoric as investor confidence at stake

BY Brian Gitonga
@themkenyatimes

Party chairman says government must tackle youth unemployment through policy, not inflammatory statements

By Brian Gitonga

The Democratic Party of Kenya yesterday warned the government to exercise caution in its public remarks about foreign nationals doing business in the country, saying inflammatory statements risk damaging investor confidence and straining Kenya’s diplomatic relationships.

DP national chairman Peter Ndubai said recent comments by some leaders targeting foreign businesspeople had caused concern among investors and members of the diplomatic community, and that the government had a responsibility to choose its words

carefully.

“Kenyans are already undergoing significant economic hardships as a result of poor policies and governance decisions by the government,” Ndubai said, adding that the solution to youth unemployment lay in expanding economic opportunities — not in rhetoric that could trigger unintended consequences.

He proposed increased investment in skills development, incentives for businesses and consistent enforcement of existing laws as a more durable path to creating opportunities for young Kenyans. Ndubai also noted that millions of Kenyans live and work abroad, arguing that Kenya must protect its citizens overseas while extending the same respect to foreign nationals who lawfully live, work and invest within its borders.

He called for structured consultations between the government, diplomatic representatives and the business community to develop a balanced response to unemployment — one that preserves Kenya’s standing as an attractive investment destination.

Ndubai also turned his attention to what he described as organised attacks on people participating in peaceful opposition activities, which he condemned in strong terms. He said the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to express political views, assemble peacefully and participate in political life without fear of intimidation, and that those rights were not negotiable.

He challenged security agencies to investigate reported attacks, identify the perpetrators and ensure suspects face justice regardless of their political affiliations. “Political differences must never be settled through violence,” he said, warning political actors against deploying hired groups to intimidate opponents.

With the 2027 General Election drawing closer, Ndubai urged political parties and their leaders to embrace dialogue, tolerance and peaceful competition as the only legitimate basis for political contest.

On the party’s internal affairs, Ndubai said the DP was expanding its grassroots presence through membership recruitment, mobilisation and outreach activities across the country. He said the party was assessing potential candidates for elective positions as it prepared to offer what he described as a democratic alternative grounded in unity, peace, accountability, good governance and service to



Democratic Party of Kenya national officials during the opening of the Othaya branch last weekend. | Photo: Courtesy

citizens. Young people, women and professionals with the competence and integrity to serve in public office would be prioritised, he added.

Ndubai also called for a lasting resolution to recurring disruptions in the healthcare sector, particularly those affecting nursing services. He said the pattern of handling disputes through temporary interventions and crisis-driven negotiations had gone on long enough, and that a sustainable framework was overdue.

That framework, he said, should address remuneration, staffing levels, working conditions, career progression, access to equipment and medicines, and the implementation of agreements already reached between government and health workers. Failure to resolve the underlying problems, he warned, would result in repeated strikes and continued disruption of essential services — with ordinary patients bearing the cost.

“Kenya needs lasting solutions — not temporary fixes,” he said.

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Health The head of civil service said this year's theme, "Elevating Oral Health Care, Excellence, and Expertise," calls for more than just professional reflection

Head of public service calls for mapping of oral health workers in all counties

BY James Wakahiu

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya requires a comprehensive mapping of its oral health workforce across all 47 counties, the Chief of Staff and Head of the Public service, Mr. Felix Koskei has said.

With approximately 0.27 dentists for every 10,000 people - roughly one dentist for every 37,000 Kenyans - the country cannot meet its oral health needs through dentists alone. "Nor can we answer a problem of unequal access merely by increasing national totals while leaving the same communities beyond the reach of care," he said.

In 1985, Kenya began training Community Oral Health Officers to compliment the dentists. Today, approximately 1,800 officers represent a considerable national investment in a cadre designed to take preventive, promotive and basic clinical care closer to the people.

Mr. Koskei said a mapping of the entire oral health staffing in the country will show an update of the distribution and status of the workforce. "We need to know who is serving, where they are serving, the populations they cover, the level of care at which they work, and the infrastructure necessary for them to succeed. From that evidence must emerge clear staffing norms, an equitable deployment framework and a funded plan for implementation," he said.

He said the community oral health officers should be integrated across the health system, from Level 6 referral facilities downwards, with particular emphasis on Levels 2, 3 and 4. "This is the front line at which prevention, early detection, basic treatment and timely referral can have the greatest effect. This does not diminish the dentist. It allows every cadre to work at the height of its competence within a coherent and complementary system," he added.

The head of civil service spoke at the 32nd annual scientific conference of the Oral Health Association of Kenya (OHAK) held at Lake Naivasha Resort in Nakuru county. The three-day conference ended on Friday OHAK has more than 2000 members.

"For too long, oral healthcare has occupied the margins of public health policy that is noticed when pain becomes unbearable, funded when disease has advanced, and sought when prevention has already failed. I challenge OHAK to become not only the voice of a profession, but the conscience of the oral health system. Speak with authority, but also with evidence," he noted.

He said the Social Health Authority (SHA) gives the sector an important opportunity to bring oral healthcare from the periphery to the centre of health financing. "OHAK must engage that process with both courage and evidence. Preventive services, screening, early intervention and basic restorative care must be treated not as optional additions, but as essential protections against disease and financial hardship," he added.

The head of civil service said this year's theme, "Elevating Oral Health Care, Excellence, and Expertise," calls for more than just professional reflection. "It has summoned us to a higher standard of public duty. Excellence cannot remain a word displayed on a conference banner. It must become the ordinary experience of the citizen who walks into any health facility in Kenya," he added.

Mr. Koskei asked the health workers to defend professional standards as well as the public interest. "Advocate for your members, but never lose sight of the patient who has no platform, no title and no voice in the rooms where policy is made," he said.

He also challenged the national Government, county governments, training institutions, regulators and de-

velopment partners to look after staff welfare. "A health worker cannot be asked to deliver excellence inside a system that withholds the conditions for excellence. We must match responsibility with tools; training with opportunity; deployment with infrastructure and public expectation with institutional support," he cautioned.

Mr. Koskei noted that oral health should no longer be treated as an afterthought in Universal Health Coverage and that no professional trained to serve shall be rendered idle by poor planning. "No facility shall bear a mandate it has not been equipped to discharge; no county shall be invisible in the distribution of care and no Kenyan shall endure preventable oral pain merely because of where they were born, where they live, or what they earn," he said.

