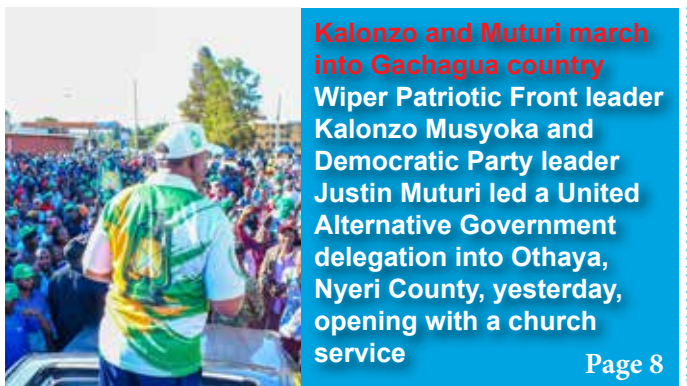




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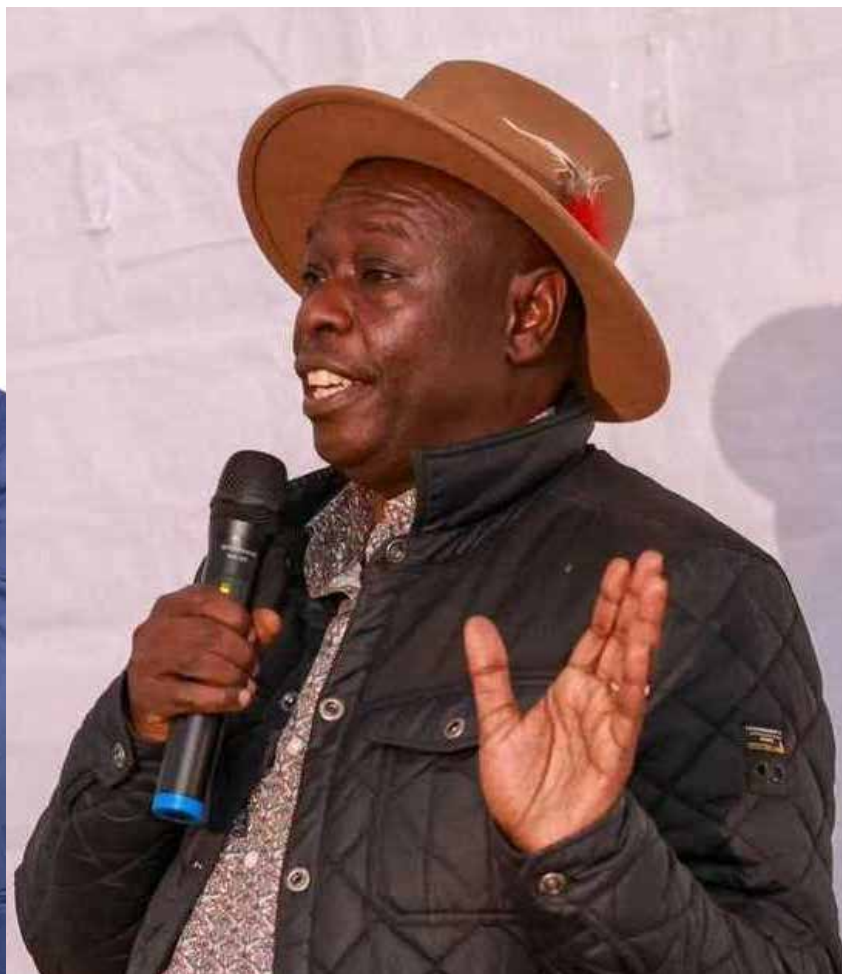
Gachagua: I can deputise Sifuna

Rigathi Gachagua, the former Deputy President of Kenya and leader of the Democracy for the Citizens Party, declared yesterday that he is prepared to serve as Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna's running mate in the 2027 general election if political arithmetic demands it, a statement that instantly reshuffled the deck in the already volatile race to unseat President William Ruto eleven months from now.

Gachagua made the remarks during a community engagement with Kenyans in Spokane, Washington, the latest stop on an extended diaspora tour of the United States that has become, in effect, an early campaign trail. He was blunt, characteristically so. "If we do our arithmetic and find that Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna will send President William Ruto home early, so be it," he told the gathering. "And there is no problem, by the way, even I, Riggy G, can deputise Sifuna."

It was a sentence designed to travel — and it did. To understand the full weight of what Gachagua said in Spokane, one must understand the peculiar theatre of Kenya's pre-election season. The general election is constitutionally fixed for 10 August 2027, the second Tuesday of the month as required by the 2010 Constitution.

