



Ruto and Uhuru: Why is Kenya still trapped in yesterday's political battles?
Kenya's political conversation has once again been pulled back into the turbulent relationship between President William Ruto and his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta. **Page 8**



The 2027 election has already started: This time, watch the money
The loudest part of Kenya's 2027 election has not yet arrived, but the machinery is already moving. **Page 12**

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The Mt. Kenya Times Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 **A landmark transparency ruling in Omtatah's petition reshapes the electoral battlefield**

IEBC told: Open servers

Kenya's High Court yesterday ordered the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to grant political parties and accredited election observers full access to the voter register, servers, audit logs and all election data ahead of the August 2027 General Election, in a ruling that immediately redraws the boundaries of electoral accountability in the country.

The decision, delivered in a petition filed by activist and Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah, was opposed vigorously by both the United Democratic Alliance and the IEBC itself — a combination that made the court's ruling against them all the more striking. In siding with the petitioner, the court applied constitutional standards of accuracy and verifiability to Kenya's electoral process, concluding that transparency is not a privilege to be granted selectively but a constitutional requirement that must be honoured structurally and in advance of polling day.

The ruling lands at a moment of acute political sensitivity. Kenya is fourteen months from a general election that is already generating the kind of tension, positioning and counter-positioning that typically arrives much closer to polling day. The political class is watching. So are the voters.



Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission chairman Erastus Edung Etheke

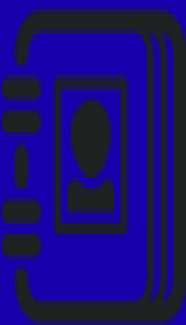
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Ruto marks CBK's 60th anniversary with call for monetary institution to anchor Kenya's economic ambitions

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto yesterday attended the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Central Bank of Kenya at the Institute of Monetary Studies in Nairobi, using the milestone occasion to underscore the institution's role in anchoring the country's economic stability and long-term growth ambitions.

The CBK, established in 1966 following Kenya's post-independence push to assert monetary sovereignty, has navigated six decades of economic turbulence, currency pressures and financial sector transformation. Its anniversary arrives at a moment of particular consequence — with inflation management, exchange rate stability and the cost of credit all bearing directly on the livelihoods of ordinary Kenyans heading into an election year.

Ruto's appearance at the commemoration carried political as well as institutional significance. With the August 2027 General Election fourteen months away, the administration faces mounting public pressure to demonstrate tangible economic progress. The CBK's credibility as an independent institution remains central to investor confidence and to the government's capacity to service its debt obligations without triggering further currency depreciation. Governor Kamau Thugge has steered the bank through a period of considerable external pressure, and the anniversary offers a moment to consolidate confidence in Kenya's monetary framework before the political season fully consumes the national conversation.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Fourteen people injured in yesterday's fuel tanker explosion along the Turbo-Eldoret highway were admitted to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret for specialised treatment, as emergency teams continued rescue operations at the scene. The blast, which tore through the busy corridor connecting Uasin Gishu and Trans-Nzoia counties, left a trail of destruction that overwhelmed initial response capacity at nearby health facilities, forcing the transfer of the most critically injured to the regional referral centre. Medical staff at the hospital were placed on emergency footing to receive the casualties, several of whom sustained severe burns. Authorities have not yet confirmed the cause of the explosion, but investigations are underway as residents in surrounding areas were urged to stay clear of the scene.



The International Democratic Alliance yesterday unveiled a steering committee mandated to organise and coordinate commemorations marking the first anniversary of Raila Odinga's elevation to the African Union Commission chairmanship, as supporters prepare to celebrate what they regard as a landmark moment in continental diplomacy and Pan-African leadership. The committee, whose composition spans political organisers, cultural figures and diaspora representatives, will oversee a programme of events intended to reflect both the significance of Odinga's historic appointment and his enduring influence on Kenya's political landscape. Odinga, who assumed the AU Commission role after decades at the centre of Kenyan opposition politics, remains a towering figure whose international stature continues to shape domestic political calculations as the country moves toward the August 2027 General Election.



Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna was yesterday turned away at the gates of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology's Karen campus after the institution's administration abruptly cancelled a student forum he had been invited to address, triggering immediate accusations of political interference in academic spaces. Sifuna, who arrived at the campus to engage students on governance and civic matters, was denied entry without prior notice, a move that drew sharp criticism from opposition figures and free speech advocates who described the cancellation as an attempt to suppress political discourse on university grounds. JKUAT's administration had not issued a public explanation at the time of going to press. The incident reignites a recurring debate in Kenya about the boundaries between institutional autonomy and the constitutional right to free expression.



Former Chief Justice David Maraga yesterday took his Ukatiba civic education caravan to the United States, targeting Kenyan diaspora communities as he seeks to build momentum for electoral participation ahead of the August 2027 General Election. The tour marks a significant expansion of the Ukatiba initiative beyond Kenya's borders, reflecting growing recognition that the diaspora vote — long underutilised and administratively complicated — could carry meaningful weight in a closely contested election. Maraga has been traversing the country in recent months urging Kenyans to register, understand their rights and participate actively in the democratic process. Taking that message to North America signals an intent to leave no constituency untouched. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has previously acknowledged the logistical challenges of diaspora voting but confirmed it remains part of the 2027 electoral framework.



The government yesterday stepped up preparedness measures ahead of the October-to-December rainfall season, warning Kenyans to take early precautions against floods, landslides and other weather-driven emergencies as meteorological projections pointed to potentially heavy precipitation across several regions. Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Deborah Barasa urged households, county governments and emergency response agencies to treat the warning seriously and act before conditions deteriorate rather than after. The Kenya Meteorological Department has flagged elevated rainfall risk across parts of the Rift Valley, coastal strip, western highlands and Mount Kenya region during the season. Authorities have directed county disaster management units to pre-position relief supplies, clear drainage systems and maintain early warning communication channels to ensure communities receive timely alerts as the rains approach.



Tourism Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano faced pointed questioning yesterday before the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Roads, Transportation and Housing over her repeated absences from scheduled committee oversight meetings, in a session that laid bare growing parliamentary frustration with executive accountability. Legislators pressed Miano to account for the missed appearances, which committee members argued had undermined their constitutional mandate to provide oversight of the ministry's operations and expenditure. Miano offered explanations for her absences but stopped short of a direct apology, a response that failed to fully satisfy several committee members who warned that continued non-attendance would attract formal sanctions. The grilling reflects a broader tension between Parliament and the executive over ministerial responsiveness to legislative scrutiny as the 2027 election cycle begins sharpening institutional rivalries.

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Forest “Bamboo has the potential to move well beyond being viewed as a forest resource,” Njuguna said

Kenya to establish 10 bamboo nurseries as Meru expo puts sector in national spotlight

KEFRI Director General Jane Njuguna makes the case for research-led bamboo development as the government commits to propagating more than 10 million seedlings

BY John Kariuki

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

The government yesterday announced plans to establish ten bamboo nurseries across the country with a combined capacity to propagate more than ten million seedlings, as Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Deborah Barasa opened the National World Bamboo Expo 2026 at Meru University of Science and Technology.

The announcement, made before an audience of farmers, investors, researchers and sector stakeholders, marked one of the government’s most concrete public commitments yet to scaling bamboo as a component of the national tree-growing campaign and green economy agenda.

Kenya Forestry Research Institute Director General Jane Njuguna, whose institute has been at the centre of research into bamboo propagation, species development and value chain support, was among the senior officials present. For KEFRI, the expo represented both a platform and a validation — the kind of public, policy-level attention to bamboo that the institute’s research work has been building toward.

“Bamboo has the potential to move well beyond being



Kenya Forestry Research Institute, Director General, Dr Jane Njuguna

viewed as a forest resource,” Njuguna said, outlining KEFRI’s role in supporting sustainable development across the sector. “Research and innovation are what connect the resource to the economy.” Barasa toured exhibition stands displaying bamboo products developed through processing and value addition, among them butter knives, cups, gutters, chicken feeders and toothbrush holders — a range that illustrated the breadth of what the sector can produce when research informs enterprise. She commended exhibitors for the creativity on display, called for greater investment in bamboo processing and as-

sured stakeholders of government support, saying Kenya was open to investment in the sector.

The expo, held under the theme “Sustainable bamboo for climate action, economic growth and empowerment,” was also attended by Meru Deputy Governor Linda Koome, Forestry Administration Secretary Patrick Meso and Meru University of Science and Technology Vice Chancellor Romanus Odhiambo.

KEFRI’s presence at the event reflects the institute’s expanding role at the intersection of forestry science, climate policy and economic opportunity. As the govern-

ment scales up its tree-growing and environmental restoration programmes, the institute’s technical capacity in bamboo research — covering species selection, propagation methods, sustainable harvesting and value addition — positions it as a critical partner in translating policy commitments into practical outcomes on the ground.

The planned nurseries, once operational, will require precisely the kind of research-backed propagation knowledge that KEFRI has been developing. Njuguna’s stewardship of the institute places it in the conversation not merely as a research body, but as an institution whose work feeds directly into Kenya’s climate resilience and livelihood agenda.

The Meru expo offered more than a product showcase. It served as a national forum for farmers, researchers, investors and policymakers to examine how bamboo — as a single versatile resource — can connect environmental conservation with commercial and community opportunity. For KEFRI and its Director General, it was a moment that put the institute’s years of forestry research in front of the audience that can act on it.

Gachagua accuses Ruto of plot to grab Muthaiga Golf Club using Kenya Forest Service



KFS officers

BY Jane Njoki

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday accused President William Ruto of using the Kenya Forest Service to seize land belonging to Muthaiga Golf Club, one of Kenya’s oldest and most prestigious private sporting institutions, in the latest escalation of hostilities between the two estranged political figures ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Gachagua said club members had alerted him after senior KFS officers arrived at the club accompanied by dogs, declaring part of the golf course to fall within the boundaries of Karura Forest. He described the move as part of a wider pattern of land appropriation he attributes di-

rectly to Ruto.

“William Ruto must know that Muthaiga Golf Club has been in existence since before independence, before he was born,” Gachagua said. “The colonial governor never touched Muthaiga. Kenyatta never touched it. Moi never touched it. Kibaki played golf there. His appetite for land has now surpassed public land — he has turned to private land.”

The allegations, which the presidency had not responded to at the time of publication, are unverified and their legal basis remains untested. The IEBC has confirmed August 10, 2027 as the election date, and with campaigns intensifying, Gachagua’s broadside signals that land and governance accountability will feature prominently among opposition lines of attack.

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Politics Ruto is the sitting president. He carries the responsibility of accounting for his administration's record and responding to the real concerns of ordinary Kenyans

Ruto and Uhuru: Why is Kenya still trapped in yesterday's political battles?

As the Ruto-Uhuru feud flares again, Kenyans are entitled to ask whether their leaders are focused on the future or imprisoned by the past

BY Collins Kibet

@themkenyatimes

Kenya's political conversation has once again been pulled back into the turbulent relationship between President William Ruto and his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta. Yesterday, Ruto renewed his criticism of the retired president, accusing him of actively working to undermine his administration and questioning his continued involvement in the country's political affairs.

The renewed exchange raises a question that goes well beyond the two men at the centre of it: why does Kenya's political debate keep revolving around yesterday's battles when the country faces pressing present-day challenges?

