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Countdown 2027

Uhuru on the receiving end

P.9

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta

Politics: Kalonzo marches into Raila's heartland: The Nyanza gambit that could define 2027 P.8

Law & Culture: The oath the court would not hear: An elder's 40-year fight for land and justice P.11

Mining: Kenya's first oil moves closer as drilling rig arrives at Mombasa port P.12

Ruto tours Lagos refinery ahead of Lamu groundbreaking next week

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto yesterday toured the Dangote Refinery in Lekki, Lagos State, Nigeria, at the invitation of Dangote Group President Aliko Dangote, days before the two men are scheduled to break ground on the KSh2.2 trillion East African Refinery in Lamu on September 30.

The Lagos facility — with a crude oil refining capacity of 700,000 barrels per day and a daily output exceeding 100 million litres of fuel — gave Ruto a first-hand look at the continental ambition underpinning the Lamu project. "This huge achievement is a testament of what African governments, investors and financial institutions can do together," Ruto said.

The Lamu refinery is projected to match its Nigerian counterpart in scale, produce petrol, diesel, aviation fuel, fertilisers, chemicals and packaging materials, and create 60,000 direct and indirect jobs — while positioning Kenya as East Africa's refining and petroleum distribution hub. Dangote has offered regional governments a combined 30% equity stake, with Kenya's 10% share valued at approximately $500 million.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki chairs the government's implementation committee. Construction is expected to take approximately four years.









Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times


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NEWS IN BRIEF

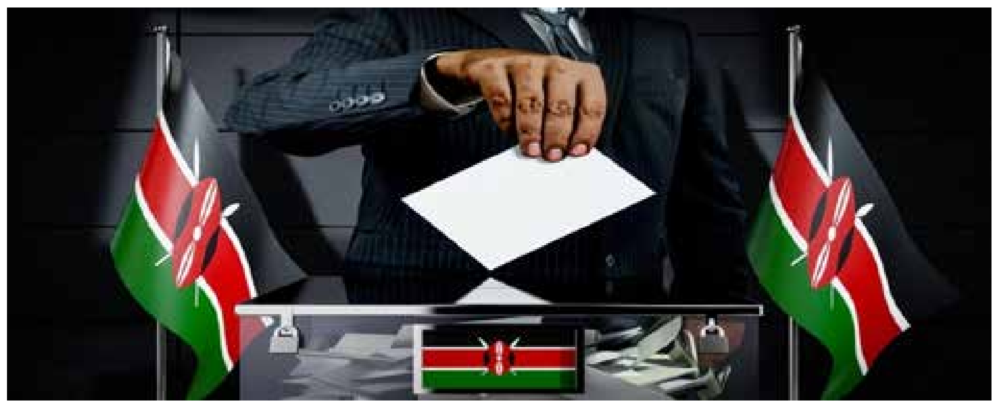
Kenya's Mining Cabinet Secretary Hassan Ali Joho yesterday pitched the country's untapped mineral wealth to global investors at the 28th China Mining Conference in Tianjin, positioning Kenya as the next frontier for critical minerals investment on the continent. Addressing delegates at one of the world's largest mining industry gatherings, Joho highlighted significant deposits of critical minerals awaiting development and urged international capital to participate in what he described as Kenya's mineral-led economic transformation. "This conference provided a valuable platform to invite investors to be part of the country's next chapter," Joho said, framing Kenya's mineral sector not merely as a resource opportunity but as a strategic partnership proposition for forward-looking global investors seeking exposure to Africa's emerging critical minerals corridor.

Jubilee Party chairman Vincent Kemosi yesterday declared the party's unequivocal determination to deny President William Ruto a second term, while mounting a robust defence of former President Uhuru Kenyatta's continued and active role in Kenya's political arena. Speaking ahead of a National Executive Council meeting convened under Kenyatta's chairmanship, Kemosi dismissed critics who have urged the former head of state to withdraw from partisan politics, arguing that Kenyatta retained both the right and the responsibility to shape the country's political direction. The declaration signals Jubilee's increasingly combative posture as the party repositions itself within the newly formed Ukombozi Alliance ahead of the August 2027 General Election, with Kenyatta's return to frontline politics adding fresh combustion to an already volatile pre-election landscape.

The Orange Democratic Movement, once Kenya's most formidable opposition machine, is fracturing from within as the contradictions of its broad-based government arrangement with President William Ruto's administration tear at its internal cohesion ahead of the 2027 General Election. Internal power struggles, public recriminations, courtroom battles and openly warring factions are now competing for control of a party that for two decades delivered disciplined bloc votes across Nyanza and beyond. What began as a strategic accommodation with the ruling establishment has curdled into an existential crisis, with loyalists divided between those who see the arrangement as pragmatic statecraft and those who regard it as an irreversible surrender of the party's opposition identity and grassroots credibility. The risk of ODM fragmenting into a regional outfit — rather than a national political force — has never been more real.

A court petition filed yesterday seeking to halt Kenya's 2027 General Election over the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission's failure to complete a mandatory review of constituency and ward boundaries has collided with Parliament's accelerating push to establish a referendum framework — raising a question that cuts to the heart of Kenya's constitutional order. Could two parallel legal and legislative processes, each with its own momentum, converge to disrupt the August 2027 electoral calendar and inadvertently extend President William Ruto's hold on power beyond his constitutionally mandated term? Legal analysts say the intersection of a boundaries delimitation dispute and an unresolved referendum timeline creates a genuinely unpredictable constitutional moment — one that opposition leaders and civil society are watching with mounting unease as the election window narrows.

The Kenya Ports Authority faces the loss of KSh195 million paid for five Kalmar empty container handlers after the equipment it contracted to procure was allegedly diverted and sold to a Tanzanian port, according to documents filed in court. The revelation has exposed a procurement arrangement gone seriously wrong, raising urgent questions about the oversight mechanisms governing multimillion-shilling equipment contracts at the country's principal maritime gateway. KPA, which manages the critical Mombasa port infrastructure underpinning Kenya's position as East Africa's dominant trade corridor, has not recovered the machines or the funds. The case, now before the courts, threatens to embarrass an authority already under scrutiny over the management of its assets and contracting processes at a time of intensifying competition from regional port rivals.



The United States has no preferred candidate or party in Kenya's 2027 presidential contest, President Donald Trump's nominee for ambassador to Nairobi declared yesterday, seeking to draw a clear line between Washington's diplomatic interests and the country's increasingly volatile pre-election politics. The declaration, made during the nominee's confirmation process, amounts to a pointed reassurance to Kenyan political actors across the spectrum — and a signal that Washington intends to maintain working relationships with whichever administration emerges from the August 2027 General Election. The statement carries weight at a moment when Kenya's opposition and government camps are both actively courting international legitimacy as they position themselves for what is shaping up to be one of the country's most consequential and fiercely contested electoral battles in recent memory.

Development President William Ruto begins a tour of Kenya's coastal region tomorrow

Ruto heads to the coast with refinery launch and 200,000 title deeds

The President's Lamu groundbreaking on September 30 marks the single largest industrial investment in Kenya's history — but it lands on a coastline where land grievances run deep.

BY Njeri Kamau
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President William Ruto

President William Ruto begins a tour of Kenya's coastal region tomorrow, headlined by Tuesday's groundbreaking ceremony for the KSh2.2 trillion Dangote East African Refinery in Lamu and the issuance of nearly 200,000 title deeds across the region's six counties.

The refinery groundbreaking, confirmed for September 30, is the centrepiece of what State House is billing as one of the most consequential presidential tours of the coast in recent memory. Backed by Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote, the 700,000-barrel-per-day facility is projected to become East Africa's largest oil refinery, create 60,000 jobs and position Kenya as the region's dominant petroleum processing and distribution hub. Several East African heads of state are expected to attend the ceremony alongside Ruto, reflecting the project's regional ambitions.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, who chairs the government's refinery implementation committee, has described the project in unambiguous terms. "The Lamu Refinery is a landmark project that will unlock the economy of Lamu and the Coast region, create more than 50,000 jobs and boost Kenya's industrialisation quest," he said after a final preparations meeting at his Karen residence this week. The KSh2.2 trillion investment — to be financed through a mix of private capital, government seed funding of KSh21.5B and a planned public offering — would also anchor a wider industrial complex including a 1,000-megawatt power plant and a special economic zone on Lamu Island, which sits astride international shipping routes and the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor.

The title deeds component carries its own weight. Land tenure on Kenya's coast is among the most politically sensitive and historically contested issues in the country, rooted in decades of colonial-era dispossession, absentee landlordism and unresolved community claims that successive governments have promised but failed to fully address. The issuance of close to 200,000 title deeds in a single presidential tour represents an effort to make tangible progress on a grievance that has shaped coastal politics for generations — and one that opposition leaders and civil society organisations will watch closely for signs of genuine reform or electoral expediency.

The timing is not incidental. With the August 2027 General Election less than a year away, the coast — comprising Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, Tana River and Taita Taveta counties — is a battleground that no serious presidential candidate can afford to cede. Ruto's Kenya Kwanza administration has invested heavily in development infrastructure across the region, including road upgrades, electricity projects and market facilities. The refinery groundbreaking, however, operates on an entirely different scale: it is the kind of generational infrastructure announcement that a sitting president wears as a re-election credential.

For the coast, the question will be whether Lamu's communities, historically marginalised despite sitting atop Kenya's most ambitious infrastructure corridor, will benefit from the jobs and economic activity the refinery promises — or watch its gains flow elsewhere. That question will not be answered on Tuesday. But it will hang over the ceremony all the same.

Court upholds Affordable Housing Act

Affordable Housing

BY David Kimani
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Kenya's Court of Appeal yesterday upheld the Affordable Housing Act as constitutional, dismissing 42 consolidated cases that had challenged the law and the Housing Levy deductions it mandates from workers' salaries.

The ruling delivers a decisive legal victory for President William Ruto's flagship development programme, which has faced sustained opposition from trade unions, civil society organisations and individual petitioners who argued that the levy amounted to an unconstitutional tax imposed without adequate public participation.

The bench rejected those arguments, finding the Act compliant with Kenya's constitutional framework and clearing the way for the government to press ahead with its housing agenda without further legal disruption. The levy, deducted at 1.5% of gross salary from both employees and matched by employers, has been a lightning rod since its introduction — condemned by critics as an additional burden on already strained household incomes, and defended by the government as a necessary mechanism to finance affordable units for millions of Kenyans locked out of the formal housing market.

With less than a year to the August 2027 General Election, the timing of the ruling hands Ruto a political dividend as much as a legal one — allowing his administration to point to a programme that has survived the courts and is now beyond challenge.

The 42 petitioners may still pursue a further appeal to the Supreme Court.