Page 9



Acollage of Edwin Sifuna Leader of Linda Mwananchi and Rigathi Gachagua, the former Deputy President of Kenya and leader of the Democracy for the Citizens Party




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Faith and politics travel together for Gachagua in Washington State

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua and his wife, Pastor Dorcas Rigathi, worshipped at Favor Time Church in Pullman, Washington, on Sunday, pausing a politically charged diaspora tour for a morning of prayer and reflection.

The couple, who are on a 50-day tour of the United States ahead of the 2027 general election, have made faith a visible thread throughout their American visit. Gachagua, who a day earlier had addressed Kenyans in nearby Spokane and made headlines by declaring he would willingly serve as Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna's running mate if the numbers demanded it, spent Sunday away from the political platform.

Invoking the Great Commission from Mark 16:15 — "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" — Gachagua called for continued divine protection over Kenya, saying: "May God continue to bless and protect Kenya abundantly."

For a politician navigating one of the most consequential pre-election periods in Kenya's recent history, the Sunday pause carried its own quiet message: that behind the coalition arithmetic and the diaspora speechmaking, something quieter and more personal endures.



Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Residents of Kihoto, a low-lying settlement on the shores of Lake Naivasha, were yesterday urged to relocate immediately as the lake continued to rise following sustained heavy rainfall linked to the El Niño weather phenomenon. Local authorities warned that the swelling waters posed an imminent flood risk to households closest to the shoreline, with some structures already showing signs of encroachment.

The warning came as water levels at the lake reached their highest point in recent memory, alarming officials and conservation groups who monitor the Ramsar-designated wetland. County emergency response teams were deployed to the area yesterday to assess the extent of the risk and assist families in moving their belongings to higher ground, as the situation showed no sign of stabilising.

Kihoto, which sits at the lake's edge in Naivasha town, is home to hundreds of families, many of them low-income earners who settled on the flood-prone land over decades of unplanned urban expansion. Previous flooding episodes have repeatedly displaced residents, yet resettlement has remained piecemeal and largely ineffective due to the chronic shortage of alternative affordable land within the town's boundaries.

The broader environmental picture adds urgency to the crisis. Lake Naivasha, which supports one of Kenya's most productive horticultural industries and sustains a significant freshwater fishery, is acutely sensitive to rainfall variations. Conservation bodies have long warned that settlements along its shifting shoreline are inherently vulnerable, a caution that successive administrations have struggled to translate into enforceable action.

Meteorologists warned yesterday that rainfall across the wider Rift Valley region was expected to intensify over the coming days, compounding pressure on the already swollen lake and raising the prospect of further inundation along its margins.

Authorities appealed to residents to heed evacuation advisories without waiting for rising waters to reach their doorsteps, stressing that the window for an orderly and safe relocation was narrowing rapidly.



Kenya's Copyright Board faces mounting accusations of institutional bias after musicians and content creators alleged that Pavrisk, one of several licensed collective management organisations, was receiving preferential treatment in the administration and distribution of artists' royalties. The allegations, circulating within creative industry circles for weeks, centre on claims that Kecobo has applied its regulatory oversight unevenly, affording Pavrisk advantages in licensing, collections and dispute resolution that rival organisations say they do not enjoy. Critics argue the arrangement undermines a royalty system that thousands of Kenyan artists depend on for their livelihoods. The controversy arrives at a delicate moment for Kenya's creative economy, which the government has identified as a pillar of its economic diversification agenda. Kecobo and Pavrisk had not responded to requests for comment at the time of going to press.



Kenya's government yesterday renewed its commitment to resolving long-standing disputes with teachers' unions over salaries, promotions, housing allowances, medical cover and working conditions, as both sides sought to head off industrial action that could disrupt learning and jeopardise national examinations.

The pledge came against a backdrop of simmering discontent within the teaching profession, where grievances over stalled promotions and inadequate welfare provisions have festered for years despite repeated rounds of negotiations between the Ministry of Education and the Kenya National Union of Teachers and the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers.

At the centre of the dispute is a pay structure that teachers' representatives say has failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living, leaving educators — particularly those in rural and hardship areas — struggling to meet basic needs on salaries that have not been substantively reviewed in years. Housing allowances, which teachers argue bear no relation to prevailing rental costs, and a medical cover scheme widely described as inadequate, have sharpened the sense of institutional neglect.

