



Court seals national tallying of presidential votes as 2027 election battle lines form
The High Court yesterday upheld the national aggregation and verification of presidential election results, dismissing a petition by Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah

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Uhuru's 2022 election claim: What really happened?
Former President Uhuru Kenyatta has reopened one of Kenya's most contested political questions by declaring that Raila Odinga won the 2022 presidential election, adding that "we know how things went down."

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Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 **Your Excellency, with humility, I accept the appointment to oversee the Jubilee Party as the party leader"**

Matiang'i takes Jubilee helm

Fred Matiang'i yesterday became the leader of the Jubilee Party after retired President Uhuru Kenyatta formally handed over the party's leadership at the party's Nairobi headquarters, in a transition that redraws the political map heading into the 2027 general election.

The handover, conducted during a National Executive Council meeting on yesterday, was both a political milestone and a legal necessity. Uhuru told those gathered that he had decided to step aside in favour of his deputy ahead of the party's National Delegates Convention, which will formally ratify the change. "While we wait for the NDC, I have decided to let my deputy take over the party leadership. I want to ask you respectfully to accept Fred Matiang'i to take the position of Jubilee party leader," Uhuru said.

Matiang'i, visibly moved, accepted the position with words that captured the weight of the moment. "Your Excellency, with humility, I accept the appointment to oversee the Jubilee Party as the party leader," he said. He then added: "This is a difficult time, as you can imagine for me. It can be almost emotional because, frankly speaking, I never thought in my life that this moment, this day would come today."

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Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta formally handed over the party's leadership to Fred Matiang'i



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Jubilee's new dawn: Matiang'i takes the helm

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Fred Matiang'i yesterday assumed leadership of the Jubilee Party after retired President Uhuru Kenyatta formally relinquished the position he had held since the party's founding, pending ratification by the National Delegates Convention.

The handover, conducted at Jubilee headquarters in Nairobi, was driven by both political calculation and legal pressure following a High Court ruling that bars retired presidents from holding formal party office beyond six months after leaving State House.

"While we wait for the NDC, I have decided to let my deputy take over the party leadership," Uhuru told the gathering. He will remain in Jubilee as senior adviser.

Matiang'i, visibly moved, accepted without hesitation. "With humility, I accept the appointment to oversee the Jubilee Party as the party leader," he said. "I never thought in my life that this moment would come."

The transition hands Matiang'i a potent but complicated inheritance — a party rebuilding its relevance, a fractious opposition coalition and a presidential contest against an incumbent whose first term has strained public confidence. Kenya's 2027 reckoning has found its opening act.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



UDA yesterday fired back at retired President Uhuru Kenyatta over his repeated claim that the late Raila Odinga won the 2022 presidential election, with party Secretary General Hassan Omar accusing Uhuru of refusing to accept reality and warning that a fresh defeat awaits him in 2027. “Uhuru Kenyatta continues to live and wallow in a fool’s paradise,” Omar said, insisting that President William Ruto won the election “decisively and conclusively.” Omar also alleged that Uhuru had attempted to manipulate the tallying process at Bomas of Kenya, and credited Ruto’s political networks with delivering Uhuru’s victories in both 2013 and 2017. “He owes his two terms to President William Ruto,” Omar said, adding that Ruto would seek re-election next year.



Deputy President Kithure Kindiki yesterday directed Kenyans to comply fully with safety instructions ahead of El Niño rains forecast between October and December, warning that evacuation orders and movement restrictions in flood-prone areas are mandatory, not advisory. Kindiki issued the directive after chairing a meeting of senior government officials and agency heads at his Karen residence in Nairobi. “A situation like this is a matter of national security. Where evacuation orders are issued, they must be complied with,” he said. The Deputy President said national and county governments, development partners and humanitarian agencies are coordinating disaster response in vulnerable areas, with Nairobi, Mombasa, Busia and arid regions identified as carrying the highest risk. Landslide-prone areas have been mapped and will receive targeted intervention, he added. “We have engaged all hands on deck. Do not worry or panic,” Kindiki said.



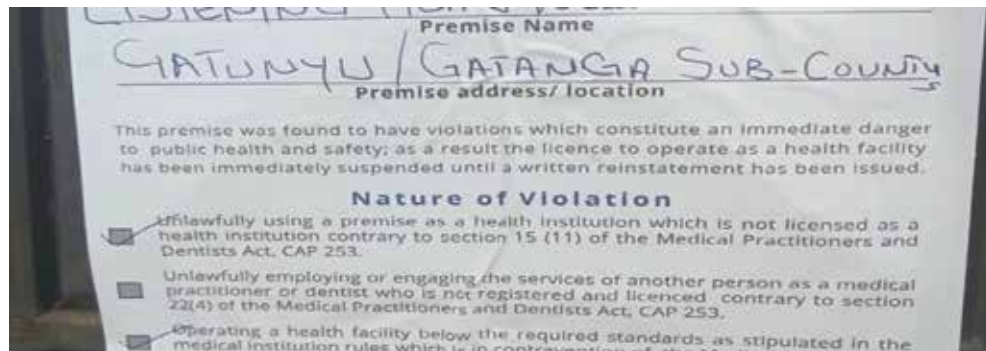
The National Transport and Safety Authority yesterday launched a nationwide training programme targeting more than 4,000 public service vehicle drivers, SACCO managers, supervisors and operators, in a structured effort to professionalise Kenya’s public transport sector ahead of the festive season. The first cohorts began a four-day course on Monday in Taita Taveta, Mombasa and Garissa, with the programme set to roll out across other counties in four phases covering design, piloting, national expansion and long-term institutionalisation. Training covers defensive driving, hazard prevention, vehicle safety checks and passenger care, alongside SACCO management and viable PSV business models. “The programme is designed to treat drivers and operators as partners in road safety,” NTSA said. Selected participants will serve as road safety champions within their organisations once training concludes. The authority also plans to introduce a Professional Drivers Certification and a specialised Public Transport Management course through accredited training institutions.



Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday declared that Raila Odinga won the 2022 presidential election, making the assertion publicly as he stepped down from the Jubilee Party leadership during yesterday’s handover ceremony. Uhuru said he and Jubilee members had done everything possible to support Raila’s bid and remained convinced the result did not reflect the will of voters. “And votes were cast, and to this day, I know that he won that election. I know that. We know, we know!” he said. Uhuru also questioned how Azimio could have lost the presidency while winning more parliamentary and senatorial seats than its rivals. “How can they say they won when we had more MPs than any of those other parties? We had more senators than them. How else did we lose?” he asked.



A bitter naming dispute yesterday deepened fractures within Kenya’s opposition after Azimio’s re-branding as the Ukombozi Alliance directly collided with prior claims to the name by the Ukombozi People’s Party, a vehicle widely associated with Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna’s 2027 presidential ambitions. The party’s Secretary General Allan Akivaga said the name had been formally reserved with the Registrar of Political Parties in March last year and demanded immediate revocation of Kalonzo Musyoka’s newly launched alliance. “The name reservation was still very active,” Akivaga said, accusing the Registrar of acting in bad faith. The dispute compounds Sifuna’s difficulties after Embakasi East MP Babu Owino separately launched the Mwananchi Party, effectively claiming another name linked to Sifuna’s camp. Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa, speaking at the Ukombozi Alliance launch, told Sifuna directly that both his intended party names had been taken from under him. Sifuna is expected to unveil his political vehicle on October 3.



Two rehabilitation facilities in Murang’a County were yesterday served with closure notices following a multi-agency inspection that uncovered serious regulatory violations and human rights concerns at both centres. The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse, acting alongside the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council and the Department of Public Health, shut down Listening Heart Wellness Centre in Gatanga Sub-county and SMECC Rehab after inspectors found conditions endangering clients seeking treatment for substance use disorders. Listening Heart was found operating without a licence, conducting construction works with clients still on the premises, employing no qualified professional personnel and maintaining poor hygiene standards, including a cook without a valid food handler’s certificate. Three clients were present at the time of the inspection. The facility’s director was given three days to arrange their transfer to compliant centres.

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Politics The court upheld Section 39(1C) of the Elections Act and Regulation 83(2) of the Elections

Court seals national tallying of presidential votes as 2027 election battle lines form

BY James Mwangi

@themtkenyatomes

The High Court yesterday upheld the national aggregation and verification of presidential election results, dismissing a petition by Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah that had challenged the legal basis of Kenya's national tallying centre and its role in determining the presidential winner.

The court upheld Section 39(1C) of the Elections Act and Regulation 83(2) of the Elections (General) Regulations, finding that national aggregation is not an arbitrary addition to the electoral process but a constitutional requirement. Under Article 138(4) of the Constitution, a presidential candidate must secure more than half of all votes cast nationally and at least 25 per cent of votes in more than half of Kenya's 47 counties — a two-tier threshold that, the court found, can only be established by aggregating results at the national level.

"A national aggregation and confirmation exercise is accordingly not an arbitrary extra burden imposed on presidential candidates or voters," the court held, describing the process as a "necessary and rational corollary" of the Constitution's unique presidential threshold.

Omtatah had argued that the Constitution assigns constit-



National tallying of presidential votes

uency returning officers the primary and final responsibility for tallying, verifying and declaring presidential results, making national re-tallying unconstitutional. The court rejected that framing, drawing a clear distinction between declaring results at polling station level and determining whether the constitutional threshold for a presidential win has been met across the country.

The ruling, however, was not a blanket endorsement of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission's powers. The court was explicit that national aggregation does not give the IEBC authority to alter results declared at polling stations. Where a discrepancy exists between electronically transmitted results and physical results declared at a polling station, the polling station

result prevails. That clarification carries particular weight in a country where disputes over electronic transmission have defined post-election litigation since 2017.

The court also declined to strike down related provisions of the Elections Act in their entirety, finding that several of Omtatah's claims — including those relating to ballot reconciliation, government timelines and aspects of an equality challenge under Article 27 — were insufficiently supported by evidence. "These claims proceed largely by way of general assertion and invocation of constitutional provisions without the requisite nexus to a demonstrated or imminent violation," the judges said.

Perhaps the ruling's most consequential passage, however, was directed not at the parties before the court but at

Parliament. The judges called on lawmakers to review Kenya's electoral laws ahead of the 2027 General Election, invoking the political philosophy concept of the "veil of ignorance" — associated with philosopher John Rawls — to argue that electoral laws should be developed without regard to which political actors or interests would benefit from them. Laws shaped by current political convenience, the court warned, serve only the "narrow, temporal and variable goals" of those in power at the time of drafting.

With Kenya fourteen months from its next general election, that recommendation lands at a critical moment. Questions surrounding tallying, verification and result transmission have featured in every presidential dispute since the advent of multiparty democracy. Yesterday's ruling settles the legality of national aggregation. It does not settle the deeper question of whether Kenya's electoral architecture commands sufficient public trust to deliver a result that all sides will accept.

That work belongs to Parliament. The court has pointed the way. Whether lawmakers follow it — and how quickly — will shape not just the 2027 contest, but the credibility of whatever result it produces.

Connecting the world to nature through live conservation



Tourism CS Rebecca Miano

BY Waithaka Kariuki

@themtkenyatomes

Kenya's tourism story has never been only about the classic safari. Through the KenyaLIVE partnership, global audiences are now being taken on a journey into the country's lesser-known wonders — from the salt-licking elephants of Mount Elgon's caves to the Cradle of Mankind at Sibiloi, and the rich biodiversity of Shimba Hills. The initiative also pulls back the curtain on the real work of conservation, including the use of technology to collar and track elephants in Amboseli.

