



Gachagua's Dallas reckoning: prophecies, intelligence wars and a challenge to Ruto from Texas
Rigathi Gachagua yesterday used a diaspora address in Dallas, Texas, to deliver his most comprehensive political broadside yet against President William Ruto

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Martha Karua mourns father Jackson Karua as Kenya enters defining march to 2027
People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua has announced the death of her father Jackson Karua in Kirinyaga County. The news came yesterday, just moments after she had left his home after a family visit

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Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027 **President William Ruto and his predecessor Uhuru reopened an old debate**

Did Raila win in 2022?

Did Raila Odinga really win the 2022 presidential election? That is the question former President Uhuru Kenyatta has put back on the national table, four years after Kenya's electoral and judicial institutions appeared to have delivered a final, binding answer. The timing is striking. The implications are considerable. And for a country already navigating the complex political terrain ahead of a general election, the reopening of this particular wound deserves careful, honest examination.

On 22 September, Uhuru told a Jubilee Party meeting in Nairobi that he remained convinced the late Odinga had received the votes necessary to win the August 2022 presidential contest. He said he and his political allies had done everything possible to support Odinga's presidential bid and that his personal belief about the outcome had not changed in the four years since polling day. The remarks were not a casual aside. They were delivered at a formal party gathering, before an audience of political associates, and they have since reverberated across Kenya's political establishment.

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The late Raila Odinga



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Kalonzo turns 40-year jibe into rule of law defence

BY Jane Njeri

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka has hit back at President William Ruto over jibes about his 40 years in politics.

Kalonzo responded yesterday in Bondo, Siaya County, where he defended his record and his friendship with the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. The exchange captures the personal turn Kenya's succession politics is taking eleven months to the August 10, 2027 general election.

"It's true I have been around for 40 years as Ruto claims, but I have not killed anyone's child, I have defended the rule of law together with many leaders," Kalonzo said.

Ruto has mocked Kalonzo over the Tseikuru road, arguing four decades produced little development until his administration intervened.

Kalonzo defended his alliance with Odinga, saying he believed in constitutionalism, and said he will not attend Raila's first anniversary alongside government leaders he now accuses of mistreating Odinga and rigging the 2022 poll.

"I will not share a platform with people who mistreated Raila when he was alive. I will come back on my own," he said. With the opposition yet to settle on a flagbearer, Ruto is framing longevity as failure while Kalonzo frames it as experience and fidelity to law in a volatile pre-election season.



Editor's Desk

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Group Executive Chairman

M. Danson

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/>

Our Contacts

P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262

Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,

News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has said his Democracy for Citizens Party team will not retreat, saying Kenyans are yearning for a new Kenya free from corruption, extrajudicial killings, bribery and selfish interests. Gachagua said yesterday his team keeps moving forward and must never take public support for granted, noting that over the next 319 days Kenyans must get the leadership and future they deserve. He spoke after campaign engagements in Discovery and Mwioko in Ruiru, Kiambu County, where he thanked residents for listening and supporting his team. Gachagua said the events were led by his secretary general designate John Methu, adding that the party will continue vigorous grassroots mobilisation across the country ahead of the August 2027 general election.



Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiangi has asked President William Ruto to stop intimidating leaders seeking to challenge him in the 2027 general election. Speaking yesterday at Olerai Dominion Church in Narok County, Matiangi said Kenyans want choices and accused government of interfering with parties and multiparty democracy. “You don’t want to trouble all of us so that you remain the only candidate. Kenyans want choices, and we are ready to give leadership,” he said. Matiangi accused government of using public resources and independent institutions for propaganda and intimidation. He said Richard Moitalele ole Kenta remains Jubilee secretary general and urged Ruto to stay out of party affairs, noting Jubilee governed without interfering with other parties, including United Democratic Alliance formation.



The Port of Lamu has received 2,930 metric tonnes of heavy construction machinery for the proposed Sh2 trillion Dangote East Africa Refinery ahead of groundbreaking next week. The consignment, aboard MV Da Yang, marks a major step for the project billed as northern Kenya’s first oil refinery. Kenya Ports Authority Chief Executive Officer William Ruto received the vessel, presented its master Captain Wang Shengli with a first-call certificate and said the arrival shows government commitment to the project. KPA said the cargo will support construction of the facility expected to process crude from Turkana’s Lokichar fields and other regional sources, and demonstrates Lamu’s readiness to handle specialised cargo and future petroleum logistics as an industrial hub develops along the coast.



Kenya and Tanzania will intensify surveillance, patrols and intelligence sharing along their shared border to curb illegal immigration and transnational organised crime. The commitment was reached yesterday at the second Proximity Commanders Security Meeting in Kajiado County, which brought together senior commanders from the Kenya Defence Forces and Tanzania People’s Defence Force. The forum focused on emerging threats affecting border communities and called for closer coordination between military and multi-agency teams at crossing points. KDF said the sides agreed on regular surveillance, impromptu patrols and sustained presence to deter crime and stronger information exchange to disrupt cross-border networks effectively. The meeting was co-chaired by Major General Luka Kutto of Eastern Command and Brigadier General Paul Masinde of TPDF as agreed.



The Kenya Air Force is stepping up modernisation of its logistics systems, with commanders calling for greater use of technology, data-driven planning and locally adaptable solutions to sustain air operations. The push emerged yesterday from a three-day logistics seminar held at Moi Air Base from September 23 to 25, where senior officers examined fleet sustainment, supply chains and resource management. Deputy Commander Brigadier Mohamud Farah, representing Commander Major General Bernard Waliaula, said future sustainment will depend on adapting modern technologies to Kenya’s unique operational challenges. Moi Air Base Commander Brigadier Herbert Wafula said effective logistics must ensure the right capability reaches the right place at the right time. KAF said the forum will strengthen resilient systems and enhance mission readiness.



Kenya is integrating artificial intelligence and digital platforms into tourism promotion to make destinations more visible to increasingly digital travellers, Tourism Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano said yesterday. Miano said today’s traveller uses smartphones and online tools to discover destinations, compare experiences and make decisions, making AI critical to competitiveness. She said government must redesign how it showcases experiences to remain relevant in digital spaces. She cited Safari Live, developed with Wildlife Earth, and Tembea Kenya as platforms expanding visibility and encouraging domestic travel. Miano said youth, influencers and creators will play a bigger role in promotion. He spoke as Kenya marked World Tourism Day in Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County, under the theme Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism.

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Labour The intervention reflects a broader approach that places skills development at the centre of Kenya's global workforce strategy

Roseline Njogu emerges as leading voice in Kenya's diaspora and labour mobility agenda

Principal Secretary makes case for safe, skilled migration as bridge between Kenyan talent and global opportunity

BY John Kariuki

@themtkenyatimes

Principal Secretary for Diaspora Affairs Roseline Njogu is emerging as a leading voice in Kenya's drive to turn diaspora engagement, labour mobility and global opportunities for Kenyan talent into practical drivers of national development.

Through her leadership at the State Department, Njogu has consistently advanced an agenda that views Kenyans living and working abroad not as mere recipients of government services, but as critical partners in investment, skills transfer, innovation, employment creation and economic transformation.

Her latest engagement at the Migration and Development Roundtable held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York has further underscored her growing role in shaping Kenya's international labour mobility agenda.

Speaking at the forum yesterday, Njogu presented labour mobility as a triple win that can benefit migrant workers, countries of origin and destination, and employers. She emphasised the importance of mutual recognition of qualifications to enable skilled Kenyans to access international job markets more seamlessly. The intervention reflects a broader approach that places

skills development at the centre of Kenya's global workforce strategy. With Kenya's youthful population, Njogu has consistently highlighted the need to equip young people with skills that respond to emerging international labour market demands.

Under her stewardship, the State Department has continued to strengthen partnerships aimed at creating safe, structured and demand-driven pathways for Kenyans seeking employment abroad.

Njogu has also placed considerable emphasis on protecting Kenyans from exploitation during migration and employment. The government approach includes promoting responsible recruitment, strengthening labour agreements and ensuring that Kenyans accessing opportunities abroad are better prepared and protected.

The Kenya-Germany Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership is among the initiatives through which the government is seeking to deepen structured labour mobility while strengthening skills development and cooperation between institutions in the two countries.

The State Department has similarly expanded engagements with other international partners to open additional opportunities for Kenyan professionals and skilled workers.

A notable feature of Njogu's

leadership has been the emphasis on ensuring that international opportunities also generate value for Kenya. Rather than viewing labour mobility simply through the lens of employment abroad, she has consistently highlighted the potential for diaspora professionals to contribute knowledge, expertise, investment and networks to national development.

This philosophy is reflected in the proposed Kenya Diaspora Impact Platform, which seeks to create stronger mechanisms through which Kenyans abroad can contribute their expertise and experience to national development.

Njogu has also championed greater recognition of the diaspora's contribution beyond remittances. Her engagements have repeatedly highlighted the role of Kenyans abroad in bringing back skills, capital, technology, innovation and global connections that can strengthen communities and institutions at home.

The approach has positioned the State Department for Diaspora Affairs as an increasingly important bridge between Kenya and its citizens across the world.

Her leadership has coincided with intensified efforts to connect Kenya's technical and vocational education programmes with international labour market requirements. The objective is to ensure that young Kenyans are not only



Principal Secretary for Diaspora Affairs Roseline Njogu

trained, but equipped with skills that translate into real opportunities in a competitive global economy.

For Njogu, the emerging global labour market presents both an opportunity and a responsibility. Kenya must prepare its workforce to compete internationally while ensuring that those who secure opportunities abroad are protected and remain connected to home.

Her message at the New York roundtable captured this balance, with the Principal Secretary calling for stronger

collaboration among governments, employers, training institutions, development partners and international organisations to scale responsible and development-oriented pathways.

The emphasis on partnerships has become a defining feature of her approach, as Kenya seeks to move from isolated labour agreements towards structured systems capable of creating sustainable opportunities for its growing workforce.

As Kenya deepens engagement with its global diaspora,

Njogu is playing a significant role in giving greater visibility to the country's diaspora agenda and positioning Kenyan talent as a central part of the nation's development story.

Her current agenda reflects a vision in which the Kenyan diaspora is not only connected to home but actively integrated into the country's economic and social transformation through skills, investment, innovation, professional networks and global opportunity.

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Politics Gachagua opened by confronting directly the question of whether the opposition can hold together long enough to mount a credible unified challenge to Ruto

Gachagua's Dallas reckoning: prophecies, intelligence wars and a challenge to Ruto from Texas

In his most politically charged diaspora address yet, the DCP leader accused the NIS of sabotaging the opposition, predicted a principal will defect — and declared himself part of the winning team

BY Grace Wanja

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday used a diaspora address in Dallas, Texas, to deliver his most comprehensive political broadside yet against President William Ruto, accusing the National Intelligence Service of actively working to fracture the opposition coalition, predicting that a senior opposition principal would defect to State House before next August's election, and declaring that Ruto's attendance at last week's United Nations General Assembly in New York would be his last.