He advised the medics to focus on preventive rather than predominantly curative care; community-based rather than facility-bound; equitable rather than concentrated; integrated rather than isolated; and accountable for results rather than satisfied with intentions.

"The Office of the Head of the Public Service stands ready to support stronger coordination, evidence-led workforce planning and accountable public service delivery. But the momentum must be carried by all of us. Government must listen. Institutions must act. Professionals must lead and citizens must feel the difference," he told the conference.



Felix Koskei. Head of Public Service




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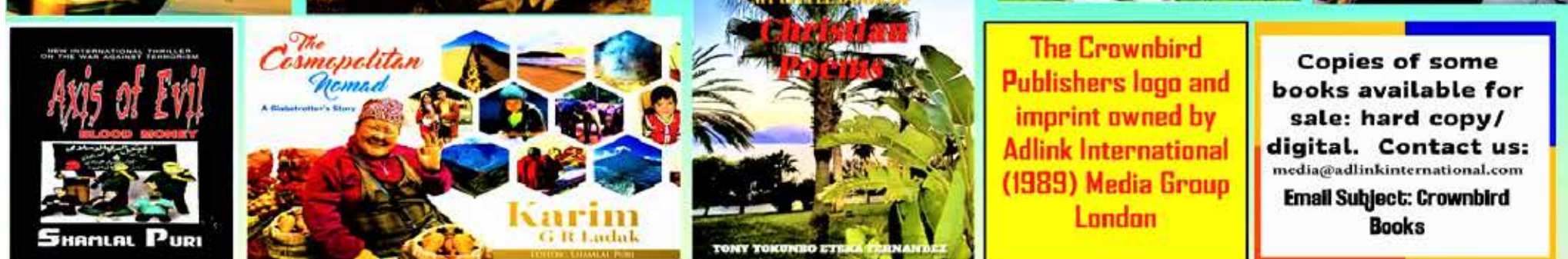
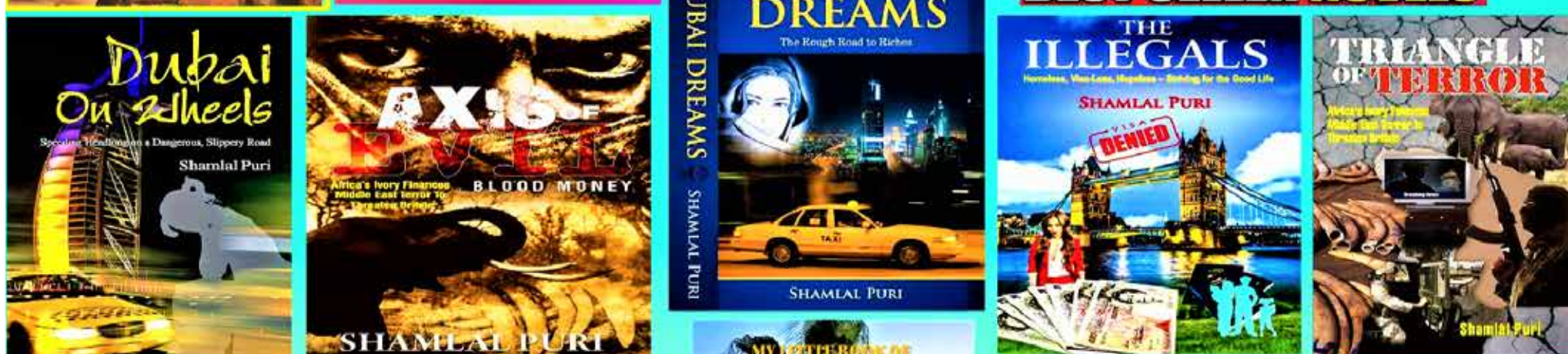
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Politics These stations did not invent ethnic animosity. Colonial administrators perfected the art of cataloguing, ranking and weaponizing difference

The frequencies of fracture: Kenya's vernacular venom and the algorithms of atrocity