Promotions represent perhaps the most acute grievance. Thousands of teachers are reported to have waited years beyond their due dates for advancement, a bottleneck that unions attribute to bureaucratic inertia within the Teachers Service Commission and insufficient budgetary allocation from the Treasury.

The timing of the government's intervention is significant. With the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations approaching, a strike would carry consequences far beyond classroom disruption, threatening the academic futures of hundreds of thousands of candidates who have spent years preparing for the assessments.

Officials indicated that a structured engagement framework would be established to track progress on each grievance, though union leaders signalled they would measure the government's sincerity by actions rather than assurances. For Kenya's teachers, yesterday's pledge is one they have heard before.



Kenya's investment climate faces a critical stress test as the prolonged standoff between the government and Tata Chemicals Magadi reaches an inflection point, mining industry players warned yesterday.

The dispute, which centres on licensing, operational and fiscal grievances that have accumulated over years of unresolved negotiations, has unnerved investors monitoring Kenya's extractive sector. Industry figures cautioned that the manner in which authorities handle the standoff will send a signal — positive or damaging — to multinational corporations weighing long-term capital commitments in the country.

Tata Chemicals Magadi, which operates the soda ash extraction facility at Lake Magadi in Kajiado County, is one of Kenya's oldest and largest industrial investors. A protracted or adversarial resolution risks deterring the foreign direct investment that Kenya's mining sector urgently needs.

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Courts Judge finds flaws in the procurement process ran deeper than the original challenge

High Court backs PPARB in Kenya Power security tender dispute

BY Brian Gitonga

@themtkenyentimes

Judge finds flaws in the procurement process ran deeper than the original challenge and affected the entire tender

By Brian Gitonga

The High Court has dismissed challenges by Kenya Power and several security firms seeking to overturn the cancellation of a KSh1.86 billion security services tender, upholding a decision by the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board that nullified the entire procurement process.

Justice W. Musyoka dismissed three consolidated judicial review applications filed by Kenya Power and Lighting Company and the affected security firms, ruling that the applicants had failed to demonstrate that the board acted illegally, irrationally, or unfairly when it nullified the tender.

The dispute traces back to a tender Kenya Power advertised on 27 February 2026 for nationwide guarding services under tender number KPI/9A.2/OT/069/SS/25-26. The contract was divided into two categories — Class A and Class B — and attracted 70 bids.

Following evaluation, several companies were proposed as successful bidders. Under Class A, Ismax Security Services, Lavington Security Services, Spy eagle Security Services, and Sumich Solutions were recommended for a combined 715 guards and a



Justice William Musyoka

cumulative contract value of KSh677 million. Hounsflow Security Limited was among the successful Class B bidders.

Riley Falcon Services Limited, an unsuccessful bidder, challenged the procurement before the PPARB. On 9 July 2026, the board nullified the entire process after identifying a series of fundamental flaws.

Kenya Power and the successful bidders moved to the High Court, arguing that the board had exceeded its mandate. They contended in particular that the board had unlawfully cancelled the Class B awards without affording companies such as Houn-

slow Security an opportunity to be heard, and had considered matters that were never raised in the original review proceedings.

Justice Musyoka rejected those arguments. He found that once Riley Falcon questioned how its bid had been evaluated, the board was entitled to examine the tender document and the evaluation process in full — and what it found gave it good reason to act.

The judge identified an inherent inconsistency in the tender document itself. While it capped awards at 200 guards per bidder, certain zones required more than that figure, with the Stima Zone specifying as many as 245

guards. Complying with the cap would require splitting the zone, while awarding it in full would breach the limit — an irreconcilable conflict built into the document from the outset. The board also found that Western Region had been split between Sumich and Lavington, and Nairobi Region between Ismax and Spy eagle, breaching the requirement that zones be awarded to a single bidder in full.

The court also noted discrepancies in financial evaluations. Ismax had quoted KSh9,013,200 for the Nairobi Region but was recommended for an award of KSh7,563,200, with no explanation offered for the difference. Ismax was also recommended for 206 guards despite the stated 200-guard ceiling.

On Hounsflow's complaint that it had been condemned without a hearing, Justice Musyoka was direct: the flaws identified were not confined to Class A. They ran through the foundations of the entire procurement.

"The entire tendering process was founded on a single tender document," the judge said, adding that the inconsistencies identified undermined the integrity of the procurement as a whole.

The court dismissed all three applications, discharged the interim orders that had been in place, and directed each party to bear its own costs.

Into Gachagua's backyard: Kalonzo and Muturi take the fight to Othaya



Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka

BY Kamande Muchiri

@themtkenyentimes

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi led a United Alternative Government delegation into Othaya, Nyeri County, on Sunday, opening with a church service at St Paul's ACK Church before addressing a public rally in a carefully choreographed push to embed opposition roots in the Central Kenya heartland.