Linking live on World Rhino Day from Nairobi National Park yesterday was more than symbolic. It offered a moment to celebrate Kenya's remarkable progress in wildlife protection — a story that deserves far wider telling.

From a worrying low of fewer than 400 black rhinos, targeted conservation by the Kenya Wildlife Service has driven a significant comeback, with populations nearly doubling as Kenya works toward a national goal of 2,000 rhinos. Nairobi National Park stands as one of the world's most successful wildlife sanctuaries, home to more than 197 black and white rhinos. From community-led achievements such as the Sera Rhino Sanctuary to the vast 3,200 sq km Tsavo West sanctuary, Kenya is at the forefront of the global effort to keep the five iconic species alive.

The KenyaLIVE streams offer viewers everywhere a chance to witness these landscapes and the conservation champions working within them — and, ideally, to start planning a visit to experience the authentic spirit of Kenya first-hand.

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Fatuma Ibrahim Ali shortlisted for Parliamentary Service Commission seat

The former Wajir Woman Representative is among 12 candidates competing for a constitutionally reserved position on Parliament's governing body



Fatuma Ibrahim Ali

BY John Kariuki
@themkenyaintimes

Fatuma Ibrahim Ali, the former Wajir County Woman Representative, is among 12 women shortlisted for the female non-MP position on the Parliamentary Service Commission, drawn from a field of 75 applicants.

The commission is recruiting under Article 127(2)(d) of the Constitution, which reserves two positions — one for a woman, one for a man — for persons experienced in public affairs who are not serving Members of Parliament. The vacancy follows the completion of the six-year tenure of former Kakamega Woman Representative Rachel Ameso Amolo as the female non-MP commissioner.

Fatuma served as Wajir County Woman Representative in the 11th Parliament, where she participated in national debates on education, insecurity, gender-based violence and the welfare of communities in North Eastern Kenya. Her parliamentary record puts her among the candidates with direct legislative experience — a quality the commission's mandate arguably demands.

The Parliamentary Service Commission is not a ceremonial body. Established under Article 127 of the Constitution, it oversees the

provision of services and facilities for Parliament's functioning, manages appointments and supervision of parliamentary staff, prepares expenditure estimates, exercises budgetary control and supports programmes promoting parliamentary democracy. The role requires familiarity with parliamentary structures, public administration and institutional governance.

The shortlist also includes former legislators, professionals and academics, making the process competitive. The final appointment will be determined through constitutional and parliamentary procedures.

Fatuma's inclusion places her public service record under fresh national scrutiny. Her tenure in the National Assembly, representing a county that has historically faced significant development and marginalisation challenges, drew attention to issues that rarely dominate parliamentary debate. For Northern Kenya, her presence in the process carries weight beyond the individual appointment — the region has produced leaders who have built careers in national institutions, and Fatuma's trajectory is part of that pattern.

The interviews are under way. Parliament has not indicated when the final appointment will be announced.



Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe

Kagwe vows to fight punitive taxes choking Kenya's flower farmers

BY Grace Wanja
@themkenyaintimes

Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe yesterday called for an urgent review of taxes on horticultural products, describing current levies as unfair and punitive to a sector already struggling under the weight of soaring production costs, doubled freight charges and a government debt of unpaid VAT refunds that is quietly draining investor confidence.

Kagwe made the remarks at the Naivasha Horticultural Fair, one of Kenya's most significant annual gatherings for a sector that generates billions in foreign exchange and employs hundreds of thousands of workers across the country's growing regions. The timing was pointed. Flower farmers arrived at the fair carrying a set of grievances that have accumulated over months — rising global fuel prices, freight costs that have more than doubled, and a government that has been slow to pay what it owes. The US-Iran conflict has added further pressure, pushing fuel prices higher and tightening an already strained logistics environment for fresh produce exports.

The CS was direct about the structural unfairness at the heart of the tax question. Horticultural producers, he argued, are being taxed as though they were industrial manufacturers — a classification that bears no relationship to how they operate or what they produce. "If you say a horticultural grower is an industry, a manufacturing concern,

you charge them as such — that's unfair because they are not an industry," Kagwe said. "They are agricultural product producers. So we are debating all these things. We are liaising with my colleague in Trade to make sure the sector is treated fairly, and you know you cannot get growth out of taxation; you get growth out of production."

He pledged to engage his counterparts at Treasury and the Ministry of Trade to address the levies hampering the sector's competitiveness, framing the conversation not as a favour to business interests but as a basic requirement for an industry that Kenya cannot afford to lose.

The grievances from industry players were specific and urgent. Naivasha Horticultural Fair Chairman Richard McGonnel said some farms are owed tens of millions of shillings in outstanding VAT refunds — a liability that compounds the pressure on businesses that carry large payrolls. On the bigger farms, that means obligations to workforces of up to 14,000 staff. "All these petty taxes — there are a lot of petty taxes that shouldn't be there," McGonnel said. He singled out Kenya Bureau of Standards charges on growers as among the levies that the industry regards as indefensible. "Some of these farms are owed tens of millions of shillings in VAT refunds, and I think it's wrong."

The freight crisis drew equally sharp attention. Elgon Kenya Managing Director Bimal Kantaria urged the government to tackle the logistics problem at its root, calling

on Kenya Airways to establish a dedicated fresh produce freight division that would operate separately from passenger services. "We really want Kenya Airways, which is our national carrier, to open a freight division so that they do only freight transportation of our fresh produce," Kantaria said. He added that if a dedicated division was not feasible, the government should accelerate open skies agreements to bring more cargo capacity into the market. "Open skies is important so that we can bring in more planes," he said.

Horticulture is one of Kenya's most reliable foreign exchange earners, sitting alongside tea and tourism as a pillar of the country's export economy. The sector's distress carries consequences that extend far beyond the greenhouses and flower farms of Naivasha — into rural employment, smallholder livelihoods and the broader agricultural supply chain that feeds both domestic and international markets.

Kagwe has made his position clear, and the industry has made its frustrations plainer still. The harder question — whether Treasury will act on the VAT backlog, whether the tax classification will change and whether Kenya Airways or open skies will provide the freight relief the sector needs — remains unanswered. For the farmers watching costs rise and refunds remain unpaid, the fair has provided a platform. What they need now is a response.

Politics Matiang'i, visibly moved, accepted the position with words that captured the weight of the moment. "Your Excellency, with humility, I accept the appointment

Kenyatta passes the torch: Matiang'i takes Jubilee leadership in a handover that reshapes Kenya's 2027 race

BY David Kimani
@themkenyattimes

Fred Matiang'i yesterday became the leader of the Jubilee Party after retired President Uhuru Kenyatta formally handed over the party's leadership at the party's Nairobi headquarters, in a transition that redraws the political map heading into the 2027 general election.

The handover, conducted during a National Executive Council meeting on yesterday, was both a political milestone and a legal necessity. Uhuru told those gathered that he had decided to step aside in favour of his deputy ahead of the party's National Delegates Convention, which will formally ratify the change. "While we wait for the NDC, I have decided to let my deputy take over the party leadership. I want to ask you respectfully to accept Fred Matiang'i to take the position of Jubilee party leader," Uhuru said.

Matiang'i, visibly moved, accepted the position with words that captured the weight of the moment. "Your Excellency, with humility, I accept the appointment to oversee the Jubilee Party as the party leader," he said. He then added: "This is a difficult time, as you can imagine for me. It can be almost emotional because, frankly speaking, I never thought in my life that this moment, this day would come today."

The ceremony was notable for the absence of party Secretary General Richard Moitalel Ole Kenta and senior figures including former Secretary General Jeremiah Kioni, whose absence underlined the internal fault lines that Matiang'i inherits alongside the party title.

Uhuru was unambiguous about his own new role. He will remain in Jubilee — but not at its head. "I will not leave Jubilee. I have decided that I will remain as a senior adviser and a senior member of Jubilee," he said. He described Matiang'i as an intelligent and honest leader who delivers results, avoids unnecessary conflict and genuinely cares about Kenyans — language that amounted to a full personal endorsement from the man who built the party.

The handover did not happen in a political vacuum. It was triggered in part by a High Court ruling on September 14 in which Justice Lawrence Mugambi upheld Section 6 of the Presidential Retirement Benefits



Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta formally handed over the party's leadership to Fred Matiang'i

Act, which bars retired presidents from holding formal positions in political parties beyond six months after leaving office. A conflicting ruling on September 21 from Justice Bahati Mwamuye declared the same provision unconstitutional, leaving the legal position technically contested. But the political conclusion had already been reached: Uhuru's continued formal leadership of Jubilee was untenable, and the handover provided the cleanest path forward for both the party and the man.

For Matiang'i, the legal complexity is secondary to the political opportunity. He steps into the party leader's seat carrying a record that is simultaneously his greatest asset and his most contested inheritance. As Education Cabinet Secretary under Uhuru, he dismantled exam cheating cartels that had corrupted Kenya's national examination system for a generation. As Interior Cabinet Secretary, he ran security operations that

significantly reduced gang activity in Nairobi and other urban centres. He served across three major ministries — Education, Interior and ICT — with a discipline and results-orientation that his supporters regard as proof of presidential readiness.

His critics, however, are not silent. His tenure at the Interior ministry attracted documented allegations of heavy-handed conduct, arbitrary detentions and the suppression of political dissent, producing a human rights record that rights organisations challenged repeatedly during his time in office. Those questions will not disappear because he now holds a party title. They will resurface in the campaign, and how he answers them will shape whether his administrative reputation translates into electoral trust.

"The question for Matiang'i is not whether he can run an institution," one senior Nairobi political analyst said. "The question is whether Ken-

yans are ready to hand him the country. That is a much harder sell, and 2027 will tell us whether the answer is yes."

The political landscape into which Matiang'i now leads Jubilee is complex and fluid. President William Ruto is defending a first term that has been marked by economic pressure, a rising cost of living and public protests, most dramatically in June 2024, that rattled the administration. Ruto retains the formidable advantages of incumbency — resources, state machinery and the ability to shape the policy environment — but his support base in the Mount Kenya region has shown signs of erosion, and the political mood in parts of the country that backed him in 2022 is less settled than his allies publicly acknowledge.

That erosion is the opening Jubilee is trying to exploit. Much of Ruto's 2022 Mount Kenya support came from voters who were loyal to Uhu-

ru's political network and who broke from Uhuru's explicit endorsement of Raila Odinga at the ballot box. Many of those voters backed Ruto as the available alternative, not as a statement of permanent allegiance. Matiang'i, carrying Uhuru's blessing, is positioned to make a direct argument to those voters: that the leadership they trusted under Uhuru is now available to them again, in a new form, through a figure who served that administration at its most consequential moments.

Whether that argument succeeds depends on factors that yesterday's ceremony alone cannot determine. Matiang'i must navigate the United Opposition coalition, a broad grouping that includes Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party and other formations, each with its own ambitions and its own calculations about the coalition's eventual presidential flagbearer. Managing that coalition — full of formidable personalities and competing regional interests — will test Matiang'i's political instincts in ways no ministerial posting ever did.