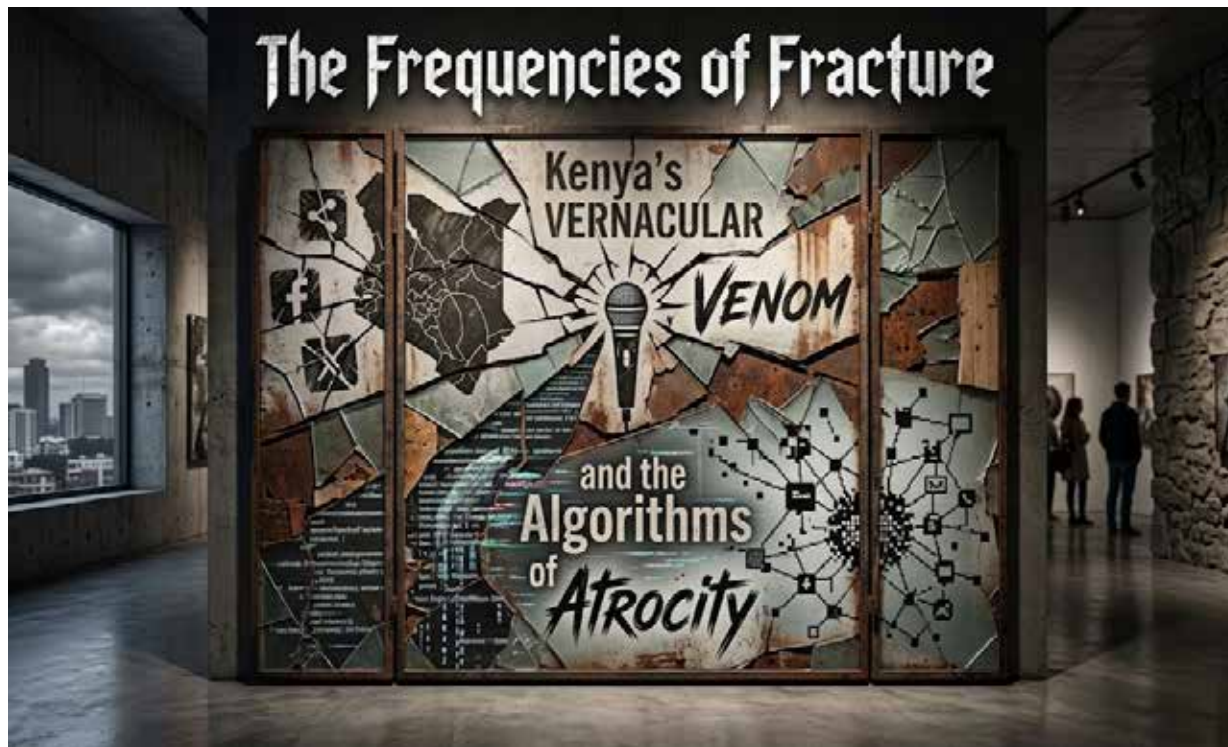


By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

@themkenyatimes

In the weeks after Kenya's disputed 2007 elections, more than 1,100 people were killed, over 600,000 displaced, and thousands of women subjected to sexual violence. The Waki Commission and multiple independent monitors did not treat this bloodletting as spontaneous combustion. They documented a clear accelerant: vernacular radio stations broadcasting in Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luo and other tongues, pumping coded calls to "cut the grass," reclaim "stolen chickens," or reject the "uncircumcised" into communities already primed by historical grievance. Local media became not mere reporters of tension but architects of it. That is the factual starting point. Everything else is the architecture of recurrence.

These stations did not invent ethnic animosity. Colonial administrators perfected the art of cataloguing, ranking and weaponizing difference; postcolonial elites refined it into electoral calculus. What the liberalisation of the airwaves after the 1990s achieved was scale and intimacy. Suddenly the familiar voice speaking the language of the homestead could reach hundreds of thousands at once, translating political competition into existential threat. The algorithm of animosity is simple and ruthless: identify the in-group, define the out-group as existential contaminant, repeat the definition until it feels like memory, then provide the emotional permission for violence. Radio and, to a lesser extent, television supplied the bandwidth. Call-in shows became unmoderated laboratories of dehumanization. Presenters who should have been gatekeepers became amplifiers. The feedback loop was perfect: politician plants the seed, presenter waters it with selective framing, caller supplies the raw ethnic fury, and the sta-



The frequencies of fracture

tion broadcasts the harvest back into the soil that will grow the next cycle of corpses.

The parallels are not subtle. Rwanda's Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines did not create Hutu Power; it operationalized it. Kenya's vernacular stations in 2007–2008 performed a similar function at lower technological sophistication but comparable moral vacancy. Joshua Arap Sang of Kass FM was charged at the International Criminal Court precisely because the evidence showed a presenter using his platform to coordinate and inflame. Whether convictions followed is secondary to the documented pattern: the microphone became a weapon. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission was born from this recognition, yet the disease has merely migrated and mutated. Social media now hosts the densest concentrations of toxic ethnic discourse, but the older medium retains unique potency in rural and peri-urban Kenya where trust in the local-language voice remains high and alternative information is scarce.

Consider the numbers that refuse to stay buried. The 2007–2008 violence produced an estimated 1,133 official deaths and displacement on a scale that temporarily shattered national growth from 7.1 percent to 2.5

percent. Earlier multiparty elections in 1992 and 1997 had already left thousands dead in ethnic clashes that politicians and local media helped choreograph. Monitoring by organisations such as Internews in later cycles showed dangerous speech declining after training and scrutiny, only for spikes to reappear whenever political temperatures rose. In 2024 the NCIC was still intervening in dozens of hate-speech cases, many rooted in the same ethnic framings that once poured from FM transmitters. The continuity is not accidental. It is the product of incentives. Politicians need mobilized ethnic blocs. Station owners, often aligned with political interests, need audiences and advertising. Presenters need relevance. Listeners, fed a steady diet of grievance, experience the confirmation of their deepest suspicions as truth. The algorithm rewards division because division pays.

Literary devices are not decoration here; they are diagnostic. The "people of the milk" and the "grass" that must be cut were not random metaphors. They were compressed histories of land, belonging and exclusion, weaponised into marching orders. Irony saturates the landscape: stations that market themselves as cultural guardians become

the most efficient destroyers of the cultural fabric they claim to protect. Satire writes itself when stations that broadcast sermons on national unity on Sunday morning spend weekday afternoons hosting callers who describe fellow citizens as weeds. The language of kinship is twisted into the language of expulsion. What should be the warm medium of the mother tongue becomes the cold instrument of the undertaker.

Deep insight requires refusing the comforting myth that this is merely "tribalism," some primordial African defect. It is modern political technology operating on pre-existing social software. Ethnic identity is real and emotionally powerful; its conversion into zero-sum political capital is a choice repeatedly made by elites who calculate that short-term power outweighs long-term national ruin. The correlation is tight: where vernacular media ecosystems are dense, political competition intense, and institutional restraints weak, the probability of lethal mobilisation rises. Kenya is not unique, but it is exemplary. The same stations that can mobilise for peace after violence have already demonstrated they can mobilise for slaughter before it.

This is not abstract. It is the burnt homestead in the Rift Valley, the

body dumped in a Nairobi estate, the woman who will never again trust her neighbour because the radio told her that neighbour was the enemy. It is the child who grows up learning that political loyalty and ethnic loyalty are the same thing, and that dissent from the communal line is betrayal. Each election cycle that tolerates the old scripts is a quiet referendum on whether Kenya prefers the politics of the graveyard to the politics of the common good.

Action is therefore non-negotiable and multi-layered. The Communications Authority and the Media Council must treat repeated patterns of coded ethnic incitement as the serious regulatory failures they are, not as occasional excesses to be tut-tutted after the fact. Ownership structures that concentrate vernacular reach in the hands of political actors require transparency and, where necessary, structural remedy. Presenters and producers who turn their microphones into megaphones for dehumanization should face professional and legal consequences proportional to the harm, not the current pattern of selective and delayed enforcement. Politicians who still traffic in the language of "our people" versus "the others" must be denied the oxygen of respectability; parties that platform them should pay electoral and reputational costs. Civil society and ordinary listeners must refuse the narcotic of ethnic self-congratulation and demand better. Advertisers who fund stations that specialize in division are complicit and should be named. The NCIC's monitoring is necessary but insufficient without swift, consistent prosecution that makes the cost of hate higher than its political benefit.