The choice of Othaya — the political home constituency of Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua — was pointed. It signalled that the coalition intends to contest every square metre of Mt Kenya, not merely circle its edges. Muturi, who told

worshippers in Nairobi in July that he would back "my brother Dr Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka" if he were not to be the opposition's presidential candidate, stood alongside the Wiper leader as a demonstration that those words were more than courtesy.

Kalonzo himself reached for biblical and ancestral weight to frame the moment. "To the Ruto regime, hear the words written on the wall: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin — your days are numbered," he declared. He closed with a Gikuyu proverb that the Nyeri crowd would feel in their bones: "Gũtirĩ ũtukũ ũtakĩa — there is no night, however long, that does not end in dawn."

Dawn, he said, is coming.

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Politics Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi led a United Alternative Government delegation into Othaya, Nyeri County

Kalonzo and Muturi march into Gachagua country

The opposition takes its most audacious gamble yet — a joint rally deep in the heartland of their own coalition partner

BY Kamande Muchiri

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi led a United Alternative Government delegation into Othaya, Nyeri County, yesterday, opening with a church service at St Paul's ACK Church before addressing a public rally in the most symbolically loaded opposition visit to Central Kenya since the 2022 election.

The choice of Othaya was not accidental. This is the constituency that produced Rigathi Gachagua — the impeached former Deputy President, Democracy for the Citizens Party leader, and the man whose political network is supposed to be the United Alternative Government's bridge into the Mount Kenya vote. By marching into Gachagua's home turf while their coalition partner was thousands of miles away addressing Kenyans in Spokane, Washington, Kalonzo and Muturi were making a point that transcends courtesy. They were demonstrating that the opposition's appeal in Central Kenya does not begin and end with one man, and that the coalition intends to own the ground, not merely borrow it.

The August 2027 general election, constitutionally fixed for the second Tuesday of that month, is eleven months away. In Kenyan political terms, that is an eternity and a heartbeat simultaneously — long enough for alliances to fracture and reform several times over, short enough that every rally now carries strategic consequence. The question that defines this pre-election period is not whether the opposition will challenge President William Ruto. It is whether the opposition can agree on who will lead that challenge, and whether whoever does can actually win.

Kalonzo, 72, is Kenya's most experienced political bridesmaid. He served as Vice President under Mwai Kibaki from 2008 to 2013, has run for president three times without success, and has spent much of the past decade navigating the treacherous waters of opposition coalition politics with a combination of patience, tactical calculation, and a



Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi

stubbornness that his allies admire and his opponents have consistently underestimated. He arrived in Othaya yesterday not as a supplicant seeking Central Kenya's blessing, but as a man who believes the mathematics of 2027 are finally converging in his favour.

The coalition he is part of — the United Alternative Government — brings together a remarkable assembly of former rivals and allies: Gachagua's DCP, Muturi's Democratic Party, Martha Karua's People's Liberation Party, Eugene Wamalwa's Democratic Action Party of Kenya, Fred Matiang'i's Jubilee faction, and former Chief Justice David Maraga. Each brings a constituency. None, individually, is sufficient. The coalition's collective wager is that the sum of these parts can produce a winning total against a sitting president who controls the state machinery, the treasury, and the patronage networks that have historically decided Kenyan elections.

Muturi's role in Othaya yesterday was more than ceremonial. In July, speaking at a Nairobi church, he declared that if the presidential ticket

were not to be his, he would back "my brother Dr Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka." Kalonzo acknowledged the endorsement while carefully maintaining that he would equally support Muturi if the coalition coalesced around him. That mutual deference — each man publicly deferring to the other — is either a sign of political maturity or a choreographed holding pattern designed to keep both options alive while the



Kalonzo, 72, is Kenya's most experienced political bridesmaid. He served as Vice President under Mwai Kibaki from 2008 to 2013, has run for president three times without success, and has spent much of the past decade navigating the treacherous waters of opposition coalition politics with a combination of patience, tactical calculation, and a stubbornness that his allies admire and his opponents have consistently underestimated. He arrived in Othaya yesterday not as a supplicant seeking Central Kenya's blessing, but as a man who believes the mathematics of 2027 are finally converging in his favour.

coalition's larger calculations are resolved. Probably both.