NEWS PAPER
IN BUSINESS

Politics The visit is far more than a weekend itinerary. It is a statement of intent — and an audacious one. Bondo is not simply a constituency in Siaya County

Kalonzo marches into Raila's heartland: The Nyanza gambit that could define 2027

BY Agnes Wavinya
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Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka tomorrow carries his presidential campaign into the heart of Luo Nyanza, attending a church service at St Michael's All Angels Cathedral in Bondo, Siaya County, before proceeding with a meet-the-people tour in a region that for a generation answered to one name alone: Raila Odinga.

The visit is far more than a weekend itinerary. It is a statement of intent — and an audacious one. Bondo is not simply a constituency in Siaya County. It is the birthplace of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, the epicentre of a political identity that shaped Kenya's opposition politics for three decades and delivered millions of votes in five consecutive presidential contests. For Kalonzo to stand in its cathedral, shake hands in its streets and ask for its support is to make an argument that the post-Raila political vacuum in Nyanza is his to fill. Whether Nyanza will listen is the question that makes today's visit consequential.

The tour comes just six days after the former opposition coalition, Azimio la Umoja One Kenya Coalition, was formally rebranded as the Ukombozi Alliance — the Redemption Alliance — with Kalonzo at its helm. Standing flanked by Siaya Governor James Orengo, DAP-Kenya leader Eugene Wamalwa and Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi at the SKM Command Centre in Nairobi on September 21, Kalonzo made the announcement with deliberate symbolism. "After today, even this podium will change because the Azimio la Umoja One Kenya Coalition has this day, September 21, 2026, unanimously agreed to rebrand and change the name to Ukombozi Alliance," he said. The coalition, he added, would operate under the slogan "One Term, One Team, One Coalition" — a message aimed squarely at an electorate exhausted by four years of economic hardship and political turbulence under President William Ruto.

But the rebranding immediately hit turbulence of its own. Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna's Linda Mwananchi movement had been moving to register a party using the Ukombozi name, creating a collision that exposed the fault lines running through the opposition. The presence of Orengo — associated with Sifuna's camp — at the Ukombozi Alliance launch raised eyebrows and questions about whose side the Siaya governor was truly on. That Orengo is today hosting Kalonzo in his political backyard suggests, at minimum, a tactical alignment — though analysts are cautious about reading it as a full merger of forces.

Cleophas Malala, of Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party, struck a note of measured scepticism about the pace of opposition consolidation. "We cannot get there at this point. Let them join hands, then DCP can also join hands with Sifuna, and thereafter we can sit down and have a discussion. Let the Ukombozi Alliance come together, let DCP and Sifuna also come together, and then we can form a coalition," Malala said — a formulation that acknowledged the possibility of ultimate unity while signalling that the road to it remained long and unresolved.

The strategic logic of Kalonzo's Nyanza push is straightforward. President Ruto completed a five-day development tour of the region earlier this month, commissioning infrastructure projects across Kisumu, Siaya, Homa Bay and Migori counties in a sustained effort to prise open the region's historically opposition vote. He inspected the Dhogoye Bridge project in Usenge, launched housing and road projects, and held public engagements with residents — all part of a carefully calibrated campaign to use government delivery as a wedge into Nyanza. That a sitting president of the Kenya Kwanza administration is investing this heavily in a region that was never his tells its own story: Ruto understands that the mathematics of 2027 may require him to eat into opposition territory to secure re-election.

Kalonzo's counter-tour is therefore a direct response to Ruto's incursion. By entering Nyanza personally — not through emissaries or endorsements, but with his own feet and his own voice — the Wiper leader is making the argument that the region remains fertile opposition ground and that he is the candidate best placed to consolidate it. He has already been holding consultations with Coast leaders, including Nyali MP Mohamed Ali, Wundanyi MP Danson Mwashako and others, having toured Busia County yesterday before making the journey south to Siaya.

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Wiper has also been laying groundwork. The party has identified offices in Migori and Siaya for establishment, a sign that this is not a one-off campaign appearance but the beginning of a structured organisational effort to build a permanent party presence in Nyanza. "From today and henceforth, Wiper is going to open offices in all the sub-counties in Nyanza," declared Wiper's Nyanza coordinator, a commitment that, if followed through, would mark a significant escalation of the party's regional footprint.

Local supporters in Siaya have been clear about what they expect. At earlier mobilisation meetings, supporter Jane Atieno urged Kalonzo to visit all Nyanza counties and introduce himself formally to communities. "We'd like you to come to Kisumu, walk to each and every county, so that we can introduce you formally and officially to our people," she said — a welcome, but a conditional one, framed in the language of an electorate that remembers what promises have looked like before.

The political significance of the Bondo church service should not be underestimated. Faith and politics have always been intertwined in Kenya's public life, and a cathedral appearance in Raila's hometown carries a moral weight that a rally alone cannot manufacture. It signals humility, community and continuity — an implicit claim that Kalonzo is not seeking to replace Odinga but to carry forward a political mission that transcended any single individual.

Yet the challenge remains formidable. Kalonzo has long been associated with Ukambani, his Eastern Kenya stronghold, and his previous attempts to build durable alliances in Nyanza were always mediated through his partnership with Odinga — as running mate in 2013 and 2017, and as a supporting voice in 2022. Without Odinga as the bridge, Kalonzo must build that connection himself, in the one region where his claim to leadership will face the most rigorous scrutiny.

With less than eleven months to the August 2027 General Election, the opposition has never been more fractured — or more urgently in need of a coherent coalition. Kalonzo's Nyanza tour is his most visible bid yet to provide one. Whether Siaya embraces or simply tolerates him today will offer an early signal of how far the Ukombozi Alliance's redeeming mission can actually reach.

The cathedral bells will ring at Bondo this morning. What echoes back across Kenya's political landscape will be listened to very carefully.

Politics Kenyatta made the remarks on September 22 at the Jubilee Party headquarters in Nairobi, where he formally handed over the party's leadership

Uhuru on the receiving end: Kenyatta's 2022 rigging claim sparks a national political storm

With 2027 less than a year away, the former president's bombshell reopens old wounds and reshapes the terrain of Kenya's most consequential election in a generation.

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta's declaration that the late Raila Odinga won the 2022 presidential election has detonated across Kenya's political landscape, drawing a ferocious, multi-front backlash from leaders across party lines and setting the stage for a 2027 general election campaign unlike any the country has witnessed before.

Kenyatta made the remarks on September 22 at the Jubilee Party headquarters in Nairobi, where he formally handed over the party's leadership to former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i. Standing before delegates, he offered no equivocation. "We did everything to help him become President of Kenya. And to date I know that he won that election. We know how things went, and we don't want it to happen that way again," Kenyatta said, his words landing like a grenade in a city already crackling with pre-election tension.

The official record stands against him. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission declared President William Ruto the winner of the August 2022 contest with 7,176,141 votes — 50.49% of the total — against Odinga's 6,942,930 votes, or 48.85%. The Supreme Court subsequently upheld Ruto's victory after Odinga's legal challenge. But Kenyatta's claim, made openly and deliberately, has shattered whatever political truce existed between Kenya's major camps and accelerated the fractious repositioning already underway ahead of August 2027.

The response was swift, organised and furious. National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula, speaking at a women's empowerment forum in Matungu Constituency, Kakamega County, challenged the former president directly. "You peacefully handed over the instruments of power to the President. Why did you hand over power to him if you believe he did not win the elections?" Wetang'ula demanded, before turning the knife further. "You are not telling ODM supporters why you did not walk with their candidate in your Mt Kenya backyard in search of votes if you genuinely supported him." Wetang'ula, who has become one of the government's most vocal defenders, accused Kenyatta of seeking to destabilise a country that needed calm and stability as it moved towards elections.

Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot was equally cutting, arguing that Kenyatta had never come to terms with Ruto's 2022 victory despite the advantages of incumbency he had enjoyed. "Uhuru undermined President Ruto when he was his deputy, denied him resources, called him names and used his juniors in government to intimidate him. But his silence paid off as Kenyans elected him as their President," Cheruiyot said. He then issued a pointed warning: "Uhuru must respect the verdict Kenyans gave and move on respectfully. If he dares us, we will hit back strongly."

UDA Secretary General Hassan Omar went further in a formal statement, accusing Kenyatta of living in a "fool's paradise." "Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta continues to live and wallow... William Ruto conclusively won the 2022 election," Omar stated, adding that Kenyatta's remarks reflected an unwillingness to accept political reality. The party itself issued a scathing rejoinder, stating that "Uhuru has never healed from the humiliating defeat that he occasioned Raila in the hands of President William Ruto, even after employing State machinery."

From Kibwezi West, MP Mwengi Mutuse — who famously triggered the impeachment of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua — addressed Kenyatta directly at a constituency rally. "You were the President then. You supported Raila Odinga. You told him many things, but Kenyans made their own decision. We will not allow you to fool other leaders in Kenya," Mutuse said. He added a broader rebuke rooted in dynastic politics: "Kenya has many families, but your family alone has ruled this country for 25 years. That should make you humble and make you respect Kenyans and the current leadership."

Baringo Women Representative Florence Jematiah, speaking at the same Kakamega event as Wetang'ula, was more blunt about the historical moment. "We must begin to rethink the kind of leaders we have been voting for. For four years, we have enjoyed peace and calm in the country. The talk of rigged elections is primitive and ill-intended," she said. Also joining the chorus of critics were Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa, Senators Vincent Kiprono and others across the Kenya Kwanza architecture, all insisting Ruto's victory was legitimate and that Kenyatta's intervention was timed to disrupt rather than to illuminate.

But the rebuke was not limited to government allies. Makadara MP and Nairobi ODM chairman George Aladwa, whose party formed the core of Odinga's 2022 bid, delivered a stinging verdict from within the former opposition camp itself. "He had the power to help Raila but he handed over the instruments to Ruto at Kasarani Stadium. It is him we are blaming for Raila's loss," Aladwa said. Aladwa declared that ODM had moved on and pledged to support Ruto's re-election bid — a position that underscores the seismic political realignment already reshaping Kenya's 2027 landscape.

ODM Party Leader Senator Oburu Oginga, Raila's younger brother, issued a formal statement on September 24 demanding that Kenyatta answer three questions: why he was revealing this now, why his government facilitated the transfer of power to Ruto if Raila had won, and what Kenyans were supposed to do with this information today. "Now that President Kenyatta has chosen to exhume the deeply painful question of the 2022 election, he owes Kenyans some answers," Oburu said. He acknowledged the validation Kenyatta's remarks offered ODM while rejecting the manner of their delivery: "The 2022 election and the sacrifices of our departed Party Leader must not be reduced to material for contemporary vote-winning propaganda."

What makes Kenyatta's intervention so consequential is not simply the claim itself — credible or otherwise — but its timing and its implications for the terrain ahead. Kenyatta has now formally repositioned himself as a power broker in the opposition space, backing Matiang'i's presidential candidacy under a reinvigorated Jubilee Party, while serving notice that he intends to be a force in the 2027 contest rather than a quiet elder statesman.