Ruto is the sitting president. He carries the responsibility of accounting for his administration's record and responding to the real concerns of ordinary Kenyans. Kenyatta, having left office in 2022, remains an influential figure — but his current role and the extent of that influence have become subjects of increasingly heated political debate. A Democracy for the Citizens Party official, Peter Mbae, argued yesterday that Kenyatta should not be cast as Ruto's political opponent, a framing that itself reflects how contested these boundaries have become.

Ruto has framed his criticism around what he describes as deliberate efforts to destabilise his government. Meanwhile, opposition-linked figures and Kenyatta's allies operate in a political environment where the contest for influence ahead of the 2027 General Election is already intensifying. The argument over who bears responsibility for Kenya's political direction is sharpening — and it is doing so well before the formal campaign period has begun.

This matters because political narratives have consequences. When the dominant conversation in a country centres on the personal grievances between two powerful men, it crowds out the debates that ordinary citizens most need their leaders to be having. The cost of unga. The state of public hospitals. Youth unemployment. The credibility of county governments. The reliability of the Kenya Revenue Authority's tax bur-



President William Ruto and his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta

den on small businesses. These are the conversations Kenyans at the grassroots level are having every day — and they deserve to hear their leaders having them too.

The more important concern for Kenyans, therefore, is whether this confrontation is generating solutions or simply consuming political oxygen. The country continues to face serious questions about the economy, employment, the cost of living, the delivery of public services and the credibility of institutions meant to serve ordinary people. These challenges require sustained, policy-grounded public debate — not an endless recycling of personal grievances dressed up as national politics.

Kenyatta's continued political relevance, however, cannot simply be wished away. Former presidents retain influence through experience, networks and longstanding relationships within political structures. That is the nature of high office — it does not end cleanly on the day a successor is sworn in. Kenyatta built political relationships over a decade at the centre of Kenyan power. Those relationships do not dissolve simply because he no longer occupies State House.

A recent High Court ruling has sharpened attention on his position within Jubilee, upholding the statutory restriction that prevents retired presidents from holding formal party office beyond six months after leaving State House, while affirming their right to remain party members and participate in political activity. The ruling does not silence Kenyatta — but it does clarify the legal boundaries within which his political role must now be exercised. Whether those boundaries are respected in practice, or creatively worked around, will itself become a political story in the months ahead.

Kenya is therefore entering another sensitive period in which the influence of former leaders, the record of the current administration and the choices of voters will increasingly intersect. The Ruto-Kenyatta confrontation may ultimately matter less as a personal dispute and more as a visible symptom of the wider struggle for political positioning ahead of 2027. Both men understand this. So do their respective political networks. The public exchanges are rarely simply about what is being said — they are about signalling strength, testing loyalties and shap-

ing the narrative that will define the next electoral cycle.

For Ruto, the central challenge is keeping the national conversation anchored to his administration's record, plans and policies — ground on which a sitting president should feel most comfortable standing. An incumbent who is perpetually drawn into confrontations with a predecessor risks appearing reactive rather than in command. Leadership, at its most effective, sets the agenda rather than responding to one set by others. Every week spent relitigating the Ruto-Kenyatta relationship is a week not spent making the affirmative case for why the current administration deserves a second term.

For Kenyatta and other opposition-aligned figures, the challenge is equally clear. Political relevance in a democracy must ultimately rest on something more substantial than opposition to a sitting government. Kenyans are entitled to know what an alternative political formation would do differently — concretely, measurably and honestly. The country has heard enough about what past governments failed to deliver. What voters increasingly want to hear is a credible account of what the next

chapter could look like, and who is genuinely capable of delivering it.

There is also a generational dimension to this conversation that deserves attention. Kenya has a large and growing population of young people who were children or teenagers during the Kibaki era, came of age politically during the Kenyatta years and are now navigating early adulthood under Ruto. For many of them, the Ruto-Kenyatta relationship is not a story of betrayal or broken brotherhood — it is simply background noise from an older generation of politicians whose rivalries feel distant from their daily realities. Young Kenyans want a political conversation about their futures, not a replay of their parents' political disappointments.

This is not a small consideration. The youth vote will be decisive in 2027. Any political formation that speaks convincingly to the aspirations, frustrations and ambitions of young Kenyans will have a significant structural advantage. The danger for all sides is that a political conversation dominated by yesterday's feuds alienates precisely the voters who will determine tomorrow's outcome.

Kenya cannot afford to remain permanently imprisoned by rivalries born in previous election cycles. The country's political class may find old battles familiar and convenient, but ordinary Kenyans have present-day concerns. They want jobs, affordable living costs, accountable leadership, reliable public services and a political system that actually addresses their problems rather than endlessly performing its own internal dramas.

The question, therefore, is not simply whether Ruto and Kenyatta will continue their confrontation. The more important question is whether Kenya's leaders — on all sides — can find the discipline and the vision to move the national conversation from personalities and grievances toward the issues that will genuinely shape the country's future.

The 2027 election will come. Voters will choose. And when they do, they will be looking for leaders who demonstrated, well before polling day, that they understood what the country actually needed — and were serious about delivering it.

Elections A landmark transparency ruling in Omtatah's petition reshapes the electoral battlefield fourteen months before Kenya goes to the polls

Kenya's High Court orders IEBC to open voter register and election servers to parties and observers

BY James Mwangi

@themkenyentimes

Kenya's High Court yesterday ordered the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to grant political parties and accredited election observers full access to the voter register, servers, audit logs and all election data ahead of the August 2027 General Election, in a ruling that immediately redraws the boundaries of electoral accountability in the country.

The decision, delivered in a petition filed by activist and Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah, was opposed vigorously by both the United Democratic Alliance and the IEBC itself — a combination that made the court's ruling against them all the more striking. In siding with the petitioner, the court applied constitutional standards of accuracy and verifiability to Kenya's electoral process, concluding that transparency is not a privilege to be granted selectively but a constitutional requirement that must be honoured structurally and in advance of polling day.

The ruling lands at a moment of acute political sensitivity. Kenya is fourteen months from a general election that is already generating the kind of tension, positioning and counter-positioning that typically arrives much closer to polling day. The political class is watching. So are the voters.

To understand what the court has done, it is necessary to understand what has always been at stake in Kenya's electoral disputes. The country's two most contested elections — in 2007 and 2017 — produced crises that were rooted not only in allegations of fraud but in the absence of verifiable data that could either confirm or refute those allegations with finality. When citizens cannot see the numbers, cannot trace the path from polling station count to national tally, and cannot independently audit the systems that produce the final result, the space for doubt — and for political exploitation of that doubt — becomes enormous.

The court's ruling addresses that structural vulnerability directly. By mandating access to the voter reg-



Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission chairman Erastus Edung Etheke

ister, it ensures that political parties can verify the integrity of the electorate itself — checking for ghost voters, duplicate registrations and anomalies that have historically been alleged but rarely independently confirmed. By opening the servers and audit logs, the court creates a paper trail that did not previously exist in accessible form. Every step in the digital transmission of results becomes, in principle, traceable. Every discrepancy becomes, in principle, detectable.

The constitutional basis for the ruling rests on a principle that Kenya's Supreme Court has previously affirmed: that the presidential result at the polling station is final, and the national tallying centre is an aggregation exercise, not a fresh count. If that principle means anything in practice, it requires that the aggregation process be verifiable. Yesterday's ruling gives it teeth.

For the IEBC, the implications are

significant and immediate. The commission, which opposed the petition, must now open systems it has previously treated as proprietary. That is not simply a logistical challenge — it is a cultural one. Electoral commissions rarely welcome external scrutiny of their internal infrastructure, and the IEBC has historically been protective of its technological architecture. The court has now decided that protection cannot extend to opacity on matters of fundamental public interest.

For UDA, which also opposed the petition, the ruling carries a different kind of weight. A governing party that fights transparency in electoral processes invites a question it may struggle to answer convincingly: what, precisely, was it afraid observers would find? That question will echo through the campaign period regardless of how UDA's leadership chooses to respond. Supporters of the ruling were quick to draw pre-

cisely that inference, with some arguing publicly that the opposition to the petition was itself politically revealing.

The political landscape heading toward August 2027 is already dense with competing pressures. President William Ruto faces a re-election campaign in an environment shaped by public frustration over the cost of living, the fallout from last year's anti-finance-bill protests and a fractured relationship with his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta. The opposition, reorganising under various formations and alliances, is looking for ground on which to fight an election it believes it can win. Electoral integrity is now firmly part of that terrain.

The ruling also arrives in the context of broader institutional pressures on the IEBC. The commission is simultaneously managing voter registration, boundary delimitation preparations and the growing de-

mands of a political class that is already in campaign mode. Adding the obligation of structured, constitutionally mandated data access to that workload will test the commission's capacity and its leadership's willingness to implement a court order it actively resisted.

Civil society organisations that have spent years pushing for greater electoral transparency welcomed the ruling as a generational shift. The argument they have long made — that democratic confidence is a function of verifiability, not simply of outcome — has now been given judicial force. Whether that force is exercised effectively will depend on how rigorously parties and observers use the access the court has granted, and how honestly the IEBC responds to what they find.

The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, which monitors electoral violence risks across Africa, has previously flagged Kenya's pre-election environment as one requiring careful management. A disputed election result in 2027 would not simply be a political crisis — it would carry the potential for the kind of community-level conflict that Kenya has experienced before and worked hard to prevent from recurring. In that context, a ruling that strengthens the verifiability of the result is not merely a legal development. It is a contribution to peace.

What the court cannot do is guarantee that the access it has ordered will be used wisely, reported honestly or accepted gracefully by those who lose. Elections are ultimately political events, shaped by human behaviour as much as by institutional rules. But rules matter. Transparency matters. And a judiciary willing to hold electoral institutions to constitutional standards, even against the resistance of powerful political actors, is one of the things that distinguishes a functioning democracy from a performing one.

The ballot box opens in August 2027. The real counting, it seems, has already begun.

Business Old Mutual General Insurance Kenya Managing Director Japheth Ogalloh said both products were shaped by a clear understanding of what customers actually need

Old Mutual launches flexible motor cover and travel eSIM in Kisumu push

Insurer urges households and businesses to review cover as El Niño weather risks loom later in the year

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Old Mutual yesterday unveiled two new insurance products in Kisumu — a flexible motor premium payment plan and an integrated travel eSIM service — as the financial services group deepened its customer engagement drive across the country.

The products, launched during the company's Kisumu Market Storm activation, reflect a broader push by Old Mutual to make insurance more accessible and practically useful to Kenyan consumers navigating increasingly complex financial lives.

The first product, Motor-Rahisi, allows customers to spread comprehensive motor insurance premium payments

over a period of up to three months, addressing one of the most persistent barriers to uptake of full motor cover in Kenya — the upfront cost burden. Comprehensive motor insurance has historically been out of reach for many motorists who cannot comfortably pay a full annual premium at once. Motor-Rahisi is designed to change that calculation.



The second product integrates Airalo eSIM functionality directly into Old Mutual's travel insurance offering. Through the partnership with Airalo, one of the world's largest eSIM providers, Old Mutual travel insurance customers will gain access to mobile data connectivity in more than 200 countries and regions — all within a single digital journey, without the inconvenience of sourcing or physically swapping SIM cards while abroad.

Old Mutual General Insurance Kenya Managing Director Japheth Ogalloh said both products were shaped by a clear understanding of what customers actually need. "Customers increasingly expect solutions that are convenient and responsive to their everyday needs," Ogalloh said. "Motor-Rahisi gives motorists greater flexibility in managing the cost of comprehensive insurance, while our partnership with Airalo brings protection and connectivity together in one convenient digital journey."