What is clear is that Muturi brings something specific to the Othaya visit. As the former Speaker of the National Assembly and former Attorney General, he carries institutional credibility that complements Kalonzo's longevity. And in a Central Kenya electorate where anger at Gachagua's impeachment remains raw, his presence alongside Kalonzo signals that the coalition's legal and constitutional credentials are robust enough to be trusted with the country's governance.

Kalonzo did not shy away from the gravity of the moment. Addressing the rally, he reached for both scripture and ancestral wisdom to frame his message. "To the Ruto regime, hear the words written on the wall long before we arrived at this hour: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," he said, invoking the biblical passage from the Book of Daniel — the divine warning to a king whose days were numbered. "Your days are numbered, and Kenya will not wait for you to count them." He then turned to the Gikuyu proverb that

resonated with particular force in a Nyeri crowd: "Gũtirĩ ũtukũ ũtakĩa — there is no night, however long, that does not end in dawn. Kenya's night has been long. But dawn is coming, and together we shall rebuild Kenya."

The deployment of a Gikuyu proverb by a Kamba politician on the soil of the Mount Kenya heartland was deliberate and deft. It said: I speak your language, literally and figuratively. I understand your culture. I am not here as an outsider extracting votes — I am here as a partner in a shared national project.

The opposition's strategic problem in Central Kenya is well-documented. Ruto won the 2022 election partly on the strength of a sweeping Mount Kenya vote, delivered through his alliance with Gachagua. Gachagua's subsequent impeachment in October 2024 fractured that arrangement and created a political opening that the opposition has been attempting to exploit ever since. But exploiting it requires more than rallying DCP supporters. It requires convincing ordinary Mount Kenya voters — many of whom have voted for Ruto twice and have institutional and business relationships with the Kenya Kwanza administration — that the opposition offers a credible alternative, not merely a vehicle for the personal grievances of an impeached deputy president.

Yesterday's Othaya visit is the opposition's answer to that challenge: show up, build relationships, make the constitutional and economic argument, and let the crowds draw their own conclusions. Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot recently questioned whether Mount Kenya would back a Sifuna-led ticket. Othaya's crowds yesterday added a quieter but equally significant answer of their own.

Eleven months remain. The ticket question is unresolved. The coalition is large, unwieldy, and held together by the shared conviction that Ruto must be a one-term president. Whether that conviction proves sufficient glue for what lies ahead will be answered not in Spokane or Othaya, but at the ballot box on 10 August 2027.

Politics To understand the full weight of what Gachagua said in Spokane, one must understand the peculiar theatre of Kenya's pre-election season

Gachagua: The man who would be kingmaker — or king

From a diaspora hall in Washington State, Rigathi Gachagua tears up the script on Kenya's 2027 opposition presidential race

BY David Kimani

@themkenyatimes

Rigathi Gachagua, the former Deputy President of Kenya and leader of the Democracy for the Citizens Party, declared yesterday that he is prepared to serve as Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna's running mate in the 2027 general election if political arithmetic demands it, a statement that instantly reshuffled the deck in the already volatile race to unseat President William Ruto eleven months from now.

Gachagua made the remarks during a community engagement with Kenyans in Spokane, Washington, the latest stop on an extended diaspora tour of the United States that has become, in effect, an early campaign trail. He was blunt, characteristically so. "If we do our arithmetic and find that Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna will send President William Ruto home early, so be it," he told the gathering. "And there is no problem, by the way, even I, Riggy G, can deputise Sifuna."

It was a sentence designed to travel — and it did.

To understand the full weight of what Gachagua said in Spokane, one must understand the peculiar theatre of Kenya's pre-election season. The general election is constitutionally fixed for 10 August 2027, the second Tuesday of the month as required by the 2010 Constitution. That gives the opposition roughly eleven months to resolve a question it has been circling for the better part of two years: who will carry the single presidential ticket that, its leaders have repeatedly pledged, will face Ruto? The pledge has been easier to make than to keep.

The field of serious opposition contenders is both deep and combustible. Kalonzo Musyoka, the veteran Wiper party leader who has twice served as vice president and twice lost the presidential race, commands a formidable base in Ukambani and presents himself as the elder statesman whose time has finally come. Fred Matiang'i, the former Interior Cabinet Secretary who became one of Kenya's most feared ministers before his dramatic fall from grace,



Rigathi Gachagua is welcomed at a church in Spokane USA

carries the Jubilee party ticket and has built steady support in parts of the Mount Kenya region. Martha Karua, leader of the People's Liberation Party, brings intellectual credibility and a fierce reputation for principle that her allies in the United Alternative Government and the Linda Mwananchi movement have rallied around. Former Chief Justice David Maraga and former Attorney General Justin Muriu — now the Democratic Party leader — have both positioned themselves as candidates, with Maraga hinting at closer cooperation with Karua.