The DCP Party leader spoke yesterday to Kenyans gathered in Dallas during the final leg of his United States tour, which has taken him through Spokane, Portland, Kansas City and Dallas over several weeks. The address was by any measure his most politically dense of the tour — touching on intelligence operations, opposition unity, electoral integrity, economic policy and the shape of a post-Ruto government. It was delivered less than eleven months before Kenyans go to the polls on 10 August 2027.

Gachagua opened by confronting directly the question of whether the opposition can hold together long enough to mount a credible unified challenge to Ruto. He said he had doubts, and he named the reason: some supporters of opposition principals had been making public statements suggesting they would back Ruto if their preferred candidate failed to secure the coalition's presidential ticket. He called the statements retrogressive and nonsensical and urged opposition leaders to give their supporters unambiguous direction.

"The opposition must come together, agree on a candidate and start the real battle for 2027. We cannot keep delaying while our opponents are organising," Gachagua said.

He then delivered what amounted to a political prophecy, drawing on what he described as his experience, foresight and understanding of Kenya's political history. One of

the opposition principals currently negotiating a joint candidacy would, he said, ultimately walk away from the arrangement. He was categorical that the defector would not be himself.

"I want to prophesy today, not because I am a prophet, but based on experience, foresight and understanding of the Kenyan political scene, that history will repeat itself. One single presidential candidate will be announced. One person will go away on his own. And a single presidential candidate will be elected by over 75 per cent of the Kenyan vote. Riggy G will be part of the winning team because he will not be the fellow who walks away," Gachagua said.

He projected that whoever the opposition settles on will win the first round outright. His preferred formula for selecting that candidate, he said, would be driven by practicality, efficiency and cost-effectiveness — not by the individual ambitions of the principals. He said he had no problem serving as a running mate to Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna or occupying any role that best served the goal of removing Ruto from office. The statement, notable for its flexibility from a man who has himself positioned as a presidential contender, drew applause from the diaspora audience.

Gachagua then turned to electoral security, reassuring Kenyans in the diaspora who had expressed fears that the 2027 election could be manipulated. He said structural changes to Kenya's electoral system — particularly the counting of votes at polling stations rather than transporting ballot boxes to central locations — had made large-scale manipulation far harder to execute.

"Most of you are frightened that Ruto will rig the elections. I have come to tell you to calm down, take a glass of water and say, relax. Nobody can steal a general election in Kenya," Gachagua said. He pointed to the Ol Kalou parliamentary by-election of 16 July as a model of citizen vigilance, recalling how voters had remained at polling stations until results were announced.



Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua in Dallas, Texas

His DCP candidate, Sammy Kamau Ngogho, won that contest — the party's first parliamentary seat.

The sharpest section of his Dallas address was reserved for what he described as direct state interference in opposition politics. Gachagua accused Ruto of directing the NIS to sow division within the Linda Mwananchi coalition, which last weekend settled on Sifuna as its presidential flagbearer following weeks of internal tension with Embakasi East MP Babu Owino over the movement's party structure and registration. Gachagua said the internal feuding that had threatened the coalition was not organic but was orchestrated from State House through operatives embedded within opposition structures.

The NIS has not publicly responded to the Dallas allegations. The claims are unverified and follow a pattern of intelligence-related accusations Gachagua has levelled at the ad-

ministration in recent months, all of which the government has rejected as politically motivated and without factual basis.

He concluded with a challenge aimed directly at Ruto that was theatrical in construction but precise in political intent. He told the diaspora audience that the UNGA session Ruto had just attended in New York would be his last as Kenya's president. "I want to commit to you; this UNGA meeting that Ruto attended here in New York will be his last. Next year, it will be me," Gachagua said.

He balanced that declaration with a sober economic warning. Removing Ruto from office, he said, would mean nothing if the incoming government failed to address the unemployment crisis gripping Kenya's young population. Any new administration that ignored youth joblessness would itself face removal with-

in two years — an unusual public acknowledgement that winning an election was the simpler part of the challenge ahead.

In Dallas, Gachagua had positioned himself as strategist, prophet, democrat and economist within a single evening. Whether the coalition he is helping build can survive the months ahead — the negotiations, the party registrations, the vote-sharing arrangements and the defections he himself is predicting — will determine whether any of it amounts to more than confident speeches delivered very far from Nairobi.

Kenya's election is ten months away. The campaigns have never felt closer.

Politics Could today’s disagreement therefore be another chapter in that unfinished political history? There is also the question of Odinga’s legacy.

Did Raila win in 2022? Ruto and Uhuru reopen an old debate

Four years after a settled election, a former president’s claim puts Kenya’s democratic institutions back under scrutiny

BY Collins Kibet
@themkenyatomes

Did Raila Odinga really win the 2022 presidential election? That is the question former President Uhuru Kenyatta has put back on the national table, four years after Kenya’s electoral and judicial institutions appeared to have delivered a final, binding answer. The timing is striking. The implications are considerable. And for a country already navigating the complex political terrain ahead of a general election, the re-opening of this particular wound deserves careful, honest examination.

On 22 September, Uhuru told a Jubilee Party meeting in Nairobi that he remained convinced the late Odinga had received the votes necessary to win the August 2022 presidential contest. He said he and his political allies had done everything possible to support Odinga’s presidential bid and that his personal belief about the outcome had not changed in the four years since polling day. The remarks were not a casual aside. They were delivered at a formal party gathering, before an audience of political associates, and they have since reverberated across Kenya’s political establishment.

But what do the official records say? The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission declared William Ruto the winner of the 9 August 2022 presidential election with 7,176,141 votes, representing 50.49 per cent of valid votes cast, against Odinga’s 6,942,930 votes, or 48.85 per cent. The margin was 233,211 votes. The result was challenged before the Supreme Court, which unanimously dismissed the presidential election petitions and upheld Ruto’s victory. Those are the facts on the public record. Uhuru’s remarks, however sincerely held, do not alter either finding.

If the Supreme Court settled the legal dispute, why is the political debate returning now? That is the central question this controversy raises. Uhuru’s remarks represent a political claim about what he believes happened in 2022, not a legal challenge to what institutions determined. They do not change the official



Former President Uhuru Kenyatta

election result or the Supreme Court’s determination. Yet they have reopened a conversation with significant political implications, particularly because Uhuru was the sitting president when the election took place, commanded enormous institutional authority at the time, and had actively and publicly supported Odinga’s presidential campaign against his own deputy.

Could Uhuru’s intervention therefore be about more than revisiting the past? The timing strongly suggests so. Kenya is moving steadily toward the 2027 General Election, with political alliances already being renegotiated, parties being reorganised and new coalitions taking shape. The political landscape of 2022 looks markedly different from the one now emerging. The former president’s remarks have drawn reactions from different political camps. ODM figures have called for further clarification on his claim. Other politicians have used the statement to reposition themselves in the evolving pre-election debate. It would be politically naive to read Uhuru’s remarks purely as a retrospective observation with no bearing on the present.

But perhaps another question deserves equal attention: why should Kenyans still care about the 2022 election? For millions of citizens, elections are not simply contests

between political personalities or vehicles for elite ambition. They determine who controls the national government and shape decisions affecting taxation, employment, education, healthcare, infrastructure and the broader economy. When former national leaders reopen an old electoral dispute, it inevitably raises questions about public confidence in democratic institutions — the very institutions that Kenyans are expected to trust when they return to the polls in 2027. If those institutions can be reliably questioned by the very leaders who operated within them, the implications for civic trust are serious.

Yet should a political disagreement expressed four years later be treated as equivalent to an unresolved legal dispute? That distinction matters considerably and must not be blurred. The 2022 election was contested through mechanisms provided by the Constitution. Presidential election petitions were presented before the Supreme Court, legal arguments were heard over several days, evidence was examined and the court reached a unanimous decision. The IEBC’s official record identifies Ruto as the winner. That does not prevent individuals from holding different political opinions about what happened or why. Uhuru is entitled to his interpretation of the

election, and other political actors are equally entitled to challenge that interpretation. However, competing political narratives must not be confused with, or presented as, a change in the official constitutional outcome. One is an opinion; the other is a determination made under law.

What exactly is Ruto saying in response? Yesterday, Ruto addressed a church service in Mwatate, Taita Taveta County, where he urged political leaders to be responsible and mindful of the influence their public statements carry on ordinary citizens. His remarks were widely interpreted as a direct response to the renewed debate following Uhuru’s comments at the Jubilee meeting, although Ruto did not name Uhuru directly in the remarks reported by Kenyan media. The presidential restraint was deliberate and noted. Why did Ruto choose not to relitigate the election numbers publicly? Could his measured response be a calculated attempt to shift the discussion away from the 2022 result and toward the broader accountability of political leaders to the public they serve? Or could his restraint itself deepen the political confrontation between himself and his former political patron by leaving Uhuru’s claim unanswered and, in some eyes, unchallenged?

The relationship between Ruto and

Uhuru makes the exchange between the two men particularly significant and historically layered. For nearly a decade, they were close political partners whose alliance defined Kenyan politics. Ruto served as Uhuru’s deputy president from 2013 until 2022, a period spanning two full terms and two successive election victories. They campaigned together in both the 2013 and 2017 elections and governed jointly under the Jubilee administration through some of Kenya’s most consequential policy moments. Their relationship, however, deteriorated sharply and publicly during Uhuru’s second term, most visibly after Uhuru extended a political handshake to Odinga in March 2018 — an act that fundamentally altered the geometry of Kenyan politics and signalled the beginning of the end of the Ruto-Uhuru partnership.

By 2022, the partnership had effectively collapsed. Uhuru supported Odinga openly and campaigned against his own deputy. Ruto, meanwhile, presented himself as the candidate of a new political movement — the Kenya Kwanza coalition — that defined itself against the political establishment both men had once built and led together. The 2022 election consequently became not only a presidential contest but a dramatic, public and deeply personal separation between a president and the man who had served beside him for nine years. The bitterness of that separation has not fully healed. Sunday’s exchange suggests it may never fully do so.