The rift between Kenyatta and Ruto has been widening since their public falling-out after the 2022 election, with Ruto accusing his predecessor of sabotaging his administration and breaching a political pact the two allegedly made when they were allies. Kenyatta's September 22 remarks represent the most direct escalation yet of that personal and political war.

With the IEBC still rebuilding public trust, the question of electoral credibility now entering the mainstream of political discourse, and party alliances shifting at speed, Kenya is entering a pre-election period of extraordinary complexity. Every declaration from Kenyatta, every counter-salvo from Ruto's camp, and every repositioning by the ODM and opposition blocks adds a new variable to an already volatile equation.

The country has been here before — in 2007, in 2013, in 2017, and in 2022. Each cycle left behind fresh wounds and unresolved grievances that the next election was then asked to carry. The difference in 2027 is that those grievances are now being spoken out loud, by the very architects of the decisions that created them.

Kenyatta lit the fuse on September 22. The explosion, when it comes, will be measured in votes.

Agribusiness **“If we don’t fight fabricated tobacco products, it will end up rendering real tobacco farmers irrelevant, the way cotton farming went,” Munene warned.**

Tharaka Nithi tobacco farmers back proposed control amendments

Farmers in Chuka Igambang’ombe expressed support for the Tobacco Control Bill after MPs explained its provisions at a public forum in Mariani Ward.

Chuka Igambang’ombe MP Patrick Munene takes tobacco farmers through the provisions of the Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill, 2024, during a public participation exercise at Kaanwa Market yesterday.

BY Dennis Mutua
@themtkenyatimes

Tobacco farmers in Chuka Igambang’ombe Constituency, Tharaka Nithi County, yesterday voiced support for proposed amendments to the Tobacco Control Act after legislators explained the Bill’s provisions at a public participation forum held at Kaanwa Market in Mariani Ward.

The forum was convened as part of public hearings by the National Assembly Departmental Committee on Health, which is collecting views from across the country before reporting the Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill, 2024, to the House.

Chuka Igambang’ombe MP Patrick Munene, vice-chairperson of the Health Committee, said he moved to engage his constituents directly after spotting the Bill in Parliament and recognising that many residents — particularly in Mariani Ward — depend on tobacco farming for their livelihoods.

“If I did not let you know that there is such a Bill, could you have known?” Munene asked the gathering, adding that the Senate should have provided similar opportunities for farmer consultation before transmitting the Bill to the National Assembly.

Munene urged tobacco farmers to form and register a cooperative society to give them a formal channel for raising concerns and engaging authorities — similar to structures that exist in the tea and coffee sectors. He committed to carrying farmers’ views to Parliament and pushing for changes that address their concerns when the Bill comes up for consideration.

He also dismissed claims that he opposed tobacco farming, accusing political opponents of spreading misinformation that he wanted the crop banned.

“If we don’t fight fabricated tobacco products, it will end up rendering real tobacco farmers irrelevant, the way cotton farming went,” Munene warned.

Nyeri Town MP Duncan Maina Mathenge, a member of the Health Committee, told the forum that the public had been misinformed. The government, he stressed, had no plans to ban tobacco farming. The proposed amendments instead target new tobacco and nicotine products, several of which are manufactured using synthetic substances.

Mathenge said the committee had already received views on issues including the licensing of tobacco products, while some participants at earlier hearings had also called for shisha to be outlawed.

The clarification appeared to reassure many farmers present. One farmer, identified as Mwenda, said he supported the amendments after hearing the provisions explained and believed the changes would benefit growers.

However, another farmer, Waithaka, expressed anxiety over whether established tobacco products could be affected. “I have been farming BAT since 2008 and it saddens me to hear that BAT could be shut, whereas it is the one we have been using to pay school fees for our children,” he said.

A third farmer asked Munene to help tobacco growers access safer pesticides, citing health concerns over chemicals currently used in production. Farmer Henry raised the prospect that the amendments could introduce new packaging requirements affecting how tobacco is sold.

Tharaka Nithi County National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse coordinator Agnes Kanyinge said the agency supports the proposed amendments but wants changes to the composition of the Tobacco Control Advisory Committee, including the involvement of NACADA’s chief executive.

Kanyinge raised alarm over synthetic nicotine, saying children as young as six were consuming the substances in schools, resulting in restlessness, anxiety and violent behaviour. “Synthetic nicotine has very high levels of nicotine and we want it looked at,” she said.

She also called for tighter regulation of shisha, saying its use had become widespread around Chuka and Tharaka universities. Kanyinge said women had surpassed men in shisha consumption and raised concerns about its effects on unborn children, citing premature births and babies born with deformities among women who use it.

NACADA further proposed that the Bill’s 100-metre buffer zone around restricted areas be expanded to 300 metres, arguing this would bring it in line with provisions under liquor-control legislation.

The Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill, 2024, is a Senate Bill sponsored by Nominated Senator Catherine Mumma. Published in 2024, it seeks to amend the Tobacco Control Act to strengthen regulation of tobacco and nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes, nicotine pouches and other electronic nicotine delivery systems. The Senate passed the Bill before transmitting it to the National Assembly, where it received its first reading on March 31, 2026, and was subsequently referred to the Health Committee.

Closing the forum, Munene assured farmers that the government had no intention of shutting down tobacco farming and urged them to continue planting. He said Parliament’s attention should next turn to fruit-based products, questioning the use of chemicals in drinks marketed as fruit beverages and linking such industrial products to rising cancer cases in the country.

Culture & Law Wheelchair-bound Maswili Mulwa, barely able to move and facing the double anguish of potential eviction from the land he has lived on for most of his life

The oath the court would not hear: An elder's 40-year fight for land and justice

A dying man's bid to invoke the Kamba community's most feared instrument of truth has forced Kenya to confront the unresolved tension between its formal legal system and the living traditions it has never fully absorbed.

Kithitu oath | Photo: Coutesy

BY Agnes Musyoka
@themtkenyatimes

A terminally ill 85-year-old man confined to a wheelchair stunned a Makueni magistrate's court when he demanded permission to invoke kithitu — the most feared oath of justice in Kamba tradition — to resolve a land dispute that has defeated Kenya's formal legal system for more than four decades.

Maswili Mulwa's request was dismissed. The presiding magistrate said he was unfamiliar with kithitu and adjourned the case to November 24 for formal hearing. But the moment itself — an elderly man, facing eviction and the threatened exhumation of his late wife's body from the contested land, turning to ancestral justice because the courts have failed him for forty years — carries a weight that no procedural ruling can contain. It is one of the most human stories to emerge from a Kenyan courtroom in recent memory, and it raises questions that go far beyond one man's land dispute in Mutulani village, Makueni County.

The case pits Mzee Mulwa against the family of his late neighbour, Kisese Mutwanthele — specifically four members of the Kisese family who claim a section of the parcel that includes an orange orchard. The court had already visited the homestead to physically verify its boundaries, a recognition that maps and title documents alone cannot always settle what memory and occupation have defined over generations. What the court visit did not settle, and what four decades of litigation have not resolved, is the fundamental question of who the land belongs to and on what terms.

It was at that point of exhaustion — legal, physical and personal — that Mzee Mulwa reached for something older and, in his community's understanding, more reliable than any magistrate's ruling. He asked for kithitu. And in a moment of striking cultural clarity, Mzee Munywoki Kisese, from the opposing family, responded not with objection but with a twig — the traditional Kamba gesture signifying acceptance of the oath's authority. Both men, in that instant, were operating within a framework of accountability that the court around them had no tools to engage with.

To understand why that moment matters, one must understand what kithitu actually is — not as folklore or superstition, but as a sophisticated system of truth-enforcement developed by the Kamba people over centuries precisely because formal structures of power could be manipulated by the wealthy against the poor. Academic scholarship on Akamba customary law, including research published in the Journal of African Law and anthropological studies conducted over decades, describes kithitu as a form of sacred medicine — an instrument whose name translates as "principal source," meaning that from which all reckoning proceeds. It is not invoked lightly. Before the oath itself can be administered, the ordeal of kusuna kavyu — the licking of a heated knife — must first be completed, demonstrating the absolute seriousness of what follows. Both parties then swear over the kithitu, each declaring their truth, with the community's understanding that the one who lies will face consequences that extend beyond any courtroom sanction.

In land disputes specifically, the ritual incorporates soil from the contested ground, binding the sacred to the physical reality of the claim. The accuser strikes the kithitu with a twig while reciting the grievance. Women and children cannot approach it. Its administration has always been attended by secrecy and danger. These are not the characteristics of a practice that exists merely for ceremony. They are the characteristics of a system that was designed to do what formal law aspires to do — extract truth and deliver accountability — but through a framework rooted in community belief rather than state authority.

Historical records show that kithitu was introduced precisely because the Kamba elders' council, the Nzama, could be influenced by wealth and standing. When a powerful man stole from a poor one and the elders looked away, kithitu was the recourse that wealth could not neutralise. It was, in that original sense, an instrument of equity — a check on the powerful that the powerless could invoke when every other door had closed. That is exactly what Mzee Mulwa was reaching for in that Makueni courtroom. He is 85, terminally ill, in a wheelchair, facing eviction from land he has occupied for most of his adult life, with his wife buried in its soil. He has been in and out of court for forty years. He was not asking for kithitu out of ignorance of the formal system. He was asking for it because the formal system has had forty years to answer him and has not.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution, widely regarded as one of Africa's most progressive legal documents, explicitly recognises customary law as a legitimate source of applicable law, provided it does not conflict with constitutional provisions or statute. The National Cohesion and Integration Act and various legal reform frameworks have similarly acknowledged that traditional dispute resolution mechanisms have a role to play alongside formal courts, particularly in matters of land, inheritance and community relations where customary norms govern the social reality more accurately than imported legal frameworks. The constitution's Article 159 specifically directs courts to be guided by the principle that justice shall be administered without undue regard to procedural technicalities — a provision that, in spirit at least, ought to create space for the kind of engagement that the Makueni magistrate declined.

Yet the gap between constitutional aspiration and courtroom reality remains vast. A magistrate who has never heard of kithitu is not an anomaly — he is representative of a system that was built on English common law foundations, trained in English legal tradition and equipped with English procedural tools. That system can reference customary law in its judgments, but it cannot practise it, cannot weigh it and cannot, it seems, even recognise it when an 85-year-old man invokes it in a desperate bid for resolution. The unfamiliarity is not the magistrate's personal failing. It is a structural failure of legal education and judicial training in a country whose constitution tells courts to take tradition seriously but whose institutions were never redesigned to do so.

This matters enormously in a country where land conflict remains one of the most persistent sources of community tension, family fracture and political mobilisation. The Kenya National Land Commission has repeatedly documented the scale of unresolved land disputes across the country, particularly in regions where customary tenure systems and formal titling processes have operated in parallel for decades without ever being properly reconciled. In Ukambani, as in many parts of Kenya, land is held within the extended family, inherited according to customary norms and understood through lived memory and community witness rather than survey coordinates. When those disputes enter the formal court system, the translation is always imperfect and sometimes catastrophic — producing rulings that satisfy procedural requirements while leaving the underlying human reality unresolved.