Beyond the product launches, Ogalloh used the Kisumu platform to issue a timely caution to households and businesses. With meteorologists tracking the possibility of El Niño conditions later in the year, he urged Kenyans to review their existing insurance cover and take practical steps to protect their property and assets before adverse weather arrives rather than after.

"Insurance is an important part of financial resilience, but protection also starts with preparedness," he said. "We en-

courage customers to review their cover, understand the risks they are exposed to and take practical steps to safeguard their homes, vehicles and businesses against weather-related risks. Being prepared can significantly reduce the financial impact when unexpected events occur."

The warning carries weight. Previous El Niño episodes have caused significant damage to property, infrastructure and livelihoods across Kenya, with many affected households and businesses discovering too late that their cover was inadequate or had lapsed. The call to act early, before conditions deteriorate, is one that insurers and disaster management authorities have repeatedly made without always finding a receptive audience. Old Mutual's decision to embed the message within a direct customer engagement — rather than issuing it through a press release alone — reflects a recognition that financial behaviour is more effectively shaped through conversation than communication.

Old Mutual Life Assurance Kenya Managing Director Martin Karenju reinforced that broader financial wellness message from the Kisumu platform. "Financial wellness starts with recognising the signs and taking action early," Karenju said. "Through the Market Storm, we are encouraging customers to build stronger savings habits, plan for retirement and invest consistently for the long term. Our ambition is to help more Kenyans move beyond

immediate financial needs to building sustainable wealth and long-term financial security."

The Kisumu Market Storm is the latest stop in Old Mutual's There Will Be Signs campaign, which uses direct community engagement to encourage customers to identify and respond to the signals in their financial lives. The Kisumu activation followed an engagement in Eldoret earlier in the week and builds on previous Market Storm events held in Thika, Nakuru and Mombasa. The roadshow format — bringing financial advisers, product specialists and senior leadership directly into communities rather than waiting for customers to walk into branches — has become a defining feature of Old Mutual's Kenya strategy.

Through the Airalo eSIM integration, customers can select a data plan, activate it digitally and manage usage and top-ups from their devices throughout their travels. The practical convenience of consolidating travel protection and connectivity into a single digital touchpoint is likely to resonate particularly with frequent travellers who have experienced the frustration of arriving in a new country without reliable mobile data.

With El Niño on the horizon and the cost of living continuing to squeeze household budgets, the timing of both product launches and Old Mutual's broader financial wellness message may prove to be well-judged.

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Global Concern: Solid Waste and E-Waste Management



BY D. Brinda
@themtkenyetimes

By: D. Brinda
It is one of our foremost duties to be concerned about waste . how we manage it. Together, we can find a solution to this pollution. This is a major problem the entire globe is facing. If we do not show care and concern now, it will ultimately spoil the future generations, and we will be the sufferers.

It is our duty to manage waste right at the household level.

Solid Waste Management
Waste is broadly classified as organic and inorganic, that is, biodegradable and non-biodegradable.
Biodegradable waste includes cattle waste and food waste. It can be converted into biogas or used as manure.
Non-biodegradable waste means plastic waste. We must manage plastic waste through recycling.
Every day, tonnes of waste are generated, and we must manage it properly. Earlier, we followed a two-dustbin system - biodegradable and non-biodegradable. Now it is a four-dustbin system:

- A. Wet Waste - Kitchen waste, vegetable waste, fruit waste, meat, flowers.
- B. Dry Waste - Plastic, paper, metal, glass, wood, rubber.
- C. Sanitary Waste Used diapers, sanitary napkins, towels.
- D. Special Care Waste - Paint cans, bulbs, mercury thermometers, medicines.
- E. E waste. Mobile, computer, charger, electric gadgets,

Whether at school or at home, we must manage waste properly. Never put all waste into one bin.
Mixed waste is really a waste. It spoils everything; nothing can be saved and it all goes to a dump. If waste is segregated, food waste can go into a compost pit, cow dung can be used for bio gas and plastic waste can be renewed, reused, or recycled.

We are all responsible for this. Everyone should be alert, especially schools, colleges, commercial units, industrial units, malls, hotels, hospitals, and hostels. Let us practice this every day. Do not litter or throw waste on roads, in drains, rivers, or ponds. Practice making a wet waste compost pit in schools and homes. Follow the 4 Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Always carry a cloth bag. Refuse single-use plastic. Say no to burning waste. The easiest and best way to manage waste is to never generate waste .
A one-day waste audit can be done in school or at home to check how much waste is generated. Create awareness among all children and parents regarding waste management. Explore new ways to minimise waste generation and find more ways to recycle. Many students are not aware of these things, and it is our duty to teach them. Let every child spread awareness to 10 more family members or neighbours. It is our responsibility.
Initiate compost pits in all places. Channelise kitchen waste into manure for the kitchen garden.

E-Waste Management
E-waste means any discarded electrical or electronic equipment, broken items thrown away during manufacturing and repair , anything that runs

on electricity, electronics, or battery becomes e-waste. These were once useful and functional, mainly mobile phones, chargers, Bluetooth devices, speakers, electronic toys, solar modules, and inverters.
It is said that from 1 kg of mobile phones, we can recover 2 to 3 grams of gold. Not only gold, but also copper, tin, lithium, silver, cobalt, and indium. So we must be responsible in disposal. If we do not do this now, it will lead to serious pollution. It harms and contaminates land, water, and air.
If we are responsible, all this can be avoided.
When you buy electronic gadgets, buy durable, repairable, and upgradable items. Take care of them, maintain them, and use them for a longer time.

The 5 Rs for E-Waste:

- 1. Reduce - Minimise waste. Buy only what is needed.
- 2. Reuse - Use products multiple times before discarding them.
- 3. Repurpose - Find alternative uses for electronic devices.
- 4. Refurbish - Restore electronic devices to a functional state by repairing or replacing faulty components.
- 5. Recycle - Break down electronic devices into their base materials and recover valuable resources for reuse.

Collect e-waste and send it to an e-waste collection centre. Never burn e-waste.

And finally, use both sides of paper.
Plant more sapling.
Don't throw plastic in water , it will harm marine creatures, land animals, burning plastic causes acid rain also.

Here is your content corrected and polished:



Global Concern: Solid Waste and E-Waste Management

It is one of our foremost duties to be concerned about waste - how we manage it. Together, we can find a solution to this pollution. This is a major problem the entire globe is facing. If we do not show care and concern now, it will ultimately spoil the future generations, and we will be the sufferers.

It is our duty to manage waste right at the household level.
Solid Waste Management
Waste is broadly classified as organic and inorganic, that is, biodegradable and non-biodegradable.
Biodegradable waste includes cattle waste and food waste. It can be converted into biogas or used as manure.

Non-biodegradable waste means plastic waste. We must manage plastic waste through recycling.
Every day, tonnes of waste are generated, and we must manage it properly. Earlier, we followed a two-dustbin system - biodegradable and non-biodegradable. Now it is a four-dustbin system:

- A. Wet Waste - Kitchen waste, vegetable waste, fruit waste, meat, flowers.
- B. Dry Waste - Plastic, paper, metal, glass, wood, rubber.
- C. Sanitary Waste - Used diapers, sanitary napkins, towels.
- D. Special Care Waste - Paint cans, bulbs, mercury thermometers, medicines.

Whether at school or at home, we must manage waste properly. Never put all waste into one bin.

Mixed waste is really a waste. It spoils everything; nothing can be saved and it all goes to a dump. If waste is

segregated, food waste can go into a compost pit, and plastic waste can be renewed, reused, or recycled.

We are all responsible for this. Everyone should be alert, especially schools, colleges, commercial units, industrial units, malls, hotels, hospitals, and hostels. Let us practice this every day. Do not litter or throw waste on roads, in drains, rivers, or ponds. Practice making a wet waste compost pit.

Follow the 4 Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Always carry a cloth bag. Refuse single-use plastic. Say no to burning waste. The easiest and best way to manage waste is to never generate waste in the first place.

A one-day waste audit can be done in school or at home to check how much waste is generated. Create awareness among all children and parents regarding waste management. Explore new ways to minimise waste generation and find more ways to recycle. Many students are not aware of these things, and it is our duty to teach them. Let every child spread awareness to 10 more family members or neighbours. It is our responsibility.
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- 4. Refurbish - Restore electronic devices to a functional state by repairing or replacing faulty components.
- 5. Recycle - Break down electronic devices into their base materials and recover valuable resources for reuse.

Collect e-waste and send it to an e-waste collection centre. Never burn e-waste.
And finally, use both sides of paper.

D. Brinda
Creative writers
Teacher, ghs Melpattampakkam
Cuddalore dist
Tamilnadu India

Election It is a question that rarely receives the same attention as political defections and dramatic speeches. Perhaps it should.

The 2027 election has already started: This time, watch the money

BY Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyaintimes

The loudest part of Kenya's 2027 election has not yet arrived, but the machinery is already moving. Politicians are touring the country, parties are reorganising and alliances are taking shape long before a single presidential ballot is cast. Yet beneath the rallies, speeches and political declarations lies a quieter question that could become one of the defining issues of the next election: who is paying for all this politics?

It is a question that rarely receives the same attention as political defections and dramatic speeches. Perhaps it should.

Yesterday, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission moved that question closer to the centre of the national conversation by engaging the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya on strengthening campaign finance management and accountability ahead of the 2027 General Election. The partnership is intended to improve monitoring of campaign finances, covering financial disclosure, expenditure, record-keeping and reporting. For an election already consuming enormous political energy, the timing is significant. The country is being reminded that elections are not only about votes and politicians — they are also about the money that powers the competition.

Kenya has seen enough elections to understand that political money is never merely a background detail. Vehicles must move, offices must operate, advertisements must be produced, rallies must be organised and political networks must be maintained across counties. Behind every impressive political spectacle is a financial architecture, and the public has a legiti-

mate interest in understanding how that architecture works. The question is not whether politics requires money — campaigns inevitably require resources. The question is whether citizens can know where significant campaign funds come from, how they are spent and whether the rules governing that money are actually being enforced.

The timing could hardly be more consequential. The IEBC has formally set August 10, 2027 as the date for the next General Election, meaning the country is already moving toward a defined electoral deadline. The commission's election operations plan provides a timetable covering party nominations, independent candidates, campaigns and other electoral preparations. To ordinary Kenyans, 2027 may still feel distant. But the institutions responsible for organising and regulating the election are already working against the clock. The campaign has begun institutionally, even if the official campaign period has not.

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties has also begun placing concrete requirements before political parties. The Registrar has announced mandatory timelines covering party nomination rules, authorised officials and membership registers, with further inspections of party headquarters and county offices already scheduled. These may sound like dry administrative details, but they matter. Political parties are the vehicles through which most candidates will seek public office. Stronger internal records and compliance systems make the political process easier to scrutinise before voters are eventually asked to make their choices.

This is where Kenya's political conversation needs to become more sophisticated. Kenyans have grown accus-

tomed to asking who has joined which coalition, which politician has visited which county and which party appears to be gaining ground. Those questions will continue dominating headlines because personalities are easier to discuss than institutional systems. But democracy cannot be reduced to political arithmetic, handshakes and rally attendance. Voters should also be asking who is financing political organisations, whether parties are maintaining proper records and whether the institutions charged with enforcing electoral rules have the resources and authority to do their work effectively.