And then there is Sifuna. At 44, the combative Nairobi senator has emerged as the most compelling voice of a younger opposition generation, his tongue sharp and his crowd work formidable. His Linda Mwananchi movement has raised grassroots funds and built momentum, and he has been increasingly candid about his presidential ambitions. But he has also attracted scepticism from

quarters that might have been expected to support him.

The day before Gachagua spoke in Spokane, Central Organisation of Trade Unions Secretary-General Francis Atwoli — speaking at a UDA Western Region aspirants' meeting in Kisumu — advised Sifuna to stand down. "The time is not ripe for the young man," Atwoli said. "The time is not now for Edwin Sifuna." Atwoli argued that the senator needed to build a broader political network before mounting a national campaign.

Gachagua was having none of it. "I saw that man, COTU Secretary-General Francis Atwoli, telling Sifuna that he is too young to be president and should therefore wait," he told the Spokane audience. "I want to tell that Mzee, Sifuna is above 18 years. He is 44. Barack Obama was elected US president at 47. Franklin Roosevelt was 42." He then turned to Sifuna directly, saying: "I have told my younger brother, do not be discour-

aged by anybody. Go for it."

The intervention matters beyond the drama of the moment. Gachagua controls the most electorally significant block the opposition needs: the Mount Kenya vote. His ability to deliver — or withhold — that region from any challenger is the central variable in every opposition ticket calculation. His willingness to consider a subordinate role, whatever its ultimate sincerity, signals that he is prepared to trade the top position for the right political configuration. That is a significant concession from a man who has also, in the same breath, insisted: "Riggy G here is a serious candidate."

His framing of the ticket as flexible — Sifuna over Kalonzo, Kalonzo over Sifuna, or Gachagua himself at the top — is deliberate. "We will come up with a line-up and you will love it," he told the diaspora audience. "We will blend youthful energy with experience." It was the language of a man managing multi-

ple audiences simultaneously: reassuring Sifuna's supporters that youth is not disqualifying, signalling to Kalonzo that he has not been written off, and reminding everyone that Gachagua himself remains the axis on which the coalition turns.

The diaspora setting was itself strategic. Central Bank of Kenya data shows that Kenyans abroad remitted close to USD 4.9 billion — roughly KSh640 billion — in 2024, making the diaspora one of the country's most important sources of foreign exchange. Kenyans living abroad are also eligible to vote in presidential elections under the 2010 Constitution, which is why diaspora forums have become fixtures of opposition pre-campaign planning. What is said in Spokane or Minneapolis does not stay there; it travels, often faster than anything said in Nairobi.

The opposition's credibility problem is real. As recently as July 2026, the OI Kalou by-election exposed the coalition's unity pledge as aspirational at best, with nine candidates — eight of them aligned against Ruto — splitting the anti-government vote into irrelevance. A movement that cannot agree on a candidate for a constituency seat faces steep questions about its ability to consolidate behind one person for the presidency.

The October 9 People's Forum on Electoral Preparedness, being co-ordinated by Maraga, Muriu, and Linda Mwananchi spokesperson Caroli Omondi, is the opposition's next formal attempt to bring order to the chaos. Whether it succeeds is another matter. As Kenya accelerates toward August 2027, the only certainty is that the race for the right to challenge Ruto is growing louder, messier, and more consequential with every passing week.

Gachagua flew into Spokane promising a line-up Kenyans will love — the question is whether Kenya's fractious opposition can actually produce one before the ballot box closes the argument for good.

Economy For years, Kenya's economic structure has exposed a painful contradiction. The country produces agricultural commodities, minerals, and other raw materials

Stop digging, start building

Kenya has vast mineral wealth — but most of the money it generates leaves with the ore. President Ruto says that stops now

BY Collins Kibet

@themkenyatimes

Kenya is confronting a fundamental question about the future of its economy: why should a country blessed with valuable natural resources keep exporting them in raw form, only to import finished products at significantly higher prices? The government's latest position on unprocessed minerals has reopened a debate that goes well beyond mining. It is a debate about

jobs, industrialisation, national wealth — and whether Kenya has for too long been exporting its opportunities along with its raw materials.

Speaking in South Horr, Samburu County, yesterday, President William Ruto was unambiguous. "It is now the policy of the Government that Kenya will no longer be exporting raw materials," he declared. The directive covers gold, limestone, iron ore, graphite, titanium, soda ash, lithium, coltan, and rare earth minerals. The argument is

economically compelling: a tonne of raw material has limited value, but once refined or transformed into a finished product, its value can multiply many times over — while creating employment and business opportunities within the country.