Mzee Mulwa's case is an extreme but not unique example of that catastrophe. Forty years. Multiple court appearances. A homestead visit. And still no resolution — only an adjournment to November, while a terminally ill man waits to find out whether he will die on his own land or be removed from it, and whether the grave of his wife will remain undisturbed.

The twig that Mzee Munywoki Kisese handed across that courtroom floor — signalling his family's readiness to stand before kithitu — was perhaps the most legally significant gesture of the entire proceedings, even if the court lacked the framework to recognise it. It was an offer of truth on terms that both families understood and neither feared. It was the system working, in the only language the people involved had always trusted.

Kenya's formal justice system said it did not speak that language. After forty years of watching it struggle with its own, Mzee Mulwa can be forgiven for thinking the time has come to try something older, and something the powerful have always had more reason to fear.

The hearing resumes in November. The land, and the grave within it, wait.

Oil The Kenya Ports Authority began offloading the rig equipment, with the firm scheduling road transfer to Turkana County in preparation for a spud date of November 1

Kenya's first oil moves closer as drilling rig arrives at Mombasa port

Gulf Energy E&P BV SEZ confirms the GW70 rig has docked at Kilindini ahead of its transfer to Turkana County, with a November spud date targeted.

BY Brian Gitonga
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's ambition to produce its first crude oil before the end of the year took a concrete step forward yesterday after a drilling rig arrived at the Port of Mombasa, setting the stage for operations to begin in the South Lokichar Basin.

Local oil exploration and production firm Gulf Energy E&P BV SEZ confirmed that a cargo ship carrying the integrated onshore drilling rig docked at Kilindini Port after sailing from Duqm Port in Oman. The GW70 rig — valued at more than $20 million and leased from Great Wall Drilling Company in the United Arab Emirates on a long-term arrangement — arrived aboard MV Transit Sedanka.

The Kenya Ports Authority began offloading the rig equipment, with the firm scheduling road transfer to Turkana County in preparation for a spud date of November 1 — the point at which drilling officially begins — to kick off the first phase of what is projected as a $6B crude oil development.

Gulf Energy E&P BV SEZ Chief Executive Paul Limoh said operations were proceeding on schedule. "All workstreams at Gulf Energy E&P BV SEZ are running to a tight project management schedule, and the project remains on course for first oil production in December 2026," Limoh said, adding that KPA officials had provided professional support during the offloading process.

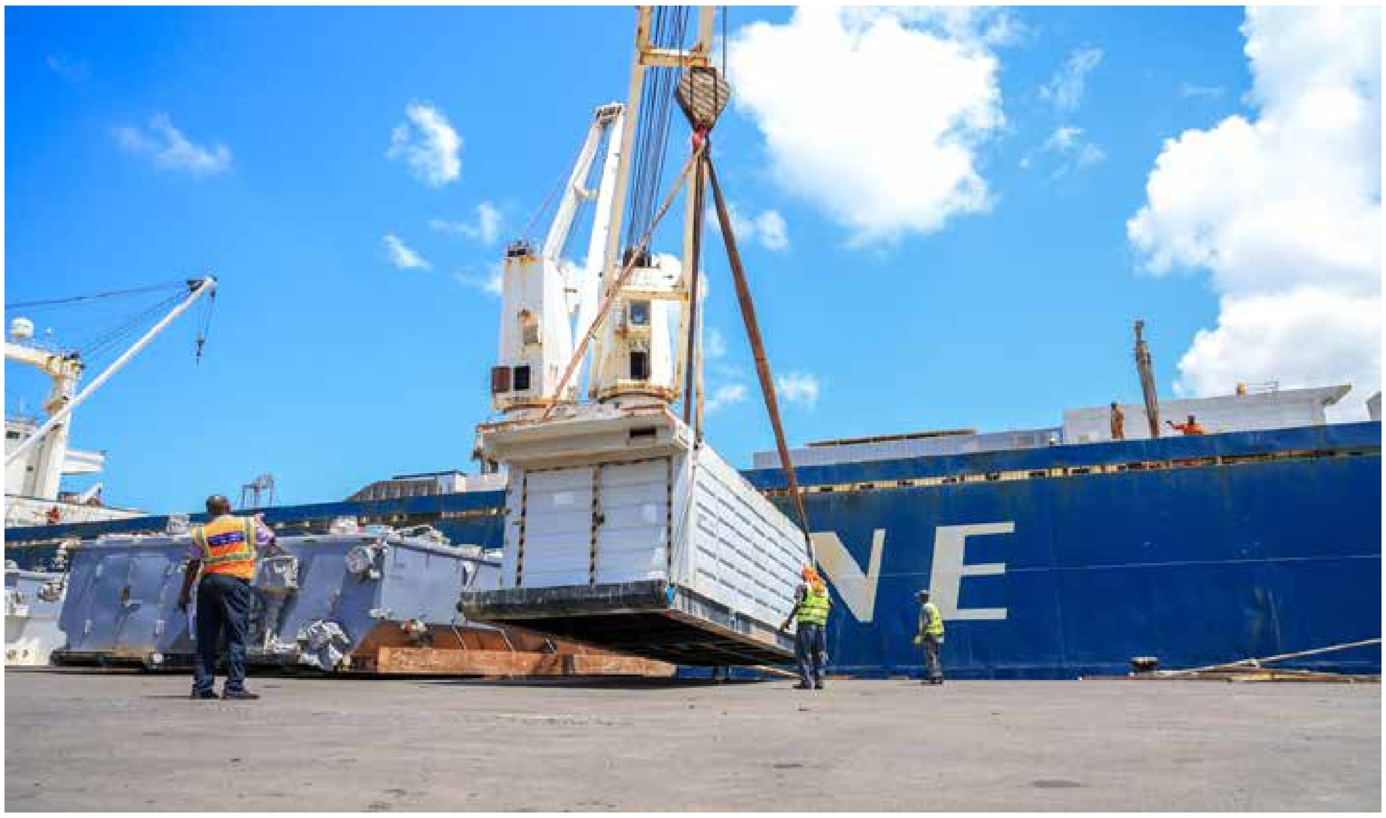
In the first phase of the South Lokichar development, Gulf Energy E&P BV SEZ plans to produce 20,000 barrels per day, before scaling up to 50,000 barrels per day in the second phase — a trajectory that would position Kenya as a significant oil producer in East Africa.

To deliver on those targets, the firm has contracted Baker Hughes, a leading global oilfield services and equipment provider, to handle integrated well services. SLB, an energy technology and services company, has been engaged to deliver the Early Production Facility.

The 1,500-horsepower GW70 rig will undergo commissioning and acceptance checks before drilling begins. In the UAE, the rig has an established record working on projects for the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, with a strong safety and efficiency profile.

The broader economic stakes are considerable. The government projects potential lifetime earnings from the South Lokichar Basin of more than $2.9B — equivalent to KSh371B — depending on global oil prices and production volumes over the life of the project.

For a country that has waited years to convert its oil discoveries into tangible revenue, the arrival of the rig at Kilindini is more than a logistical milestone. It is the clearest signal yet that Kenya's first oil is no longer a distant prospect.



Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) officials supervise the offloading of the GW70 Integrated Onshore Drilling Rig at the Port of Mombasa after its arrival from Duqm Port in Oman, having originated from Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). | *Photo:* Courtesy.

The vessel after docking | *Photo:* Courtesy.

Artisanal miners The latest collapse is particularly alarming because the danger was not confined to miners working below ground

Gold beneath the ground, danger above it: How long will Kenya ignore the risks facing artisanal miners?

Two collapses in one month expose a pattern of neglect that is costing lives in Kenya's gold-mining communities.

BY Collins Kibet
@themtkenyatimes

What happens when the ground beneath a community becomes more dangerous than the poverty it is trying to escape? That question confronted Kenya again yesterday after a gold-mining site at Osiri-Matanda in Nyatike, Migori County, collapsed, with two residents feared trapped underground as rescue teams worked to locate them. Several residential and commercial structures sank into underground mining shafts after the ground gave way shortly before midnight. The full extent of casualties and damage remained unclear as operations continued.

For the people of Osiri-Matanda, gold is not simply a precious mineral. It is school fees, food, rent and hope. For generations, artisanal and small-scale mining has sustained communities where formal employment is scarce. But when homes, hotels and businesses can vanish into abandoned or active underground shafts, an uncomfortable question becomes unavoidable: how much risk should ordinary Kenyans absorb simply to survive?

The latest collapse is particularly alarming because the danger was not confined to miners working below ground. Residential apartments and commercial establishments — including a hotel and a gaming lounge — sank into the shafts. The incident occurred at around 11pm, when many residents were asleep. The Nyatike Small-Scale Gold Miners Association said the number of people inside the affected structures had not been immediately established.

That detail changes the conversation entirely. This is no longer only about miners descending into dangerous shafts in search of gold. It is about entire communities living and working above unstable underground workings. When the earth becomes unreliable, a neighbourhood can become a danger zone without warning.

The immediate priority remains the rescue operation. Migori County's disaster management team was deployed to Matanda Mines, while authorities urged the public to stay away from the affected area. The families of those feared trapped are waiting for answers, and every minute counts.

But once the rescue concludes, Kenya must resist the familiar temptation to let the incident fade. There will be condolences, official statements and perhaps an investigation. Then, as memories dim, mining resumes and the cycle repeats. That pattern cannot be allowed to continue.

This is not the first warning this month. Earlier, two miners died after a shaft collapsed in Kowidi Location, Rachuonyo South Sub-County, Homa Bay County. Witnesses and police reported the shaft walls gave way while the men were underground; both later died in hospital from their injuries.

Two separate incidents within weeks of each other demand serious national reflection. Are mining shafts being properly inspected? Are hazardous sites identified and secured before tragedy strikes? Are communities informed about the dangers of building homes and businesses above active mining areas? Are miners receiving the technical support and protective equipment they need? And when regulations are violated, who is held to account?

These are not rhetorical questions. Artisanal mining operates within a harsh economic reality. Telling poor communities to stop mining without offering alternative livelihoods does nothing to address the underlying problem. For many families, the shaft is not a speculative gamble — it is how they put food on the table.

The challenge is therefore not to choose between safety and livelihoods. Kenya needs to make mining safer while ensuring communities genuinely benefit from the resources beneath their land. Regulation must not exist only on paper. It must be visible at the mining face, where lives are actually on the line.

Government agencies, county authorities and local communities all have roles to play. Mining areas must be properly mapped, hazardous shafts identified and secured, and construction around unstable ground controlled. Rescue teams need specialist equipment capable of responding rapidly to underground emergencies. Miners need training in ventilation, structural stability, protective gear and emergency procedures.

The issue extends well beyond Migori. Kenya's mineral wealth spans many counties, offering real potential for employment and development. But natural resources become a curse when the pursuit of wealth consistently outpaces the protection of human life.