The issue becomes sharper still when electoral technology and transparency enter the conversation. The High Court has granted political parties and accredited election observers access to specified electoral records and technological information held by the IEBC, including material relating to the Register of Voters, databases, servers and audit logs. The ruling should not automatically be read as proof that irregularities exist — access for scrutiny is not the same thing as evidence of wrongdoing. But it reinforces a principle that should be central to the 2027 process: confidence in elections is strengthened when legitimate scrutiny is possible.

The same principle applies to campaign financing. Asking where political money comes from does not amount to accusing every politician of corruption, just as demanding financial disclosure does not establish that someone's accounts are fraudulent. It simply recognises that political competition concerns the acquisition of public power, and the public therefore has a reasonable interest in the systems supporting that competition. When financial information is clear, citizens can examine and debate it. When it is hid-



den, incomplete or difficult to verify, suspicion fills the space where facts should be.

That conversation has already begun beyond the traditional political parties. A constitutional petition has been filed seeking accountability over contributions associated with the Linda Mwananchi political project, raising questions about fundraising, expenditure and financial records. The legal process should be allowed to proceed without prejudging its outcome or treating allegations in a petition as established facts. Yet the broader question is legitimate and increasingly relevant. If political movements ask ordinary citizens to contribute money toward political causes, those citizens should reasonably expect meaningful transparency about how the funds are administered within the law.

This could become one of the defining tests of political maturity before 2027. Kenya has spent years debating whether politicians genuinely represent particular communities, whether coalitions are built on ideology or convenience and whether political alliances survive beyond election day. Those debates matter. But the financial question deserves equal weight, because money shapes the political environment in which all those alliances operate. What financial interests sit behind the political machinery being assembled across the country? Until Kenyans are willing to ask that question seriously, much of the political conversation will remain focused on the visible performers while ignoring the systems keeping the show running.

There is also a danger in

treating campaign finance as a technical matter belonging exclusively to accountants, lawyers and electoral officials. It is not simply an administrative issue to be buried in compliance documents and annual reports. Money influences the scale at which political messages reach citizens, the visibility of candidates and the organisational strength of competing formations. That does not mean every well-funded campaign is illegitimate or every poorly funded one more authentic. It means the public deserves rules capable of making political financing transparent enough for citizens and regulators to understand the financial dimension of electoral competition.

The IEBC's engagement with ICPAK should therefore be judged by what happens beyond the announcement. The important question will not be whether another partnership has been signed or another framework discussed. The real test will be whether campaign expenditure can be monitored effectively, whether financial disclosures can be examined and whether the rules apply consistently across all political formations. A regulation that exists only on paper provides no meaningful accountability. Kenya has enough experience with ambitious institutional promises to know that implementation is where credibility is ultimately tested.

Political parties should face the same expectation. The Registrar's compliance timelines and inspection programme offer an opportunity to strengthen the administrative foundations of party politics before the pressure of

nominations and campaigns peaks. Parties are not merely vehicles for ambitious individuals seeking elective office — they operate within a constitutional and statutory framework. Their membership structures, nomination rules and financial records affect the quality of political competition. When those internal systems are weak, disputes that could have been resolved administratively can rapidly become national political crises.

Voters have a role in this process long before they enter polling stations. Kenyans should not wait until campaign posters cover every wall, political convoys fill the highways and candidates compete to make the loudest promises before beginning to ask difficult questions. By then, enormous resources will already have been committed and political narratives will already be deeply entrenched. Citizens, journalists and civil society organisations can instead begin examining party structures, campaign financing and electoral preparations while there is still time for institutions to respond to legitimate concerns. Democracy works better when scrutiny begins before the ballot rather than after the result.

Perhaps this is the conversation Kenya needs before the next wave of campaign slogans arrives. Not another argument over which politician insulted another, and not another endless debate about who shook hands with whom. The political class will supply plenty of those stories

Business Central to the company’s model is a commitment to local value addition anchored in Ugandan-grown cotton, processing raw agricultural output through the full production chain

Fine Spinners pours additional US\$5 million into new machinery in pan-African expansion drive

BY Jacob Kimunya
@themkenyaintimes

Fine Spinners Limited, one of East Africa’s leading integrated textile manufacturers, yesterday announced an additional US\$5 million investment in new state-of-the-art manufacturing machinery, bringing its total investment in its Uganda mill to US\$35 million as the company accelerates its pan-African expansion strategy.

The Kampala-based company said the latest capital

injection would significantly enhance production capacity, broaden its product range and sharpen its competitiveness across African and international markets, as part of a deliberate ambition to establish Fine Spinners as the leading textile manufacturing operation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Chairman Jaswinder Bedi framed the decision as a statement of confidence in the continent’s industrial future. “This investment demonstrates our confidence in the future of textile manufacturing in Africa and our commitment to building a world-class manufacturing operation. By investing in advanced technology and expanding our production capabilities, we are positioning Fine Spinners to serve more customers across Africa while delivering greater value through local manufacturing,” he said.

Central to the company’s model is a commitment to local value addition anchored in Ugandan-grown cotton, processing raw agricultural output through the full pro-



Fine Spinners Chairman Mr. Jaswinder Bedi

duction chain — from yarn and fabric through to finished garments — retaining more economic value within the continent and contributing to a more integrated regional textile value chain.

Bedi was clear that the expansion reaches beyond simply increasing output. “Our focus is not only on increasing production, but on strengthening the entire value chain and creating products that can compete effectively in African and international markets,” he said.

The investment arrives as rising consumer demand, urbanisation and government-led efforts to deepen local manufacturing are reshaping Africa’s textile and apparel sector. Fine Spinners intends to leverage Uganda’s strategic geographic position to serve multiple African markets as it extends its continental footprint.

Beyond commercial objectives, the expansion is expected to support employment, build technical skills and strengthen upstream and downstream linkages across the regional textile value chain.



The 2027 election has already started: This time, watch the money

Contd from page 12

because personality politics is easy to package and easier to consume. But the harder questions are often the ones that matter most for the health of institutions. Who donated? Who spent? How much? Where did the money go? Who keeps the records, and who has the authority to inspect them?

Follow the money into the parties. Follow it into political movements and campaign organisations. Follow it through the institutions responsible for regulating elections, while carefully distinguishing verified financial records from allegations and political

claims. Ask questions without assuming guilt, but without surrendering the public’s right to information either. Kenya does not need citizens to become accountants before they can participate meaningfully in democracy. It needs citizens willing to recognise that the financial side of politics is an inseparable part of politics itself.

By August 10, 2027, Kenyans will not simply be choosing names on ballot papers. They will be choosing among political organisations, candidates, promises and competing visions of the country’s future. Long before that day, however, the political machinery will have consumed enormous amounts of money, organisation and public attention. That is why campaign finance deserves to move from the footnotes of election coverage to the centre of public scrutiny. The earlier the country asks difficult questions, the less room there is for financial accountability to become an afterthought.

The more important question may be much simpler — and much harder to answer: who is paying for the machine, how is the money being used, and who is watching the accounts? Because in 2027, Kenyans will count votes. Before then, they should also learn to count the money behind the politics.

Happy Teacher’s Day



Day of celebrating the selfless service
Motivating, facilitating, guiding children
Case studies crosses a billion
Bringing out the hidden talents is an artifice
Teacher , a sole responsible person
Trying hard to insert knowledge
With minimal nurturing and logical reason
Sometimes confused as privilege

Irrespective of their parents co operation
With new advanced technology
Handling the latest challengeable generation
Comparing and Inventing new pedagogy
Never said “NO” to late bloomers
Strictly sticking to make them benefited
Trying multiple ways to change them into performers
Even when their situation become worse, restricted
To acknowledge their ways of handling
The stressful young minds with minimal attention span
Often charged with mishandling
Converting technology into their learning aid as they can
N. SIVASANKARI
CREATIVE WRITER
TEACHER IN ENGLISH
MADURAI DISTRICT
TAMILNADU

Teacher



A teacher is a miracle from God
They give us not only knowledge but also teach us how to live.
A Mathematics teacher teaches us to face all problems in life logically
A Science teacher makes us understand our body

and its functions
A Social Science teacher takes us through the history and the wonderful past of our country
A Tamil teacher makes us learn about our mother tongue, culture and tradition
An English teacher helps us to communicate better and know about different unknown things in the world.
Each teacher has their own identity and has their own way of making us learn.
They find out the latent talent in each of their students.
They make our mind sharp and make it realize its own potential.
All the teachers do not only mould the students, but they also shape the future of the world.

V. S. Nithiyasri
VIII
John Dewey mat hr sec school, Tamilnadu

Happy Teacher’s day



Teaching is not just a job; it is a gift from God.
A teacher is like a mother. Students are the world of teachers.
Teachers always think about the well-being of their students.
They never give up on their students’ improvement.
Teachers sacrifice all their efforts for their students. Teachers and students have a good bond,
like the relationship between parents and children.

beginning of their school life,
they may know only listening and speaking skills.
Reading and writing skills gradually develop.
Teachers give abundant motivation and build self-confidence in their students.

Teaching is one profession, but it creates all types of professions. Students are the pillars of tomorrow.
Teachers are the backbone of students’ lives.
Teaching is a great profession,
so teachers should be affectionate, calm, broad-minded, wise, and have good problem-solving skills.

Teachers create a beautiful garden in the world of their students.
I remember all my teachers with gratitude.
I hope those who read this poem will feel the same.
Therefore, Happy Teachers’ Day to all the lovely, grateful, wonderful, and selfless teachers who taught me and helped me become who I am today.
My gratitude goes to all the teachers in the world.

Teachers have kindness, calmness, boldness, and all the positive qualities. They teach their students good habits and valuable life lessons.
When students enter the classroom at the

__G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Teachers



Teachers are the most important people in our life, Not only subject but also teach good manner,
They teach discipline,
They correct our mistake,
They remove the darkness in our life,

They give a right way to us,
I will always respect my teacher,
Every teacher are special to me,
all the teacher of special to me, but,
In this standard my Tamil teacher is very special to me,
Teacher make a bright,

Special day to teacher,
I will tell thank you,
Away special day to you,
HAPPY TEACHERS DAY,
To all the teacher,

P. HEMANYA
VIII
JOHN DEWEY MAT HR SEC SCHOOL,
PANRUTI.

Teacher – The Builder of Dreams



A teacher is a guide who shows us the right path.
A mentor who helps us grow.
A kind person who understands our feelings.

A friend who listens to our words.
A supporter who stands with us.
A builder who shapes our dreams.
A light that leads us towards a better future.
A teacher who makes us believe in ourselves.

Happy teacher’s day to the builder of our dreams!

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



A teacher lights a little flame,
And helps us find our way,
They fill our hearts with hope and dreams,
And brighten every day.

Our very first teacher is our Mom,
Who teaches love and care,
She holds our hand when we are small,

And guides us everywhere.

Then teachers shape our growing minds,
With knowledge, truth and light,
They teach us how to face the world,
And always do what’s right.

For every step we take ahead,
Their guidance helps us grow,
They fill our hands with confidence,
And help our dreams to glow.