People's Party leader Ndindi Nyoro was among the first to congratulate Matiang'i publicly, also thanking Uhuru for what he described as a peaceful transfer of power. "Many thanks to President Uhuru Kenyatta for the many years he has shaped the politics of our country and led the way on peaceful transfer of power," Nyoro said — words that carried their own political undertone, positioning the handover as part of a broader culture of democratic transition that Ruto's opponents are keen to contrast with what they describe as the current administration's approach to power.

Yesterday's event was a ceremony. But it was also the opening move in Kenya's most consequential electoral battle in a generation. Uhuru built Jubilee, won two presidential elections with it and now hands it to the man he has chosen to carry it forward. Matiang'i has accepted the responsibility with humility, he said. Kenya will spend the next eleven months deciding whether humility is enough.

Marathon “When it comes to the Nairobi Standard Chartered Marathon, it is about the quality of the product — ensuring that the race is well planned,” Mwindi said.

Nairobi Standard Chartered Marathon sponsorship rises 17% to unlock KSh273m for vulnerable groups

Fifty-six companies backed this year’s race, channeling funds to women, youth and persons with disabilities through the Standard Chartered Foundation

BY James Murimi
@themtkenyatimes

Corporate backing for the Nairobi Standard Chartered Marathon has grown sharply, with sponsorship rising 17 per cent to 56 companies and unlocking approximately KSh273 million for programmes targeting women, young people and persons with disabilities.

The figures mark a significant expansion in the marathon’s role beyond athletics, with businesses increasingly treating the annual race as a vehicle for structured social investment.

Standard Chartered Bank Head of Corporate Affairs Joyce Kibe said yesterday that funds raised through this year’s sponsorship would be directed to the Standard Chartered Foundation, which

supports initiatives aimed at improving opportunities for underserved groups.

“The marathon has attracted 56 sponsors this year, a 17 per cent increase from 2025, raising about KSh273 million that will be channelled to the Standard Chartered Foundation towards supporting women, youth and persons with disabilities,” Kibe said.

David Mwindi, chairman of the Standard Chartered Nairobi



KWAL’s Commercial Director, Alice Mwalimo, leads the team in handing over a KES 10 million cheque to Standard Chartered’s Head of Corporate Affairs, Brand & Marketing (CABM) for Kenya & Africa, Joyce Kibe (far left), and Standard Chartered Nairobi Marathon Local Organizing Committee member David Mwindi (far right), in support of the 23rd edition of the race. The marathon has received a total of KES 273 million in sponsorship and partner support.

Marathon Local Organising Committee, said organisers were focused on delivering a professionally run event that meets the expectations of both participants and sponsors. “When it comes to the Nairobi Standard Chartered Marathon, it is about the quality

of the product — ensuring that the race is well planned,” Mwindi said. Kenya Wine Agencies Limited Commercial Director Alice Mwalimo was among corporate representatives at yesterday’s briefing. With 56 sponsors now at-

tached to the event, the marathon has positioned itself as one of Nairobi’s more significant intersections of sport, corporate engagement and social investment. Registration for this year’s race remains open.

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The Urban areas and Cities Act No. 13 of 2011, Sec 22 and 2nd schedule captures “Right of Participation by Residents in Affairs of their city or Urban Area”.

In view of the above, you are hereby invited for a public participation to be held at Deputy Commissioner’s Hall (DCC) on Friday 2nd October, 2026 at 09.00am.

Agenda

1. Registration
2. Opening prayer
3. Introductions
4. Welcoming Remarks
5. Sewer connection and management.
6. Disaster preparedness/El-Nino.
7. Solid Waste Management.
8. Vote of Thanks
9. Closing Prayer

Kind regards,

Ms. B. Wairimu Gicheha

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22 SEP 2026

MURANG'A COUNTY GOVERNMENT

TEDx talk What if I had delivered the same talk, posted it online, and despite all the preparation, conviction and substance behind it, only 10 or 20 people had ever watched it?

When everyone can speak, who will get heard?

In the age of the algorithm, visibility has become a privilege — and we are only beginning to understand what that means for truth, credibility and the voices that matter

BY Daniel Tusiimukye Kabaasa

@themtkenytimes

Last night, a TEDx talk I delivered crossed 10,000 views on YouTube in less than two weeks. This morning, I sat with that number for a while and reflected on how much luck had played a part. A talk that took months of preparation, thought and no small amount of courage to deliver had found an audience far beyond the room where I gave it. It had travelled across Uganda and beyond, reaching people I may never meet.

But then a harder question came to me: what if I had not been lucky?

What if I had delivered the same talk, posted it online, and despite all the preparation, conviction and substance behind it, only 10 or 20 people had ever watched it? Would the ideas have been less valuable? Would the experience I was sharing have become less relevant simply because an algorithm had decided not to distribute it? The thought made something very clear: in an age where everyone can speak, being heard is becoming a privilege of its own.

We have entered an era in which almost anyone with a smartphone can become a publisher, commentator, broadcaster or storyteller. The barriers that once stood between an individual and an audience have largely fallen away. You no longer need a printing press to share your thoughts, a television studio to broadcast an opinion or a newspaper column to reach thousands. You can record a video from your bedroom,

write from a moving taxi, livestream an event or publish your views before breakfast.

The internet has democratised speech, and that is an extraordinary thing. A young person with an idea can build an audience without waiting for an institution to grant them permission. A small business can tell its own story. An independent writer can find readers. An expert can share knowledge directly with the public. People who would previously have had no platform at all can now reach thousands — sometimes millions.

But the same system that gave everyone a microphone has created a different problem: an overwhelming amount of noise. There are only so many hours in a day, only so many posts we can read, only so many videos we can watch, only so many opinions we can genuinely absorb. Everyone is talking. Everyone is publishing. Everyone is competing for the same scarce resource: attention.

The question has therefore shifted. It is no longer simply, “Who has something to say?” Almost everyone does. The more important question is: who will get heard?

For generations, journalism was built around institutions. Newspapers had editors. Radio stations had producers. Television newsrooms had gatekeepers whose job was, at least in principle, to determine what was accurate, newsworthy and worth placing before an audience. The digital age disrupted that model. Today, the gatekeeper can be an algorithm. The editor can be a trending page. The front page

can be whatever appears on your screen when you wake up.

This has created real opportunities, but it has also complicated how we decide what deserves our attention. A carefully researched article can sit beside an unverified claim. A scientist’s explanation can appear next to a rumour. A journalist who has spent days verifying a story can find themselves competing with someone who spent 30 seconds posting an unverified opinion.

The audience is now left to decide what deserves attention — and attention is not always awarded according to merit. Sometimes it goes to timing. Sometimes to personality. Sometimes to controversy or novelty or emotion. And increasingly, it depends on whether an algorithm decides your content is worth putting in front of someone else.

That is where luck enters the conversation.

My TEDx experience made this particularly clear. I could control the preparation. I could control the message and the delivery. But once the talk was published, what happened next was no longer entirely in my hands. I could not personally place it in front of every person who might benefit from it. I could only put it out there.

There are thousands of people producing thoughtful work every day whose ideas never travel far. Researchers whose findings remain buried. Writers whose essays are read by a handful of people. Entrepreneurs whose innovations receive no attention. Speakers whose messages never escape



Daniel Tusiimukye Kabaasa

the room. And then there are people who happen to find the right audience at the right moment and suddenly reach millions. The difference is not always quality. Sometimes it is distribution. Sometimes it is timing. Sometimes it is simply luck.

That distinction matters because we risk confusing visibility with significance. A post with a million views is not automatically more truthful than one with a thousand. A person with 100,000 followers does not automatically know more than someone with 500. Something trending is not necessarily important. Something that receives little attention is not necessarily unimportant.

This may be one of the deeper challenges of the digital age. We have grown so accustomed to measuring reach that we sometimes forget to measure value. Views, followers, likes and shares are easy to count. But some of the most meaningful things are not the ones that generate the largest numbers.

So who should we listen to? Not simply the loudest voice in the room, or the post that has been shared the most. We should listen to people who bring clarity, credibility and purpose to what they say — people whose words are supported by knowledge, experience and a track record that

gives us reason to trust them. In a world where content can be produced in seconds, credibility matters more than ever. The ability to publish something does not make it true, just as the ability to speak does not make someone an authority.

We should also pay attention to people who understand the value of listening. The best communicators are not always those who speak the most. They are often those who understand that communication is a two-way relationship — who listen to the people they are addressing, understand their questions and make room for other voices.

And perhaps we need to rediscover the value of saying something worth someone’s time. In a crowded information environment, clarity matters. Substance matters. Purpose matters. The problem is not that too many people have voices. The problem is that we have not yet learned how to navigate a world in which all those voices are speaking at once.

That responsibility does not rest only with those who speak. It also rests with those who listen. We must become better consumers of information — asking where a claim comes from, distinguishing opinion from evidence, resisting the urge to believe something simply because it

has been repeated thousands of times, and equally resisting the impulse to dismiss something because it has not gone viral.

The digital revolution gave us something previous generations could only imagine: the ability to speak directly to the world. But it also gave the world an unprecedented volume of speech. We have moved from a time when access to a platform was the greatest obstacle, to a time when attention is the scarce resource.

The question is no longer whether you can publish. You can. The question is whether what you publish is clear enough to understand, credible enough to trust and meaningful enough to remember.

I am grateful that my talk reached 10,000 people in less than two weeks. But perhaps the greater lesson is not the number. It is the reminder that behind every view is a person — someone who gave a few minutes of their life, who chose, among millions of competing things, to listen.

In a world where everyone can speak, perhaps that is the privilege worth valuing most. Not simply having a voice. We already have that. The greater challenge — and perhaps the greater responsibility — is to have something worth hearing.

Politics Uhuru said his administration did everything possible to support Raila's presidential bid and remains convinced Raila won

Uhuru's 2022 election claim: What really happened?

BY Collins Kibet
@themkenyatimes

The former president says Raila won and that he knows "how things went down" — but without evidence, the statement raises more questions than it answers

By Collins Kibet

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta has reopened one of Kenya's most contested political questions by declaring that Raila Odinga won the 2022 presidential election, adding that "we know how things went down." The statement has revived memories of an election that divided political opinion, generated intense public debate and ended with the Supreme Court upholding William Ruto's victory. Coming from a former president directly involved in the political environment surrounding that vote, the remarks are likely to attract renewed scrutiny of what happened before, during and after polling day.

Uhuru said his administration did everything possible to support Raila's presidential bid and remains convinced Raila won. He also questioned how Azimio la Umoja could secure substantial victories in parliamentary and gubernatorial contests while failing to capture the presidency. The remarks raise legitimate political questions, though they must be distinguished from the official electoral and judicial record.

That record tells a different story. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission declared Ruto the winner with 7,176,141 votes — 50.49 per cent — against Raila's 6,942,930 votes, representing 48.85 per cent. The margin was narrow, making it one of Kenya's most competitive presidential contests. Raila and other petitioners challenged the result before the Supreme Court, raising

questions about the conduct and management of the election. The court considered the evidence and concluded that the allegations had not been sufficiently demonstrated to warrant overturning the result. Legally, the matter was settled.

But Uhuru's remarks introduce a distinction that matters: the difference between a legal conclusion and a political interpretation of an election. Courts determine disputes on the basis of evidence presented within a constitutional framework. Political leaders may continue to hold different views. Uhuru's statement does not change the official result, but it raises the question of whether he possesses information or perspectives not previously made public.