There is also a distributional question that must be asked plainly. Who benefits when the gold comes out of the ground? If local communities bear the greatest risks while receiving the smallest share of the returns, Kenya has a development failure that cannot be papered over by celebrating mineral output. Mining should generate safer jobs and sustainable economic opportunities — not collapsed structures, injured workers and bereaved families.

The tragedy at Osiri-Matanda must therefore become a national conversation about responsible mining. Kenya cannot keep treating mining accidents as isolated incidents when the same dangers repeatedly surface across its gold-producing regions.

There is nothing wrong with a young Kenyan seeking a livelihood from the country's natural resources. There is nothing wrong with communities pursuing prosperity from minerals beneath their land. But there is everything wrong with allowing economic desperation to drive people into conditions where a day's work can become their last.

Gold may be valuable. Human life is priceless. No ounce of gold is worth more than the person who risks everything to extract it.

As rescue teams continue searching at Osiri-Matanda, the country waits. But after the rescue, Kenya must do more than count victims and assess damage. It must investigate what went wrong, identify the failures that allowed the danger to develop, and take concrete steps to prevent the next collapse.

The real test is not how Kenya responds today. The real test is whether the country still remembers tomorrow.

The power of stepping away

Time away is not lost;
It is an investment in ourselves.
Don't always think that everything is fine
Sometimes we miss,
Sometimes we neglect,
Sometimes we blame,
Yet we still try to do our best.
That is the power of will.

Sometimes the best way
Is simply to move away from that place.
If stepping away brings you peace,
If you want to relieve your stress,
If you want to free yourself from strife,
Then take that step without fear.

Take care of every step you make.
Be alert and conscious all the time.
Know when to stay,
And know when to walk away.

Not every distance is a loss.
Sometimes distance brings clarity.
Sometimes silence brings strength.
And sometimes stepping away
Is the beginning of a better journey.

Trust God,
Walk with courage,
Walk with confidence,
And walk proudly toward your peace.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
Chengalpattu district

We can begin something

Sometimes we end up with it.
We can still laugh at someone
Who betrayed us once.
We can follow a path
That leads even to struggle.

Yet, the real strength lies
When we step away from
What we hate or dislike.
Saying "no" is also bold;
Following this always makes us gold.

Sheeba.S
Graduate teacher
Gghss, Pattukkottai
Thanjavur

The slow motion we need

In life,
some moments deserve to move in slow motion.

Einstein gave us
many wonderful thoughts about motion,
but perhaps, in today's hurried world,
people need one more kind of motion

Slow Motion.
We rush through meals,
as if even hunger has a deadline.

But life was never meant
to be a race from one plate to another.

Sometimes,
the healthiest thing we can do
is simply to slow down.

Maybe the world doesn't need
more speed.
Maybe it simply needs
a little more slow motion.

M. Rekha sugumar
Teacher
Puducherry.
India

The City inside my mind

The city inside my mind
With aesthetic pleasure I've designed
I love my dream enchanting city
Rather than a well developed city
Away from the sound of the vehicles,
Polluted air which multiples,
Fading the shinning stars
Dominated by electronic lights with bizarre.
Blooming & fragrance flowers everywhere
Representing our dears with smiley to share
Gentle breeze as relatives with embracing hands,
Favourable climate that consoles soul by understanding
And with a beautiful rainbow as cherishing friend
My ever dreaming enchanting city yet to amend.
Without conflicts to thriven
Elated to live in this heaven.

G.Sarala.

Dedicated to the memory of our mother Rukhsat

I still have so many words of regret,
I never had enough of you, Mother, not yet.
I pushed my worries far away,
Yet beside you I could not stay.
If only I could find you once again,
And hold you close through joy and pain.
If only in dreams I could see you there,
Why did you leave me, Mother, why, so bare?

The courtyards now are silent and wide,
I search for your footprints, nowhere to hide.
May your place be in Paradise above,
I pray for you with all my love.
Deep in my heart an ache remains,
I could not take you to the holy plains.
I could not hold your hand at the end,
Nor breathe in your scent, my dearest friend.

How can it be that from the phone no more
Comes your sweet voice I once adored?
No longer will I hear you say, "My child,"
The motherless cry, their hearts so wild.
How can I live in a world without you?
My cries rise to the heavens blue.
If only once, within my dream,
You'd come and hold me, saying, "My child," it seems.

I was far away and could not return,
I could not say "I love you" — and now I burn.
My heart is aflame, pierced through by a spark,
You left us behind in this world so dark, Mother!

Days are passing, one after another,
Yet grief keeps eating my heart like a fire.
It seems so easy to say, "It is fate, my dear,"
But I miss you, Mother — I miss you so dear.

Shomurodova Khosiyat
Uzbekistan, Qashqadaryo Region

I walk and walk, endless miles

Never tired, taking every stride.
No matter how hard I try,
I never make it on time.
May my teachers be safe and blest,
Who know my plight and let it rest.
If I keep going at this pace,
I won't be worth much in this race.
My friends glare and look at me,
Some criticize and disagree.
The clock's hands ticking fast and precise,
Wound me like nails, cold as ice.
Everyone serves to clear my way—
Buses, subways, taxis every day.
Only those from far away know the plight:
Which transport gets you there on time?
So forgive me now, my dear friends,
Don't beat me down or make amends.
My university's heart is wide and grand,
Just let me study and get my degree in hand.

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

Disaster

Floods shattered everything—
Whom do we blame?
No place left to survive,
Only questions rise:

Was it man-made,
Or was it God's will?

In God's own abode,
Many were lost,
And only a few survived.

No warning came.
No time to prepare.

A casual day
Turned into a disaster.

Technology failed us,
And nature could not resist
The weight of human greed.

Today, we are here.
Tomorrow—where will we be?

No one knows.

In the face of nature,
our pride fades,
our plans disappear,
and all that remains
is a prayer.

Pray for forgiveness.
Pray for the lost.
Pray for those who survived.
And pray that we learn
before nature speaks again.
Viji T
Ghs, Kvpudur,
Namakkal
Tamilnadu
India

Murder The family has launched a fundraising campaign on M-Changa, targeting KSh1 million to cover travel, accommodation, visa and passport costs for both Stacy and Njoki

Agnes Wanjiru's daughter fundraising to attend accused soldier's extradition hearing in London

Stacy Wanjiru, who was five months old when her mother was killed, plans to travel to the UK in November to press for justice more than 13 years after the murder.

BY Abel Muhatia
@themtkenyatimes

Agnes Wanjiru, the Kenyan woman murdered near a British Army training base in Nanyuki

The daughter of Agnes Wanjiru, the Kenyan woman murdered near a British Army training base in Nanyuki in 2012, is raising funds to travel to London to attend the extradition hearing of the soldier accused of killing her mother.

Stacy Wanjiru, now 14, was just five months old when her mother died. She plans to travel to the UK between November 16 and 22, accompanied by her cousin Esther Njoki, to attend the hearing and press for the accused soldier's extradition to Kenya to face trial.

The family has launched a fundraising campaign on M-Changa, targeting KSh1 million to cover travel, accommodation, visa and passport costs for both Stacy and Njoki. Any surplus raised will be directed into a trust fund for Stacy's education.

The trip follows a significant development in the long-running case. Kenyan authorities recently issued an arrest warrant for the soldier accused in the killing — more than 13 years after Agnes was found dead in a septic tank near the Nanyuki base. Her family has spent over a decade demanding accountability from both the British and Kenyan governments, accusing both of moving too slowly on the investigation.

While in the UK, Stacy and Njoki plan to meet Members of Parliament, members of the House of Lords, journalists and campaigners in an effort to maintain pressure on British authorities to see the case through to trial.

Njoki, Agnes's niece, said the family was determined to use the opportunity to its fullest. "After 14 years, this is our first ever chance to finally see the suspect face justice. We wish to travel to London to demand accountability and ensure that justice is not denied," she said.

"We also wish to pursue compensation from the UK government — as we have yet to receive anything for Agnes's murder by a British Army soldier — and to seek accountability and redress for the loss of Agnes."

Njoki appealed for public support, framing the case as one that extends beyond a single family. "This is not just about one family. It is about whether a Kenyan life matters enough for justice to be delivered, no matter how long it takes or who is accused."

Members of the public wishing to contribute to the fundraiser can do so at mchanga.africa/fundraiser/148616.

For enquiries, contact: abel.muhatia@adili.africa

13
Years After the murder

Stacy Wanjiru, now 14, was just five months old when her mother died. She plans to travel to the UK between November 16 and 22, accompanied by her cousin Esther Njoki, to attend the hearing and press for the accused soldier's extradition to Kenya to face trial.
The family has launched a fundraising campaign on M-Changa, targeting KSh1 million to cover travel, accommodation, visa and passport costs for both Stacy and Njoki. Any surplus raised will be directed into a trust fund for Stacy's education.

Business The insurer overhauls its life and savings solutions as data shows most Kenyans save with purpose but struggle to stay the course.

Old Mutual revamps savings products to deepen long-term financial wellness

On the right, Old Mutual Group CEO Arthur Oginga congratulates Old Mutual Life Assurance Kenya Managing Director Martin Karenju at the re-launch event held at Old Mutual Tower.

Old Mutual Life Assurance Kenya Managing Director Martin Karenju at the re-launch event held at Old Mutual Tower.

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Old Mutual Life Assurance Kenya has revamped its life and savings products to help Kenyan households build more consistent, long-term financial security — a move prompted by data showing that access to financial services alone is not translating into sustained saving behaviour.

The overhaul comes against a backdrop of high financial inclusion but persistent savings fragility. According to the 2024 FinAccess Household Survey, conducted by the Central Bank of Kenya in collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and FSD Kenya, formal financial access rose to 84.8% in 2024, up from 83.7% in 2021. Yet Old Mutual's own 2025 Financial Wellness Monitor tells a more nuanced story: while 91% of working Kenyans surveyed have a savings goal, 40% reported dipping into those savings to cover everyday expenses.

The gap between intention and outcome points to a clear need for structured solutions that help households remain focused on defined goals — education, home ownership, family protection and retirement — without being derailed by short-term financial pressure.

Old Mutual Life Assurance Kenya Managing Director Martin Karenju said the findings shaped the direction of the revamp directly. "Kenyans clearly want to save and build a better financial future, but they are doing so while managing significant pressures today. Our responsibility is to provide solutions that help customers balance today's needs with tomorrow's ambitions," Karenju said.

The upgraded products strengthen Old Mutual's existing propositions across several dimensions. Changes include longer investment horizons of up to 20 years on selected products, revised charges and surrender terms that favour the customer, higher guaranteed maturity values and adjustments to benefits designed to support longer-term education planning.

Old Mutual Group Chief Executive Arthur Oginga said the changes reflect a deliberate shift in how the company thinks about its customers' financial lives — starting with goals rather than products.

"A customer does not necessarily wake up thinking about an insurance or savings product. They are thinking about paying for their child's education, buying a home, protecting their family or having enough money when they retire. We need to begin with that goal and then help them identify the solution that can get them there," Oginga said.