So teachers are the builders,
Who build our dreams so bright,
With every word and every lesson,
They lead us towards the light.
By
S.Aishwarya
9A, GGHSS
Pattukkottai, Thanjavur

Passport The welcoming ranking, which measures how easily foreign passport holders can enter Kenya, tells a more flattering story. In that inbound direction, Kenya is placed second out of 199 countries

Kenya passport ranked 120th globally as country earns second place in welcoming index

Kenya scores well on openness to visitors but Kenyan passport holders still face visa requirements for nearly two-thirds of global destinations

BY Grace Njoki
@themkenyatimes

Kenya holds the second position among 199 countries in the global welcoming ranking, yet the picture for Kenyan travellers heading abroad is considerably more constrained. The country’s passport ranks 120th worldwide, carrying a Mobility Score of 75 and granting holders access to just 37.9% of global destinations, according to the latest figures from Passport Reports, which publishes passport assessments for 199 countries in 34 languages. That Mobility Score of 75 breaks down as follows: 37 destinations are accessible without a visa, 33 are available through visa on arrival or other facilitated entry arrangements, and five through



Kenya passport

an electronic travel authorisation. A visa is required for 123 destinations — equivalent to 62.1% of all countries covered in the report. The welcoming ranking, which measures how easily foreign passport holders can

enter Kenya, tells a more flattering story. In that inbound direction, Kenya is placed second out of 199 countries. The report identifies 123 countries whose citizens can enter Kenya visa-free, through electronic authorisation or on

arrival — yet Kenyan passport holders require a visa to travel to those same countries. The report records no country in the reverse position, where a foreign national would need a visa for Kenya while a Kenyan could enter that country

without one. Africa remains the region where Kenyan passport holders enjoy the broadest reach. Kenyans can access 71.7% of African destinations covered in the regional table — 19 visa-free, 16 through visa on arrival or facilitated entry, and three through an electronic travel authorisation, with 15 requiring a visa. Kenya ranks 10th among 54 African countries in the continental comparison. Looking further afield, the strongest regional coverage for Kenyan passport holders is the Caribbean at 81.3%, followed by Africa at 71.7%, Oceania at 57.1% and North America at 52.2%. Access drops sharply elsewhere: 28.0% in Asia, 16.7% in South America, 5.9% in the Middle East and just 2.1% in Europe. The Gulf countries and Central Asia both show 0.0% access, with all destinations in those groupings requiring a visa. Among the more notable visa-free arrangements in the report, Ethiopia allows Kenyan passport holders a stay of up to 360 days. Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica and Rwanda each allow stays of up to 180 days, while Fiji and Vanuatu permit 120-day visits. A number of African and Caribbean destinations offer 90-day stays. Among facilitated-entry destinations, Nepal allows stays of up to 150 days and offers an e-visa option. India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Russia and Vietnam are among those offering e-visa arrangements alongside their entry category. In broader contextual rankings, Kenya places first among four countries that list Swahili as an official language, and 43rd among 60 countries grouped under English. It ranks 40th among 56 Commonwealth countries, 67th among 132 Group of 77 countries and 111th among 159 World Trade Organization members. Passport Reports ranks passports primarily by Mobility Score — the total number of destinations reachable without a visa, through visa on arrival or equivalent facilitated entry, and through electronic travel authorisation. Where scores are equal, rankings are determined by the number of visa-free destinations first, then electronic travel authorisation destinations, then visa-on-arrival or facilitated-entry destinations. Passports share the same rank when all four values are identical.

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Education For many students, this is precisely what makes campus life exciting. It is a place where young adults are expected to make their own decisions

When campus freedom becomes a trap: Are students choosing to miss classes?

BY Hadassah Karangu

@themkenyatimes

When campus freedom becomes a trap: Are students choosing to miss classes?

University life hands students freedoms secondary school never did — but not everyone is ready for what that freedom costs

By Hadassah Karangu

Walking into university for the first time can feel like stepping into a completely different world. There are no teachers constantly checking whether you are in class, no parent asking why you missed a lesson and, in many cases, no one following up when you decide to stay in your hostel instead of attending a lecture.

For many students, this is precisely what makes campus life exciting. It is a place where young adults are expected to make their own decisions. Attendance is rarely enforced the way it was in secondary school, and students suddenly have considerable control over how they spend their time.

But that freedom comes with a question many students eventually have to confront: what happens when freedom is handed to someone who has not yet learned how to manage it?

University is not a place where attendance is compelled. A lecturer may announce that a class begins at eight in the morning, but ultimately the student decides whether to get up, dress, walk to the lecture hall and sit through it — or stay in bed. That decision can seem harmless when made once. A student may genuinely be tired, unwell, emotionally drained or simply in need of rest. The problem begins when an occasional choice becomes a routine.

“I will attend the next class” can quietly become “I will catch up later.” And later can become next week. By the time a student realises what

has happened, several lectures have passed and their grasp of the course has slipped considerably.

What campus freedom often exposes is the gap between being free and being responsible. Freedom gives students choices, but it does not remove the consequences of those choices. A student can choose not to attend a lecture — but the lecturer will still teach the content, the examination will still arrive and the assignment will still demand understanding. Eventually, the student may have to answer for material they were never present to learn.

This is where personal responsibility becomes the real subject of university education.

Some students miss classes because they genuinely struggle with motivation. There are mornings when getting out of bed feels like a battle. After a long day of lectures, assignments and personal pressures, another class can feel like too much. For others, though, the issue is not exhaustion but preference. They simply do not feel like going. The hostel is more comfortable, the

phone more entertaining, a film easier than a two-hour lecture and social media far more instantly rewarding than a classroom that demands concentration.

Then there is the influence of friends — perhaps the most quietly powerful force in student life.

University students rarely make decisions in complete isolation. If a group of close friends regularly decides to skip a lecture, it becomes much easier for an individual to follow. One person may genuinely want to attend, but when a friend says “let us just stay here today,” the decision suddenly feels simpler to make. The opposite, however, is equally true. When students surround themselves with friends who take their education seriously, attending class becomes the norm. Studying together becomes normal. Preparing early for examinations becomes normal.

Friendship does not automatically damage academic performance. What matters is the culture created within the friendship group. The danger arises when students begin confusing social belonging

with simply following the crowd — skipping class not because they personally wanted to, but because they did not want to be the only one walking to the lecture hall. At that point, a question worth sitting with is this: who is actually making the decision — the student or the group?

Campus freedom also triggers a significant psychological shift. Students are no longer children under constant supervision, yet many are still learning how to manage adulthood. Nobody forces a university student to study for three hours. Nobody confiscates their phone or demands they attend every lecture. Nobody reminds them each evening that examinations are approaching. The responsibility that previously rested with institutions and families now rests with the individual.

That transition can be difficult. Students who were accustomed to external structure can find that when the supervision disappears, their routines disappear with it.

This does not make university freedom harmful in itself. Freedom can actually be one of the most valuable aspects

of university life — it teaches independence, decision-making and accountability. The problem arises when freedom is misread as the absence of consequences. Being free to make a decision is not the same as being free from the outcome of that decision.

There is also a broader question worth directing at universities and lecturers. If students consistently avoid certain classes, the answer is not always found by looking only at students. Are the lessons engaging? Are lecturers creating an environment where students feel encouraged to participate? Are timetables reasonable? Are students overwhelmed by workload? Are there genuine academic or personal difficulties affecting attendance? These questions do not excuse students from responsibility. They simply acknowledge that academic behaviour is shaped by more than one factor.

There is a meaningful difference between a student who occasionally misses class because of a genuine personal difficulty and one who repeatedly chooses entertainment over education. There is also

a difference between a student struggling with a demanding course and one who has simply decided that showing up is unnecessary. The response to those situations cannot be identical, and the solution cannot simply be blanket punishment for anyone who misses a lecture.

What students ultimately need to develop is something no timetable can impose: self-discipline.

University ends. There will be no lecturer reminding graduates to report for work, no attendance register following them into their careers. Employers are unlikely to accept “I was not in the mood” as a reason for failing to meet responsibilities. Campus can therefore be seen for what it is — a training ground for a much larger life.

The small decisions students make today can become habits tomorrow. Choosing to attend class when friends are staying behind teaches independence. Studying when nobody is compelling you to teaches discipline. Walking away from distractions teaches self-control. And taking responsibility when a poor decision is made teaches maturity.

Perhaps the real question is not whether students should be given freedom. It is whether they understand what freedom demands of them.

Freedom without responsibility can easily become self-sabotage. Freedom combined with discipline, however, can become one of the finest opportunities university has to offer. A student does not have to attend every class because someone is standing at the door counting heads. They should, in time, develop the maturity to understand why they are there in the first place.

After all, university is not only about passing examinations. It is about learning to make decisions when nobody is watching.

And sometimes, the most important lecture is the one a student chooses to attend even when no one is making them.



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Data History has already written the warning in water levels and fish corpses. In the early 2000s the lake fell to its lowest recorded mark near 1,133 metres

The data drought that drowns the lake: Sovereignty's ironical thirst in the victoria basin

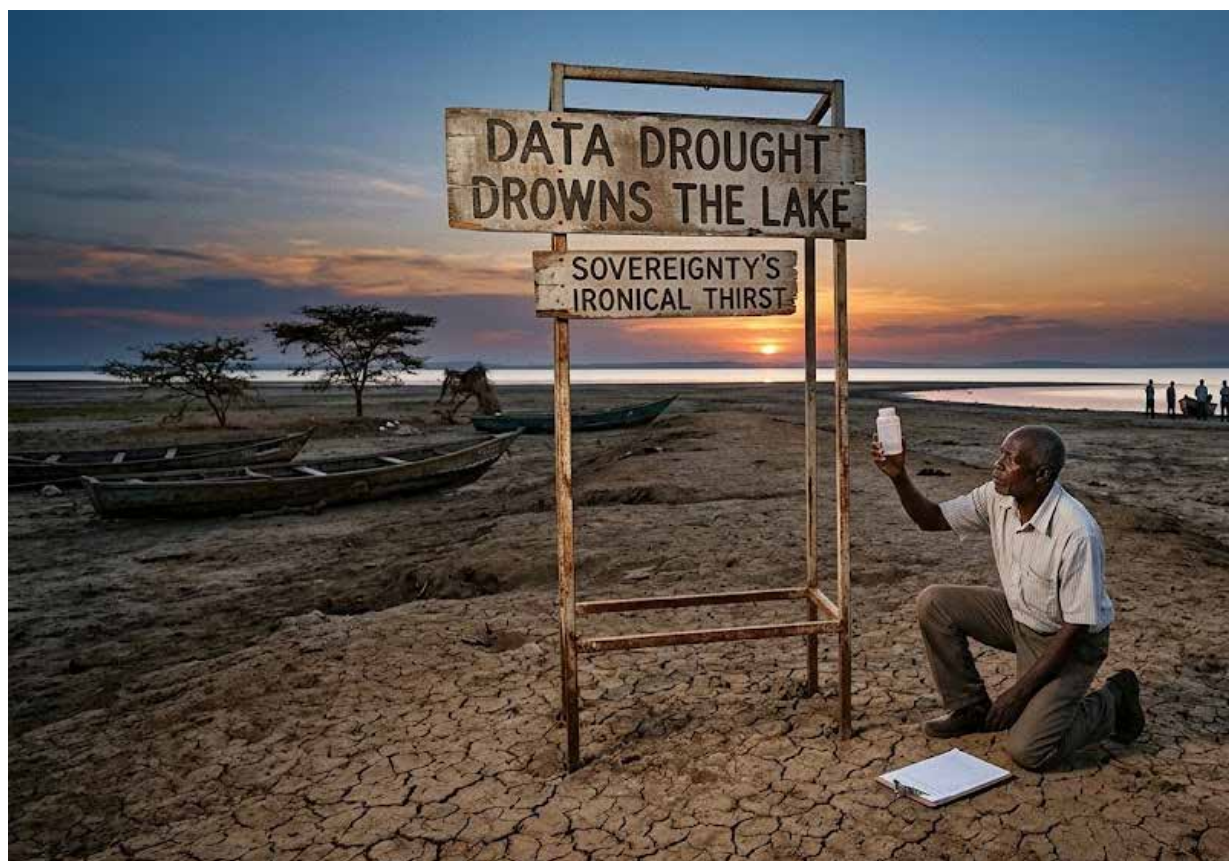


By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor
Odhiambo

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Kenya contributes roughly 45 percent of the annual river inflow into Lake Victoria while claiming a mere 6 percent of its surface. That single, stubborn hydrological fact should shame every border post and every digital firewall erected in the name of national pride. The lake, Africa's greatest freshwater expanse, spanning 68,800 square kilometres and sustaining more than 45 million people across five nations receives its lifeblood disproportionately from Kenyan highlands, yet the data that could save it remains locked behind sovereignty's gilded cage. This is not abstract policy. It is the measurable betrayal of a shared artery.