Which brings Kenya to the central question: what exactly does Uhuru mean when he says he knows how things went down? Is he referring to political manoeuvres before the election? Disagreements within coalitions? Concerns about tallying or the transmission of votes? Or is he expressing a political interpretation of an election he believed should have produced a different outcome? Without further explanation or evidence, Kenyans are left to decide for themselves.

The question carries weight beyond political point-scoring. Elections are not merely about politicians — they are about millions of citizens determining who will govern them. When questions about an election remain alive years after the votes have been counted, they erode public confidence in democratic institutions. That erosion is a national problem, regardless of which side benefits from the doubt.

The 2022 election also illustrated how rapidly political alliances can shift. Uhuru, who had served two terms along-

side Ruto, eventually backed Raila after their relationship fractured. Ruto built the Kenya Kwanza coalition around a "hustler" narrative aimed at ordinary citizens. The contest became more than a competition between two individuals — it reflected competing alliances, economic messages and competing visions for the country's direction.

The aftermath deepened the tensions. Disagreement among some electoral commissioners over the presidential results, the subsequent legal challenge and sustained public debate over the tallying process all contributed to an atmosphere in which many Kenyans questioned different aspects of the election. Yet the constitutional mechanisms for resolving presidential disputes functioned, and the Supreme Court delivered its determination.

That legal history does not make Uhuru's latest statement politically irrelevant. Former presidents occupy a particular position in national life, often carrying institutional knowledge that ordinary citizens do not have access to. When a former head of state suggests there is more to an election than the public knows, questions naturally follow. The responsibility then lies with those making such claims to provide clarity and, where appropriate, evidence.

The timing is also notable. Kenya is moving toward another general election in 2027 and memories of 2022 remain politically live. Revisiting the previous contest without evidence risks deepening divisions. But an honest examination of past electoral weaknesses can also create space for reform — and a functioning democracy should be capable of doing both.

For millions of Kenyans, the more important issue is not who claims to have won. It is whether citizens can trust the



Former President Uhuru Kenyatta

process. Every voter should be confident their vote was properly recorded, accurately tallied and that disputes would be handled fairly. Democracy becomes fragile when citizens believe outcomes are determined somewhere beyond the ballot box.

Uhuru's statement leaves Kenya with a question that extends well beyond the personalities of Ruto and Raila: what lessons has the country actually drawn from 2022, and what must change before 2027? The answer cannot be another round of accusations between competing camps. Kenya needs stronger electoral transparency, credible verification mechanisms, effective oversight and institutions that can communicate clearly with the public. Electoral technology should be auditable, and tallying procedures should be transparent enough to withstand scrutiny.

Political leaders also carry a responsibility. Claims about manipulation or hidden events should not become political slogans. Where evidence exists, it should be presented through appropriate institutions. Where it does not, leaders should be careful not to generate unnecessary suspicion around democratic

processes. Political disagreements are inevitable. Public confidence in elections is a national interest that belongs to no single party.

Kenya cannot change the outcome of 2022. The result was declared, challenged and upheld. But the country can examine the events surrounding that election, identify what worked, what did not, and act on the findings before the next vote.

Uhuru's remarks have re-

opened an old wound. They also present an opportunity. Kenya's democracy should not be defined by what politicians say after elections. It should be strengthened by systems that allow citizens to know, with confidence, how their votes were counted and why the final result was reached. The real test is not whether politicians can reopen the past. It is whether Kenya can learn from it.



Gen Z Which raises a question worth sitting with. Have young people — Gen Z in particular — stopped caring about the news, or have they simply changed where they go to find it?

Maybe Gen Z did not stop consuming news. Maybe news stopped looking like news

BY Hadassah Karangu
@themkenyaintimes

From the 7pm bulletin to TikTok, Instagram and X, Kenya's young people have not abandoned current affairs — they have simply changed the door they walk through

By Hadassah Karangu

There was a time when the evening news was something close to a family ritual. At 7pm, the television would be switched on and the living room would go quiet as households waited to hear what had happened across the country. Others caught up through the morning radio, a purchased newspaper or the evening bulletin. Being informed had a familiar routine, a recognisable shape.

That shape has changed.

For many young Kenyans today, the television is no longer the first stop when they want to know what is happening. The radio may be playing somewhere in the background, but it is rarely the primary source. Instead, the first thing many young people reach for when they wake up is their phone. They scroll through TikTok, check Instagram, open X, scan WhatsApp statuses and group chats. Before breakfast, they may have already encountered political debates, economic news, sports updates, international events and footage of something that happened somewhere in the country overnight.

Which raises a question worth sitting with. Have young people — Gen Z in particular — stopped caring about the news, or have they simply changed where they go to find it?

The evidence suggests the latter. Perhaps Gen Z did not stop consuming news. Perhaps news stopped looking like news.

The traditional understanding of news was closely tied to institutions. Television stations, radio stations, newspapers and professional journalists decided what deserved public attention and delivered it at a set time. People waited for the news to come to them. That relationship no longer holds.

News can now find a young person in the middle of something entirely unrelated. Someone scrolling TikTok for entertainment may come across a short video explaining a political development. A person opening Instagram to look at photographs may encounter a breaking story. Someone checking X may discover that a major national event is already being discussed tens of thousands of times before they have seen a single television bulletin.

News is no longer necessarily something we go looking for. Sometimes it finds us.

This is where digital platforms and content creators have fundamentally altered the media landscape. Popular pages and digital communities have become part of the information environment in which young people live. For many, these are where a story first surfaces — before they search for further detail elsewhere. A young person might see a headline on a social media page, watch a short video explaining it, discuss it with friends and eventually arrive at reporting from a mainstream outlet. The journey to the news has changed, even

when the destination is the same.

But there is a distinction that cannot be overlooked. Information is not the same as journalism.

Social media has made it possible for almost anyone with a smartphone and a connection to become a source of information. A person at the scene of an event can record and share it within seconds. A content creator can explain a complicated issue to thousands from their bedroom. A trending post can reach an enormous audience before a

For many young Kenyans today, the television is no longer the first stop when they want to know what is happening. The radio may be playing somewhere in the background, but it is rarely the primary source. Instead, the first thing many young people reach for when they wake up is their phone. They scroll through TikTok, check Instagram, open X, scan WhatsApp statuses and group chats. Before breakfast, they may have already encountered political debates, economic news, sports updates, international events and footage of something that happened somewhere in the country overnight.



Gen Z

newsroom has finished verifying the details.

That is a genuine democratisation of access, and it has created opportunities that previous generations did not have.

It has also created a serious problem.

The same phone that can deliver accurate information can deliver rumours, manipulated footage, misleading headlines and outright falsehoods. On social media, the most popular story is not necessarily the most accurate one. A dramatic headline attracts views. A shocking video gets shared thousands of times. A controversial opinion generates more engagement than a carefully verified report. The algorithm is not designed to ensure that people receive what they genuinely need. It is designed to keep them watching, clicking, sharing and coming back.

As a result, two young people can open the same application on the same morning and experience entirely different versions of events. One sees politics. Another sees entertainment. Another sees sport. Someone else spends the morning watching comedy without encountering a single significant national story — and yet feels informed because they were online.

This is where the conversation becomes more complex than the familiar complaint that Gen Z does not watch the news.

Young people may not be less interested in what is happening around them. They may simply have different expectations about how information should reach them. They want speed. They want

visuals. They want explanation. They want to comment, question and participate. They do not want to wait until 7pm to find out what happened at noon.

Traditional media cannot afford to dismiss that as indifference. The audience has changed. The technology has changed. The habits have changed. The way journalism reaches people must change with them.

This is not an argument that traditional journalism has become irrelevant. In fact, the opposite may be closer to the truth. When information is everywhere, verification becomes more important, not less. A journalist's job is not simply to be first to post something. It is to verify, contextualise, attribute and hold to account. It is to distinguish between what is known, what is alleged and what has not yet been established. That discipline matters most precisely when a misleading post can travel across a country in minutes.

Young people need more than access to information. They need media literacy — the habit of asking: who is saying this, where did it come from, has it been verified, is this fact or opinion, what evidence exists and, perhaps most usefully, what is missing?

The challenge is not that young Kenyans use TikTok, Instagram, X or WhatsApp to stay informed. The challenge is whether they can navigate those platforms without surrendering entirely to what the platforms decide they should believe.

That challenge matters beyond media. Kenya's young

population is not simply a future audience. It is an active constituency. Young people will vote, build businesses, enter leadership, shape public conversation and raise the next generation. What they know, what they believe and how they form those beliefs has consequences for the country.

Perhaps the older Kenyan sitting in a living room watching the 7pm bulletin and the young person lying on a hostel bed scrolling through TikTok are not as different as they appear. Both are trying to answer the same basic question: what is happening in the world around me? The difference is the door they use to find out.

For one generation, that door is television, radio and print. For another, it is TikTok, Instagram, X, YouTube and WhatsApp. The newsroom may still exist, but the audience has moved.

Gen Z did not abandon the news. The news changed its language, its format and its location, and followed them into their phones. The real challenge for journalism is not persuading young people to return to the television at 7pm. It is reaching them where they already are, while ensuring that speed never entirely replaces accuracy, popularity never replaces truth and entertainment never becomes a substitute for the work of reporting.

The audience is already scrolling. The question is what it will find when it gets there.

The Leaking Elixir



Moaning....
A rusted tap stood
isolated
Tickling sound ...
nobody heard
Everyone is busy moving
without knowing the move.
A kid neared

The tap felt the warmth of love
Began to predict the futureless future.
The young lips lispd sans knowing the earth is
being baked
Hours rolled by
The hunting parents cursed the roasting Sun and
saved the kid.

Raj Ganesh

Dr. K.R.GANESAN
BLOCK RESOURCE TEACHER EDUCATOR
BLOCK RESOURCE CENTRE,
GOBICHETTIPALAYAM
ERODE Dt.
TAMILNADU, INDIA

Resilience: Our Silent Strength



Struggle! Struggle! Struggle!
Though I find many hurdles,
I don't wriggle out from my side.

Shine with struggles
And kick out the hidden pebbles.

Hard to survive in these hot waves.
Not only hot but also with a tinge of betrayal

dances.

Oh! I hit the bull's eye.
If I say it louder,
There comes a big snag with silent sound.

Wake-up! Wake-up! Wake-up!
To shoot up any barriers.

Struggle! Struggle! Struggle!
It's an unstoppable hurdle.

So, Wake-up! Wake-up! Wake-up!
Always stay with vigil eyes.

M. DEVIKA
PGT ENGLISH & CREATIVE WRITER
FIITJEE GLOBAL SCHOOL, CHENNAI
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Think less live more



Over thinking is not good for health
It prevent our growth and happiness.
Over thinking always creates problems and sets
us to be stressful.

Life is in our hand
We have the responsibility to make it happy or
sad.
Move to the greatest achievements

And try to reach the goal.

Search the happiest moments and allow
happiness to enter our lives.
Life is full of challenges and surprises we have to
face every situations.

Accept the new ways of difficulties and
challenges with courage and confidence.
Stop over thinking and start living to lead a
successful life.

Mrs. Q. PATRICIA,
Creative Writers,
Cuddalore.

Some People's Roles in My Life



Some people have important roles in my life.
My parents gave me a soul and introduced the
world to me.
They are my visible Gods and my role models.
They teach me everything, both good and bad.
I am grateful to my parents forever.
Without parents, not a single soul would be in the
world.