The revamp forms part of Old Mutual's broader strategy to remain relevant across different stages of a customer's financial life — moving beyond transactional product sales towards a more holistic approach to personal financial wellness.

Education History sharpens the irony. Kenya's property regime was forged in the furnace of land alienation. From the Crown Lands Ordinance to the post-independence fixation on title deeds

Phantom fortunes: Kenya's grand illusion of turning intellectual gold into bankable dust

By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
@themtkenyatimes

Movable Property Security Rights Act

By Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

In 2017, Kenya enacted the Movable Property Security Rights Act, a statute that theoretically unlocked intellectual property patents, trademarks, copyrights, industrial designs as collateral for credit. Eight years later, during the 2023/24 financial year, intellectual property accounted for less than one percent of all movable collateral registered at the Business Registration Service. Less than three percent of security interests involved any intangible assets at all. This is not a minor administrative lag. It is a national failure dressed in progressive language, a legislative promise that has collapsed into statistical irrelevance while innovators, artists, and small enterprises remain starved of capital.

The numbers do not merely disappoint; they indict. Kenya's creative economy contributes tens of billions of shillings, yet artists still beg for financing because their songs, scripts, and brands cannot be converted into loans. Small enterprises face a 59 percent loan rejection rate for lack of "acceptable" collateral land, vehicles, fixed assets that the colonial and post-independence imagination still privileges as real. Meanwhile, counterfeiting and piracy bleed the economy of an estimated KSh 100 billion annually. The very assets meant to be securitized are being looted in plain sight, and the financial system shrugs.

History sharpens the irony. Kenya's property regime was forged in the furnace of land alienation. From the Crown Lands Ordinance to the post-independence fixation on title deeds, value has always been measured in acres and brick. Intellectual property was an afterthought, an exotic European import to be registered, not leveraged. The MPSRA arrived like a belated apology, acknowledging that knowledge itself can be wealth. Nevertheless, the old theology persists. Banks continue to treat patents as ethereal and copyrights as unverifiable, preferring the solid comfort of a title deed that can be auctioned on the courthouse steps. Eighty-five percent of banks still classify intangible assets as high-risk. Only a quarter of Tier 1 banks even partially accept them. The law opened a door; the gatekeepers simply refused to walk through it.

This is not caution. It is intellectual cowardice. Valuation remains an underdeveloped craft because few practitioners exist and no standardized methodology has been imposed. There is no liquid secondary market for distressed IP. Parallel registries KIPI, KECOBO, and the Collateral Registry create legal fog instead of clarity. When a creator defaults, the creditor faces an enforcement maze rather than a clean realization path. The result is predictable: capital remains trapped in the hands of those who already own land, while the young software developer in Nairobi, the agro-tech innovator in Eldoret, and the musician whose track streams across the continent are told their genius is not bankable.

Consider the contrast. In 2022, Chinese banks extended the equivalent of roughly USD 68 billion in loans secured by patents and trademarks, reaching at least 18,000 businesses. David Bowie once raised USD 55 million against future royalties from his catalogue. Dunkin' and Domino's have financed billions on brand equity. Kenya watches these developments with academic interest while its own registries collect dust. The correlation is brutal: nations that convert intellectual property into capital accelerate; those that treat it as decorative paperwork stagnate. Kenya's knowledge economy is not failing because Kenyans lack ideas. It is failing because the financial architecture still worships the tangible and distrusts the intangible.

The human cost is visceral. A fashion designer whose trademarked patterns define a generation cannot expand because the bank demands a plot in Kiambu. A fintech founder with proprietary code walks away empty-handed while counterfeit versions of foreign software flood the market. An author whose books shape national discourse cannot borrow against future royalties. These are not isolated misfortunes. They are systemic amputations of potential. Every rejected IP-backed application is a quiet vote for continued dependence on physical assets and foreign capital. Every year of inertia is another cohort of talent that either emigrates or abandons the risky path of creation for safer, land-secured mediocrity.

The satire writes itself. We have crafted an elegant legal instrument that allows the use of invisible assets, then surrounded it with practical obstacles so dense that the instrument becomes ornamental. We celebrate "innovation hubs" and "creative economies" in glossy policy documents while the collateral registry treats IP as a statistical curiosity. We preach financial inclusion yet maintain a collateral hierarchy that systematically excludes the knowledge workers who will determine whether Kenya becomes a producer or remains a consumer of the digital age. The emperor's new collateral is not merely invisible; it is deliberately kept that way by institutional inertia.

This cannot continue. Categorical action is required from every actor who has allowed the mirage to persist.

The National Treasury and Central Bank must issue binding guidance that reduces capital-adequacy penalties for well-structured IP-backed lending and creates regulatory sandboxes for IP finance products. Parliament must end the multiplicity of regimes by integrating IP registries with the Collateral Registry and legislating clear, rapid enforcement remedies specific to intangible assets. KIPI, KECOBO, and the Business Registration Service must stop operating in silos; they must build a unified digital platform that allows simultaneous registration of ownership and security interests, and they must fund public campaigns that teach creators how to package their assets for finance.

Commercial banks can no longer hide behind risk narratives. They must train credit officers in IP valuation, partner with specialized valuers, and pilot products particularly for the creative sector and agritech where cash-flow from royalties or licensing is predictable. Development finance institutions and the Kenya Development Corporation should underwrite first-loss facilities to de-risk early transactions and demonstrate viability. Universities and professional bodies must produce a cadre of IP valuers; the current shortage is both a market failure and a policy scandal.

Creators themselves must register their rights aggressively and demand that collective management organizations improve transparency in royalty collection so that future income streams become credible security. Civil society and industry associations must name and shame institutions that continue to reject IP collateral without serious appraisal. The judiciary must designate specialized commercial benches competent to handle the unique remedies required when intangible security is enforced.

The alternative is continued hemorrhage. Kenya cannot build a knowledge economy while treating its primary assets as phantoms. The MPSRA was never meant to be a decorative statute. It was meant to democratize capital by recognizing that the mind's products can be as solid as soil. Until banks, regulators, and policymakers treat that recognition as operational rather than aspirational, the grand illusion will persist: a country rich in ideas, poor in the means to capitalize them, congratulating itself on progressive laws while the statistics expose the hollowness of the claim.

The gold is there. The question is whether Kenya has the institutional courage to stop pretending it is dust.

The writer is a social commentator.

Sports The dual crisis — financial and administrative — has created an uncomfortable atmosphere in the national team camp at a moment when focus should squarely be on competitive preparation.

Harambee Stars crisis deepens as players protest and work permit questions emerge

Unpaid allowances and unresolved documentation issues cast a shadow over Kenya's national team preparations.

BY Levis Wangamati
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Harambee Stars' preparations for their upcoming international fixtures were thrown into disarray yesterday after players staged a protest over unpaid allowances and questions emerged about whether head coach Benni McCarthy and members of his technical team hold valid work permits to operate in Kenya.

The dual crisis — financial and administrative — has created an uncomfortable atmosphere in the national team camp at a moment when focus should squarely be on competitive preparation.

The players' protest centred on allowances outstanding from previous national team engagements. Members of the squad expressed frustration over repeated delays in receiving payments owed from earlier camps, with the dispute eventually boiling over when players declined to train as scheduled. Football officials were forced to intervene, triggering emergency discussions between the players, Football Kenya Federation and government officials.

Harambee Stars striker Ryan Ogam confirmed that players received a portion of the money owed, though concerns remained over whether the amount was sufficient. Reports indicate some squad members had attended several camps without receiving their full allowances — suggesting the problem runs deeper than a single administrative delay and points to systemic weaknesses in how national team finances are managed.

McCarthy himself has not stayed silent. The South African coach publicly expressed frustration over the situation, confirming that some players had gone through multiple camps without the allowances they had been promised. His intervention placed additional pressure on administrators and brought wider attention to a dispute that might otherwise have been quietly managed behind closed doors. McCarthy has been clear: players representing Kenya should not be stepping onto the training pitch distracted by unpaid bills.

Harambee Stars head coach Benni McCarthy

A separate and equally troubling issue surfaced when McCarthy revealed that he and members of his foreign technical staff had not yet secured the work permits required to operate legally in Kenya. The coach said the matter had become a pressing concern, as he had no wish to continue working in the country without the appropriate documentation.

The revelation raised immediate questions. McCarthy has been in charge of Harambee Stars since March 2025. The fact that the work permit issue remains unresolved months into his tenure points to a significant administrative failure. The consequences have already been practical: McCarthy and his technical team have had to leave Kenya between international assignments rather than remaining in the country to monitor domestic league matches and track potential call-ups. For a coach who has spoken openly about the importance of watching players in local competition, the disruption to his preparation process is not a minor inconvenience.

FKF acknowledged the work permit concerns and said the process was being handled in consultation with relevant government agencies. The federation indicated it was pursuing the necessary documentation and sought to reassure the technical team. It has also been involved in efforts to resolve the allowances dispute as the team prepares for its fixtures.

The federation now faces pressure on two fronts: settling outstanding player payments and ensuring the coaching staff are properly documented before further complications arise.

Harambee Stars eventually returned to training as efforts to restore calm within the camp continued. The resumption offered some relief after days of uncertainty. But a return to the training ground does not resolve the underlying issues. Outstanding allowances, incomplete documentation and the strained relationship between players and administrators will require concrete action — not reassurances — if the team is to maintain cohesion through its international campaign.

The timing could hardly be worse. Kenya's supporters expect the national team to compete with focus and ambition. Instead, the build-up to the upcoming fixtures has been dominated by discussions about money, paperwork and accountability. These are not the conversations a national team should be having in camp.

The broader pattern is difficult to ignore. Questions surrounding the timely payment of player allowances and the management of foreign technical staff are not new to Kenyan football. The current crisis is the latest chapter in a longer story about the administrative challenges facing the sport in this country.

For Harambee Stars, the challenge now goes beyond the 90 minutes on the pitch. Players must prepare for competitive fixtures while the federation and government agencies work to put their house in order. Whether this episode becomes a temporary setback or the catalyst for genuine structural change in how Kenya manages its national team will depend entirely on what happens next.

For now, the focus returns to football — and the hope that those responsible for the administration of Harambee Stars rise to the moment.

Politics These events matter because electoral credibility is cumulative. Every unresolved controversy becomes part of public memory

Can the electorate trust the ballot?

With 2027 approaching and old wounds reopened, Kenya faces a narrowing window to rebuild confidence in its electoral system.

BY Dennis Wendo
@themtkenyatimes

With 2027 approaching and old wounds reopened, Kenya faces a narrowing window to rebuild confidence in its electoral system.

By Dennis Wendo

Once again, Kenya is being forced to confront an uncomfortable question: can the country enter another election without first addressing the deep crisis of trust surrounding the management of its polls?