Could today’s disagreement therefore be another chapter in that long, unfinished political history between the two men? Almost certainly. There is also the separate but related question of Odinga’s legacy. The late opposition leader spent decades pursuing Kenya’s presidency with remarkable persistence. He came agonisingly close to victory several times across four presidential campaigns. His supporters consistently maintained that he had been denied

AI In Kenyan schools, artificial intelligence is no longer a distant concept reserved for universities or specialist technology spaces

How students interact with AI is what matters

Artificial intelligence has arrived in Kenyan classrooms — and the question now is whether it will sharpen young minds or quietly replace them

BY Ashford Kimani

@themtkenyaintimes

Artificial intelligence is rapidly entering classrooms across the world, and its growing presence is raising difficult questions about the future of learning. A recent debate in The New York Times explored mounting fears that students are increasingly allowing AI to think on their behalf. What began as a technological tool meant to support learning now threatens to alter the very meaning of education. For Kenya, this conversation grows more urgent by the day as students gain wider access to smartphones, internet connectivity, and AI-powered applications. In Kenyan schools, artificial

intelligence is no longer a distant concept reserved for universities or specialist technology spaces. Secondary school students are already using it to write compositions, answer comprehension questions, summarise set books, solve mathematics problems, and generate assignments within seconds. Some learners are going further — using AI to draft speeches, prepare debates, and complete holiday assignments without engaging mentally with the work at all.

For many students, the attraction is understandable. AI offers speed, convenience, and instant answers. A learner who once spent hours wrestling with a composition can now produce a complete es-

say almost immediately. A student who did not revise adequately for an assignment can simply type a prompt into an AI application and receive polished, well-organised responses. In a competitive academic environment like Kenya's, where performance pressure remains intense despite curriculum reforms, the temptation to lean on such technology grows stronger every day.

Beneath this convenience, however, lies a serious educational risk. Learning has always depended on mental effort. A learner develops writing skills by drafting, making mistakes, receiving corrections, and improving gradually. Critical thinking grows through questioning, analysing, and defending ideas independently. Literature cultivates imagination through close reading and interpretation. Mathematics sharpens reasoning through repeated practice and problem-solving. When AI performs all of these processes on behalf of learners, intellectual growth may quietly begin to stall.

This challenge is already visible in many Kenyan classrooms. Teachers increasingly encounter assignments that sound sophisticated yet feel strangely detached. Some students submit work containing vocabulary, sentence structures, and arguments well beyond their normal classroom ability — but when asked simple oral questions about the same material, they struggle to explain the ideas with any confidence. The work looks impressive on paper. Genuine understanding is missing.

Kenya's education system may be especially exposed because it has historically placed great emphasis on grades, assignment comple-



tion, and examination results. In many schools, particularly those managing large student populations, teachers carry heavy workloads and may not always have the time to verify the originality of every submission. Once an assignment arrives neatly and on time, it can easily pass as authentic. AI thrives in such environments precisely because it can produce convincing academic work within seconds.

The Competency Based Curriculum was introduced partly to nurture creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving among learners. Uncontrolled AI use may now undermine the very competencies the curriculum was designed to build. If students rely excessively on machines to generate ideas, construct arguments, and complete projects, then authentic competency development becomes increasingly difficult to achieve.

This creates a real contradiction. Kenya is trying to move away from rote learning, yet AI risks creating a new form of intellectual dependency — one where students outsource thinking itself.

Rejecting artificial intelligence outright, however, would be both unrealistic and counterproductive. AI carries genuine opportunities for Kenyan education. In under-resourced schools where textbooks are scarce, it can provide access to learning materials and explanations that students might otherwise never encounter. Teachers can use it to prepare lesson plans,

generate revision questions, simplify difficult concepts, and support learners with varying abilities. Students in rural areas could potentially access educational support comparable to what their urban counterparts receive. Used responsibly, AI could help reduce educational inequality.

The real challenge, therefore, is not whether Kenya should embrace AI. Technological reality has already settled that question. What matters now is whether Kenyan schools will guide AI use wisely or allow it to quietly erode independent thinking among learners.

Teachers must rethink assessment. Traditional take-home assignments are becoming unreliable because AI can complete them with ease. Schools may need to place greater weight on supervised writing, oral presentations, debates, practical projects, classroom discussions, and live demonstrations of understanding. Learners should be evaluated increasingly on their ability to explain ideas, defend arguments, and apply knowledge without assistance.

Teacher training matters equally. Many Kenyan educators remain unfamiliar with how AI works or how students are using it. Without adequate digital literacy, teachers may either react with unnecessary alarm or fail to recognise misuse altogether. The Ministry of Education and teacher training institutions will need structured policies and professional development programmes on responsible AI integration in schools.

Parents carry responsibility too. Many families unintentionally encourage shortcuts by placing excessive pressure on grades and class rankings. Learners need to understand that education is not simply about producing impressive answers — it is about becoming capable thinkers. A student who relies entirely on AI may perform adequately in the short term but struggle in workplaces and real-life situations that demand originality, judgement, communication, and decision-making.

Ironically, the rise of artificial intelligence may end up renewing appreciation for the deeply human dimensions of education. Students still need mentorship, discipline, emotional support, storytelling, humour, encouragement, and moral guidance from teachers. Machines can generate information. They cannot replicate the influence of a committed teacher standing before a class and shaping young character.

Kenya stands at a genuine educational crossroads. Artificial intelligence can strengthen learning or weaken it — depending entirely on how schools choose to respond. The future will not belong to learners who simply access technology. It will belong to those who think independently while using technology wisely.

Education must never become the mechanical production of answers by machines. It must remain the development of human beings who can reason, imagine, question, and lead society with purpose.

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Politics Could today’s disagreement therefore be another chapter in that unfinished political history? There is also the question of Odinga’s legacy.

Did Raila win in 2022? Ruto and Uhuru reopen an old debate

Contd from page 9

victory through electoral manipulation in previous contests, most painfully in 2007, while his opponents rejected those claims. His death has now altered the political context in which his electoral record is discussed, mourned and remembered. The debate about 2022 is, among other things, a debate about how history will ultimately judge a man who gave much of his political life to the pursuit of the presidency. Whether Uhuru’s statement is a genuine attempt to defend that legacy, or whether it serves an entirely different political purpose as Kenya approaches 2027, is a question only Uhuru can fully answer.

What is clear is that the statement has landed in a highly charged political environment and will not simply fade from the conversation. What can be firmly established is that Uhuru has publicly stated his belief that Odinga won the 2022 election. What can equally and objectively be established is that the official result declared Ruto the winner and that the Supreme Court unanimously upheld that outcome. Those represent two entirely distinct categories of information: one is a political assertion made by a private citizen, however influential; the other is the official constitutional determination made by independent institutions. The renewed debate therefore raises an uncomfortable but necessary question about Kenya’s political culture: why do electoral disputes sometimes remain alive long after institutions have delivered their verdict? Is it because political parties and their supporters never fully internalise or accept defeat? Is it because citizens retain genuine, unresolved questions about electoral processes and their integrity? Or is it because politicians discover that historical election controversies remain politically useful when preparing for the next contest? Whatever the explanation in this particular case, the responsibility of political leaders remains considerable and non-negotiable. Kenya has experienced periods when disagreements over elections produced deep, violent and lasting national divisions. The wounds of 2007 and

2008 took years to address and left permanent marks on the country’s political psyche. That history makes responsible political communication not merely advisable but essential. Leaders command enormous public platforms. Statements from former and serving presidents shape, in real and measurable ways, how citizens understand, remember and relate to political events. Should political leaders therefore be expected to provide evidence when making serious claims about past elections? Should they be expected to distinguish clearly and consistently between what they personally believe and what official constitutional processes have formally determined? And should political parties devote more energy to explaining their plans for the future than to reopening unresolved battles over previous elections? These questions are especially urgent as 2027 draws closer. For young Kenyans navigating unemployment, rising living costs, a heavy tax burden and limited economic opportunity, the most pressing question is unlikely to be who won an election four years ago. It is what political leaders actually intend to do about the challenges the country faces today and tomorrow. Will the next election produce better employment prospects for graduates entering a difficult labour market? Will the



President William Ruto

economy generate greater opportunities for young people currently locked out of formal work? Will public institutions earn greater trust through demonstrable accountability and transparency? Will political leaders compete on concrete policy platforms rather than personal loyalty networks? And will voters be offered genuine, meaningful choices about Kenya’s direction rather than recycled political personalities? Still, the controversy cannot simply be dismissed or waved away as political noise. If a former president publicly asserts that another candidate won an election, Kenyans are fully entitled to ask what information informs and sustains that belief. If the claim is publicly challenged, the public deserves a factual, evidence-based discussion rather than competing political rhetoric. That is precisely why this renewed debate, uncomfortable as it is, presents a genuine opportunity for a deeper national conversation about elections, institutional credibility and political responsibility. Can Kenya strengthen public confidence in its electoral institutions before 2027? Can political leaders disagree vigorously without systematically undermining constitutional processes? Can former leaders speak freely and honestly about their experiences while carefully distinguishing personal assessments from

official institutional findings? And can citizens establish and maintain a culture of demanding evidence whenever extraordinary claims enter the public arena? The 2022 election has been determined through the constitutional process. Yet politically, its shadow refuses to lift entirely. Uhuru has reopened the conversation with his assertion that Odinga won, while Ruto has responded by calling for responsibility and care in political communication. Political parties across the spectrum have entered the debate, and Kenyans are once again discussing an election held four years ago. But perhaps the most important question is not simply whether Odinga really won in 2022. Perhaps the bigger and more consequential question is what Kenya must honestly learn from 2022 before it enters its next electoral contest. If the country is to move forward with confidence, political disagreements must be tested rigorously against evidence, institutions must be respected by the very leaders who created and benefited from them, and voters must remain firmly at the centre of the democratic process. The debate over 2022 may well continue for some time yet. But Kenya’s future cannot remain permanently anchored to the unresolved arguments of its past.



Development “The management of the National Infrastructure Fund is already in place, and I have instructed that Mzima Springs water project should get priority,” he said.

Ruto: Expansion of Mzima Springs water project to begin this year

BY PCS

@themkenyatimes

By PCS

Expansion of the Mzima Springs water project in Taita-Taveta County will commence this year, President William Ruto has announced.

The President said the Government will mobilise KSh30 billion for the project to tackle perennial water shortages in the county and neighbouring areas.

The project, to be financed through the National Infrastructure Fund, will provide water to Mwatate, Voi and Taveta constituencies and also supply Mombasa City.

“The management of the National Infrastructure Fund is already in place, and I have instructed that Mzima Springs water project should get priority,” he said.

He attributed the region’s persistent water shortages to inadequate supply, noting that the first phase of Mzima Springs was completed in 1984, more than 40 years ago. President Ruto explained that the National Infrastructure Fund was established to finance major investments in roads, electricity connectivity and dams as part of the Government’s plan to speed up development.

The President made the remarks during a Sunday service at Mwatate Pentecostal Church, Taita-Taveta, on the second day of his development tour of the county.

Present were Governor Andrew Mwadime, Mwatate MP Peter Shake, Woman Rep Lydia Haika, former Taita-Taveta Governors Granton Samboja and John Mruttu, among other leaders.

Turning to the national unity agenda, the President affirmed that equitable development

remains central to his vision of a united country where no region is left behind.