All my family members bring love to me and teach
me how to handle different situations in life. My
friends also play an important role in my life.
My relatives are beautiful souls who make my life
beautiful during every function and occasion.
They indicate the good and bad things in my
deeds.

My husband is my backbone.

He gives me independence and supports me in
every situation.
I feel that women who have a husband like this are
very lucky. His support gives me confidence and
strength to move forward in life.

Teachers are like second parents. They teach me
from obedience to all the lessons of life.
They are also like visible Gods.

My life is not only about me; all my loved ones are
a part of me. Everyone has played an important
role in my life.
So, I like to live with all my lovable souls.

Life depends on family, relatives, teachers,
friends, and all professionals.
Everyone beautifully plays their role in each
other's lives.

Each person leaves a special footprint in our
journey of life, and I am grateful to all the lovable
souls who have made my life meaningful.

__G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
BlockVillupuramd

Be Like a Safety Pin



Be like a safety pin,
Small and quiet, yet strong within.
When life pulls pieces far apart,
Hold them together with a gentle heart.

You need not shine,
You need not be grand;
Sometimes strength is simply
A helping hand.

When someone is hurting,

Be there with care;
When someone feels broken,
Remind them you're there.

A safety pin makes no sound,
Yet keeps loose pieces safely bound.
So be humble, kind, and true—
Let your strength bring others through.

Be small in pride,
Strong in heart,
And be the one
Who keeps things from falling apart.

D. Renukagandhi
GHSS, Mullainagar,
Hosur, Krishnagiri D.T.

Knowledge is not power until it is applied



Knowledge is not power until it is applied.
Knowledge is not power, but it's a very wonderful
source.
Knowledge gained from various sources,
When applied, becomes a violent power.

Knowledge is for application,
And application is for human usage.
Knowledge is wasted if it is a stagnant pond out
of usage;
Sometimes it becomes toxic too.

Knowledge and application go hand in hand.
Using your knowledge for the universe makes you
unique forever.
A man with vast knowledge becomes a powerful
source;
He can walk with great pride on the earth,
Gets more name and fame,
With overflowing economic consistency—
Only if getting used with it.

Once executed to the world,
His knowledge rules the world with popularity and
power,
Building castles with comfort around it.

V.R. Vijayalakshmi
Graduate Teacher, CW Writers Group
Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu, India

Knowledge isn't power until it's applied.



If you want to be successful do this first
If you want to be successful.
Keep your goals in secret.
Never talk about your plan.
Don't show your work for perceive.
Keep your goals with heart to avoid nuisance.

Don't allow anyone to interrupt you.
Wherever you go think about your goal
Try to work for your goal Without show.
keep your goals as a pearl in the Shell.

N. SELVARANI
B. T. ASST.
GHS SAKKARAKKOTTAI
RAMANATHAPURAM
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Rains That question presses harder as the Kenya Meteorological Service warns of enhanced rainfall and strong winds across several counties between September 22 and 28

When the rains come, Kenya must be ready

The latest weather warnings are not simply about umbrellas and muddy roads — they are an early test of whether Kenya can turn information into action before families pay the price

BY Levis Wangamati
@themkenyatimes

At 5am on Tuesday, while much of Eldoret was still asleep, flames were already consuming a dormitory at Hill Girls High School. Students were away for morning preparations when the fire broke out, leaving the roof destroyed and belongings reduced to ash. No injuries were reported, but the scene captured something Kenya relearns repeatedly: emergencies do not announce the exact moment they will arrive, and they do not wait for institutions to finish preparing. Hours later, attention shifted from smoke rising over a school to clouds gathering across the country. The danger had changed. The question had not: are we



Floods

prepared before the crisis arrives? That question presses harder as the Kenya Meteorological Service warns of enhanced rainfall and strong winds across several counties between September 22 and 28.

Western counties including Kakamega, Vihiga and Bungoma face the heaviest rainfall. The Central Highlands and Nairobi are also in the forecast. Strong winds add further risk to communities already vulnerable to flooding

and crumbling infrastructure. The warning is not a declaration that every home will flood. It is something more valuable: advance notice. Kenya has been given time — and time is precisely what disaster victims rarely have.

The country has developed an unfortunate habit of treating weather warnings as announcements rather than instructions. The alert gets shared on WhatsApp, someone complains about the cold and life continues as before. Then the river rises, the bridge disappears, a hillside gives way and families ask why nobody saw it coming. Sometimes we did see it coming. The problem was not a lack of information. It was the distance between the warning and the action. County governments must close that distance before the heaviest rains arrive. Drainage channels should be cleared now. Bridges and culverts need inspection. Vulnerable settlements must be identified and emergency teams positioned where they can respond quickly. Communities near rivers and unstable slopes should know where to move if conditions deteriorate. Emergency shelters should not become a topic of discussion only after families have lost their homes. Urban Kenya needs no fresh reminder of what heavy rain does to poor drainage. Every serious Nairobi downpour exposes familiar failures — blocked channels, inadequate

stormwater systems and roads that quickly become dangerous. Rain falls from the sky, but the scale of damage on the ground is shaped by human decisions made long before the clouds arrived. Farmers need usable information, not dramatic headlines. Which crops suit expected conditions? Which roads to market will become impassable? The value of a forecast is measured not by whether it predicts rain, but by whether people can translate it into better decisions beforehand. The knowledge already exists. Meteorologists are watching the patterns. County officials know their flood-prone areas. Residents know which rivers rise first. Kenya does not need to rediscover these vulnerabilities every season. It needs to convert what it already knows into preparation, communication and faster response. The rains may be beyond our control. Preparedness is not. When disaster finally knocks, the most painful question is rarely whether anyone knew. It is why nobody acted when they did.

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PwD The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 16% of the world's population—1.3 billion people—live with significant disability

When Rights exist on paper but barriers remain: Kenya must end the second-class treatment of Persons with Disabilities



BY Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo

fkipchelimo@yahoo.com

There is a painful contradiction at the heart of Kenya's disability agenda: the Constitution recognises equality, legislation provides affirmative action, public procurement reserves opportunities for disadvantaged groups, yet millions of persons with disabilities continue to encounter barriers that make those rights difficult to exercise. The problem is no longer simply the absence of laws. It is the distance between what Kenya promises and what PWDs experience: rights have been recognised, but the conditions necessary to enjoy those rights have not been sufficiently dismantled.

Globally, disability is not a marginal phenomenon. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 16% of the world's population—1.3 billion people—live with significant disability. Earlier WHO/World Bank estimates put the figure at about 15%. This is a substantial proportion of humanity. Yet in Kenya, disability policy too often remains framed around welfare, charity and small interventions rather than economic citizenship, equal participation and removal of structural barriers.

The debate around a 5% disability quota illustrates the contradiction. Five per cent is sometimes presented as an affirmative benchmark, but it should not become a ceiling on rights or a substitute for substantive equality. The Constitution's Article 54 requires progressive imple-



Persons with Disabilities

mentation of at least 5% representation of persons with disabilities in elective and appointive bodies. The current legal framework also contains affirmative-action obligations. The crucial question is whether such provisions are being treated as minimum guarantees or convenient ceilings.

The procurement situation is even more revealing. Kenya's procurement law requires at least 30% of procurement budgetary allocations to be reserved for enterprises owned by women, youth, persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. The e-GP system itself incorporates the 30% reservation mechanism. Yet that 30% is a collective pool, not a 30% PWD entitlement. At a glance, PWDs still remain disadvantaged with more AGPO allocated to Youth and Women. Procurement barriers with its attendant technologies and skills required to competently bid in an environment with a hostile environment for disabled persons.

And the actual utilisation ex-

poses an uncomfortable gap. A recent official evaluation reported that, from a total procurement budget of KSh993.5 billion, only KSh77.2 billion was awarded to special groups under AGPO—approximately 26% of the amount that should have represented the 30% reservation. Of the KSh77.2 billion, PWD enterprises received KSh9.4 billion, or 12%, compared with 48% for women and 33% for

Globally, disability is not a marginal phenomenon. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 16% of the world's population—1.3 billion people—live with significant disability. Earlier WHO/World Bank estimates put the figure at about 15%. This is a substantial proportion of humanity.



youth. The same evaluation found that none of the 395 assessed institutions complied fully with the 30% allocation. This is not merely an accounting problem. It is an equality problem.

A PWD entrepreneur cannot be said to be competing on equal footing merely because a tender portal technically allows them to submit a bid. What happens when the information is inaccessible? When financing is unavailable? When premises are inaccessible? When transport is prohibitive? When assistive technology is unaffordable? When tender requirements unintentionally exclude small PWD enterprises? When payments are delayed and the business lacks the working capital to survive? Equality without barrier removal can become equality in name only.

Government frequently invokes international best practice when defending administrative reforms, fiscal policies and institutional changes. There is nothing wrong with learning from the world. But the same principle must ap-

ply to disability inclusion. If international standards recognise disability as a human-rights and development issue, Kenya should be equally ambitious in adapting those standards to its own governance and economic systems.

At county level, the contrast can become particularly painful. In Nakuru, PWDs recently protested delays surrounding the county's KSh27.5 million Persons with Disabilities Fund for 2025/26. The county subsequently announced that the fund would be operationalised and that a monitoring framework would be established.

The practical answer is not another declaration. Government should establish a measurable national disability inclusion compact with annual targets for employment, procurement, accessibility, enterprise financing, political representation, education, health and assistive technology with clear gaps indicated. Every ministry and county should publish a PWD inclusion scorecard showing allocations, beneficiaries, contracts

awarded, payments made and barriers removed. AGPO should publish PWD-specific procurement data rather than burying disability within a collective 30% category. Procurement systems should measure not merely tenders reserved but contracts actually awarded and paid.

We are appreciative to those who have placed their reputations, careers and even political ambitions on the line to speak for PWDs. We must recognise them without reservation. In Uasin Gishu, Hon. Regina Chumba and Hon. Kering have publicly championed disability rights, accessibility, employment and economic participation, including advocacy for sign-language interpretation and opportunities for PWDs. Their efforts—and those of many other disability advocates whose names may not appear in national headlines—should not be taken for granted. We appreciate you. We adore you. We admire you. We are taking note.

Counties should also ring-fence disability funds, publish disbursement schedules and subject them to participatory monitoring by representative PWD organisations. Accessibility must become a mandatory budget line at project-design stage, not an afterthought. But government action alone will not transform this landscape. PWDs must unite.

Not in anger against society, but in organised pursuit of constitutional citizenship. Disability organisations, CBOs, entrepreneurs, professionals, caregivers, women, youth and older PWDs must stop operating as isolated islands. There is strength in unity, credibility in evidence and power in collective civic action. Those who have been pushed to the margins must use whatever strength remaining—not to seek pity, but to demand dignity, opportunity, accountability and equal citizenship.