For years, Kenya's economic structure has exposed a painful contradiction. The country produces agricultural commodities, minerals, and other raw materials, yet most of the serious value addition happens outside its borders. Ken-



President William Ruto

yan resources leave cheaply and return as expensive finished goods. Somewhere between the mine and the marketplace, enormous economic value is created — but Kenya captures only a fraction of it.

The situation at Lake Magadi illustrates the problem sharply. Kenya exported roughly 254,779 tonnes of soda ash worth US\$56.9 million in the year to July 2025 — all in raw form. Tata Chemicals, which has operated at Magadi since 2005 following over a century of extraction dating back to 1911, had its operations suspended by the Ministry of Mining in July 2026 over compliance and licensing issues. Ruto used the moment to make a broader point: rather than simply extracting and shipping the mineral, Kenya should be developing industries producing glass, chemicals, and other downstream products — building an entire industrial ecosystem around the resource. The government is already in talks with Aliko Dangote about a refinery in Lamu to process oil locally.

But there is a difficult reality that no declaration alone can wish away. Kenya cannot announce the end of raw exports and expect factories to appear automatically. Local value addition requires reliable electricity, affordable financing, modern infrastructure, advanced technology, skilled

workers, and consistent government policy. Without these foundations, restrictions on raw exports could generate uncertainty for investors rather than the manufacturing base Kenya needs.

The deeper issue, therefore, is not whether Kenya should add value to its resources. It is whether the government is prepared to create conditions that make value addition economically viable. Industrialisation cannot be built on presidential speeches alone. It requires long-term planning, serious investment, transparent contracts, and institutions capable of protecting national interests without creating unnecessary barriers to legitimate business.

There is also the question of who will actually benefit. If Kenya succeeds in processing its resources locally but the resulting industries remain controlled by a handful of powerful companies, ordinary citizens may see little improvement in their lives. Communities where minerals are extracted must receive meaningful benefits. Kenyan entrepreneurs and local manufacturers must have a genuine opportunity to participate in the value chain, not merely watch from the roadside as wealth is redistributed among the already wealthy.

This is where the government's promise faces its

greatest test. Kenya has spoken about industrialisation and value addition before. Kenyans have heard ambitious economic promises many times. What they need now is not another slogan but visible factories, skilled employment, competitive industries, and products bearing the label "Made in Kenya" reaching markets across the world.

The refusal to remain an exporter of raw materials could become one of the most important economic shifts of this administration. But success will ultimately depend on execution. Kenya must move from digging resources out of the ground to building industries around them — from selling potential cheaply to exporting finished products profitably, and from creating wealth elsewhere to retaining more of it at home.

The uncomfortable question is no longer simply why Kenya has exported raw materials for so long. It is why Kenya has allowed so much value generated from its own soil to be created somewhere else. If the government is genuinely serious about changing that, the next chapter of Kenya's economic story should not be about what leaves the country — but about what Kenya can build from what it already possesses.

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Politics Nakuru is the third-largest county in Kenya by population and sits at the heart of President Ruto's Rift Valley base

The Rift Valley is not Ruto's anymore — and DCP is making sure everyone knows it

From a church in Solai to the streets of Bahati, Senator Methu is writing a new political map of Nakuru — one rally at a time

BY Kamande Muchiri

@themkenyaintimes

Nyandarua Senator John Methu led a Democracy for the Citizens Party delegation into Nakuru County yesterday, holding a church service in Solai before conducting two successive public rallies in Bahati Constituency — at Maili Kumi at 2:30pm and Maili Sita at 4pm — in the most sustained and organised opposition push yet into territory President William Ruto has long considered his own.

The significance of what happened in Bahati cannot be separated from what has happened there before. In July 2025, heavily armed anti-riot police erected barricades along the Nyahururu-Nakuru road at Kwa Kahiga, lobbing teargas canisters at DCP leaders and their supporters to prevent rallies from taking place in the same Bahati and Subukia constituencies. The convoy was forced through the blockade. Then, on 14 August 2026, Gachagua's motorcade was attacked in Nakuru Town West, with photographs showing several Land Cruisers with shattered windscreens and rear windows. Naivasha MP Jayne Kihara condemned the attack and asked why the government was allegedly disrupting opposition gatherings.