History has already written the warning in water levels and fish corpses. In the early 2000s the lake fell to its lowest recorded mark near 1,133 metres; scientists later admitted that the absence of reliable tributary gauges and the fog of contested figures turned a physical crisis into a diplomatic one. Gauging stations that once measured the Nzoia, Yala and Sondu had fallen silent by the mid-1980s. The Kagera's long records thinned. When the waters dropped, governments pointed fingers across borders while the water balance itself remained an educated guess sometimes overstated by a third. Today the same pattern repeats under a more sophisticated disguise. Pollution loads rise, nearshore hypoxia expands until nearly 40 percent of the lakebed can no longer support life, and mass fish kills erase livelihoods worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Between 2020 and 2023 alone, Kenyan cage farmers reported events that killed more than 1.8 million tilapia. The sensors and algorithms that could have predicted the oxygen crash existed; the shared, real-time hydrological backbone did not.



Digital sovereignty, brandished like a shield, has become the very instrument that starves the basin of the intelligence it needs. Artificial intelligence thrives on dense, continuous, cross-border data streams rainfall, river discharge, sediment, nutrient concentrations, lake levels, wind fields. Without them the models remain blind prophets. Kenya has already demonstrated what becomes possible when data flows. At Dunga Beach an AI early-warning system, trained on Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute records and live underwater sensors, detected collapsing dissolved oxygen and pushed SMS alerts that moved more than 450 cages before the fish died. That single intervention averted losses measured in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The same country is rolling out a Water Availability and Demand dashboard that fuses satellite and ground data to guide irrigation and storage. The Lake Victoria Basin Commission, headquartered in Kisumu, is activating the regional Water Information System that could weld these national fragments into a living basin model. Nevertheless, the system still depends on voluntary, often delayed, national feeds. Sovereignty concerns, bureaucratic

friction and incompatible formats continue to throttle the very arteries that AI requires.

The African Continental Free Trade Area Protocol on Digital Trade offers a narrow, luminous corridor. It obliges State Parties to permit cross-border data transfers for digital trade while carving explicit exceptions for legitimate public-policy objectives, including the protection of the environment, public health and essential security. Emerging and advanced technologies explicitly including artificial intelligence are to be fostered, not fettered. Nothing in the Protocol prevents the creation of a specialized regime for environmental data of transboundary character. The irony is savage: the same legal architecture that celebrates free data flows for e-commerce and fintech leaves the life-support data of 45 million people subject to the old territorial reflex. We facilitate the movement of consumer preferences across the continent while the hydrological pulse of the continent's largest lake remains a state secret.

This is not an argument against sovereignty. It is an argument against its caricature. True digital sovereignty in the Lake Victoria Basin would mean the capacity to generate, own,

analyse and share data on terms that protect national interest while recognising that the water itself recognises no passport. Kenya's highlands feed the lake; Uganda's and Tanzania's shores absorb the consequences of upstream land use; Rwanda and Burundi contribute through the Kagera. Climate change does not respect the 22 percent catchment share that Kenya holds or the 51 percent surface share claimed by Tanzania. Floods in Budalangi and hypoxia in Winam Gulf are the downstream signatures of upstream decisions. When data is treated as a zero-sum national asset, the only winner is entropy.

A novel legal framework is therefore not a luxury; it is the overdue recognition of physical reality. Under the AfCFTA Protocol the Partner States should negotiate a binding annex on transboundary environmental data flows for the Lake Victoria Basin. Such an annex would classify hydrological, meteorological and water-quality data as a special category of public-interest data, subject to mandatory near-real-time sharing through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission platform, with standardized formats, quality-control protocols and clear attribution of origin. AI models trained on that shared

corpus would remain under regional governance, their outputs available to all Member States for early warning, allocation and investment planning. Exceptions for national security would be narrowly tailored and subject to independent review, not used as a permanent veto. Capacity-building and infrastructure support telemetered gauges in headwaters, open-lake meteorology, sediment and nutrient sensors would be financed as continental public goods, not left to the uneven budgets of individual ministries.

The alternative is already visible. Without shared data, AI remains a boutique experiment confined to the better-resourced national laboratories. Without shared data, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission's Water Information System becomes an elegant empty shell. Without shared data, the next sharp decline in lake levels or the next cascade of fish kills will again be met with mutual recrimination rather than coordinated response. The statistics already condemn the status quo: renewable freshwater per capita in Kenya has fallen below the water-scarcity threshold; irrigation claims 85 percent of available supply; urban and agricultural pollution continues to choke the nearshore zones that once nourished the densest fisheries. Every delayed data packet is a silent contribution to that decline.

History will not judge the present generation by the elegance of its sovereignty declarations. It will judge by whether the lake that feeds the Nile and sustains an entire regional economy was allowed to die of preventable ignorance. The actors who must move are clear: the East African Community Partner States must instruct their water and digital ministries to negotiate the annex without further delay; the Lake Victoria Basin Commission must be given the legal mandate and sustained financing to operate the shared platform as a true regional utility; the AfCFTA Secretariat must treat environmental data as a priority test case for the Protocol's public-policy exceptions; and Kenya, whose rivers carry nearly half the lake's terrestrial inflow, must lead by example opening its hydrological archives while demanding reciprocal transparency. The fishermen of Dunga, the farmers of the Nzoia floodplains, the hydropower operators downstream of the Owen Falls, and the millions whose daily water comes from the lake do not have the luxury of waiting for another decade of diplomatic theatre.

The data drought is a choice. End it.

The writer is a social commentator

Books Review Defoe clearly elaborates on the experiences of Robinson Crusoe, making the plot realistic and engaging

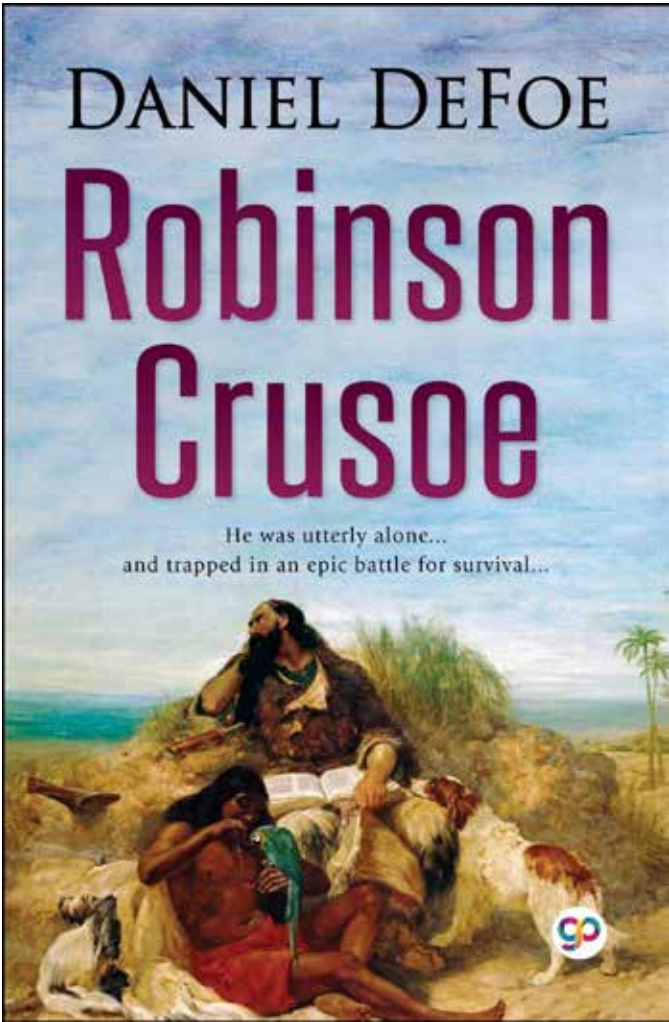
A Critical Review of Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe

MODERN NOVEL
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Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe is a famous eighteenth-century novel that artistically describes the struggles and experiences of a man named Robinson Crusoe, who belongs to a middle-class family in England. His father is a merchant who prefers a peaceful and comfortable life for his son. However, Crusoe loves travelling and adventure and wants to explore different places. The novel highlights his struggles, hard work, determination, and personal development. Its adventurous plot and realistic narration continue to attract readers.

Defoe clearly elaborates on the experiences of Robinson Crusoe, making the plot realistic and engaging. At the beginning of the novel, Crusoe goes to sea on a ship and faces the consequences of his decision. A terrible storm destroys the ship, and Crusoe becomes lonely because there is no one else with him. Eventually, he lands on an island where he appears to be the only human being. He faces many difficulties, including the problem of finding food and shelter. He collects useful supplies and equipment from the wrecked ship and gradually learns how to survive. He spends years on the island, starts farming, keeps animals, and builds a life through determination and hard work.

Another important part of Crusoe’s life is his experience of slavery. He spends almost two years as a slave after being captured by pirates. He becomes terrified and hopeless because of his situation. Xury, a young companion, helps him escape. Crusoe eventually reaches Brazil, where he works hard and be-



comes the owner of a plantation. Through his labour and enterprise, he becomes wealthy.

A further important aspect of the novel is Crusoe’s growing closeness to religion. As he is isolated on the island, he turns increasingly towards God. He reads the Bible and reflects on his life and actions. Although he initially feels threatened, confused, and lonely, his experiences gradually make him more confident, patient, and determined. His spiritual development becomes an important part of his transformation.

One of the most interesting parts of the novel is the friendship between Crusoe and Friday. After discovering a footprint on the island, Crusoe realizes that other people may visit the island. Later, he rescues a man from cannibals and names him Friday. Friday helps overcome Crusoe’s loneliness, and the two work and live together. Crusoe teaches Friday and gives him

advice. Crusoe is presented as hardworking, while Friday is shown as intelligent and helpful. At the same time, their relationship reflects the colonial attitudes of the period, and Crusoe’s treatment of Friday as a subordinate has attracted critical discussion.

One important theme of the novel is individualism. Crusoe lives according to his own decisions and becomes increasingly independent. He solves many problems by himself and learns to fulfil his basic needs through hard work. In this sense, the novel presents an individual who relies on his own abilities and practical skills to survive difficult circumstances.

After spending a long period in different countries and on the island, Crusoe begins to remember his parents and siblings. He eventually decides to return to his homeland. With assistance, he travels to England by ship. When he arrives, he learns that his parents are no longer

alive, although he has become wealthy through his experiences and enterprises.