Kenya has written enough promises. The next chapter must be about removing the barriers that make those promises inaccessible. PWDs deserve better. Kenya can do better. And together, they must insist that it does

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Universities This is not mere understaffing. It is a structural betrayal of the university's ancient purpose. Professors are not decorative titles or ceremonial elders

The professorial mirage: Kenya's universities drowning in students while the ivory tower stands empty



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

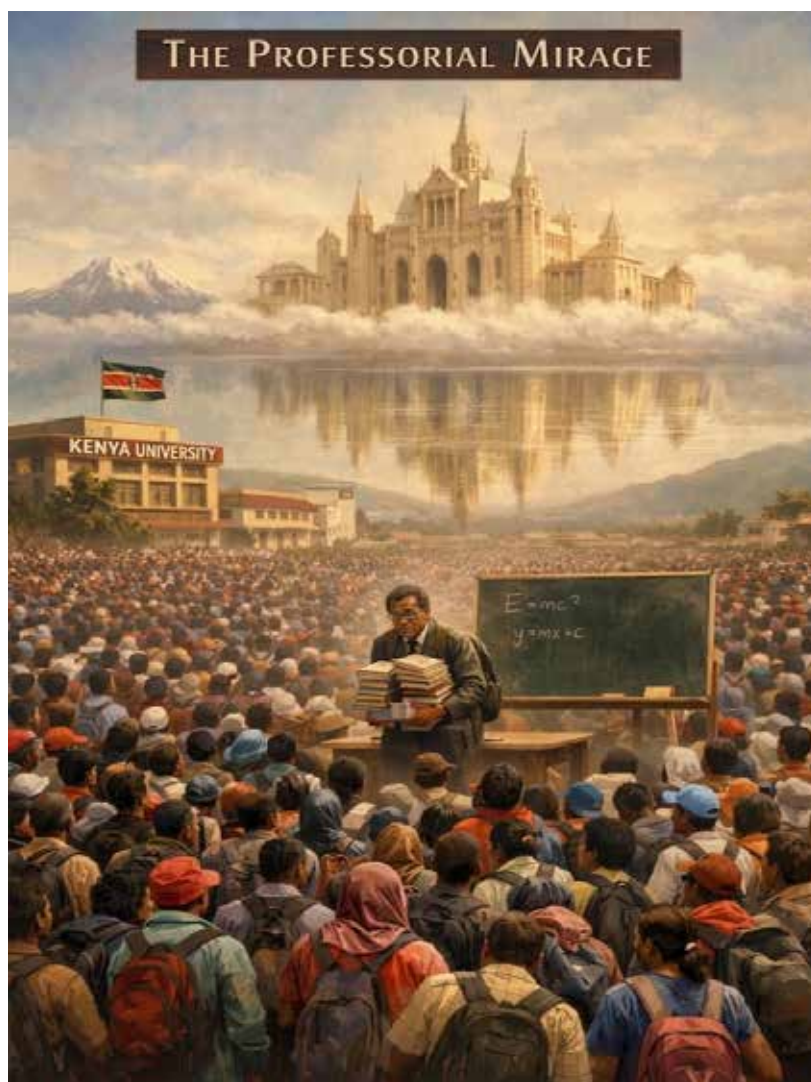
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Fewer than 600 full professors precisely 551 according to the Commission for University Education's latest figures stand as the apex of academic rank across Kenya's 90 universities, serving more than 700,000 students. That yields a ratio so grotesque it borders on the absurd: one professor for every 1,200-plus learners. South Africa, with roughly 4,034 professors for 1.1 million students, manages approximately 275 students per professor. Kenya's overall teaching staff-to-student ratio sits at 1:39, but the professorial layer the true custodians of advanced scholarship has been reduced to a thin, overstretched membrane. This is not a statistic. It is an indictment.

The numbers themselves accuse. Between 2023 and 2024, total teaching staff rose modestly from 14,349 to 15,383 a 7.2 percent increase while professors inched from 475 to 551. Lecturers still dominate, swelling from 6,052 to 6,627, the comfortable middle rank that carries the daily load. Public chartered universities saw their teacher-student ratio deteriorate from 40.77 to 44.36 as enrolment surged.

Private institutions improved theirs, but the national picture remains one of scarcity at the summit. Kamagambo Adventist University, newly granted interim authority as the 90th institution and the third Adventist university in the country, joins a system already starved of the very scholars who should define its intellectual character. We are expanding the classrooms while the masters of the craft remain missing.

This is not mere understaffing. It is a structural betrayal of the university's ancient purpose. Professors are not decorative titles or ceremonial elders. They are the living archive of a discipline, the ones who have



The professorial mirage

published extensively in rigorous journals, attracted research grants that fund laboratories and fieldwork, supervised the next generation of scholars to doctoral completion, and carried knowledge into the community through service that changes practice. They set the intellectual weather.

Without them, universities become teaching factories efficient at processing certificates, barren at generating original insight. The correlation is merciless: fewer professors mean fewer PhDs produced, weaker research cultures, thinner mentorship, and graduates who leave with skills but little capacity for independent thought. Kenya should be graduating thousands of doctorates annually to feed its knowledge economy; it produces a fraction of that need. The pipeline is choked at the source. History sharpens the irony. At in-

dependence, Kenya inherited a slender higher-education system and set about expanding it with visionary urgency. From a handful of institutions and a few thousand students, we have raced to 90 universities and hundreds of thousands of learners. Quantity became the political currency. New campuses, new charters, new programmes all announced with fanfare.

Nevertheless, the cultivation of the professoriate lagged, starved by chronic underfunding, delayed promotions, poor remuneration relative to the private sector or diaspora opportunities, and an environment that sometimes treats academic freedom as a negotiable luxury rather than the oxygen of scholarship. The result is a system that multiplies bodies while the minds that should lead them remain rare. We have built amphitheatres and left the stages empty of

virtuosos.

Consider the human cost. A senior lecturer carrying an impossible load cannot mentor with depth. A department without a professor struggles to attract external research funding or to supervise doctoral candidates who will themselves become the next professors. Students encounter knowledge second-hand, filtered through overworked mid-level staff rather than forged in the presence of those who have shaped the field.

The emotional toll is real: the quiet despair of the ambitious young academic who sees the promotion ladder as a mirage, the frustration of the student who never experiences the electrifying seminar led by a scholar of true distinction, the national loss when original research that could address Kenya's agricultural, health, climate, or governance challenges simply does not materialise at scale.

To become a professor in Kenya is no casual ascent. It demands a doctorate as foundation, then years of sustained excellence: a substantial body of peer-reviewed publications in reputable outlets, demonstrated teaching mastery, successful supervision of postgraduate students, competitive research grants won and managed, and measurable community or professional impact.

The milestones are deliberate and cumulative each paper, each graduate supervised, each grant secured is a brick in a personal cathedral of credibility. The rank is not bestowed for longevity alone; it is earned by distinguishing oneself across teaching, research, scholarship, and service. That such a rigorous path produces so few who complete it is itself evidence of systemic failure. The incentives are misaligned, the support structures frail, the recognition intermittent.

What, then, must be done and by whom? The government must treat the professoriate as strategic national infrastructure. Competitive remuneration, research endowment funds that are predictable rather than episodic, and clear, transparent promotion pathways free of bureaucratic choke-points are non-negotiable. The Commission for University Education must move beyond counting institutions and begin enforcing

meaningful thresholds for senior academic staff as a condition of continued accreditation and programme approval.

University councils and senates must prioritise internal capacity-building: accelerated, quality-assured promotion of deserving senior lecturers, aggressive recruitment of Kenyan scholars in the diaspora, and deliberate mentorship programmes that prepare the next cohort. Private universities, which have shown better staffing ratios in recent data, should be pressed to share best practices while public institutions receive the resources to close the gap. Civil society, professional associations, and industry must demand accountability not merely more graduates, but graduates shaped by genuine intellectual leadership.

The deeper insight is this: a nation that multiplies universities without multiplying professors is engaged in a form of educational theatre. It stages the appearance of progress while hollowing out the substance. Knowledge economies are not built by enrolment figures alone; they are built by the density of excellence at the highest levels of scholarship. When professors are rarer than reliable rainfall in a prolonged drought, the intellectual soil cracks. Correlation becomes causation: thin professorial ranks produce thin research output, which produces thin innovation, which leaves the broader economy dependent on imported ideas and exported talent.

This scarcity is not inevitable. Other African systems have faced similar pressures and responded with deliberate investment in academic careers. Kenya has the human material brilliant minds already in the system, many more waiting in the wings. What it lacks is the political will to treat the highest academic rank as a national priority rather than an afterthought.

The 551 professors currently carrying an impossible burden are not enough. They cannot be. The call is therefore categorical: expand the ranks with urgency, integrity, and resources commensurate to the ambition we claim for our universities. Anything less is to condemn another generation to an education that promises the sky while delivering only the ceiling of mediocrity. The ivory tower need not remain a mirage. But only deliberate, sustained action from every responsible actor will fill its empty thrones with the scholars Kenya so desperately needs.

The writer is a social commentator.

Health Ejersa’s approach is anchored on a clear philosophy: no single institution can solve the health supply challenge alone

Ejersa steers KEMSA towards a more resilient and responsive health supply chain

The KEMSA chief is building partnerships with DP World and AstraZeneca to secure medicines for millions of Kenyans depending on public health facilities



KEMSA Chief Executive Officer Dr. Waqo Dulacha Ejersa

BY John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Waqo Dulacha Ejersa, the chief executive of the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority, is reshaping how the country thinks about healthcare delivery — starting not at the hospital door, but at the supply chain that feeds it.

Under Ejersa’s leadership, KEMSA has been deepening strategic partnerships aimed at ensuring that essential medicines and health products reach facilities across Kenya reliably, efficiently and on time. The approach reflects a straightforward but often overlooked truth: quality healthcare is impossible without a supply chain capable of supporting it.

That thinking was on display when Ejersa, alongside KEMSA senior management, held discussions with DP World Kenya Managing Director Marseille Onyango and his team on ways to strengthen health product logistics, im-

prove resilience and build long-term sustainability into the supply system.

The engagement was not routine. It reflects a deliberate shift in how Ejersa is positioning KEMSA — less as a procurement agency moving commodities from warehouse to facility, and more as a strategic institution building an intelligent, responsive ecosystem in which technology, logistics, partnerships and sound management work together.

The discussions also brought in AstraZeneca regional leadership, represented by Alliance Director for Sub-Saharan Africa Amit Bhakri, underscoring the importance of public-private collaboration in expanding access to medicines for cancer and other non-communicable diseases. The timing is significant. Kenya faces a growing burden of non-communicable diseases, and patients need consistent, affordable access to essential treatments. KEMSA sits at a critical point in that chain.

Ejersa’s approach is anchored on a clear philosophy: no single institution can solve the health supply challenge alone. Collaboration is not ceremonial — it is operational. His administration is using partnerships to identify concrete solutions, exchange knowledge and adopt practices that can make health product distribution more dependable and more efficient.

Delivering on that requires more than adequate stock levels. It demands efficient procurement, dependable logistics, stronger demand forecasting, effective warehousing and distribution systems, and the institutional agility to respond when disruptions occur. These are the areas where Ejersa’s leadership has attracted attention — particularly his emphasis on building a KEMSA that can adapt to the changing needs of Kenya’s healthcare system.

His stewardship comes at a demanding moment. The health sector needs institutions that combine operational discipline with long-term

resilience. KEMSA’s performance is consequential — millions of Kenyans who rely on public health facilities depend on it getting this right.

By bringing together logistics specialists such as DP World Kenya and pharmaceutical leaders such as AstraZeneca, Ejersa is demonstrating what it looks like to draw on diverse expertise to address a complex national challenge. The partnerships open avenues for innovation, knowledge transfer and the adoption of more efficient approaches to moving health products across the country.