Recent remarks by former President Uhuru Kenyatta and former Cabinet Secretary Moses Kuria have reopened some of the most painful electoral memories. Kenyatta claims Raila Odinga actually won the 2022 presidential election but was denied victory. Kuria, responding to those remarks, went further, making allegations about the 2013 and 2017 elections — including claims about rejected votes, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission's servers and efforts to influence outcomes.

These are serious allegations. They should not become merely another round of accusations traded through the media. Where individuals claim to possess evidence of electoral manipulation, that evidence must be presented to the appropriate institutions and subjected to independent scrutiny.

But beyond the personalities involved lies a more important national question: why does every disputed presidential election leave behind a larger deficit of public confidence? That is the question Kenya must answer before 2027.

The challenge is not new. Following the 2013 election, the Supreme Court considered, among other matters, the treatment of rejected votes and irregularities in the tallying process. The court upheld the election, but the litigation demonstrated the depth of public concern. Four years later, the country witnessed something even more consequential — the Supreme Court annulled the 2017 presidential election and ordered a fresh poll, citing non-compliance with constitutional and electoral requirements.

The ballot

These events matter because electoral credibility is cumulative. Every unresolved controversy becomes part of public memory. Every allegation that is not adequately investigated adds another layer of suspicion. By 2027, Kenyans will not approach the ballot box carrying only the experiences of that particular election. They will carry 2013, 2017 and 2022 with them.

This makes the role of the IEBC exceptionally important. The commission's own Election Operation Plan for 2025–2027 acknowledges as much, committing to an electoral process grounded in integrity, transparency, accountability and public confidence, and pledging that every vote cast will be counted, verified and accurately reflected in the final result.

The difficulty is that institutional commitments alone cannot rebuild trust. Trust has to be demonstrated.

Public debate continues to point to a confidence deficit around the IEBC — concerns about the voter register, election technology, procurement, institutional leadership and the transparency of electoral processes. Parliamentary debate has explicitly acknowledged the problem. This is why preparations for 2027 must go beyond procuring equipment, registering voters and training polling officials. Kenyans need to understand how the system works before they are asked to accept its outcome.

The technology question remains critical. Kenya's recent electoral history has shown that disputes move rapidly from the physical ballot to electronic transmission, servers, biometric identification and results management. The IEBC is already proposing legal reforms covering election technology and results management. But the answer should not be to ask Kenyans simply to trust the technology. It should be to make that technology independently auditable and transparent enough to withstand scrutiny by political parties, accredited observers, civil society and the courts.

The same principle applies to the voter register. A credible election begins with a credible register. Voters must have adequate opportunities to verify their details, challenge inaccuracies and understand how the register is protected from manipulation.

The commission also needs to communicate more effectively. Silence creates space for speculation. Delayed explanations allow rumours to take root. Technical processes that are poorly explained become political controversies. The IEBC must move from simply announcing what it is doing to explaining how and why.

Political actors carry responsibility too. Candidates and parties should not wait until results are announced to question the credibility of a system they helped shape. If there are genuine concerns about technology, voter registration, tallying or polling procedures, they must be raised early and through established mechanisms. Equally, politicians who make allegations of electoral fraud must be prepared to substantiate them. A credible democracy cannot be built on allegations alone — but neither can it be built by dismissing every allegation as political propaganda. What is needed is evidence, transparency and accountable institutions.

Civil society also has a role that begins well before polling day. Independent organisations should monitor the entire electoral cycle — voter registration, civic education, campaign financing, political violence, technology, inclusion and dispute resolution. The media, likewise, must resist amplifying unverified electoral claims. Its duty is to interrogate allegations, demand evidence and give citizens the information they need to understand what is happening.

The ultimate responsibility, however, rests with electoral institutions and political leadership. There is less than a year before the August 2027 General Election. The window for addressing weaknesses is narrowing. The objective should not simply be an election declared peaceful on polling day. Kenya needs an election whose credibility survives the day after the results are announced.

That begins with a straightforward principle: trust cannot be manufactured after votes are counted. It has to be built before the first ballot is cast.

The remarks by Kenyatta and Kuria should therefore be treated not merely as another confrontation between former allies, but as an opportunity to ask difficult institutional questions. What safeguards exist today that did not exist in 2013? What lessons from 2017 have actually been implemented? What weaknesses exposed in 2022 have been permanently addressed? Can political parties independently verify critical aspects of the electoral system? Can ordinary voters understand how their vote travels from the polling station to the final declaration?

And, most importantly: if the result is contested in 2027, will Kenyans have enough confidence in the system to allow the law and evidence to settle the dispute — rather than street mobilisation and political confrontation?

These questions cannot wait until August 2027. The credibility of the next election is being built now. Kenya does not merely need another election. It needs an election whose outcome citizens can scrutinise, understand and accept through constitutional and democratic processes — regardless of who wins.

The real test of 2027 will not simply be who takes the ballot. It will be whether Kenyans believe it was honestly counted.

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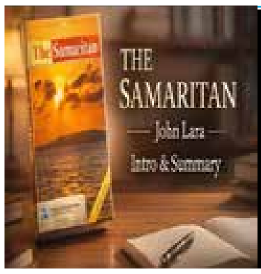
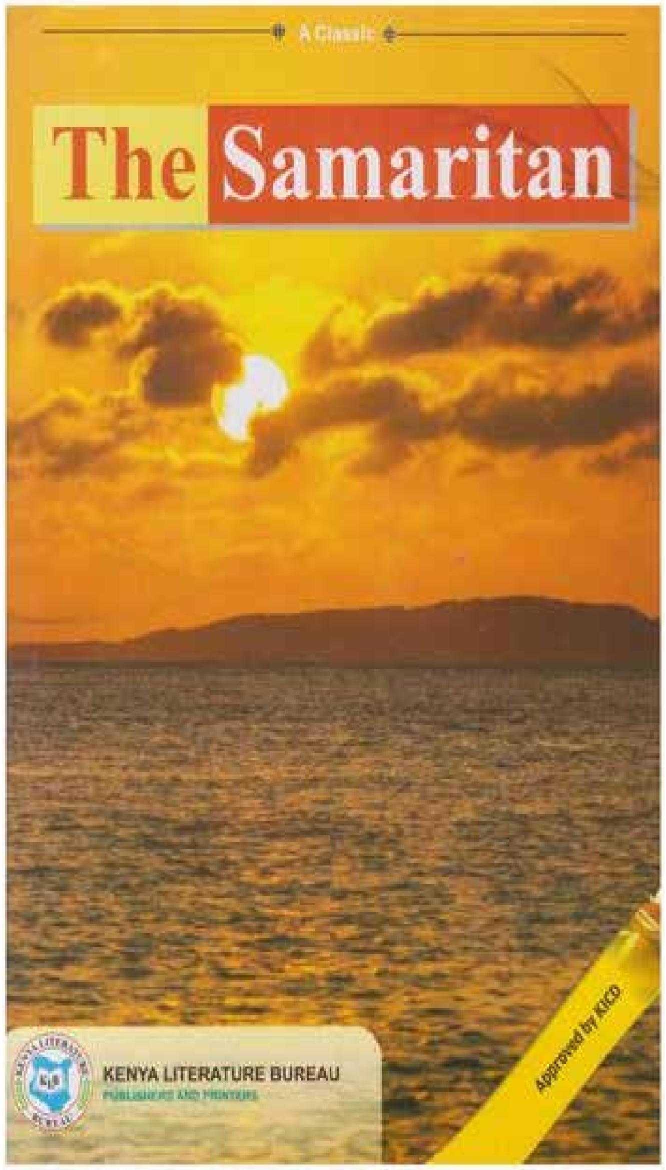


BOOKS & LITERATURE
with Ashford Kimani
Title: The Samaritan

Book Review: The Samaritan

Title: The Samaritan
Author: John Lara
Publisher: Moran Publishers
Year of Publication: 2023
Reviewer: Ashford Kimani



Literature often mirrors society by exposing its strengths, weaknesses, and possibilities for transformation. The Samaritan by John Lara is a compelling play that courageously addresses pressing social issues such as corruption, leadership failure, abuse of power, technological innovation, and the struggle for justice. Through an engaging storyline, memorable characters, and contemporary themes, the play captures the realities of modern governance while offering hope that responsible citizenship and innovation can inspire positive societal change.

Set in Maracas Municipality, the play revolves around an innovative mobile application known as The Samaritan, developed by two bright and visionary students, Alvita and Montano, under the mentorship of their principled teacher, Nicole. The application is designed to empower citizens by allowing them to anonymously expose corruption, misuse of public resources, and unethical practices among leaders. What begins as a noble technological innovation soon turns into a source of fear and panic for corrupt municipal officials whose hidden dealings risk being exposed to the public. The conflict that emerges between reform-minded citizens and self-serving leaders forms the backbone of this thought-provoking drama.

One of the strongest aspects of the play is its relevance to contemporary society. Corruption remains one of the greatest obstacles to social and economic progress in many parts of the world. Lara skillfully demonstrates how technology can serve as a powerful instrument for accountability and transparency. The idea of a mobile application being used to expose corruption feels not only creative but also remarkably realistic in an age where digital tools increasingly shape civic participation and governance. The play challenges readers to think critically about how innovation can become a force for social justice.

Nicole emerges as one of the most admirable characters in the play. She embodies integrity, courage, and unwavering commitment to truth. Despite facing intimidation and threats from influential leaders determined to silence opposition, Nicole refuses to compromise her values. Her determination to nurture responsible citizenship among her students reflects the transformative role educators play in shaping society. She believes that education should not merely produce academically successful individuals but responsible citizens capable of contributing positively to their communities.

Equally impressive are Alvita and Montano, whose creativity and intelligence symbolize youthful potential and optimism. Their innovation serves as a reminder that young people possess immense capacity to influence social transformation when empowered through education and guided by ethical leadership. Through these characters, Lara communicates an important message: the future belongs to courageous and innovative minds willing to challenge systems that perpetuate injustice.

The author also demonstrates considerable mastery of dramatic techniques. Humour plays a significant role in sustaining reader engagement despite the seriousness of the issues being explored. Characters such as Mayor Mossi inject comic relief through exaggerated speech and amusing expressions, preventing the narrative from becoming overwhelmingly heavy. This balance between entertainment and social criticism enhances the play's appeal and readability.

Suspense is another stylistic strength evident throughout the work. Readers remain invested in the unfolding events, constantly wondering whether The Samaritan application will survive mounting opposition or whether corrupt leaders will succeed in destroying it. The tension generated by this uncertainty sustains momentum and keeps audiences emotionally invested in the story until its conclusion.

Thematically, corruption and abuse of power dominate the narrative. Municipal leaders exploit public resources, manipulate systems for personal gain, accept bribes, and prioritize selfish interests above public welfare. Lara presents corruption not merely as an individual failing but as a systemic problem capable of undermining institutions and destroying public trust. The fear generated by exposure through The Samaritan application highlights how accountability mechanisms can challenge entrenched misconduct and encourage responsible leadership.