He traced the unity efforts to the formation of the Broad-Based Government, anchored on a working arrangement between the United Democratic Alliance and the Orange Democratic Movement.

That commitment, he added, informs his extensive tours across the country.

“I was here yesterday and today. I will also be here on Thursday,” President Ruto told the congregation. “I was also here in Taita-Taveta early this year, and now I am here again. And I will keep coming.”

The President urged political leaders to focus on solutions for their constituents rather than blame others, saying he is deliberately working with leaders across the political divide.

He commended Taita-Taveta leaders for cooperating with the Broad-Based Government and reminded them that elective office is a call to service.

“Politics is not life and death; it’s a God-given opportunity to serve,” he pointed out.

On next year’s General Election, he said Kenyans will assess leaders based on their track record, and criticised those who resort to name-calling, division and insults.

He noted that Taita-Taveta had suffered marginalisation partly because some leaders believe the region does not offer significant electoral returns.

“Discrimination has been a problem, causing division and animosity among our people,” President Ruto stated, urging leaders to set a good example and work together.

Assuring residents that the era of exclusion and marginalisation is over, the President pointed to the KSh15

billion set aside for roads in the county as evidence that Taita-Taveta will no longer be left behind.

In regard to the transformation going on in the county, he explained that the long-stalled Mto Mwagodi-Mbale-Bura road is now under construction and progressing well.

“In April, only 4km of the road had been done. Now 13km are complete. By December, the tarmac road will have reached Wundanyi and Bura,” he said.

In response to a request by Mwatate MP Shake, the President pledged to build the Dembwa-Murray road, reaffirming that the Government will continue opening up the region to improve access to markets and essential services.

Beyond roads, President Ruto highlighted the ongoing construction of the KSh5 billion railway line from Voi towards Tanzania. Five stations will be built at Mwatate, Bura, Mwakitau and Taveta.

“We are ending discrimination in development. Whatever projects are being implemented in other parts of the country, Taita-Taveta is getting its fair share,” he emphasised.

He questioned opposition to major infrastructure projects by a section of politicians, arguing that roads, railways, markets and housing are critical to economic transformation.

On trade infrastructure, the President disclosed that seven markets are under development across the county to provide better operating spaces for Mama Mboga and other small-scale traders.

While noting that Mwatunge Market is nearing completion, he said it is located too far from the town centre and challenged local leaders to



President William Ruto

provide land for another market closer to Mwatate town.

On affordable housing, President Ruto explained that construction in Mwatate has been delayed by a land dispute that has now been resolved. The Government allocated KSh1.5 billion for the project more than a year ago.

“The court case that had delayed the project is now over and we are launching it next week,” he announced.

At the same time, the President donated KSh10 million each to Kenyatta High School and Mwasere Girls High School for the construction of more classrooms, reiterating the Government’s commitment to investing in education to expand opportunities for learners.

Additionally, he stated that the Government is working

round the clock to comprehensively address the squatter challenge in the Coast region.

Recalling his 2022 campaign promise, he declared: “During the campaigns, I said I would address the land question. Now I have the land answer.”

He announced that 31,328 beneficiaries in Taita-Taveta will receive title deeds on Thursday, saying the intervention will end uncertainty and give families security to invest.

“We are keen to comprehensively address the squatter problem by buying land from absentee landlords so that people can plan their lives without fear of eviction and disruption,” President Ruto stated.

On family values, the President called on parents, religious leaders, communities

and political leaders to jointly instill strong moral values in children.

“To bring up upright children, we must work together,” he said, adding that such collective effort would build a stable country with a strong moral foundation.

On her part, Ms Haika thanked President Ruto for spending three days in the county, saying his extended stay demonstrated his commitment to equitable development.

She noted that residents have long endured poor roads, water shortage and uncertainty of land ownership alongside human-wildlife conflict and historical injustices.

Politics Linda Mwananchi Movement has settled on Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna as its presidential candidate for the August 10, 2027 general election.

Linda Mwananchi settles on Sifuna as 2027 presidential flagbearer

Movement ends weeks of infighting to back Nairobi senator for State House as opposition realigns for August vote

BY Beatrice Njoki

@themkenyaintimes

Linda Mwananchi Movement has settled on Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna as its presidential candidate for the August 10, 2027 general election.

The decision was reached yesterday at a leadership retreat that brought together Embakasi East Member of Parliament Babu Owino, Trans Nzoia Governor George Natembeya and Kakamega Senator Boniface Khalwale, ending weeks of public disagreement over the direction and leadership of the emerging opposition formation. In a joint statement issued on Saturday evening, the leaders said they had resolved to end their differences and work together under a common platform.

According to the statement, Sifuna will be the leader and presidential candidate and will lead the unveiling of the party on whose ticket he will run in early October. The retreat also resolved that Owino will be backed for the Nairobi gubernatorial ticket through the Mwananchi Party, while former Meru Governor Kawira Mwangaza has been cleared to contest through her Umoja na Maendeleo Party.

The leadership said it would remain united, guided by a common purpose of answering what it described as the call by Kenyans for better governance and for rescuing the country from what it termed as grave failures of the current administration.

“We have listened to Kenyans. They want unity, they want courage, and they want a leadership that puts mwananchi first. We have agreed to put our personal ambitions aside and rally behind one candidate,” Sifuna said in the statement.

Owino said the agreement

was about generational responsibility. “This is not about positions. It is about purpose. We have agreed that Sifuna will lead, and we will all support him to ensure Nairobi and Kenya get the leadership they deserve,” he said.

Natembeya said the movement would seek to build a broader coalition. “Linda Mwananchi Movement will seek to build a coalition with like-minded parties that share a similar commitment to the people of Kenya,” he said.

The settlement comes at a pivotal moment. Kenya is now eleven months from a general election that will be fundamentally different from any since the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution. The August 10, 2027 vote will be the first in which the Gen Z electorate, which led nationwide protests in 2024 and 2025, will vote as a fully registered and digitally mobilised bloc.

For President William Ruto and the Kenya Kwanza administration, the emergence of a Sifuna-led ticket signals a shift in the opposition threat matrix. Unlike the Azimio coalition of 2022, which was anchored by veteran figures, Linda Mwananchi is pitching itself as a post-handshake, post-ethnic-bargain formation. Sifuna, 44, a lawyer and former Orange Democratic Movement secretary general, combines parliamentary experience with a combative media presence that resonates with urban youth.

Analysts say the choice is tactical. Dr Peter Ngure, a political analyst at the University of Nairobi, said the movement is betting on a generational contrast rather than regional arithmetic. “Sifuna is not carrying the baggage of 2007 or 2013. He speaks the language of accountability that young voters used on the streets. If they can keep Owino and Natembeya in the



same tent, they have both the

The model mirrors the 2022 clear overture to Wiper leader Linda Mwananchi Movement leaders

tiliser prices from KSh7,000

crowd puller and the administrator,” Ngure said.

That unity has been elusive. For three weeks, the movement was publicly split, with Owino questioning internal democracy and Khalwale pushing for a more structured hierarchy anchored in Western Kenya. Sources who attended yesterday’s retreat told The Mt Kenya Times that Khalwale had demanded written guarantees on devolution funding and sugar sector reforms, while Natembeya insisted on a coalition model rather than a single party vehicle.

The compromise addresses both. By allowing Owino to run through Mwananchi Party and Mwangaza through Umoja na Maendeleo Party, the movement has adopted a coalition of affiliated parties rather than a merger, preserving individual brands while consolidating under Sifuna’s bid.

Kenya Kwanza approach but with younger leadership.

Legally, the clock is ticking. Under the Political Parties Act, all parties must submit the names and specimen signatures of their authorised persons to the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties by Thursday, October 15, 2026. Registrar Ann Nderitu confirmed yesterday that her office had received inquiries from several new coalitions seeking to regularise their papers.

“The deadline is statutory. No party or coalition will be allowed to participate in the 2027 general election without complying with the requirement on authorised officials,” Nderitu said.

That deadline explains why Sifuna will unveil the ticket party in early October. It also sets the stage for realignment. The movement said it will seek like-minded parties, a

er Kalonzo Musyoka, Democratic Action Party leader Eugene Wamalwa and People’s Liberation Party leader Martha Karua.

The road ahead will be treacherous. Sifuna must first secure his base in Nairobi, where he faces a well-funded Kenya Kwanza machinery and where Owino’s bid could either energise or cannibalise his vote. Second, he must translate social media popularity into a rural ground game, particularly in Mt Kenya where his team plans town halls from next week. Third, he must present an economic programme beyond critique.

The incumbent’s team is already framing the contest. Dennis Itumbi, head of presidential special projects and creative economy, said yesterday that Kenyans will judge leaders on delivery, not slogans. “We have stabilised the shilling, we have reduced fer-

to KSh2,500 and we are creating jobs through the housing programme. That is the record we will defend,” he said.

For Sifuna, the answer must be more than rhetoric. “Kenyans are not asking for miracles. They are asking for a government that listens, that does not tax them to suffocation and that respects the Constitution,” he said.

If yesterday’s handshake holds, Linda Mwananchi has moved from a protest hashtag to a presidential project. Whether it survives the bruising eleven months to August will depend on whether its leaders keep the promise they made in that retreat room to put mwananchi before self, discipline before ambition, and country before party in a contest that will define Kenya’s future for generations yet to come.

What a love that never came



The night is silent
The messages are loud
The music is still
The mirror is reflecting the love I begged for
I sleep as I stare at it
Naked but dressed with hope
The fake love that I can't walk with it
Only not to be called lonely
Rather not I would
Showing the flawless love I am
What a love.

First I thought love will surely come
And the loneliness will never come back
But what a coincidence it has been
That they needed to love me only when I was
useful
All my plans to be loved have ceased
The tomorrow I waited has passed away.

Now my heart is my own nightmare
In the mirror
I smile
Yet I cry inside
What a love

Tonight my eyes are watery
I see not my love star
Wishing my angels would bring me one true love
And align my heart together
Taking me away from this fake love
And keep me loved always
To a place where there is not much pain
Where sun is bright and love is not bloody
Away from this fake love

In my thoughts I am lost
The love in there stinks, I am lost
Once, no this is not the first time
Countless times it has been
I seek love, I find venom
What a love
A place so fake and full of pain
A lonely prison

Amb. Wanjohi P. Mugambi
The Weeping Onion

Nature teaches us to grow eachday



Like little flowers that find their way.
School gives us dreams and wings to fly,
And teachers teach us how to touch the sky.
With ever lessons, we learn something new,
And discover the dreams we want to pursue,
Friends walk beside us through joy and pain,

Making sunny days brighter after rain.
success is not a destination,
It is a journey.
And our life is not a competition,
It is a journey.
So let us dream,believe and raise,
And spread kindness whatever we go,
We make happy moments everyday,
They stay in our heart in special way !
Vighnavelan P B,
7th std,
Government high school,
Koonavelampatti pudur,
Namakkal ,
Tamilnadu ,india

Sunday



Coffee brews slow in the gentle light,
As morning pushes away the night.
The ticking clock slows down its pace,
And quiet fills every cozy space.
No rushed goodbyes, no noisy streets,
Just warm wool socks and tangled sheets.