Kenya has already paid the butcher's bill once in full public view. The algorithm of animosity is not mystical. It is a set of incentives, technologies, and failures of courage that can be disrupted. The airwaves can carry the languages of this land without carrying the licences for its destruction. The choice remains, as it always has, with those who hold the microphones, those who own the transmitters, those who write the laws, and those who still tune in. History is not destiny. It is only the pattern that repeats until someone with power and conscience decides the cost of repetition has become unbearable. The frequencies are still open. What they broadcast next will tell us whether Kenya has finally learned to hear itself without reaching for the match.

The writer is a social commentator.

Cybersecurity The appointment comes at a moment when the question of who — or what — has access to an organisation’s most sensitive systems has never been more complex

Saviynt appoints Heus to lead Middle East and Africa sales push

Identity security firm targets African enterprise growth as AI agents create new cybersecurity frontiers

BY Joseph Kinyua
@themkenyentimes

Saviynt, a leading provider of identity security solutions, yesterday appointed Kamel Heus as Vice President of Sales for the Middle East and Africa, signalling a significant push into one of the world’s fastest-growing cybersecurity markets.

Based in Dubai, Heus will lead Saviynt’s commercial operations across the MEA region, including Turkey, with immediate priorities that include deepening the company’s presence in existing markets, expanding into Saudi Arabia and building out local hosting capabilities to meet in-region data residency requirements.

The appointment comes at a moment when the question of who — or what — has access to an organisation’s most sensitive systems has never been more complex. Across government, banking, healthcare, utilities, oil and gas and retail, artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how institutions operate. With that shift comes a new category of identity risk: AI agents that access enterprise applications and data at scale, and that require the same governance and access controls traditionally applied to human users.

Saviynt’s Zuma platform is designed to address precisely that challenge, giving organisations visibility into AI identities and the tools to enforce least-privilege access across their full lifecycle. Heus will be expected to bring that proposition to market across a region where digital transformation is accelerating and cybersecurity budgets are growing to match.

“MEA represents a significant opportunity for Saviynt

as organisations across the region accelerate their digital transformation and increasingly look to AI to transform how they operate and grow,” said Pete Angstadt, Chief Commercial Officer at Saviynt. “Our role is to help customers move faster on that journey while ensuring security and governance keep pace. Kamel’s deep experience in the region and understanding of its customers, markets and partner ecosystem will be invaluable as we continue to expand our presence.”

Angstadt described the appointment as part of a long-term investment in the region. “His appointment is an important step in bringing Saviynt closer to our customers and partners as we help accelerate their AI journey securely,” he said.

Heus himself brings two decades of enterprise cybersecurity sales leadership and a track record of building and scaling businesses across the Middle East, Africa and Europe. He has held senior leadership roles at Thales, Centrifly — now Delinea — and Sophos. Most recently, he served as Vice President for EMEA at Thales, where he led the company’s Identity and Access Management business across the region. He holds a PhD in Applied Mathematics and Computing from Université Grenoble Alpes in France and has been based in Dubai for more than a decade.

“The Middle East and Africa have become one of the fastest-growing cybersecurity markets in the world, and identity sits right at the centre of it — especially as AI agents enter the enterprise,” Heus said. “I’ve spent over a decade building businesses from the ground up in this region, and I’m excited to do it again at Saviynt. My focus

is to build out our local presence, grow a strong partner ecosystem, and enable organisations across MEA to grow their business through secure, confident access — both for their people and their AI.”

For African enterprises in particular, the appointment arrives at a defining moment. Cloud adoption is accelerating, regulatory environments around data sovereignty are tightening and AI is moving from pilot projects into core business operations. The challenge of managing who has access to what — across human employees, contractors, third-party systems and now autonomous AI agents — is one that identity security platforms like Saviynt are increasingly positioned to address.

Heus’s expansion agenda for Saudi Arabia also reflects broader regional dynamics. The Kingdom’s Vision 2030 programme has driven substantial investment in digital infrastructure, creating demand for enterprise security solutions that can scale with ambitious transformation targets. Similar pressures are visible in the UAE, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria, where large enterprises and government institutions alike are grappling with the governance implications of rapid digitalisation.

With Heus now leading its MEA sales organisation, Saviynt said it would continue to deepen relationships with customers and partners, expand regional capabilities and help organisations strengthen identity security as cloud adoption, AI integration and digital transformation continue to reshape enterprise environments across the continent and the Gulf.

Kamel Heus



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Elections That development should force Kenya to rethink what it means by misinformation, disinformation and information warfare

Wendo: Kenya's 2027 battle will also be fought on your phone

BY Dennis Wendo

@themkenyatimes

Kenya's next major political battle may not begin at a rally, in Parliament or even at the ballot box. It may begin on a mobile phone.

A fabricated video. An artificial voice appearing to belong to a political leader. A photograph showing an event that never happened. A false statement attributed to a public figure. Or hundreds of apparently ordinary social media accounts repeating the same political message without disclosing that the content was generated and coordinated using artificial intelligence.

This is no longer a distant possibility.

Anthropic's recent disclosure that it disrupted a Kenyan political influence operation — in which AI was reportedly used to generate large volumes of political content — should serve as a wake-up call. The operation reportedly promoted government narratives while attacking opposition figures, demonstrating how AI can now be deployed not only to create false content but to manufacture the appearance of spontaneous public opinion.

That development should force Kenya to rethink what it means by misinformation, disinformation and information warfare.

The danger is no longer simply that false information travels quickly. Technology can now help manufacture, personalise and distribute political narratives at a scale that would previously have required a large human operation.

Perhaps even more troubling is the ability to manufacture the appearance of public consensus. If hundreds or thousands of apparently independent accounts repeat similar political messages, an ordinary citizen may conclude that a particular view is genuinely widespread. Yet behind those voices could be a coordinated operation designed to create the illusion of grassroots support.

The weapon, therefore, is not simply false information. It is the manipulation of perception itself.

This comes at a particularly consequential moment for Kenya as the country moves towards the 2027 General Election.

Government Spokesperson Charles Owino warned yesterday that the



spread of misinformation, disinformation and false information is becoming a serious threat, describing it as a time bomb and cautioning that Kenyans risk making important decisions on the basis of information that is neither factual nor properly verified.

That warning deserves serious attention.

But it also raises a larger question. If disinformation is becoming a threat to Kenya's democracy, peace and security, who should be trusted to lead the response?

The answer cannot be government alone. Nor can it be left entirely to technology companies, political actors or the media.

Civil society must become a central pillar of Kenya's information resilience architecture.