Resilience sits at the heart of his agenda. Health supply chains are vulnerable — to global logistics pressures, shifting demand, procurement constraints and unexpected disruptions. A resilient system must perform under normal conditions and adapt when they change. That is the institutional culture Ejersa is working to embed at KEMSA.

As Kenya advances its Universal Health Coverage ambitions, a dependable medical supply system is not optional — it is foundational. Health policies and programmes can only achieve their intended impact when facilities have the medicines and products required to serve patients. Ejersa has made that link between supply-chain excellence and health outcomes the defining thread of his leadership.

The engagements with DP World Kenya and AstraZeneca are therefore part of something larger than a round of stakeholder meetings. They represent a sustained effort to build a health-product ecosystem strong enough to serve Kenya today and equipped to meet the demands of tomorrow.

For KEMSA, the ambition is clear: optimal availability of quality, safe and affordable health products for every Kenyan who needs them. For Ejersa, the task is equally clear: provide the leadership to make it happen.

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Health The causes of stress and depression among teachers are many and closely linked. Perhaps the heaviest is the weight of the system itself

Mental health among teachers

The silent crisis in our classrooms: Why Kenya's teachers are breaking down and what must be done about it



By: Wanjohi P. Mugambi
@themtkenytimes

Teaching is often described as a noble profession — a calling that shapes the future of a nation. But behind the respect and the chalk dust lies a silent crisis that few people talk about. Today, many teachers are stressed, exhausted and depressed. They stand in front of classrooms smiling and delivering lessons, yet inside they are battling emotional fatigue, financial pressure and a deep sense of being unappreciated. Much attention has been paid to the mental health of learners. The mental health of the teacher entrusted with guiding those learners has been largely ignored. Yet a teacher who is not well cannot make learners well.

The causes of stress and depression among teachers are many and closely linked. Perhaps the heaviest is the weight of the system itself. The introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya, well-intentioned as it is, has dramatically increased the demands on teachers — more paperwork, more complex lesson planning, more assessment. A single teacher is expected to manage classes of more than 50 learners, prepare schemes of work, maintain individual records, assess each child separately and still show up for co-curricular activities. The working day does not end when the bell rings. It stretches deep into the night — marking books, filling out forms on the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development system. There is little time left for rest, family or personal growth.

Financial strain compounds the problem. Many teachers, particularly those in private schools or employed on Board of Management terms, earn salaries that cannot keep pace with the rising cost of living. Even those employed by the Teachers Service Commission carry heavy loads — loans, school fees for their own children, and the social expectation to maintain a certain standard of



Teacher

living. When a teacher is wondering how to pay rent, settle a loan from the Higher Education Loans Board, or afford medical care, while simultaneously being expected to be a role model, stress is not a possibility — it is a certainty. Frequent transfers and delocalisations make it worse, severing teachers from their families and the support networks that might otherwise sustain them.

Then there is social and professional pressure. Society expects teachers to be perfect — morally upright, academically rigorous, disciplinarians, counsellors and surrogate parents to hundreds of children at once. When learners fail, the teacher is blamed. When there is indiscipline, the teacher is blamed. When learners excel, the credit tends to go elsewhere. This chronic lack of appreciation, layered with difficult relationships with school administrators, increasingly hostile parents and learners exposed to drugs and disorder, breeds

helplessness. A teacher who is consistently disrespected cannot remain motivated.

Personal and emotional pressures make the situation worse. Many teachers are carrying private burdens — marital difficulties, health problems, grief — yet they are expected to leave all of that at the school gate. There is rarely space in a staffroom to say, “I am not doing well.” Counselling services for teachers are virtually non-existent. The TSC Wellness Unit exists on paper, but is inaccessible to the average teacher in Bondo, Turkana or the remoter parts of western Kenya. In the absence of support, teachers resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms — excessive alcohol, withdrawal from colleagues, or displacing frustration onto learners through harsh punishment.

The signs are often visible, though frequently overlooked. A stressed teacher is irritable and constantly tired, loses patience over minor

incidents and raises their voice in class. Absenteeism increases. Punctuality suffers. The passion that once defined their work fades. Physically, the toll shows up as persistent headaches, high blood pressure, ulcers and insomnia. Emotionally, withdrawal sets in — teachers stop contributing in staff meetings and speak disparagingly about the profession. In severe cases, prolonged depression leads to full burnout, resignation or, quietly and increasingly, thoughts of ending one's life — a trend that has been growing among civil servants in Kenya.

The consequences reach beyond the individual teacher. A stressed teacher cannot prepare well, cannot be creative in the classroom and cannot give learners the individual attention they need. The classroom becomes tense, and learners absorb that tension. Research shows that children taught by emotionally exhausted teachers perform poorly and

develop anxiety of their own. Teacher depression also drives turnover — experienced practitioners leaving the profession for business or other fields — leaving schools in a permanent state of shortage.

Addressing this crisis requires a broad response. The Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of Education must reduce unnecessary administrative burdens and review teacher-to-learner ratios to bring them within humane limits. Employing more teachers would ease the load on those already in service. Accessible, regular mental health support — not occasional workshops — must be available at sub-county level, where teachers can speak confidentially to professionals without fear of judgment or professional consequences. School heads must build environments where teachers can raise challenges without being seen as weak. Small things count: recognition, adequate rest, and meaningful involvement in decision-making restore dignity and morale.

Teachers themselves have a part to play. They need to understand that it is acceptable not to be well — and to seek help early rather than silently absorbing the damage. Building peer support networks, joining welfare groups, exercising, sleeping enough and creating clear boundaries between work and home life are all practical steps. Learning to decline excessive duties, managing time with intention, and finding joy outside the classroom — through farming, sport or faith — can help restore emotional balance. Communities and parents, too, must play their part by treating teachers as partners rather than adversaries.

The stress and depression affecting Kenya's teachers is a national issue. It threatens the very foundation of the country's education system. Quality education cannot be delivered by a person who is broken inside. A teacher is not a production machine measured by exam scores. A teacher is a human being — with emotions, needs and limits. Those who carry the weight of a classroom every day carry more than most people see. If Kenya takes care of its teachers, its teachers will take better care of its children. It is time to check on the teacher.

Resilience Life constantly presents difficulty. Deadlines pile up. Relationships fray. Work becomes overwhelming. Students strain under expectations

How writing builds resilience and strengthens the human mind

From cave markings to modern journals: Science shows that putting pen to paper does far more than communicate — it heals

BY Ashford Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Human beings have always written. From ancient cave markings to handwritten letters, journals, books, essays and digital messages, writing has been woven into human civilisation for as long as memory allows. Most people think of it primarily as a communication tool — a way to express ideas, share information, record history or complete tasks at school and work. Yet writing does something far deeper. Beyond communication, it shapes the brain, strengthens emotional health and builds the resilience that helps people navigate everyday life.

Life constantly presents difficulty. Deadlines pile up. Relationships fray. Work becomes overwhelming. Students strain under expectations. Teachers battle fatigue. Parents carry responsibilities that feel endless. Even small disappointments can accumulate into exhaustion. In such moments, many people search for solutions outside themselves, yet one of the most effective tools for coping often sits quietly within reach: writing.

Scientists and psychologists have increasingly found that writing changes how the brain processes experience. When people write down their thoughts, feelings, fears, frustrations or hopes, they are doing more than transferring words onto paper. They are organising experience in ways that help the brain make sense of emotion. Writing creates structure where confusion exists. It introduces clarity where uncertainty dominates. Human emotions can feel overwhelming because they exist as tangled experiences inside the mind. Anxiety, disappointment, anger, fear and stress often collide without order. Thoughts race faster than understanding. Writing interrupts that chaos. The simple act of translating feelings into words forces the brain to slow down, reflect and organise.

Psychological research on expressive writing has repeatedly shown that people who write about stressful experiences tend to report improved emotional wellbeing. Writing creates distance from painful situations. In-



Illustration

stead of carrying worry entirely in the mind, individuals place it onto paper, where it becomes easier to examine with some objectivity.

A student overwhelmed by examination pressure may find relief in writing down fears about failure. A teacher buried under professional responsibilities may gain perspective by keeping a journal. A parent navigating a difficult family situation may find clarity by recording thoughts privately. Writing transforms internal struggle into something visible — something that can be understood rather than merely endured.

The process changes brain function itself. Neuroscientists suggest that writing engages multiple regions of the brain associated with language, emotional regulation, decision-making and memory. When people name emotions through writing, they reduce the intensity of emotional reactions. Rather than operating purely from fear or frustration, they activate thinking processes that support reflection and problem-solving.

Consider someone who receives sharp criticism at work. Without reflection, the emotional reaction can lead to impulsive decisions or unnecessary conflict. Writing creates a pause between feeling and response. By describing the experience in words, the individual moves from

emotional reactivity toward a more measured perspective. The brain begins processing circumstances more clearly. Resilience grows through these repeated moments of thoughtful adaptation.

Many people misunderstand resilience. They assume it belongs to extraordinary individuals — those who have overcome dramatic adversity or survived hardship on a grand scale. Yet resilience often develops quietly, through everyday habits. It is not the absence of struggle. It is the ability to recover, adapt and keep moving despite difficulty. Writing strengthens precisely those abilities.

Consider the journal. It becomes more than a collection of thoughts over time. It becomes evidence of personal growth. When people return to earlier entries, they often make a quietly powerful discovery: problems that once felt crushing eventually passed. Challenges that seemed impossible became manageable. Growth happened gradually, almost without notice. That recognition builds confidence. Writing reminds people that difficult seasons do not last forever.

Teachers understand this reality particularly well. Education professionals carry immense emotional and professional demands — lesson planning, learner needs, assessment, curriculum delivery, administrative

expectations and classroom management all pressing at once. Many educators carry that weight quietly, without an outlet.

Writing offers them a genuine tool for resilience. Reflective writing helps teachers process classroom experiences constructively. Recording successful lessons builds confidence. Documenting difficult moments encourages honest problem-solving. Reflecting on learner progress reinforces purpose and meaning. Teachers who write consistently often discover patterns, insights and solutions that remain hidden in the rush of daily routine.

Students benefit just as profoundly. Young learners today face academic stress, social pressure, uncertainty about the future and emotional challenges at a scale previous generations did not experience in quite the same way. Encouraging writing habits develops far more than literacy. It develops emotional intelligence.

When learners journal about their experiences, reflect on their goals or write creatively, they strengthen self-awareness. Writing teaches them that emotions deserve examination rather than suppression. It creates a safe space for reflection. Creative writing, in particular, builds resilience through imagination and perspective-taking. Stories allow individuals to explore fears, possibili-

ties and solutions indirectly. Poetry offers emotional expression when direct communication feels too hard. Personal narratives help people understand their own lives more deeply.

Importantly, writing does not require perfection. Many people avoid it out of fear — of grammar mistakes, limited vocabulary or imperfect expression. But resilience-building writing is not about producing polished work. It is about honesty. A few handwritten sentences matter. A simple reflection matters. An unfinished journal entry matters. Even writing a list of worries before bed can reduce the mental burden of carrying them alone.

Writing by hand may offer additional benefits. Some studies suggest handwriting strengthens memory formation and deeper cognitive processing more effectively than typing. The slower pace encourages reflection. There is an intentionality to pen on paper that supports emotional processing in ways that screens sometimes do not. That said, digital journals, private documents and notes applications serve similar purposes. The method matters less than consistency.