Defoe’s writing style is simple, detailed, and realistic. He carefully describes Crusoe’s situations, whether he is experiencing fear, confusion, happiness, or loneliness. The use of first-person, autobiographical-style narration contributes to the realism of the novel and allows readers to experience Crusoe’s thoughts and experiences closely.

The novel also illustrates the relationship between human beings and nature. Crusoe gradually learns to live with and appreciate his natural surroundings. The island becomes the setting in which he observes trees, clouds, animals, and other elements of nature while adapting his life

to his environment. However, the detailed narration can also make the novel lengthy for some readers. While some readers appreciate the detailed descriptions, others may find the extended narrative difficult to follow.

Robinson Crusoe became popular because of its adventure, travel, survival, and realistic presentation of human experience. Defoe skillfully narrates Crusoe’s circumstances and development. The novel is an important work of eighteenth-century English literature and is generally associated with the development of realism in the English novel. It also portrays Crusoe’s transformation from a disobedient and careless young man into someone who learns that wealth alone is not the most

important thing in life.

After reading the novel, I appreciate Crusoe’s desire to travel and explore because his experiences teach him valuable lessons. He achieves wealth and independence, but he also experiences loss, loneliness, fear, and hardship. His adventures therefore become a source of learning and personal growth. Without leaving his familiar surroundings, he might never have gained these experiences and lessons.

In conclusion, Robinson Crusoe is an adventurous and influential novel of the eighteenth century. Daniel Defoe presents Crusoe’s sacrifices, hard work, learning, spirituality, and personal transformation through a detailed and realistic narrative. His life is full of challenges, but his patience and determination help him survive and develop. The novel continues to interest readers because it combines adventure with themes of individualism, survival, religion, nature, and personal growth.

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Politics Recent violence across the country has sharpened that concern. Human Rights Watch has documented attacks by unidentified armed groups at civil society and opposition gatherings

When the street becomes a political weapon: Kenya's pre-election violence problem

With the 2027 General Election still months away, a pattern of organised disruption and political violence is raising urgent questions about democratic safety

BY Dennis Wendo

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya is not yet in formal campaign mode, but the political temperature is already climbing.

Political meetings that ought to create space for competing ideas are increasingly being accompanied by confrontations, disruptions and organised groups of youths for hire. What should concern the country is not any single isolated incident, but the pattern taking shape — and what it signals for the political environment ahead.

Recent violence across the country has sharpened that concern. Human Rights Watch has documented attacks by unidentified armed groups at civil society and opposition gatherings, reporting that at least six people were killed and dozens injured in incidents reviewed ahead of the 2027 elections.

Then came Embu.

On September 12, violence erupted at a political meeting in Nembure attended by Deputy President Kithure Kindiki. Police reported injuries and the torching of six vehicles. Subsequent investigations led to arrests, and two suspects were later arraigned as detectives continued examining the circumstances surrounding the confrontation.

The Embu incident must be investigated on its own facts, with responsibility established through evidence and due process. But it also raises a much larger national question: what happens when political competition begins to depend on the power of the street rather than the strength of ideas?

Kenya has been here before.

The country carries the painful memory of the post-election violence of 2007 and 2008. That history should make every early warning sign a matter of urgent national concern. The difference today is that political mobilisation is taking place in a far more complex environment, one in which criminal networks, local gangs, informal groups, social media and political interests can intersect with dangerous ease.

The word “goon” has consequently



entered Kenya's political vocabulary. But the real issue runs deeper than the young person seen throwing a stone, carrying a weapon or disrupting a meeting. The more important questions are: who mobilised them, who transported them, who financed them, who coordinated them and who ultimately benefits from the violence?

Those questions cannot be answered through political accusation. They require professional investigations and credible evidence.

The danger is that political violence can develop its own self-sustaining ecosystem. There is a pool of unemployed and underemployed young people who may be vulnerable to financial inducement. There are criminal groups with established networks and territorial influence. There are political actors competing for power. There are local grievances that can be exploited. And there is an increasingly powerful digital environment capable of turning a local confrontation into a national political narrative within minutes.

This creates a dangerous cycle. One political camp mobilises youths for protection or disruption. An opposing camp responds by mobilising its own. A confrontation follows. Anger generates retaliation, retaliation generates counter-mobilisation, and what began as a political disagreement can rapidly become a community security crisis.

Recent analysis by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project has identified the interaction between political groups, gangs and retaliatory mobs as a growing concern in Kenya's pre-election environment.

This is why the national conversation must move beyond blaming one camp or another. The problem is larger than political sides.

No political party should turn young people into instruments of intimidation. Equally, no group of citizens should assume that political disagreement entitles them to invade meetings, attack opponents or destroy property.

Democracy requires space for disagreement. A political leader should be able to travel and campaign. Citizens should be free to attend meetings of their choice. Opponents should be able to criticise one another. Communities should be able to support different political formations without fearing retaliation.

Once political affiliation determines who can safely enter a particular town, constituency or county, democracy begins to lose its meaning.

The challenge therefore extends beyond policing. It is also about institutional credibility.

The National Police Service must demonstrate that the law applies equally — to those in government, those in opposition and ordinary citizens alike. Investigative agencies must follow evidence wherever it leads. Political parties must take responsibility for the conduct of their supporters. Institutions responsible for electoral preparedness must treat early warning signs seriously.

Kenya does not lack the laws or institutions designed to deal with organised crime and political violence. The harder question is whether those laws will be applied consistently, and early enough.

The National Cohesion and Integration Commission has already

launched its roadmap towards a violence-free 2027 General Election, emphasising early warning, conflict mapping, responsible political leadership and cooperation among security agencies, electoral bodies, political actors, civil society and communities. That matters, because prevention cannot begin after people have been killed, vehicles burned or communities divided.

It must begin when intelligence indicates that young people are being recruited, when threats are issued, when political meetings are deliberately disrupted and when inflammatory rhetoric begins to normalise confrontation.

Recent national stakeholder engagements have also brought political parties, government, security agencies, religious organisations, civil society, youth representatives and other sectors together around shared commitments against violence, intimidation and the use of hired crowds in the 2027 elections.

The real test, however, begins after the conferences and the public declarations.

Can institutions act before violence occurs? Can investigators identify those who recruit, finance and organise violent groups rather than focusing only on those found at the scene? Can political parties discipline supporters who cross the line? Can security agencies protect political gatherings without appearing partisan? And can citizens refuse to become instruments in political battles whose consequences they will ultimately bear?

The youth question deserves particular attention.

Young Kenyans should not become

the expendable manpower of political contests. The young person paid to attend a rally, confront an opponent or cause a disruption may be the first to be arrested, injured or killed when violence erupts. Those who encouraged or financed the confrontation are likely to remain far removed from the consequences.

Political violence therefore carries a cost that extends well beyond election day. Families lose breadwinners. Businesses lose property. Communities fracture. Victims carry physical and psychological scars for years. Young people acquire criminal records or lose their lives. Public confidence in democratic institutions suffers.

Civil society, religious organisations, community leaders and the media all have a role to play. They must strengthen grassroots early warning systems, document incidents responsibly and resist the temptation to turn every confrontation into partisan propaganda.

The media must be particularly careful. In an environment already affected by misinformation and increasingly sophisticated artificially generated content, an unverified allegation about who sponsored an incident can itself become a source of further conflict.

Kenya needs a different political culture as 2027 approaches.

Political competition should be about ideas, leadership, accountability, development and the future of the country — not a contest over who can mobilise the most intimidating crowd. The ballot must remain more powerful than the stone, the stick or the hired crowd.

The appearance of violence before the formal campaign period does not mean Kenya is destined for another troubled election. It means the warning signs deserve attention while there is still time to act.

The objective should not be to predict violence. It should be to prevent it.

Kenya still has the opportunity to ensure that political differences do not harden into community conflicts, that young people are not weaponised for political ends and that every citizen can participate in the 2027 election without fear.

The country has seen what happens when political competition escapes the ballot box and enters the streets. We should not need to learn that lesson again.

The warning signs are visible. The responsibility now is to ensure they do not become the defining story of Kenya's 2027 election.

Heartbreak Heartbreak is rarely about losing a person alone. It often involves losing dreams, expectations, routines and parts of an identity that had become attached to another human being

Understanding why most people write poetry after heartbreak

When ordinary language fails, the broken-hearted have always reached for verse — and there is more science behind that instinct than most people realise

BY Ashford Kimani

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Heartbreak has always been one of the most powerful forces behind human creativity. Across generations and cultures, people who have experienced emotional pain have turned to writing, music, painting and poetry as ways of processing what they feel. Some of history's greatest poems, songs and literary works were born from moments of loss, disappointment, rejection and separation. When ordinary conversation fails to capture emotional depth, creative expression becomes a bridge between pain and healing. Poetry, in particular, has remained one of humanity's most enduring responses to a broken heart.

Heartbreak is rarely about losing a person alone. It often involves losing dreams, expectations, routines and parts of an identity that had become attached to another human being. A broken relationship can create emotional confusion that feels impossible to articulate through ordinary language. Someone may feel sadness and relief simultaneously. They may feel anger toward someone they still love deeply. They may experience loneliness while also valuing a newfound independence. Such emotional contradictions make heartbreak uniquely difficult to describe — and uniquely resistant to the kind of tidy explanation everyday conversation demands.

Normal communication tends to prioritise clarity and logic. Everyday language encourages people to explain situations directly and rationally. Yet heartbreak does not operate rationally. Emotional pain arrives in fragments — memories that surface unexpectedly, questions that go unanswered, feelings that shift from one moment to the next. Poetry offers something different. Rather than forcing emotions into neat explanations, it allows complexity to exist naturally and honestly.

Poetry creates room for symbolism, imagery, rhythm and metaphor. A person struggling to explain emotional emptiness may describe it as walking through an abandoned



house, or carrying rain inside the chest. Such images communicate emotional truth in ways ordinary sentences sometimes cannot. Through poetry, people give shape to feelings that previously seemed impossible to express — and in doing so, they begin, however tentatively, to understand them.

Scientific research increasingly supports what artists and writers have long understood intuitively. Emotional pain affects the brain profoundly. Heartbreak activates neurological systems associated with distress and emotional processing, which explains why it can feel physically exhausting. People experiencing emotional loss often struggle with sleep, concentration, motivation and appetite. Some describe heartbreak as feeling like an actual wound — and in many ways, they are not wrong. The brain processes emotional pain through pathways that overlap significantly with those associated with physical discomfort.

Writing becomes important because it helps organise emotional experience. Psychologists studying expressive writing have found that putting feelings into words can contribute

meaningfully to emotional processing. Writing does not erase pain, but it allows individuals to understand it differently. Emotions that remain trapped internally can feel chaotic and overwhelming. Once placed into language, however, those same emotions become something that can be examined, reflected upon and, eventually, understood.

Poetry offers an especially powerful form of that emotional organisation because it does not demand complete understanding from the writer. Someone writing after heartbreak does not need all the answers. They do not need to fully understand why a relationship ended or why certain memories remain painful. Poetry permits uncertainty. It allows unfinished emotions to exist — honestly, without apology and without resolution.

This explains why many people who have never written creatively in their lives suddenly find themselves reaching for a pen after experiencing emotional loss. They are not necessarily trying to become poets. They are trying to survive emotionally. Writing becomes less about artistic perfection and more about making

meaning out of confusion. The act itself is what matters.