Technology and innovation emerge as equally significant themes. Alvita and Montano's creation demonstrates that technological advancement can extend beyond convenience and entertainment to become a tool for civic empowerment. The play advocates for responsible technological use, emphasizing its potential to strengthen governance, improve transparency, and amplify citizens' voices. In an increasingly digital world, this message carries profound relevance.

Leadership and responsibility also occupy a central place in the narrative. Nicole consistently advocates for leadership rooted in service rather than self-interest. The play suggests that genuine leadership requires courage, accountability, and commitment to collective well-being. Citizens are equally challenged to participate actively in improving society instead of remaining passive observers.

Another important theme explored is fear and intimidation. Powerful individuals attempt to silence truth through threats and coercion. Lara effectively illustrates how corrupt systems often rely on fear to preserve themselves. However, the resilience displayed by Nicole, Alvita, and Montano reinforces the idea that courage remains a powerful antidote to oppression.

Hope for change ultimately shines through the play's message. Despite the challenges confronting reform efforts, Lara presents optimism as both necessary and achievable. Through youthful innovation and principled leadership, society retains the possibility of renewal and transformation. The play inspires readers to believe that meaningful progress begins when ordinary individuals choose integrity over silence and action over indifference.

While the play excels in many areas, certain sections involving prolonged political discussions may challenge some readers. Extended debates among leaders occasionally slow narrative progression and may require careful attention to follow fully. Nonetheless, these moments do not significantly diminish the overall impact of the work. Instead, they reinforce the complexity of governance and institutional reform.

Overall, The Samaritan is an engaging, educational, and socially relevant play that successfully combines humour, suspense, political commentary, and creativity to deliver a powerful message about accountability, leadership, and civic responsibility. John Lara has crafted a work that not only entertains but also encourages reflection on society's challenges and possibilities.

This play is highly recommended for secondary school students, lovers of drama and political satire, and readers interested in governance, leadership, and social transformation. It serves as both a literary experience and a civic lesson.

On a rating scale of ten, The Samaritan earns an impressive 9/10 for its originality, educational value, relevance, and ability to provoke critical thought while remaining engaging throughout.

Ashford teaches English and Literature in Gatundu North Sub-county and serves as Dean of Studies.

Sports >> *The Senegalese football star launches an ambitious agricultural initiative in Bambali aimed at creating 2,500 jobs and planting 78,000 mango trees.

Mané invests $20M in hometown agro project

By **Pascal Okoth**

Sadio Mané

Sadio Mané is putting his money where his roots are. The Senegalese football star has launched a $20 million agricultural initiative in his hometown of Bambali, in what represents one of the most ambitious community investment projects undertaken by an active African footballer.

The SM10 AGRO project — named after Mané's iconic shirt number — is designed to create more than 2,500 jobs and plant over 78,000 mango trees, with the goal of driving long-term economic development in the region.

"I don't want to be remembered only for the goals I've scored," Mané said. "Before the stadiums, the lights and the victories, there was Bambali."

The former Liverpool and Bayern Munich forward has long maintained a deep connection with the Senegalese village where he grew up. Despite rising from humble beginnings to become one of Africa's most celebrated footballers — winning the Premier League and the UEFA Champions League with Liverpool and leading Senegal to continental glory — Mané has consistently channelled resources back into his home community.

SM10 AGRO reflects a deliberate shift from short-term charity to sustainable economic activity. Large-scale mango cultivation generates employment across multiple stages: planting, maintenance, harvesting, processing, transportation and distribution. For a region where agriculture underpins most livelihoods, the project's potential reach is considerable.

The planned 2,500 jobs would offer a meaningful alternative to unemployment for local residents, particularly young people, and could help anchor a generation that might otherwise leave in search of opportunity elsewhere.

The initiative builds on Mané's existing record of investment in Bambali, which has previously included projects targeting access to essential services and infrastructure. Taken together, these efforts have established him as one of the most prominent examples of an African athlete using personal wealth to drive tangible change beyond the football pitch.

SM10 AGRO also raises broader questions about the role of successful African sports personalities in local development. Football has given Mané a global platform; projects like this allow him to direct that influence towards communities that rarely benefit from the wealth generated by the game.

The project's long-term success will depend on implementation quality, agricultural productivity, market access and the capacity to sustain employment over time. But the scale of the commitment signals that this is not a publicity exercise. It is, by any measure, a serious economic undertaking.

From Bambali to the biggest stages in world football, Mané has built a remarkable career. Through SM10 AGRO, he is ensuring that a meaningful share of what that career produced finds its way back to where it all began.

Sports >> *An independent commission delivers its verdict in English football's most consequential financial case, but the battle is far from over.

Manchester City found guilty of 114 Premier League charges

By **Andalo Christine Ingutia**

Manchester City have been found guilty of 114 of the 115 financial charges brought against them by the Premier League, in a verdict that marks the most significant moment yet in a case that has consumed English football for years.

The finding, reported by The Athletic's David Ornstein, was reached by an independent commission following proceedings that stretched over an extended period. City were cleared on only one of the charges. The remaining 114 were upheld.

No punishment has been announced. The club is expected to appeal, and both sides have 14 days to do so. If an appeal is lodged, the matter would be referred to a new three-member commission — meaning the final outcome could still be some way off.

The Premier League brought the charges in February 2023 following a four-year investigation into City's financial affairs. The allegations cover a period between 2009 and 2018, during which the club, backed by Abu Dhabi ownership, transformed themselves into the dominant force in English football, winning multiple league titles, domestic trophies and the UEFA Champions League.

The charges relate to several areas of financial regulation. City were accused of providing inaccurate financial information concerning revenue, sponsorship income and operating costs, and of failing to disclose complete details of payments made to managers and players. The case also included alleged violations of UEFA financial regulations and the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules. The club was further accused of failing to cooperate fully with league investigators during the course of the inquiry.

Manchester City Etihad Stadium

City have consistently denied any wrongdoing. The club previously stated it held evidence to support its position and maintained that stance yesterday following the commission's findings. Rather than addressing the specific guilty verdicts, a club spokesperson issued a carefully worded statement redirecting attention to the league's conduct as a regulator.

"The club has diligently respected due process for eight years on the basis that the Premier League Board and Executive would behave as an independent, impartial and fair-minded regulator, free from partisan influence," the spokesperson said.

The statement signals that City intend to contest the findings vigorously. The club has long expressed confidence in its legal position and has rejected the suggestion that it deliberately operated outside the rules during the period in question.

The question now dominating football is what sanction, if any, City will ultimately face. Speculation has ranged widely, from heavy financial penalties and points deductions to transfer bans, the stripping of previously won titles and, at the most extreme end of the discussion, expulsion from the Premier League altogether. None of these outcomes has been confirmed, and no formal punishment will be determined until the appeal process has run its course.

The scale of that potential punishment is what gives this verdict its extraordinary weight. City's success during the period covered by the charges is unmatched in the modern English game. If sanctions ultimately affect their standing in the league table — past or present — the ripple effects across English football would be profound.

The case has also raised wider questions about the Premier League's regulatory framework and whether it is equipped to handle disputes of this complexity and duration. The original charges were brought more than two years ago. The investigation that preceded them lasted four years. The proceedings have been among the most technically demanding in the sport's history, involving vast quantities of financial documentation and expert testimony.

For City, the immediate focus will be on mounting an appeal and protecting the club's position. Their trophies, their current squad and their participation in domestic and European competition remain unaffected at this stage.

For the Premier League, the process now moves to its next phase. A final determination on punishment cannot be made until all appeal options have been exhausted.

English football has rarely witnessed a case of this magnitude. The commission's verdict is a landmark moment — but with an appeal pending and sanctions yet to be decided, the story of Manchester City and the 115 charges is not finished yet.

The MT. KENYA TIMES
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Emirates to bring A350 to Nairobi from October

Nairobi becomes the 32nd destination on the Emirates A350 network, with Premium Economy making its Kenya debut on the Dubai route.

By: Joan Wanjiku
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **Business Class on the A350 is configured in a 1-2-1 layout, giving every passenger direct aisle access and a fully lie-flat seat finished in soft cream leather. Each seat includes a personal minibar and wireless charging. A self-service snack display at the rear of the cabin allows passengers to help themselves to refreshments throughout the flight.**
- **Economy Class has been refreshed with a new colour palette of sky blue, bronze and cream, complemented by lighter wood finishings. Seats feature the airline's upgraded ice entertainment system on a 13.3-inch 4K adjustable touchscreen, with leather headrests and increased seat pitch.**

Emirates will begin operating its newest aircraft, the Airbus A350, on the Dubai-Nairobi route .

Emirates will begin operating its newest aircraft, the Airbus A350, on the Dubai-Nairobi route from October 25, bringing a new generation of cabin experience to Kenyan travellers and introducing Premium Economy class to the country for the first time.

Nairobi becomes the 32nd destination worldwide to be served by the A350, which will operate on flights EK717 and EK718. The aircraft carries 298 passengers across three cabins — Business, Premium Economy and Economy — and is characterised by wider, brighter interiors, improved connectivity and upgraded in-flight entertainment.

The most significant addition for Kenyan travellers is the Premium Economy cabin, which makes its debut on the route. The cabin features leather reclining seats with a generous pitch, adjustable headrests, additional legroom, in-seat charging points, a wood-finished side cocktail table and a 13.3-inch screen. Passengers on the Dubai-Nairobi route will also receive complimentary amenity kits and access to Chandon Vintage Brut 2017, a sparkling wine exclusive to Emirates.

Business Class on the A350 is configured in a 1-2-1 layout, giving every passenger direct aisle access and a fully lie-flat seat finished in soft cream leather. Each seat includes a personal minibar and wireless charging. A self-service snack display at the rear of the cabin allows passengers to help themselves to refreshments throughout the flight.

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Emirates Country Manager in Kenya Christophe Leloup said the aircraft's arrival marked a new chapter for the airline in the market. "We're delighted to bring our latest aircraft and onboard experience to our customers, with more comfort, choice and thoughtful touches in every cabin," Leloup said. "The A350 gives customers travelling on the Dubai-Nairobi route something new to discover, while building on the experience they know and love from Emirates."

The A350 deployment follows a run of upgrades to Emirates' Kenya operations. The airline introduced a third daily flight between Dubai and Nairobi in July, bringing its total to 21 flights per week and offering travellers greater connectivity to destinations across Europe and the United States via Dubai.

Nairobi is also home to Africa's first Emirates World store, which opened in 2024, offering a more immersive booking and product experience. Earlier this year, Emirates introduced a split-payment solution in partnership with Cellulant, allowing travellers to combine multiple payment methods across 24-hour instalments when purchasing tickets.

Tickets for flights from October 25 are available now on Emirates.com, the Emirates app, through travel agents and at the Emirates World store in Nairobi. All tickets booked after August 10, 2026, include unlimited complimentary date changes to Dubai and one complimentary date change to any other destination, along with reduced refund fees across all cabin classes.

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