Writing also teaches an essential truth about life: growth happens through revision. Writers return to drafts repeatedly — reorganising ideas, strengthening weak sections, improving clarity. Human growth follows a similar pattern. Mistakes become lessons. Failures become adjustments. Challenges become opportunities to learn. Writing mirrors resilience because both require persistence, both demand patience, and both recognise that progress matters far more than perfection.

In a world defined by speed, distraction and constant noise, writing offers something rare: space to think. Space to process. Space to heal. Space to grow.

Resilience does not emerge only during life's biggest crises. Sometimes it develops quietly — in notebooks, classroom reflections, unfinished paragraphs and private moments of honesty. Every sentence written during a difficult season is evidence of courage. Words do more than communicate thoughts. They strengthen minds. They build resilience. And sometimes, they help people discover that they are far stronger than they ever imagined.



Sports >> *The Real Madrid striker argues goals and records should speak louder than trophies as the 2026 Ballon d’Or race intensifies

Mbappé mounts Ballon d’Or campaign as individual brilliance takes centre stage

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

Kylian Mbappé has stepped up his campaign for the 2026 Ballon d’Or, arguing that individual performance should carry more weight than team success as the Real Madrid and France forward bids for the biggest individual prize in world football.

With the Ballon d’Or ceremony scheduled for 26 October in London, Mbappé has used a series of high-profile interviews to make his case to voters. His latest appearance on RFI saw the 27-year-old insist that the award is ultimately given to an individual, not a team.

“They won’t announce a team in the envelope. They will announce a player,” Mbappé said.

The comments follow a season in which Mbappé produced exceptional scoring numbers but ended without a major trophy with either Real Madrid or France. He finished as La Liga’s leading scorer with 25 goals, topped the Champions League scoring charts with 15 goals, and struck 10 times for France at the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Those numbers form the centrepiece of his argument. Mbappé maintains that his personal contribution should not be diminished by the fact that his teams fell short of silverware.

“I had a great year individually,” he said in a recent interview, adding that he considered individual performance the most important criterion for the award. He also said he still believed he could win the Ballon d’Or despite finishing the season without a trophy.

His argument faces a direct challenge from players whose individual brilliance was matched by collective success. France’s World Cup campaign ended in the semi-finals against Spain, while Real Madrid finished second in La Liga and were eliminated from the Champions



Kylian Mbappé

League in the quarter-finals.

Lamine Yamal is among those applying pressure, having helped Spain win the 2026 World Cup. The Barcelona forward has also spoken publicly about his own Ballon d’Or ambitions. Ousmane Dembélé is another prominent name in the conversation.

The debate has therefore returned to a familiar question: should the Ballon d’Or recognise the best individual footballer of the year, or should team success weigh heavily in the final calculation?

Mbappé’s media campaign has drawn criticism from some observers, who argue that players

have traditionally allowed their performances to make the case for them. Others regard his comments as a legitimate attempt to explain why his statistical record deserves to be judged on its own terms.

The Frenchman has also made an appeal to the African continent, saying he would dedicate the trophy to Africa if he won it. Mbappé was born in France to a Cameroonian father and an Algerian mother and has spoken often about his connection to his African roots.

He has never won the award. This year’s contest has developed into one of the most closely

watched individual battles in recent football history — his case built on goals, records and consistency, his rivals’ cases built on goals and trophies.

For Mbappé, that contradiction is precisely why the Ballon d’Or should be judged differently. The final decision rests with the journalists who participate in the voting process. What is clear is that the Real Madrid forward is no longer leaving his case to interpretation. He is putting his argument directly to the voters and asking them to decide whether individual brilliance can outweigh the absence of collective success.

Sports >> *With the next Madrid derby approaching, Atlético accuse their rivals of intimidating referees and threatening the integrity of Spanish football

Atlético Madrid warn Real Madrid over refereeing dispute as derby tensions escalate

By Pascal Okoth

Atlético Madrid have issued a sharp statement accusing Real Madrid of crossing what they describe as “red lines,” with tensions between the two clubs escalating sharply ahead of their next derby.

Speaking to Marca, Atlético claimed that certain actions and comments from Real Madrid have gone too far and risk causing lasting damage to Spanish football.

“There are red lines that cannot be crossed, and they’ve done it again. You cannot show this kind of disrespect,” Atlético said.

The club expressed particular concern about what it sees as a deliberate campaign to influence the atmosphere surrounding the return derby through pressure on match officials.

“They already want to start playing the return derby now, with the referees intimidated so that mistakes go in their favour,” the statement said.

One of the sharper moments in Atlético’s statement came in a pointed reference to Megía Dávila, a former referee who now serves as Real Madrid’s team delegate. In a sarcastic remark about refereeing appointments, Atlético suggested the only appointment Real Madrid would welcome is Dávila himself.

The comments lay bare the increasingly strained relationship between the two clubs, particularly over refereeing controversies in La Liga. Atlético questioned why Real Madrid continue to direct public attention toward officials despite recent changes within the Technical Committee of Referees. At the Metropolitano, there is frustration over what Atlético regard as a sustained effort to undermine confidence in the refereeing system.

The club also took aim at Real Madrid TV, the club’s official



channel, arguing that videos criticising referees before matches place undue pressure on officials and compromise their ability to operate independently.

The dispute reflects a wider and increasingly uncomfortable debate in Spanish football about the relationship between clubs, referees and public criticism. Refereeing decisions have become a flashpoint around La Liga fixtures, with clubs frequently going public when controversial incidents occur.

For Atlético, however, the issue has moved well beyond individual decisions. Their statement frames the situation as a fundamental threat to the sport’s credibility.

“The integrity of Spanish football is at risk. Either we stop them now or there will be no turning back,” Atlético warned.

Real Madrid have consistently defended their right to highlight what they consider to be refereeing errors. Atlético’s position, made plain yesterday, is that the continued and coordinated nature of that public pressure has now crossed an acceptable line.

The statement also lands at a moment of broader scrutiny for the Technical Committee of Referees, which has faced repeated questions over consistency and transparency across several recent seasons. Clubs and supporters continue to demand clearer standards from officials, and the

public battle between the two Madrid clubs is unlikely to ease that pressure.

With another derby on the horizon, the dispute is set to remain a major talking point. Both clubs will ultimately settle matters on the pitch, but Atlético’s statement makes clear that the argument over refereeing and public influence is already being fought well away from it.

The next Madrid derby will be watched not only for the fierce competition it invariably produces, but for the charged atmosphere that this increasingly public feud has created around it.

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Paballo Mamabolo — where beauty meets purpose and education



By: Anila Bukhari
@themkenyatimes

Paballo Mamabolo is a proud South African young woman, student, beauty queen, youth advocate, and passionate education champion whose journey reflects the powerful connection between beauty, purpose, education, and service. At just 20 years old, she is pursuing Mechanical Engineering while using her growing platform to inspire young people, advocate for quality education, celebrate culture, and encourage communities to create better opportunities for children.

Paballo proudly holds the titles of Miss Revolve South Africa 2026 and Miss Tourism South Africa 2026, achievements that have provided her with a meaningful platform to represent South Africa and communicate causes that are close to her heart. For Paballo, pageantry is much more than a crown, a title, or a moment on a stage. She views it as a responsibility and an opportunity to use visibility for something greater than herself.

Her philosophy is beautifully simple: beauty must be backed by purpose. Paballo believes that true beauty is not defined only by appearance, but by character, compassion, service, and the positive impact a person makes in the lives of others. This belief has shaped the way she approaches both her personal journey and her role as a young leader.

At the centre of Paballo's purpose is her passion for quality education. She is deeply committed to the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to attend school, learn with dignity, develop their abilities, and dream about a better future. Her mission can be expressed through one powerful message: no child should stay away from school because of what they lack.

Paballo understands that educational challenges are not always limited

to access to classrooms. Children can face everyday barriers when they do not have basic school supplies, personal-care essentials, encouragement, or someone to guide them. Through her advocacy and community-focused efforts, she works to support children by providing school essentials, sanitary pads for girls, and mentorship.

Her work supporting girls with sanitary products reflects her commitment to dignity as an essential part of education. She believes that girls should have the resources they need to continue attending school confidently and comfortably. By helping address practical barriers, she hopes to contribute to an environment where girls can concentrate on their studies, develop their confidence, and pursue their ambitions without unnecessary obstacles.

For Paballo, however, education is not only about providing physical resources. She also believes strongly in the transformative power of mentorship. Young people need encouragement, positive role models, and people who believe in their potential. Through mentorship, she hopes to remind children that their circumstances do not have to determine the boundaries of their dreams.

Her own academic journey adds another important dimension to her advocacy. As a young woman studying Mechanical Engineering, Paballo is pursuing a technical field that requires dedication, creativity, analytical thinking, and persistence. Her educational path allows her to demonstrate that young women can confidently explore fields across science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

By pursuing engineering while also serving as a beauty queen and youth advocate, Paballo represents a generation of young women who are embracing multiple dimensions of leadership. She hopes her journey encourages other girls to pursue education without allowing stereotypes to determine what they can or cannot achieve.

Her role as Miss Tourism South Africa 2026 has also strengthened her passion for culture and cultural exchange. Paballo believes tourism

should be about more than visiting beautiful destinations. She sees it as an opportunity to learn, connect, and develop a deeper appreciation for the histories, languages, traditions, arts, music, and heritage of different communities.

Through her platform as Miss Tourism Africa, she advocates for education through culture. She believes that when people have the opportunity to learn about one another's heritage, cultures, and languages, they can develop greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity that exists across Africa.

Paballo views Africa's cultural richness as something that should be celebrated and shared with younger generations. She hopes to encourage young people to become curious about cultures beyond their immediate surroundings and to recognise the importance of protecting and celebrating their heritage. In her vision, tourism can become a bridge connecting communities while creating meaningful opportunities for learning and cultural exchange.

Her work therefore reaches beyond the traditional expectations associated with pageantry. The crown provides her with visibility, but purpose gives that visibility meaning. Paballo seeks to use her platform to raise awareness, inspire young people, encourage educational participation, and highlight the importance of cultural understanding.

She also understands that meaningful leadership begins with service. Rather than viewing leadership as a position, she sees it as an opportunity to contribute. Whether through education advocacy, mentorship, supporting girls, promoting cultural exchange, or representing South Africa internationally, she strives to make her platform relevant to the lives of young people.

At only 20 years old, Paballo is already building a journey that brings together academic ambition, beauty, cultural representation, humanitarian values, and youth empowerment. Her story demonstrates that a young woman can pursue a demanding professional education while simultaneously using her voice to advocate for children and communities.



Paballo Mamabolo

As she continues her journey as a Mechanical Engineering student, beauty queen, tourism ambassador, and education advocate, Paballo Mamabolo remains guided by her belief that beauty becomes most meaningful when it is connected to purpose. Her crown represents recognition, but her mission represents responsibility.

Through education, mentorship, cultural exchange, and service, Paballo continues to champion a vision where children are supported,

girls are empowered, young people are encouraged to dream, and communities recognise education as one of the strongest foundations for the future.

Her journey is ultimately a reflection of what can happen when beauty becomes a platform for purpose. For Paballo Mamabolo, the crown is not the destination. It is a doorway through which she hopes to inspire, educate, serve, and create opportunities for others — proving that when beauty meets purpose, it can become a powerful force for positive change.