Civil society organisations are often closest to the communities where rumours first emerge. They understand local languages, social networks, grievances and community dynamics. They can identify early warning signals, verify information, educate citizens and help prevent harmful narratives from escalating into community tensions. Their greatest advantage is proximity and trust.

But there is an uncomfortable dimension to this discussion that must also be acknowledged.

Civil society is not automatically neutral.

Organisations can themselves become vulnerable to political interests, ideological agendas, ethnic mobilisation, donor influence or externally sponsored narratives. Competition for funding, visibility and

political access can create incentives to communicate before information has been properly verified.

This raises an important question: who verifies the verifiers?

The answer should not be to silence civil society. Instead, civil society must hold itself to the same standards of transparency, independence and accountability that it demands from government, political actors and media organisations.

Every organisation involved in information integrity should be prepared to answer straightforward questions: Who funds us? Who influences us? What evidence supports what we are saying? Who scrutinises our work? And what happens when we are wrong?

These questions do not weaken civil society. They protect its credibility.

Kenya therefore needs to move from reactive fact-checking to a broader culture of information resilience.

That process should begin at community level. Civil society organisations, journalists, researchers and relevant public institutions should be connected through effective early warning mechanisms capable of identifying dangerous narratives before they harden into social tensions.

Independent verification capacity must also be strengthened — including fact-checking and public education in Kiswahili and other widely spoken local languages. Information resilience cannot depend exclusively on English-speaking audiences.

Digital and media literacy should become a permanent civic programme rather than something that surfaces only during election cycles.

Citizens should be equipped to recognise manipulated photographs, fabricated accounts, misleading statistics, deepfakes, artificial voices and emotionally engineered narratives.

Technology companies must also accept greater responsibility for the information environments their platforms create. Greater transparency is needed around coordinated campaigns, AI-generated content and the systems that amplify political messages to millions of users.

But technology alone will not solve the problem.

Trust remains at the centre of the challenge.

A citizen who does not trust government may reject an official correction. A citizen who does not trust the media may dismiss a fact-check. A community that feels politically or economically excluded may be more receptive to narratives that confirm its grievances, even when those narratives are false.

This is why information warfare cannot be separated from the wider questions of governance, inequality, political inclusion and social cohesion.

The Horn of Africa offers important lessons. Across the region, contested narratives have interacted with political grievances, ethnic tensions, conflict and insecurity. Kenya cannot assume that its relatively stronger democratic institutions make it immune.

The country is also a major political, economic, diplomatic and humanitarian hub in the region. What happens within Kenya's information environment can therefore have consequences well beyond its borders.

Disinformation does not stop at national boundaries, and neither should efforts to build resilience.

Kenya should work with regional partners to strengthen information integrity — particularly around emerging technologies, cross-border narratives, conflict-related misinformation and election-related manipulation.

There is, however, an equally important caution.

The fight against disinformation must never become a convenient cover for suppressing legitimate criticism, investigative journalism or political dissent.

Government should not label uncomfortable information as disinformation simply because it is critical.

Opposition parties should not dismiss legitimate scrutiny as political persecution. Civil society should not present advocacy as independent verification. Media organisations should not sacrifice accuracy in pursuit of clicks and influence.

The same standards must apply to everyone.

If government is asking citizens and journalists to verify information, government itself must be prepared to meet the same standard. Political actors, civil society organisations, media houses and technology platforms must all be subject to scrutiny.

The objective is not to create a society where everyone believes the same thing. It is to create a society capable of distinguishing evidence from manipulation, disagreement from incitement and genuine public opinion from manufactured consensus.

This is where Kenya's preparations for the 2027 General Election must expand beyond voter registration, polling stations and physical security.

The information environment in which citizens make their political choices must also be protected.

An election cannot be considered fully secure simply because votes are counted correctly. The quality of democracy is also shaped by whether citizens have access to credible information before they reach the ballot box.

Kenya needs to begin building that information resilience now.

Civil society can play a critical role through a simple but coordinated approach: monitor emerging narratives, verify information, respond rapidly to harmful falsehoods, build public resilience, connect communities and institutions, and demand accountability from every actor.

The coming political contest will test not only Kenya's electoral institutions but also the resilience of its citizens.

Artificial intelligence has changed the scale, speed and sophistication of information manipulation. Kenya must respond with equal seriousness — without sacrificing the constitutional freedoms that make democracy meaningful.

The new battlefield may indeed be the phone in our hands.

The most dangerous message may not be the one that looks obviously false. It may be the one that looks like everyone already believes it.

Kenya does not need louder voices. It needs more credible ones.



BOOKS & LITERATURE

with Areeba Shokat

An M.phill Scholar from the University of Chenab, Gujrat

Book Review:

Submitted By
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Programme
M.A. English — 1st Semester
Suggested By
Muhammad Adnan Gujjar

John Keats is one of the greatest beloved romantic poet in English literature. He was born on 31october 1795 in London. John Keats is younger poet and he is also recognized as pure poet. He writes poetry for the interest of poetry between all the romantic poets Keats is known as the real poet. he is also known as the poet of beauty Keats states beauty falsehood in the eyes of viewers. Keats views beauty in each part of art in the lap of nature art in season bird sculpture imagination of human mind give it is also known as escapist when we study Keats poetry forget the fever and fret of society. The most examined perspective of Keats poetry of its poetry in his belief of beauty .Keats considered that beauty has over lasting appreciation can give solace to human being .Many scholar discuss that Keats regarded beauty as a divine and sentimental strength that could got our pain and suffering. Kids did not spend an easy life rather Keats father died when Keats was a child and Keats mother died of tuberculosis when he was a teenager Keats educated to be doctor or the help of a doctor he adored book so much there for quite medicine to write some for writing for children. The faerie Queen which exposed to him the huge word of poetry he got fascinated inn beauty

of nature his poetic works of poem was appeared in 1817 and his first long poem Endymion in 1818 which unclosed to with following remarkable line a thing of beauty is joy forever. Keats carried out lost volume of his poems in 1820 these poems memorable moments three stories Is Bella the eve of st Agnes lamia love tragedy far from being a part of loneliness he was fully occupied in the poetic and political debates Major thread of his poetry Negative competence Staying broad minded He considered a poet should be capable to see at a mystery or unhappy circumstance lacking find a reasonable answerable liked unclearness of life and did not feel the requirement to be right all the time. Sensuousness Keats is very notable for his sensuous most significant poet of this time wrote about how things will tasted and smelled in preference to simply telling a story his poetry firmly attract to the five senses Keats uses strong illustration that attract to the senses his poetry is full of profound sensory adventures. Hellenism is known for a tradition tongue art made of life of ancient Greek it develop into broadly expand after the occupation of Alexander the great this is the impressive trait. Keats was captivated