A gentle breeze through the open door,
Sunlight spilling across the floor.
The afternoon drifts soft and long,
Carried along by a lazy song.
A chance to pause, to breathe, to be,
Unframed by time, entirely free.
So hold the quiet before it goes,
As evening comes and shadow grows.
Rest your mind, let the world spin on—
Sunday's sweet peace is never gone.

S.p saai samyukktha
John dewey matric hr sec school

The city inside my mind



Inside my mind, a city grows,
Where every dream quietly glows.
Its streets are paved with hopes and plans,
Its bridges reach to distant lands.
Tall towers rise from thoughts so bright,
Lit by the stars of every night.

Dreams become windows, shining clear,
And courage whispers, "Have no fear."
There are quiet lanes of memories,
And gardens filled with possibilities.
Sometimes the city loses its way,
But hope brings back the light of day.
No map can show this special place,
No walls can limit its endless space.
For in my mind, I build and see—
A city shaped by who I dream to be.
D . RENUKAGANDHI
GHSS, MULLAINAGAR,
HOSUR, KRISHNAGIRI D.T.,

City inside my mind



A city inside my mind,
Filled with emotions,
The pain of dejection,
An amalgamation of all feelings,
Wisdom from experience,

Fears in tons,
Wishes filled with lovely hopes,
Prayers for all,
A pretty mind that explores,
Crowded with thoughts,
Running a race inside,
Analysed thoughts win the race,
A crazy mind loves to laugh loudly,
Gently remembers to be silent,
Funny people around turn the head around,
Forgets everything,
Becomes a child reborn.

Viji. T
GHS, KV Pudur
Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu

Never say never



King Robert Bruce once lost his battle,
Disappointed, tired, and low.
He hid inside a lonely cave,
Wondering where next to go.

Then he saw a tiny spider
Trying hard to climb the wall.
It slipped and fell again and again,
But never stopped after a fall.

Each time there was no whisper,
"Never will I reach up there."
It just kept on trying one more time,
With patience, courage and care.

Bruce learnt a lesson from the spider,
Never say 'Never', just keep trying,
The greatest "ever" you will see,
May be waiting for one more try from you.

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

My Companion: The Moon



Dear Moon, you are my best Companion
Though you never give your opinion
As I share my best & bitter of my life
And you accept it as your positive sense without
strife
I believe you'd judge my emotion
Gravitating me to commotion

But I'm able to understand your pacification
With your glittering face & calmness
Hugging my soul with sweetness
And now my dear friend
Singing a lullaby as the day ends
Wishing me tomorrow a bright morning
Ever adoring
And as you are very far
I'd like to stay beside you as a star
But let me complete my assigned duty
Proving my birth beauty
I plead you to wait
By your soulmate...
G.Sarala.
Creative writers

Award She dedicated the recognition to young people across the continent who are determined to chart their own paths through hard work, integrity, courage and purpose.

Dr Esther Muchemi honoured among Africa’s top 100 leaders

Samchi Group chief executive dedicated the recognition to young Africans pursuing ambition with courage and integrity

BY John Kariuki
@themkenyaintimes

Samchi Group Chief Executive Officer Esther Muchemi was Friday named among Africa’s Top 100 Leaders Influencing Africa, an accolade she dedicated to the continent’s young men and women as a call to pursue their ambitions with courage, integrity and purpose.

The recognition places Muchemi among a distinguished group of African leaders whose work and influence continue to shape the continent’s evolving leadership landscape.

For the Kenyan business leader, however, the award carries weight beyond personal achievement. It is a responsibility and a call to inspire a new generation of Africans to pursue their dreams with

courage, integrity and purpose.

Reflecting on the moment she walked to the podium to receive the honour, Muchemi said the strongest emotion she felt was the weight of responsibility that comes with being a role model to young African men and women.

She dedicated the recognition to young people across the continent who are determined to chart their own paths through hard work, integrity, courage and purpose.

Her message distills the leadership philosophy that has become central to her public identity — one that combines enterprise, purpose, resilience and a firm belief in the potential of Africa and its people.

For Muchemi, Africa is not simply a geographical identity. It is home, a continent whose people have the power to shape and own their own

narrative.

“Africa is home. We own our narrative,” she said, while humbly acknowledging her faith and describing herself as a vessel for God’s glory.

The recognition adds to Muchemi’s growing profile as an influential Kenyan business leader and advocate of purposeful leadership, particularly at a time when Africa continues to seek a new generation of entrepreneurs and leaders capable of driving sustainable transformation.

Her message to young Africans is equally clear: leadership is not merely about titles or accolades, but about accepting responsibility, remaining grounded in values and using influence to inspire others.

The award therefore carries a significance that extends beyond the individual recipient. It represents a celebration

of the possibilities available to young Africans willing to pursue their dreams with determination and integrity.

Muchemi’s journey continues to offer an example of how African leaders can combine professional success with a strong sense of purpose, faith and responsibility to society.

Her celebration of the recognition was also a celebration of Africa itself — a continent she believes must confidently tell its own story and embrace its immense potential.

As she accepted the honour, Muchemi delivered a message of hope and confidence in Africa’s future: “We rise. We shine. For our light has come.”

From Kenya to the wider continent, the recognition further cements her identity as a symbol of ambition, resilience and purpose-driven African leadership — a reminder that when Africans commit to excellence and remain anchored in values, the possibilities are boundless.



Samchi Group Chief Executive Officer Esther Muchemi

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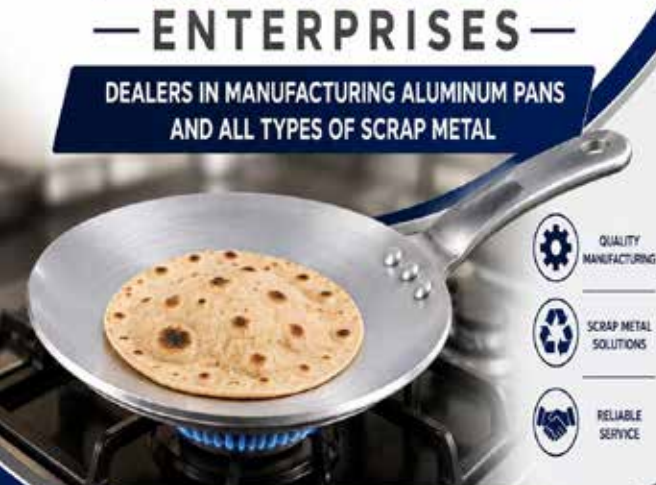
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Grief

Martha Karua mourns father Jackson Karua as Kenya enters defining march to 2027

BY Jane Njeri

@themtkenyatimes

People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua has announced the death of her father Jackson Karua in Kirinyaga County.

The news came on Sunday, just moments after she had left his home after a family visit, turning what had been a day of hymn and prayer into one of mourning for one of Kenya's most prominent political families. In a statement that was as personal as it was poignant, Karua said she and her siblings had spent time with their father, singing his favourite gospel hymn, unaware it would be their final chorus together.

"I went to Kirinyaga to visit my father. My siblings and I spent time with him and sang his favourite gospel hymn, never knowing it would be our last song together. On my way back to Nairobi, I received the news that my beloved father had breathed his last," she said.

For Karua, who has built a four-decade career on principle and defiance, the loss

"I went to Kirinyaga to visit my father. My siblings and I spent time with him and sang his favourite gospel hymn, never knowing it would be our last song together. On my way back to Nairobi, I received the news that my beloved father had breathed his last," she said.

”

is intimate and foundational. She described her father not as a political figure but as a teacher and moral compass, a man who believed in character before credentials.

"My father believed in me long before I had achieved anything worth celebrating. From my school days, through my career in law, and through the many chapters of my public life, he remained one of my strongest supporters, always proud, always encouraging, and always in my corner," Karua noted.

"My father was a principled man, a teacher, and a man who believed deeply in the value of character, education, and doing what is right. But to us, above all, he was a loving father, steady, generous, and present."

That steadiness now departs at a moment when Kenya itself enters a period of profound unsettlement. With eleven months to the August 2027 general election, the country is sliding into what is arguably its most consequential political transition since the 2010 constitution.

This will not be a routine election. It will be a referendum on the economic contract, on the credibility of the opposition, and on whether Kenya's democracy can accommodate dissent without fracture. The Kenya Kwanza administration, elected in 2022 on a platform of bottom-up transformation, faces a restless electorate battered by the cost of living, debt repayments and youth unemployment. The opposition, fragmented and still searching for a unifying narrative after the 2022 loss, is attempting to reassemble under new formations like Karua's People's Liberation Party.

In that context, Karua's personal loss carries political weight. She has positioned the PLP as a vehicle for clean governance and constitutional fidelity, values she directly attributes to her father. Sources close to the family told The

Mt Kenya Times that Jackson Karua, a retired teacher from Kimunye village, instilled in his children an uncompromising belief in education as liberation, a theme that would later define his daughter's advocacy for judicial independence and gender equity.

Tributes have poured in across the divide, a rare pause in a polarised arena. President William Ruto said in a condolence message that Mzee Jackson Karua raised a daughter who has served the nation with courage and integrity. Azimio leader Raila Odinga described him as a patriarch whose quiet sacrifice produced a leader of national stature, while Chief Justice Emeritus David Maraga praised the family for upholding dignity in public life.

That cross-party respect underscores what the next year will test. The 2027 campaign will be fought not just in rallies but in WhatsApp groups, in courtrooms, and in the streets where Gen Z has rewritten the rules of protest. It will demand candidates who can withstand scrutiny and families who can bear the cost of public life. Karua's reflection that grief has no age captures a truth many political households will confront as the race intensifies.

"There is never really an age at which you are prepared to say goodbye to someone who has been part of your life from the very beginning," she said. "We will each feel his absence in our own way, but we will also carry forward the lessons he gave us and the love that held our family together. I will miss his voice, his counsel, his encouragement, and the quiet reassurance of knowing that he was there."

As burial preparations begin in Kirinyaga, Kenya's political class would do well to heed the lesson of a teacher who never sought office but shaped one who did. In a season when noise will overwhelm signal, character will still count.



People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua




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Food producers The drought had also destroyed the seed stock families depended on for the next planting season. The cycle of loss seemed unbreakable.

Permagardens take root after three dry years in coastal Kenya’s Mbuguni region

In Kwale County, a training programme is turning drought-devastated families into food producers — one garden at a time

BY Afia Agyapomaa Ofosu
@themtkenyentimes

Three and a half years: that is how long the sky over Mbuguni stayed stubbornly empty.