Education professionals often observe similar patterns among young learners. Students facing emotional difficulties sometimes struggle to communicate directly about their experiences. Traditional academic assignments do not always create space for emotional expression. Creative writing exercises, however, frequently reveal thoughts and feelings that students had difficulty expressing anywhere else. Poetry can become a safe channel for emotional exploration — a space where vulnerability is not a weakness but the point.

Teachers of language and literature understand that poetry develops far more than linguistic skills. It strengthens emotional intelligence, empathy and reflective thinking. When learners write poetry, they practise identifying emotions, interpreting experience and communicating internal realities with honesty. These are skills that extend well beyond the classroom. They contribute to resilience, self-awareness and psychological well-being in ways that are difficult to measure but im-

possible to dismiss.

Schools are increasingly recognising the connection between emotional wellness and learning outcomes. Young people experiencing emotional distress often face real challenges with concentration, full participation and academic motivation. Encouraging creative expression through journals, poetry, storytelling or reflective writing gives students constructive tools for managing difficult experiences — tools they can carry long after formal education ends.

The relationship between heartbreak and creativity also reveals something important about human resilience more broadly. Pain does not automatically produce wisdom or beauty. Suffering alone guarantees neither growth nor healing. But when people engage actively with difficult experience — reflecting, writing, creating, finding meaning — they often emerge stronger and more self-aware than they were before.

Poetry does not remove grief. It does not instantly heal emotional wounds or erase painful memories. What it offers instead is structure. It transforms confusion into language. It converts emotional chaos into images, lines and metaphors that can be held, examined and understood. Through creative expression, pain becomes something observable rather than simply overwhelming.

Human beings have always created art in response to emotional upheaval, because creativity helps rebuild internal order after disruption. Heartbreak changes people. It forces a reconsideration of identity, relationships, values and expectations. Poetry becomes one way of rebuilding after emotional collapse — a means of reconnecting with oneself when the relationship with another person has fallen apart.

Perhaps this is why poems written after heartbreak so often resonate deeply with others. Emotional pain can feel profoundly isolating, but artistic expression reminds people they are not alone. Someone else has experienced similar loss, confusion, longing or disappointment. Through poetry, private suffering becomes shared humanity.

Heartbreak may shatter certainty, routine and emotional comfort. Yet through poetry, many people discover that even pain can become part of rebuilding a life. Sometimes healing begins not when the answers arrive, but when difficult emotions finally find their words.

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Sports >> *Six-strong national side believe they have the quality to finish in the top two and secure a historic ticket to Germany in 2029

Kenya chase World Championships place as badminton squad targets African glory in Entebbe

By Martin Weche

Kenya's national badminton team departed yesterday for Entebbe, Uganda, targeting a top-two finish at the Africa AirBadminton Championships and the Zone 5 Regional Championships that would secure qualification for the World Championships in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2029.

Badminton Kenya president Peter Muchiri expressed confidence in the six-member squad ahead of what promises to be a fiercely contested two-week campaign against thirteen other African nations, including defending champions Egypt.

"We have managed to send six of our best athletes, three ladies and three men to Entebbe," Muchiri said. "I know they will do well and qualify for the World Games in Germany because, with the support of the Ministry of Sports, we have prepared well."

The men's contingent comprises Edwin Akwanyi, Sammy Sikoyo and Calvin Simiyu, while Jacinta Sengera leads the women's challenge alongside Yvonne Mwikali and Buyanzi Blessing. The squad is coached by Brijesh Jagdish Sonigra, a UK-trained tactician with considerable experience at continental level, assisted by John Mburu.

The Africa AirBadminton Championships runs from September 16 to 19 at Aero Beach in Entebbe, with the Zone 5 Regional Championships following immediately from September 20 to 22 at the same venue. Kenya face competition from Egypt, Uganda, Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Comoros, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Egypt, as defending champions, represent the most formidable obstacle between Kenya and the qualification places they seek.



National team player Jacinta Sengera pictured during an international assignment for Kenya. PHOTO/BADMINTON CONFEDERATION AFRICA

The North Africans have consistently dominated continental badminton and will arrive in Entebbe with the considerable weight of expectation behind them. Uganda, as hosts, will carry strong home support, while Nigeria and Algeria have also shown the capacity to trouble the continent's leading sides in recent years.

For Kenya, the tournament represents one of the most significant opportunities the national programme has had in recent memory. The World Championships in Karlsruhe — scheduled for July 19 to 29, 2029 — will draw the world's best AirBadminton nations, and a place on that stage would mark a meaningful step forward for a programme that has been building steadily under Sonigra's guidance.

AirBadminton, the outdoor variant of the traditional indoor game, was developed by the Badminton World Federation to broaden the sport's global reach

and accessibility. Played on a specially designed outdoor court using a modified shuttlecock engineered to withstand wind, the format has gained traction across Africa in particular, where outdoor sporting infrastructure is more widely available than purpose-built indoor facilities. Kenya has invested in developing the format at grassroots level, and the Entebbe squad represents the most polished expression of that investment to date.

Muchiri's reference to Ministry of Sports backing is significant. Government support for travelling squads in Kenyan badminton has not always been guaranteed, and the backing provided ahead of this campaign suggests a growing institutional recognition of the sport's potential. Whether that support translates into results on the Aero Beach courts will be the more immediate question.

Sengera, who heads the women's side, is the most experienced campaigner in the group

and will be expected to lead by example in the early rounds. Akwanyi and Sikoyo have shown steady improvement at regional level and will need to produce their best badminton if Kenya are to trouble the established powers of Egyptian and Ugandan racket sport.

The coaching pairing of Sonigra and Mburu offers a blend of international technical knowledge and local contextual understanding that Muchiri believes gives this squad a competitive edge. Preparation, the president insists, has been thorough.

Two weeks in Entebbe will reveal whether that preparation is sufficient. The prize on offer — a place at the World Championships in Germany — is the most valuable the continental circuit can deliver, and Kenya are determined not to let the opportunity pass.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *A much-changed City side put five past Norwich at the Etihad, with teenage debutant Samba Rose stealing the show with a brace

Manchester City sweep aside Norwich 5-0 in Carabao Cup rout

A much-changed City side put five past Norwich at the Etihad, with teenage debutant Samba Rose stealing the show with a brace

By Andalo Christine Ingutia
Defending Carabao Cup champions Manchester City swept aside Norwich City 5-0 yesterday evening at the Etihad Stadium in a performance that underlined the remarkable depth available to their manager.

City rotated heavily, with a string of senior players left out of the starting lineup. Ryan Cherki was the only regular to keep his place. For the opening half-hour, Norwich made life uncomfortable for the hosts. The Championship side defended with discipline, denying City space in and around the penalty area, and the hosts struggled to find a way through until the 29th minute.

It was Samba Rose who broke the deadlock — a perfectly timed header from an Allan Elias cross giving City the lead on what was an unforgettable senior debut for the teenager. Within three minutes, the advantage had doubled. Cherki found the back of the net before the teams headed into the interval.

Norwich had kept City honest, but once the first goal arrived the game changed quickly. Rose was not finished. The teenager struck again in the second half to complete a debut brace, and Allan then added his name to the scoresheet, converting after his assist in the first half to make it 4-0.

Even with four goals to their advantage, City refused to ease off. The visitors briefly celebrated what appeared to be a consolation, but the assistant referee's flag ended that hope immediately. In the 89th minute, substitute Ryan McAidoo cut through a tiring Norwich defence to finish clinically and complete the rout.

The night belonged to Rose. He arrived with composure, took his



chances and helped City continue their Carabao Cup defence. At 17, the spotlight will now follow him — and supporters are already eager to see him step up

to first-team duty on a more regular basis. Five goals, a clean sheet and a dominant display. Manchester City turn their attention next to

a home fixture on October 31 against Brighton, which will represent a stiffer test of their title defence.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



When viral fame finds ordinary Kenyans: The night the internet decides you are famous



By: Charles Irungu Gachango
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- A funny moment can make you famous. A song can make you famous. A relationship, a personal struggle, or simply being yourself can make you famous. But what happens when the internet stops scrolling past you and starts watching you?
- Vincent “Kaluma Boy” is among the most striking recent examples of that question being answered in real time. The teenager from Othaya, in Nyeri County, drew national attention after sharing videos documenting his everyday life and the heavy responsibility he carried caring for his ailing father. There was no elaborate production, no celebrity machinery — just a young Kenyan recording his reality.



One minute you are living your life. The next, strangers on the internet know your name, your face, your family and, sometimes, far more about you than you ever intended to share.

Welcome to Kenya’s new school of celebrity.

No record deal required. No television audition. No red carpet invitation. Sometimes all it takes is a smartphone, a few seconds of footage and an algorithm that decides your story deserves the country’s attention. For a growing number of ordinary Kenyans, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and X have become unlikely launchpads into the public spotlight. And the journey can be as unpredictable as it is exciting.

A funny moment can make you famous. A song can make you famous. A relationship, a personal struggle, or simply being yourself can make you famous. But what happens when the internet stops scrolling past you and starts watching you?

Vincent “Kaluma Boy” is among the most striking recent examples of that question being answered in real time. The teenager from Othaya, in Nyeri County, drew national attention after sharing videos documenting his everyday life and the

heavy responsibility he carried caring for his ailing father. There was no elaborate production, no celebrity machinery — just a young Kenyan recording his reality.

Then the internet did what it does best. It amplified it.

His videos were shared widely. His story travelled well beyond Nyeri, reaching Kenyans across the country and eventually spilling into the real world, with people making the journey to his home to offer support.

What made the story resonate was its familiarity. Many Kenyans could see something of themselves in it — family responsibility, sacrifice, rural life and the sometimes crushing expectations placed on young shoulders. The internet did not simply discover a content creator. It discovered a story. And in the process, Kaluma Boy became a public figure almost entirely by accident.

His experience also demonstrated that going viral carries consequences beyond likes and comments. Public attention can open doors — bringing support, opportunities and connections that might otherwise have remained out of reach. That is the beautiful side of viral fame.

There is, however, another side.

Traditional celebrities usually have

time to prepare. They build careers gradually, learn how interviews work and, over time, acquire managers, publicists and advisers who help them navigate contracts, publicity and the sometimes peculiar demands of being well known. The viral celebrity may get none of that preparation.

Today, you are an ordinary Kenyan. Tomorrow, someone recognises you at the supermarket. A stranger asks for a selfie. Someone messages you asking about your family. A blog publishes your story. A radio station wants an interview. A brand is already thinking about a campaign. And somewhere online, thousands of people are discussing you — your past, your choices, your family.

It can be exciting. It can also be overwhelming.

The strange thing about internet fame is that followers develop a powerful sense of intimacy with someone they have never met. They know the creator’s jokes, mannerisms, family stories and daily routines. They celebrate the wins and dissect the mistakes. The audience can feel like an extended family. But unlike an actual family, that audience can number in the thousands — or the millions. And not everyone

watching has good intentions.

Which brings us to the sharpest edge of viral fame: privacy.

The biggest currency of social media is attention. The biggest cost is often privacy. Once something goes viral, it is almost impossible to put it back. A video can be downloaded, reposted and shared across multiple platforms within minutes. Even deleting the original may not erase it from the internet.

This becomes particularly complicated when the viral content involves deeply personal matters — illness, poverty, grief, relationships or family difficulty. Kenyans are well known for rallying around people in need, and social media has made that generosity even more powerful. A story can trigger fundraisers. A struggling family can receive assistance. A young person can find an opportunity that transforms their life.

Someone who was previously invisible can suddenly find themselves with a national support system. But the question is worth asking plainly: when does public interest become an invasion of private life?