John Keats

with ancient Greek art and sculpture .He admired with Greece gods and tradition he experienced Greek grasped beauty above any individual else. Escapism John Keats is often called the poet of escapism. John Keats spend his life very difficult because he loss is parent sibling and he loves fanny Browne when Keats meat in 1818even though they love each other very much but one Keats suffer from tuberculosis and many financial issue they did not marry with each other. Therefore he uses his poetry as a mean to refuge his difficulty and misery. when we recite John Keats poetry we neglected the fever and front of social word and fully focus with the beauty of nature. Melancholy In the poetry of john Keats the idea of melancholy is very significant Keats observed that joyful moment in life or also a minute bit sad as the do not lost for ever you see a flower blossoming and feel happy but you are feel sadness like you will die tomorrow. The year 1819 Keats had written many remarkable poems like adaption is Bella Giovanni Boccaccio De-

cameron .when Keats completed the most long poem Endymion but he is not satisfied with his work so He write another poem such as lamua the eve of st agnes the remarkable odes are keats greatest unique poetic success. All odes are written between Mars and June 1897 excluding ode to autumn which is written from September ode to a nightingale ode to autumn ode on a Grecian urn ode on indolence on melancholy and the two forms of Hyperion. The most remarkable for ode to a nightingale. When the odd begin the poet is very sad and emotional condition when the poet hear the nightingale sound he feel joy and always existence and also compare it into life this is completely opposite to the real word the port wishes to live with the nightingale so he can enjoy the company of nightingale. Keats poet of imagination so he can use imagination ignore sadness and enjoy the company of nightingale. Odd on Grecian urn this is the most famous poem of john Keats . In this poem the poets saw a Greek urn the urn is decorated with art

and beauty through keats is a poet of imagination he said real life is full of Sorrow and pain but art is permanent and Joyful the poet comprehend that everything on the urn is permanent like the guy on the urn such as love life will never grow old and trees that never lose beauty the art is frozen while the real life is temporary symbolizes eternal beauty ,although human

medical into art and using into poem eventually keafs combine through medicine and poetry.keats medical education also established some images as part of his analytical instrument would certainly discovered their way into his poetry. when keats get a degree during working in the hospital.he observes many things. Love of nature keats had a deep love for nature and its effect on emotion and imagination keats uses symbol images and metaphor to use his attention and emotional lyricism in poetry is a beautiful poetry where he is known for conveying personal through and emotion instead of saying long stories.lyricism in Keats poetry often arrive from the association of emotional intensity sensory and musical make keats poetry more beautiful and attractive use of imagination keats uses imagination to show his inner mind and thought he use vivid imagery.The use of imagination is the skill to make a artistic ability and emotional in the mind our reality. To conclude all John Keats maintained a special status in English literature. John Keats poetry celebrated for his rich imagination he lived on 25 years but he wrote remarkable poetry .Keats considered that beauty had the power enhance the person soul. Throughout keats poem he examined theme such as love imagination. His believe of negative capability also showed his faith that great poetry include enigma and ambiguity instead of person in clear answer now Keats acknowledge as one of the greatest poet in English literature. his work is very remarkable across the word. Thus John Keats poetic legacy is time less and his effort on English literature on going to encourage era people to read and write.john Keats was died in the age of 25 in London in the year 1821. He was died due to the disease of tuberculosis.H3 was well known as the greatest young literature poet.john Keats told our cohort the main understanding of beauty. John Keats not spend a life as bed of roses though he spend his life very difficult and hard and he enjoy the resentment of life.

livelihood indicate indicate change and death. Ode to autumn this poem is different from other poem because keats is mature now. This poem is about season the poets said ode to autumn is not a sad season it is about peace and calm the poet said that every season is beautiful.The poet mainly sad life every stage is beautiful. The main theme of Keats poetry is melancholy and virtue. moreover his melancholy is not miserable through he was continuously familiar of death and misery rather hus melancholy is not this despairing . Ode on melancholy the most theme of keats poetry because it teaches that sadness is most important in our life we cannot avoid them keats at that beauty is short term. this understanding of fatility give emotional intensity to his poetry it makes more actual and powerful. The effect of medical education on keats poetic perspective Keats medical education profoundly effected how he saw poetry .Keats understanding of the human body and it's weaknesses. Keats medical skill talk about complex part of life . he transformed his

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Sports >> *The former world record holder says success means nothing if it does not reach the communities that shaped you

Loroupe urges Kenyan athletes to give back to their roots

By Joshua Kimemia

Tegla Loroupe, the former women's marathon world record holder, yesterday called on Kenya's sporting elite to invest in their communities and resist the temptation to leave their humble origins behind as their careers and bank balances grow.

Loroupe, 53, who rose from the dusty, conflict-scarred plains of West Pokot to become one of the most celebrated distance runners in Kenyan history, said the lesson she most wants today's athletes to take from her career has nothing to do with pace, training or technique. It has to do with memory.

"For sure, I think something they can learn from me is that I come from a humble background," she said. "I believe also even the current athletes — nobody comes from a rich family, they come from a humble background. This is something they should never forget."

The advice carries the weight of lived experience. Loroupe clocked 2:20:47 to set a world record at the Rotterdam Marathon in April 1998, then lowered it by four seconds at the Berlin Marathon a year later. She went on to claim two New York Marathon titles, three Rotterdam Marathon crowns and three world half-marathon championships — a body of work that made her a global figure in long-distance running at a time when female athletes from rural Kenya faced enormous structural barriers simply to compete.

Those barriers, she said, were not merely logistical. They were cultural.

"Nowadays, they have everything, but during our time, we had a lot of luggage coming from the family," Loroupe said. "You didn't have equipment or even money to take you to competitions, but we did not lose hope. We had to fight — while you are



Former world record holder Tegla Loroupe. PHOTO/TEGLA LOROUPE.

still alive, you have to fight."

She acknowledged that attitudes towards sportswomen have shifted considerably over the decades, with cultural resistance that once discouraged women from competing having largely softened. But she argued that the greater prosperity now available to elite Kenyan athletes makes their obligation to those left behind more urgent, not less.