In this remote village in Matuga, Kwale County, no rain fell. Crops failed in the fields, food stores ran dry and families exhausted their seeds. Each season, finding food and water grew harder than the last.

Women walked long distances searching for water and wild fruits. Some men left in search of work elsewhere. Children bore the consequences too. Some dropped out of school, while others — some as young as ten — turned to fishing in the ocean using mosquito nets.

Hunger took a visible toll on children’s health. Community members recalled malnourished and stunted children spending much of the day sleeping, too weak to move. Others collapsed by the roadside on their way to school.

The drought had also destroyed the seed stock families depended on for the next planting season. The cycle of loss seemed unbreakable.

Then, in August 2024, The Permagardens Foundation began training families in Mbuguni to establish permagardens.

Isaac Atsiaya, a trainer with The Permagardens Foundation and lead at United for Poor Communities, said the training was the first step toward helping families grow vegetables again. The gardens rely on locally available resources and prioritise efficient water use — an approach suited to a community that has endured prolonged drought.

For the women who established the gardens, each harvest meant food on the table. Surplus produce opened a second door: income.

“Vegetable surplus was sold to cover school fees, medical expenses and other small family needs,” Atsiaya said.

By November 2024, the community had recorded a rise in school attendance. “No more cases of school-children collapsing along the road were recorded,” Atsiaya said.

Mwanajuma Bakari, a widow raising nine children, said vegetables from her permagarden were helping



A mother cultivates a permagarden with her children Photo Credit The Permagardens Foundation



A family harvests okra from their permagarden Photo Credit: The Permagardens Foundation

her feed her family and meet school costs.

“I am grateful my family has plenty of vegetables, and I am selling the surplus to pay school fees,” she said. “Before the permagarden, we used to sleep with empty stomachs.”

Binti Nasoro, a single mother of eight, is using part of her harvest to keep her children in school.

“My children had dropped out of

school, and I am glad half of my permagarden harvest now pays their fees,” she said.

Mwanamisi Masudi, a mother of eight, said the drought had unravelled her household after her husband left during the worst of the food shortages.

“Drought left us with nothing. My husband went away during the tough times,” she said. “I am happy now

sleep hungry anymore.”

For Niyawa Athumani, a mother of ten, the change is visible in her children.

“My children have enough vegetables. They have gained weight, and those who had dropped out of school have returned,” she said. “We have a little money from the surplus we sell.”

The experiences of these women illustrate how the gardens are serving a dual purpose: household food security and a modest but meaningful source of income. Women manage the gardens and determine how to use what they produce — a model that places decision-making where the need is greatest.

Climate change may yet bring more drought or flooding to Mbuguni. But these women are no longer waiting. They have turned empty plots into sources of food, income and dignity.



Even in drought, permagardens thrive in Mbuguni Photo Credit: The Permagardens Foundation



A water-smart permagarden Photo Credit: The Permagardens Foundation

we can grow our own food. We don’t

Politics The IEBC timetable places the 2027 election firmly on the national calendar and sets milestones for parties, candidates and electoral administration

Kenya political weather — The winds are changing



BY Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo
@fkpchelimo@yahoo.com

There is a moment before a storm when the sky has not yet darkened, yet something in the air tells experienced eyes that the weather is changing. The wind feels different. Conversations become more deliberate. People begin looking towards the horizon. Kenya has entered such a moment.

The country is not yet in the full intensity of the 2027 election, but politics is acquiring a different rhythm. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has published its election operation plan for the August 10, 2027 poll, while political parties are moving towards organisational decisions that will shape nominations and alliances. The electoral calendar is beginning to influence political behaviour.

This first edition of Kenya Political Weather is a weekly column intended to read those changes without becoming another political megaphone. Each week, we will examine claims, evidence, pressure points and what citizens should watch next, especially locally. We will not tell Kenyans whom to support. We will not mistake a rally for a constituency, a photograph for a programme.

The first pressure point is preparation. The IEBC timetable places the 2027 election firmly on the national calendar and sets milestones for parties, candidates and electoral administration. Party primaries are scheduled for 2027, while the formal campaign period will begin later in the year. What happens inside parties before those deadlines will matter because



nominations are often where political competition becomes most immediate to ordinary voters.

For citizens, the coming months deserve attention. Who writes the nomination rules? Who participates in deciding them? Are internal processes transparent? How are disputes handled? Which communities, women, young people and persons with disabilities are genuinely represented? The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties describes party rules and internal procedures as fundamental to inclusive participation, accountability and responsible representation. Those principles deserve scrutiny before campaign trucks arrive.

The second pressure point is the county. Kenya's political conversation is often excessively Nairobi-centred, yet much of the politics determining whether a household feels abandoned or heard happens in county governments. A road can determine whether a farmer reaches a market. A county hospital can determine whether a family receives treatment. A procurement decision can determine whether a young entrepreneur gets an opportunity. A disability programme can determine whether inclusion becomes real or remains an empty phrase. The counties are political weather

stations, revealing where expectations rise and leadership is judged by delivery rather than rhetoric.

The third pressure point is trust. An election is ultimately a constitutional process, and that process requires confidence in institutions. The IEBC is already undertaking preparations for 2027, while questions around electoral technology, registration, administration and institutional credibility remain part of public debate. Such questions must be tested against evidence, not amplified as political fact. Confidence is built before election day through transparency, clear procedures and visible adherence to the law.

The most important pressure point is the household. Politics becomes real when the parent is calculating school fees, when the farmer is negotiating fertiliser prices, when a young graduate is searching for work, when a trader is trying to keep a business alive, or when a person with a disability asks whether inclusion exists beyond speeches and budget lines. This is where political language meets lived experience. That is why citizens should increasingly ask simple questions of complicated promises: Who benefited? What was delivered? Where is the evidence? What did it cost? Who was left out?

What happens next? These are essential democratic questions. The weeks ahead will provide

plenty to watch. Parliament resumes scheduled business on September 29. Political parties are entering important organisational and nomination-related phases. Government will explain its record. Opposition formations will discuss their future configuration. Counties will remain arenas where national politics, local interests and development expectations intersect. None of these developments, by themselves, tells us how 2027 will unfold. They show that the political environment is becoming more consequential.

Our work will be neither prophecy nor propaganda. We will examine movements, follow evidence and listen beyond familiar political voices. Nairobi will matter, but so

will every county where citizens experience government in practical terms. We will watch institutions, parties, counties and, above all, people.

Because political storms rarely arrive without warning. Pressure accumulates quietly. Alliances evolve. Institutions make decisions. Citizens change the questions they ask. Issues that appear peripheral today can become central tomorrow.

Some clouds will bring rain. Others will pass. Our responsibility is to watch carefully enough to know the difference.

Welcome to Kenya Political Weather. Every Monday, we will read the changing atmosphere—not to tell Kenyans what to think, but to help them see more clearly what is happening around them.

The weather is changing. The Kenyan citizen must keep watching the barometer closely, carefully.

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Constitution The BBI process brought national attention to questions of inclusivity, representation, equitable sharing of power and the consequences of intensely competitive presidential elections

The 2010 Constitution must evolve beyond winner takes all

Sixteen years of political experience have exposed gaps that neither BBI nor NADCO has fully closed



BY Dennis Wendo

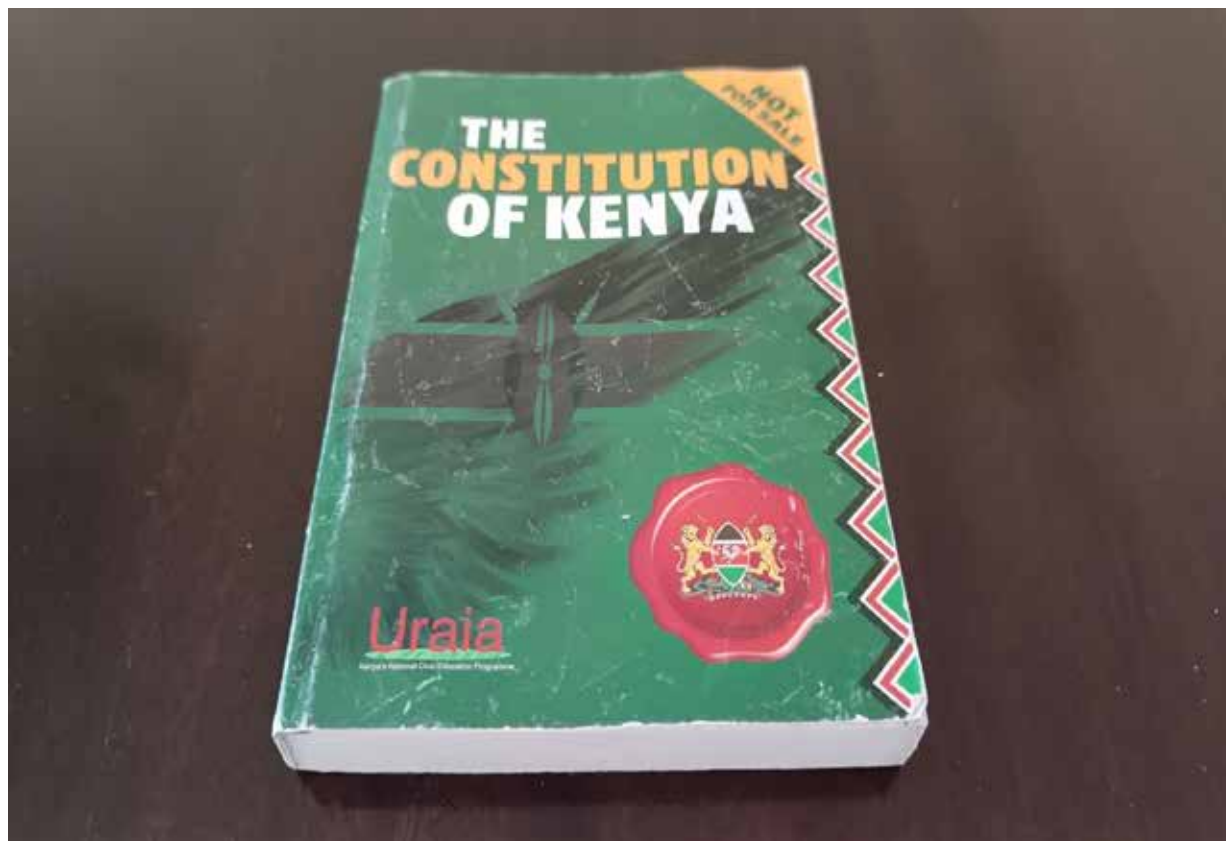
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Kenya's constitutional journey has reached a point where an honest national conversation is overdue — not about whether the 2010 Constitution should be discarded, but about whether it has sufficiently responded to the political and governance realities that have shaped the country over the past sixteen years.

This is not a call to replace the Constitution or reopen every provision. It is about examining what has worked, what remains unfinished and whether experience has exposed areas requiring targeted constitutional and legislative reform rather than continued improvisation through political agreements.

The journey from the Building Bridges Initiative to the National Dialogue Committee and, more recently, the Kenya Kwanza-ODM framework agreement demonstrates that many concerns surrounding Kenya's political settlement remain unresolved. Each process has revisited broadly similar questions. Each has fallen short of producing durable institutional answers.

The BBI process brought national attention to questions of inclusivity, representation and the consequences of intensely competitive presidential elections. Although the proposed amendments were halted by the courts, the underlying questions of national cohesion and political inclusion did not disappear. NADCO subsequently revisited several of those issues, among them electoral justice, IEBC reforms, the two-thirds gender principle, parliamentary strengthening and institutionalisation of the opposition. The March 2025 Kenya Kwanza-ODM framework further committed the parties to implementing NADCO recommendations while promoting inclusivity, strengthening devolution and addressing corruption and pub-



lic accountability. It was, in many respects, a restatement of commitments made before.

Taken together, these developments point to a persistent national concern. Kenya has repeatedly attempted to address questions of inclusion through post-election political negotiations rather than through durable institutional arrangements. The pattern is familiar and its costs are real.

The presidential system produces a clear electoral winner, as it should in a competitive democracy. However, the concentration of power attached to the presidency can create the perception that winning State House provides disproportionate control over national opportunities, while citizens who voted differently are left waiting for another electoral cycle. This concern becomes more acute when elections are decided by narrow margins. Treating such contests simply as events in which one side wins and the other loses can deepen divisions along ethnic, regional and economic lines.

This is the deeper meaning behind winner takes all. It is not simply about who becomes president. It is about whether political competition can coexist with a genuine sense of

belonging and equitable opportunity for citizens and communities that voted differently.

The Constitution already provides important safeguards. Devolution has redistributed political authority and resources. The Bill of Rights protects citizens regardless of political affiliation, while independent commissions provide institutional checks. Equality, participation, inclusivity and protection of marginalised groups are established as national values. The challenge has consistently been implementation. The two-thirds gender principle remains unachieved across successive parliaments. Representation of marginalised groups falls short of constitutional aspiration. Public confidence in electoral institutions remains fragile — a serious concern as Kenya approaches 2027.

Electoral credibility is central to national stability. Where citizens do not trust the electoral process, an election becomes more than a contest for office. It becomes a test of institutional legitimacy, and when institutions fail that test, the consequences extend well beyond the ballot.

Kenya must also reconsider the

place of opposition politics. A democracy cannot be reduced to government alone. Effective opposition is essential to accountability, and Parliament must have sufficient independence to scrutinise the executive without political consequence. The NADCO proposal for an institutionalised office of the Leader of the Official Opposition is part of a wider debate about ensuring political competition continues constructively after election day through oversight, not perpetual confrontation.

Equity must remain central to this conversation. Kenya carries significant historical and regional inequalities. Equality before the law does not automatically produce equitable outcomes. Inclusion must extend beyond ethnic and regional balancing to encompass women, youth, persons with disabilities and communities historically excluded from national opportunity. Political inclusion and economic equity cannot be separated. A citizen who sees no improvement in economic opportunity experiences exclusion even when formally represented. The same applies to young Kenyans who vote actively but remain absent from meaningful decision-making.

Kenya must also draw lessons from BBI. Constitutional reform should never become an instrument of political convenience or elite negotiation. Any future process must be citizen-led, evidence-based, transparent and firmly anchored in constitutional principles. There is equally no justification for amending the Constitution every time the country encounters a political disagreement. Many persistent challenges can be addressed through better implementation, targeted legislation, stronger institutions and enforcement of existing law.

The starting point should be a comprehensive constitutional audit — a systematic assessment of the 2010 framework over sixteen years that distinguishes between provisions requiring better implementation, those needing legislative intervention and those where experience has revealed a genuine constitutional gap. Such an approach would prevent reform from becoming a political shopping list and focus national attention on areas that recur across transitions: electoral justice, institutional independence, gender inclusion, devolution, parliamentary oversight, campaign financing and protection of marginalised communities.

As the country moves toward 2027, this conversation must not become an electoral weapon or a vehicle for political advantage. Nor should the proximity of an election silence legitimate discussion of long-term institutional questions.

The central objective is straightforward. Kenya needs a democratic system in which elections determine who governs, but do not determine who belongs. Winning should confer a mandate to govern within constitutional limits. Losing should not translate into exclusion. Opposition should be a legitimate constitutional role, not a temporary condition awaiting the next election.

The country may not need a new Constitution. But after sixteen years, it is reasonable and responsible to consider whether the 2010 Constitution requires carefully targeted evolution to close persistent gaps in inclusion, equity, electoral confidence and institutional accountability. The goal is not to eliminate winners and losers. It is to ensure that whoever wins governs within constitutional limits, whoever loses remains a legitimate participant in the Republic, and every Kenyan retains an equal stake in the nation regardless of how they voted.

That is the constitutional conversation Kenya should be prepared to have.

Speech Speech culture primarily refers to the correct, appropriate, and purposeful use of linguistic resources in accordance with the norms of the literary language

The study of speech culture at the societal level



BY Adashaliyeva Durdona Akramjon

@themtkenyatimes

Language is one of the most important social phenomena of humanity. It plays an invaluable role in facilitating communication among people, expressing thoughts and feelings, and transmitting social experience from one generation to another. A person's speech is one of the main means of reflecting their level of knowledge, worldview, moral values, and culture of communication. Therefore, speech culture should not be considered merely a linguistic issue; rather, it is an important phenomenon closely connected with the spiritual and social development of society.

In today's era of globalization and rapid development of information technologies, forms of human communication are also undergoing significant changes. Alongside oral communication, written communication through social networks, messengers, and various digital platforms has become increasingly widespread. Under such circumstances, observing literary language norms and expressing thoughts clearly, fluently, logically, and effectively have become increasingly important.

Studying speech culture at the societal level makes it possible to identify the specific characteristics of the speech of different social groups, analyze the practical application of literary language norms, and develop the younger generation's ability to speak correctly and communicate appropriately.

Main Part

Speech culture primarily refers to the correct, appropriate, and purposeful use of linguistic resources in accordance with the norms of the literary language. Speech culture is not limited to using words without grammatical errors. Accuracy,



logical coherence, fluency, purity, richness, expressiveness, and appropriateness to the communicative situation are also important characteristics of cultured speech.

Every individual uses language in everyday life. Conversations within the family, the educational process, professional activities, communication with public institutions, mass media, and online correspondence are all forms in which speech culture is manifested. Therefore, speech culture should be studied not only as an individual's communicative ability but also as one of the factors reflecting the general cultural level of society.

When studying speech culture at the societal level, particular attention should be paid to literary language norms. Violations of phonetic, lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and orthographic norms can negatively affect the content, comprehensibility, and effectiveness of speech. In particular, since the speech of employees of mass media organizations, educational institutions, and public institutions influences a wide audience, special attention should be paid to speech culture in these fields.

The education system is one of the most important social institutions for developing speech culture. From preschool education through higher education, students learn to express their thoughts both orally and in writing. In particular, Uzbek language and literature classes play an important role in expanding students' vocabulary, constructing

grammatically correct sentences, creating texts, developing independent thinking, and teaching them to substantiate their opinions.

Teachers' speech directly affects the effectiveness of the educational process. A teacher's fluent, clear, understandable, and expressive speech serves as an example for students. Therefore, speech culture is not only an important component of professional competence but also an essential element of pedagogical culture.

The family also plays an important role in developing speech culture in society. A child acquires their first linguistic experiences within the family. The speech style of parents and other family members, their choice of words, attitude toward interlocutors, and communication etiquette influence the child's subsequent communicative behavior. Therefore, communicating with children in a respectful, meaningful, and linguistically appropriate manner within the family is an important condition for speech education.

Today, the influence of mass media and social networks on speech culture is also becoming increasingly significant. Rapid online communication has contributed to the increased use of abbreviated forms, colloquial expressions, loanwords, and various shortened forms. In digital communication, there are also cases of insufficient attention to spelling and punctuation and of expressing thoughts hastily.

At the same time, modern communication technologies create signifi-

cant opportunities for disseminating educational, scientific, literary, and cultural materials in the Uzbek language to a wider audience. Electronic dictionaries, online educational platforms, digital libraries, and scientific resources provide broader opportunities for people to improve their language skills.

When studying speech culture at the societal level, regional and social factors should also be taken into consideration. The dialects and regional varieties of the Uzbek language constitute an important part of the rich linguistic heritage of the Uzbek people. Although dialects are an important component of the national language, adherence to literary language norms in official, scientific, educational, and public communication is essential for ensuring mutual understanding.

Speech culture is also closely connected with communication etiquette. Respecting the interlocutor, listening to their opinions, not interrupting them, choosing words and expressions appropriate to the situation, and avoiding rude or discriminatory expressions are important characteristics of proper communication. Thus, a high level of speech culture requires not only grammatical correctness but also respect and responsibility in human relationships.

To develop speech culture in society, it is important to increase speech-oriented activities in educational institutions, create opportunities for students to express their

independent thoughts orally and in writing, encourage reading of literary and scientific works, promote adherence to literary language norms in mass media, and encourage proper writing practices on the internet.

Conclusion

In conclusion, speech culture is a multifaceted phenomenon that plays an important role in the spiritual, educational, and communicative life of society. The way a person speaks and writes reflects not only their attitude toward language but also their respect for their interlocutor. Therefore, developing speech culture is not solely the responsibility of linguists; it is a shared responsibility of families, educational institutions, mass media, and society as a whole.

In particular, developing speech culture among the younger generation directly contributes to the quality of social communication in the future. Along with teaching students the norms of literary language, it is necessary to develop their ability to think independently, substantiate their opinions, listen to others, and observe ethical norms during communication.

In today's digital era, it is important to approach speech culture in new ways and harmonize traditional language norms with the opportunities provided by modern communication. Although language development is a natural process, preserving its national character, richness, and literary norms is the responsibility of every language user. Developing a high level of speech culture in society is an important factor in enhancing the prestige of the Uzbek language, enriching the spiritual environment, and ensuring effective social communication.

About the Author

Adashaliyeva Durdona Akramjon qizi was born on June 30, 2002, in Uychi District, Namangan Region, Uzbekistan. She graduated from Secondary School No. 33 in Uychi District. She subsequently studied Uzbek Language at Namangan State University and obtained higher education in this field. She currently works as a teacher at Technical School No. 1 in Namangan City. Her pedagogical activities focus on developing students' knowledge and skills, increasing their interest in the Uzbek language and literature, and improving the speech literacy of young people.