That conviction has shaped how Loroupe has spent the years since her competitive career wound down. Through the Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation, she established an annual Peace Run in Kapenguria designed to bring warring communities together — offering sport as a reason to lay down arms and discover shared purpose. The initiative has become one of the more quietly remarkable peace-building efforts in a region where cattle raids and inter-communal violence have long disrupted lives and livelihoods.

The foundation has also focused specifically on girls from mar-

ginalised communities and on refugees, populations that Loroupe argues are frequently invisible to the institutions that could help them most. Her own experience of growing up in poverty in a region marked by conflict has given her both the motivation and the credibility to work in spaces that more comfortable advocates sometimes struggle to enter.

Her charitable instincts were on public display recently at the Strathmore Annual Run in Nairobi, where she took part in the 2.5-kilometre race. The event raises funds for scholarships for financially disadvantaged students at Strathmore University, and Loroupe said she did not hesitate when she received the invitation.

"I want to say something that motivated me is the vice chancellor, who stood for charity to support the underprivileged students — that's something that's in my heart," she said. "When I see somebody who has the heart of supporting and is using this

energy to bring other people along, that motivates me a lot. I may not give much, but I am happy to contribute."

Beyond community investment, Loroupe also made the case for running as a public health tool — one that Kenya allowed to slip during the Covid-19 pandemic despite the opportunity the period presented.

"Look at the Covid-19 period — many people embraced running because they were tired of staying in the house," she said. "I wish we could have continued as a country with the same practice even after the pandemic ended."

It is a characteristically practical observation from a woman who has spent her post-competitive years converting athletic achievement into social action. For Loroupe, the race was never only about the finish line. It was always about what you do when you get there.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *From dressing-room drama at Arsenal to Hull City’s surprise defensive resilience, Matchweek 4 promises an absorbing weekend of football

Arteta fires back, Alonso faces a wall: Premier League Matchweek 4 preview

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

The Premier League rolls into Matchweek 4 carrying more than the usual early-season energy. From Mikel Arteta firing back at a former player to Xabi Alonso facing the division’s most surprising defensive wall in newly promoted Hull City, the weekend arrives loaded with storylines that could begin to shape the table.

With the season still young, every point is starting to carry extra weight.

Drama erupted at Arteta’s press conference yesterday when the Arsenal manager found himself in the firing line. Gabriel Jesus, who recently completed a move to Barcelona, publicly alleged he had been forced to train alone before his exit from the club.

Arteta pushed back, saying he was surprised by the Brazilian’s claims. He dismissed any narrative of a toxic dressing room by pointing to Leandro Trossard’s recent visit to the Emirates Stadium after his own departure.

The situation adds another layer of scrutiny around Arsenal, who have started the campaign strongly. Arteta will be hoping the off-field noise does not distract his squad as they travel to the Stadium of Light on Saturday to face Sunderland, looking to protect a perfect nine-point start to the season.

Chelsea, meanwhile, welcome newly promoted Hull City — arguably the most surprising side in the division so far. Hull currently sit third in the table, built on a defensive record that has already drawn widespread attention. Without midfielder Moisés Caicedo, who is sidelined with a calf injury, Alonso must find a way to dismantle a defensive unit that has shown it can frustrate top opponents. Chelsea will need patience and creativity to break Hull down.

Saturday evening also features

Liverpool against Fulham, with Álvaro Arbeloa returning to Anfield as a visiting manager. Fulham sit at the bottom of the table after three successive defeats, though it may be too early to write off Arbeloa’s approach. Fulham need a result badly; Liverpool will be keen to capitalise on their opponent’s difficult start and maintain their own momentum.

Roberto De Zerbi is feeling the pressure at Tottenham. Despite a summer outlay reported at around £300 million, Spurs remain winless. They face a desperate Everton side on Saturday, though De Zerbi received a boost yesterday with confirmation that James Maddison is fully fit to start. Tottenham will be under pressure to convert their attacking talent into points, making this another defining test for their new manager.

Elsewhere on Saturday, Crystal Palace host Ipswich Town, while Bournemouth face Brentford. Palace will look to build on recent positive form when Ipswich visit, while the Bournemouth-Brentford fixture promises to be tight, with both clubs viewing it as an opportunity to collect valuable early-season points.



Mikel Arteta

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Gut microbiota and human health: Is there really a “second brain”?



By: Visola Navruzova
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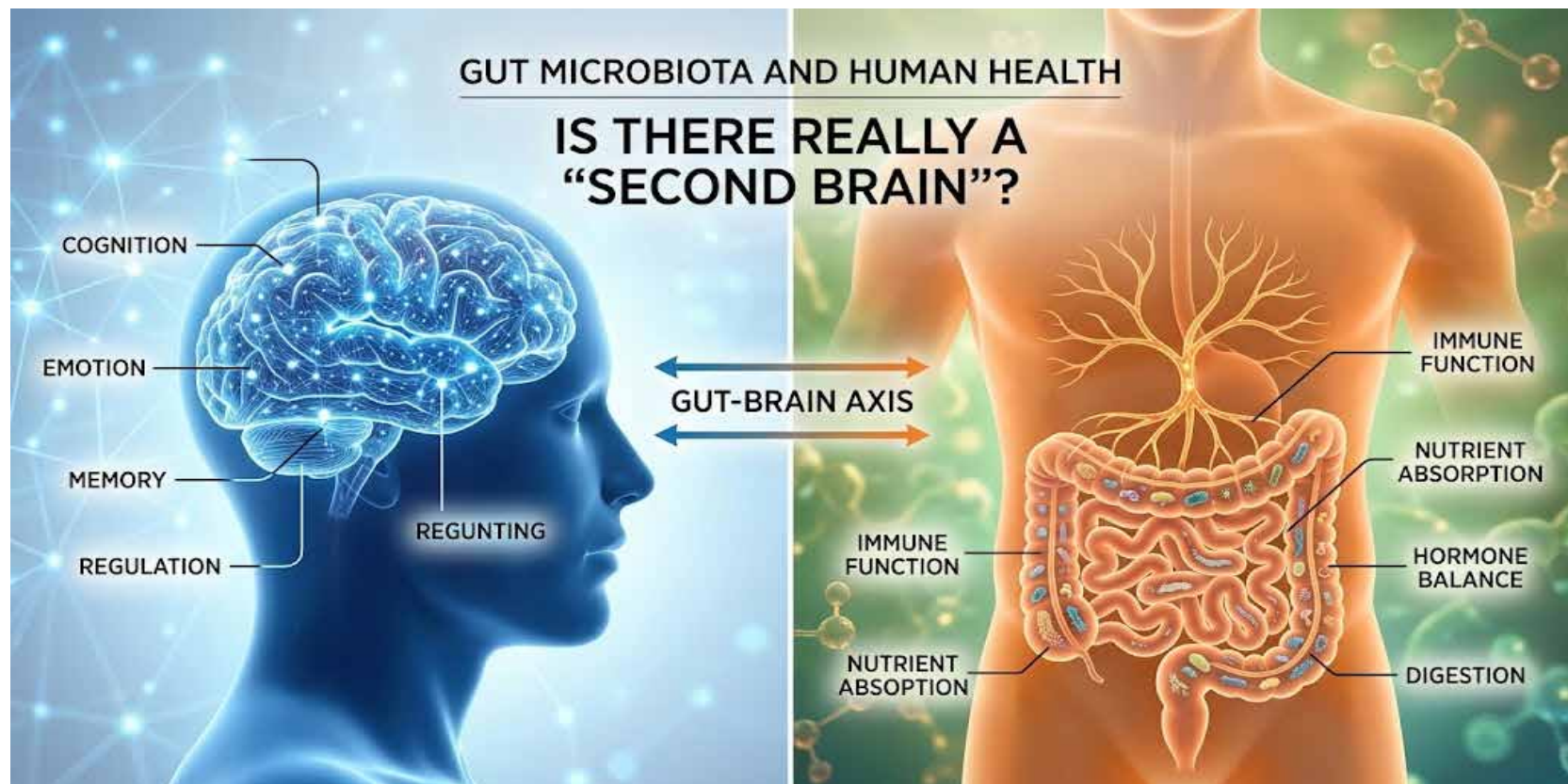
An Invisible World Within

Inside every human gut lives a staggering population of microorganisms — bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other microbes. Trillions of them, together weighing a few kilograms in an average adult. Scientists call this hidden ecosystem the “microbiota,” and over the past two or three decades, medical science has come to view it through an entirely new lens. It used to be assumed that these microorganisms were simply helpers in digestion. Today the picture looks very different: the microbiota appears to play a significant role not only in digestion, but in immunity, emotional states, and even brain function. These discoveries are exactly why the gut has come to be nicknamed the “second brain.” But is this label scientifically justified, or just a catchy metaphor?

The Gut’s Own Nervous System

The phrase didn’t come out of nowhere. The walls of the intestines contain a vast, semi-independent network of neurons known as the enteric nervous system. It holds hundreds of millions of neurons — comparable in number to those found in the spinal cord. This system can control muscle contractions, secretions, and other digestive processes largely on its own, without waiting for instructions from the brain.

Still, it isn’t fully independent — it stays in constant contact with the brain, primarily through the vagus nerve, which carries information in both directions. Interestingly, most of that traffic — roughly ninety percent — flows from the gut to the brain, not the other way around. In other words, the gut “talks” to the brain more than the brain talks to the



gut.

The Link Between Emotions and Bacteria

One of the most fascinating findings is that around ninety percent of the body’s serotonin is produced in the gut. Serotonin is closely tied to mood, calmness, and feelings of well-being. Of course, gut-produced serotonin doesn’t simply travel straight to the brain — the blood-brain barrier prevents that. But growing evidence suggests it can indirectly influence emotional states by affecting signaling pathways along the vagus nerve.

Animal studies have produced notable results as well. Mice raised in completely germ-free conditions showed altered anxiety levels and social behavior. When these mice received a microbiota transplant from healthy mice, positive behavioral changes were observed. Such findings point to a real connection between microbiota and emotional state — though drawing firm conclusions for humans from animal studies remains premature.

What About Humans?

Human studies don’t allow for conclusions as clear-cut as those in

animals, since human behavior is shaped by countless factors — environment, social circumstances, genetics, lifestyle. Even so, clinical observations have revealed some intriguing patterns. For example, patients with gut-brain disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome show higher rates of anxiety and depression. This suggests the relationship between gut and mental health isn’t one-directional — sometimes gut problems affect mood, and sometimes stress and depression disrupt gut function.

The diversity of the microbiota itself is increasingly viewed as a marker of overall health. A rich, varied microbiota — home to many types of beneficial bacteria — tends to correlate with good nutrition, an active lifestyle, and lower stress. Conversely, reduced microbial diversity has been linked to several chronic conditions, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, and inflammatory processes.

Where Fact Ends and Myth Begins
It’s worth stressing an important point here: “second brain” is not a precise scientific term for a distinct structure — it’s a metaphor. The gut’s nervous system doesn’t think,

remember, or make decisions; those functions belong exclusively to the brain. So the idea that “the gut thinks” would be inaccurate. What is real, however, is the connection between gut and brain — scientifically referred to as the “gut-brain axis” — and it matters a great deal for health. Researchers today are exploring this field with genuine enthusiasm, tempered by caution. Some commercial products are marketed with bold claims like “improves mood” or “eliminates stress,” but there currently isn’t enough rigorous clinical evidence to support such sweeping effects. Experts recommend treating these kinds of marketing claims with a healthy dose of skepticism.

Practical Takeaways

Regardless of ongoing scientific debate, one thing is clear: caring for gut health is good for overall well-being. The most reliable ways to do this are refreshingly simple:

- Fiber-rich foods — vegetables, fruits, whole grains — support microbiota diversity
- Fermented foods (yogurt, kefir, fermented vegetables) can be a source of beneficial bacteria
- Overusing antibiotics can

disrupt microbiota balance, so they should be taken only when necessary and under medical supervision

- Regular physical activity and quality sleep also indirectly benefit gut health
- Reducing chronic stress helps not only mental health but gut health as well

Final Thoughts

“Second brain” isn’t a scientific term — it’s a vivid way of highlighting just how complex and influential the gut truly is. The gut can’t replace the brain, but it does affect it in meaningful ways, and science is uncovering that influence in ever-greater depth. Perhaps future research into the gut-brain connection will lead to new, more effective treatments for mental health conditions. For now, the wisest approach is to distinguish genuine scientific progress from exaggerated marketing claims — and to care for one’s gut health through simple, consistent habits.

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