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Sports >> *A teenage masterclass, a missed penalty and a second-half collapse cost England dearly as Spain claimed a dramatic Nations League win.

Wembley silenced: Spain beats England 3-2



Spain beats England 3-2

By **Andalo Christine Ingutia**

Spain silenced Wembley yesterday with a pulsating 3-2 victory over England in a hard-fought UEFA Nations League Group A3 clash that swung dramatically in both directions before the visitors finally held their nerve to claim all three points on English soil.

It was Lamine Yamal who set the tone for the evening. The teenage forward punished an early England defensive lapse to fire Spain ahead after just two minutes, silencing a full house at Wembley and giving the visitors exactly the confident, early start they had worked so hard for.

England, playing in their first Nations League A campaign after winning League B last season, were not rattled for long. They gradually grew into the match and drew level in the 36th min-

ute when Jude Bellingham slid a precise, incisive pass through to Anthony Gordon, who finished coolly to restore parity.

The equaliser sparked England into life. Four minutes later, captain Harry Kane added a second, rising to meet a cross from Nico O'Reilly and heading firmly into the net. From 1-0 down inside two minutes, England had turned the contest completely on its head. They held on to carry a 2-1 advantage into the break.

Spain, who entered this tournament looking to bounce back after losing to Portugal on penalties in the 2025 Nations League final, regrouped at half-time and came out with renewed purpose and greater intensity in the second half.

The pivotal moment arrived in the 53rd minute. England were awarded a penalty after a VAR review confirmed a foul on Bell-

ingham, but Kane's effort struck the crossbar. The reprieve was immediate and costly. Six minutes later, Spain were level. A heavy touch by O'Reilly surrendered possession cheaply, and Álex Baena seized on the mistake to curl a composed finish into the bottom corner — 2-2.

Spain sensed the shift and pressed for more. In the 73rd minute, substitute Mikel Oyarzabal found space in behind the England defence and finished with calm authority to put Spain 3-2 ahead. It was a goal that would prove decisive.

England threw players forward in search of a leveller, but Spain were composed and disciplined in closing out the win. Wembley fell quiet as the final whistle confirmed a 3-2 defeat for the hosts.

The result leaves England third in Group A3, level on points with Czech Republic but ahead

on goal difference. Spain sit top alongside Croatia, who also took maximum points yesterday.

Both sides return to Nations League action on Monday, when England travel to face Czechia and Spain host Croatia. The two sides will then meet again in their reverse fixture on 15 November.

For Spain, it was a statement victory — a reminder that despite their setback in last year's final, they remain among Europe's most dangerous and resilient international sides. For England, the performance offered genuine encouragement in patches, but Kane's missed penalty and a costly defensive lapse in the second half ultimately proved the difference between a famous comeback and a painful home defeat at Wembley.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The France captain left the international camp early as Real Madrid prepare to assess the extent of the damage.

Mbappé returns to Madrid for tests after knee tendon injury

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

Kylian Mbappé flew back to Madrid yesterday for further medical examinations after suffering a knee tendon injury during France’s international fixture, casting doubt over his availability for Real Madrid in the weeks ahead.

The France captain was forced off the pitch after experiencing sharp discomfort in his knee during the match. Mbappé had already made a notable impact on the game before being withdrawn, but his early exit quickly overshadowed everything else once the final whistle had blown. France coach Zinedine Zidane confirmed that Mbappé had hyperextended his knee and that the player would return to Madrid for specialist assessment. The decision was taken as a precaution to prevent the injury from worsening and to allow Real Madrid’s medical team to carry out a more thorough examination.

“Mbappé has hyperextended his knee,” Zidane said, explaining both the nature of the problem and the reason behind the decision to release the forward back to his club.

With Mbappé now back in Madrid, Real Madrid will take full charge of his recovery process. The club is expected to run additional tests to determine the precise extent of the damage and establish how long their forward is likely to be sidelined.

No recovery timeline has been confirmed at this stage. The results of those examinations will be critical in determining whether Mbappé has sustained a relatively minor setback or whether he faces a more extended spell away from the game.

The injury is a source of anxiety for both Real Madrid and France, and understandably so. Since arriving at the Bernabéu, Mbappé has become one of the



Kylian Mbappé

club’s most influential attacking figures, carrying the weight of expectation both as a creator and a scorer of goals.

His pace, movement and clinical finishing make him a persistent danger in the final third. His versatility — capable of operating centrally or from the left — gives his side additional options in attack. Losing him, even for a short period, would represent a significant challenge for Real Madrid’s forward planning. For France, the blow is equally sharp. Mbappé is not simply a key player — he is the captain and the man around whom much of the national team’s attacking play is built. His withdrawal from the current squad means

Zidane must now consider other options up front while awaiting news on his captain’s condition.

The timing makes the situation more difficult. Real Madrid face a congested calendar ahead, with domestic league fixtures and European competition placing sustained demands on the squad. The club will be anxious to avoid a lengthy absence and will be monitoring Mbappé’s recovery closely.

The episode also serves as a reminder of how carefully the relationship between clubs and national associations must be managed when players are injured on international duty. Rather than pressing Mbappé to continue, France acted responsi-

bly by releasing him early so that Madrid’s specialists could take over his care.

Establishing an accurate diagnosis is now the immediate priority. Real Madrid’s medical staff will assess the affected knee thoroughly, determine whether further intervention is required, and set out a rehabilitation plan. The club is expected to issue an update on his condition once those examinations are complete.

Until then, supporters on both sides will be waiting. Any decision on when Mbappé returns to training and eventually to competitive football will rest on how well he responds to treatment and whether he can be cleared to play without risk of aggravating the injury.

The Frenchman had done enough on the pitch before his withdrawal to suggest he was in good form. But that contribution has been largely forgotten in the anxiety that followed his departure. He will now observe France’s remaining fixtures from the sidelines as the squad continues without him.

Real Madrid fans will be hoping the medical results bring reassurance. The club is unlikely to take any risks with such an important player, and a cautious approach to his return is almost certain.

Until the full assessment is complete, the true severity of the tendon injury remains uncertain. What is not in doubt is that Mbappé has returned to Madrid, and the coming days will determine just how serious the problem is.

Both Real Madrid and France will be watching closely and hoping their captain recovers quickly and fully.

SPORTS NEWS



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Dolly Parton, Múgithi and the soundtrack of Kikuyu homes

A Tennessee legend who never visited Kenya somehow became the voice in the background of an entire generation's childhood.

By: Charles Irungu Gachango

@themkenyatimes

As the world mourns Dolly Parton, many will remember the rhinestones, the towering wigs, Jolene, 9 to 5, and one of the greatest songbooks in country music. They will remember the voice that could break your heart and mend it again within the same song. They will remember the larger-than-life personality, the self-deprecating humour, the quiet philanthropy, and the remarkable discipline of a woman who turned a childhood of deep poverty in rural Tennessee into a career that spanned six decades and touched hundreds of millions of lives across the world.

Here in Kenya, particularly in Kikuyu households, we remember something else.

We remember growing up to her voice.

For many millennials raised in Central Kenya, country music was never a niche genre. It was the family playlist before playlists existed. It echoed from cassette players in our parents' living rooms, from matatus heading upcountry, from nyama choma joints on Sunday afternoons, and from every bar where someone waited for the first guitar strings to announce an evening of stories. There were no algorithms deciding what to play next. There was simply a tape, worn smooth from use, carrying voices from across the world into the heart of the Kenyan highlands.

Walk into a Kikuyu social joint today and you will still hear Don Williams, Kenny Rogers, Jim Reeves, Dolly Parton and the rest of country music's royalty. They belong there as naturally as a plate of nyama choma and a cold drink. Nobody planned it that way. Nobody sat down and decided that Kikuyu culture would adopt country music as one of its own. It simply happened, the way all genuine cultural exchanges hap-

pen — quietly, organically, and with lasting effect.

That is why Dolly's passing feels strangely personal.

She was never just an American icon. She became part of our cultural memory without ever intending to. She never performed in Kenya. She never recorded a song about the slopes of Mount Kenya or the rolling hills of Murang'a. Yet somehow, across decades and thousands of miles, her music found its way into our homes, our Sunday afternoons, our most ordinary and most precious memories.

Perhaps that is because country music and Kikuyu culture speak remarkably similar languages.

Both are built on storytelling. They sing about love that endures and love that breaks. About hard work, family, faith, heartbreak, longing, laughter and home. About mothers who sacrificed everything and fathers who worked until their hands could not hold anything more. About leaving home and aching to return. Strip away the accents and geography, and the emotions are almost identical. A Dolly Parton song about growing up poor in the Smoky Mountains does not feel distant to someone who grew up in a small home in Nyeri or Kirinyaga. The specifics differ. The feeling does not.

Even our original Múgithi carries traces of that same spirit.

Long before it became the lively dance music many associate it with today, Múgithi borrowed from the acoustic storytelling traditions that define American country music. The guitars did most of the talking. The songs unfolded like conversations, drawing the listener in slowly, building something between the performer and the audience that went beyond entertainment. The audience did not merely listen — they joined in, just as country audiences always have. There was a call and response, an intimacy, a shared understanding that the song belonged to everyone in the room.



Dolly Parton.

Perhaps that is why country music found such fertile ground among Kikuyu listeners.

It never felt foreign.

It felt familiar.

There is also something to be said about the values both traditions carry. Country music at its best is not simply entertainment. It is a record of ordinary life treated with extraordinary dignity. It insists that the lives of farmers and mothers and miners and ordinary working people are worth singing about. That their joys and sorrows deserve a melody. That grief and hope can exist in the same verse. Kikuyu cultural tradition has always understood this too. The elder telling a story by firelight, the woman singing as she works, the gathering where memory and laughter share equal space — these are not so different from what Dolly Parton was doing every time she stepped onto a stage.

Dolly Parton may have sung from the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, but her voice somehow found a home in the Aberdares too.

As the world says goodbye to one of country music's greatest storytellers, many Kikuyu millennials are quietly saying goodbye to a piece of their childhood. To Sunday afternoons that seemed to last forever. To family gatherings where the adults talked and laughed and the music played on without anyone choosing it consciously, because it was simply always there. To the soundtrack that played in the background as life unfolded — as children grew, as parents aged, as the world changed around all of us.

Legends do not always belong only to the places that produced them.

Sometimes they belong to every place that welcomed their music. Every kitchen where their songs played. Every long journey where

their voice kept someone company. Every quiet evening where their words said something that the listener had never quite been able to say themselves.

Rest well, Dolly.

Thank you for finding your way into our homes, our memories, and a small corner of Kikuyu culture you may never have known existed. You belonged here too, even if you never knew it.