And yet yesterday, DCP came back. DCP Secretary for Planning Peter Mbae had announced the return in a defiant statement on 2 September: "Nakuru, we are back to Su-

bukia and Bahati that Rigathi Gachagua was not able to cover last time. One step at a time. DCP Siku Zombo." The phrase — DCP is unstoppable — has become the party's rallying cry in contested terrain, and Nakuru is among the most contested terrain in Kenya ahead of the August 2027 general election.

Nakuru is the third-largest county in Kenya by population and sits at the heart of President Ruto's Rift Valley base. It is governed by Susan Kihika, a UDA loyalist who has been emphatic in her support for the President. "I will not leave Ruto for Wamonyoro, never," Kihika declared at a Bahati constituency event during Madaraka Day celebrations in June. She subsequently led a delegation of over 1,000 elected leaders and business figures to State House to reaffirm that loyalty. On paper, Nakuru should be settled ground for Kenya Kwanza.

It is not. The fissures running through Nakuru politics are deep, and DCP has been systematically widening them. The party's Nakuru County Secretary-General, Simon Ole Nasieku, issued a stark warning to Members of the County Assembly who voted to impeach Bahati MCA Ngware Ng'ang'a, who had been removed as Deputy Speaker after criticising the 2025/26 Finance Bill. "Anyone on the list of these MCAs who decide to impeach Ngware should forget about vying for a DCP ticket in 2027," Ole Nasieku said. It was a dec-

laration that DCP intends to contest local seats in Nakuru, not merely show up for the presidential race.

That layered strategy — disrupting county politics while building a national profile — is what makes the Bahati rallies more than headline noise. Methu, who serves as DCP's Secretary-General designate, has been running the party's ground operation since Gachagua departed for the United States on 26 August 2026, embarking on a 50-day diaspora tour. Deputy party leader Cleophas Malala and Methu were specifically tasked with keeping the party's mobilisation engine running in his absence. The Nakuru tour followed meet-the-people engagements in Laikipia, and before that, a CBD rally in Nairobi. DCP is moving fast and moving wide.

On the ground in Nakuru, the political arithmetic that has long defined the county — a compact between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities, forged through the Kenya Kwanza alliance — is showing visible strain. Political analysts have noted that the divisions within that alliance are widening ahead of 2027, with Gachagua's DCP aggressively targeting Kikuyu voters in the Rift Valley who feel alienated by the current administration. Methu, himself from Nyandarua, has been direct about this. "There are people misleading the President that Nakuru is firmly behind him just because he hails from the Rift Valley," he said at a previous DCP rally



Nyandarua Senator John Methu led a Democracy for the Citizens Party delegation into Nakuru County

in the county. The message is calculated: Nakuru, for all its symbolism as Ruto's regional heartland, is not monolithic.

At the national level, the Nakuru rallies are one piece of a broader opposition mobilisation that, on Sunday alone, saw the United Alternative Government also deploying into Nyeri County — where Kalonzo Musyoka and Democratic Party leader Justin Muriu held a church service at St Paul's ACK Church in Othaya and a subsequent public rally, having chosen the political home constituency of Gachagua himself as their venue. Across the country, multiple opposition flanks were moving simultaneously: DCP in the Rift Valley, the UAG in Central Kenya, and Gachagua himself working the Kenyan diaspora in Washington State. The coordination, whether deliberate or coincidental, created the unmistakable impression of an opposition that has found its operational rhythm less than a year before the election.

The countdown is unambiguous. Kenya goes to the polls on 10 August 2027, a constitutional requirement embedded in the 2010 charter. That gives Methu, Malala, and whoever eventually carries the opposition presidential ticket roughly eleven months to convert Sunday crowds in Bahati into election-day turnout. The opposition's central challenge — consolidating behind a single candidate from a crowded field that includes Gachagua,

Kalonzo, Muturi, Martha Karua, Fred Matiang'i, and former Chief Justice David Maraga — remains unresolved, and its resolution will determine whether all this grassroots energy ultimately coheres or dissipates.

But what Sunday demonstrated in Nakuru is that DCP is not waiting for that resolution before expanding its territory. It is planting flags in places it was previously teargas-cleared from and returning to roads its convoys were stoned on, with the same

green wave it launched from Gachagua's impeachment and has been building ever since.

Nakuru has been told to expect DCP back in Subukia, Kabazi, Lanet Umoja, and Dundori. Ole Nasieku warned the MCAs. Methu warned the government. And on Sunday, several thousand people turned out in Bahati to hear the message for themselves.



Politics The declaration landed in a room already primed for political theatre. Ruto had travelled to South Horr for a thanksgiving service honouring Devolution Principal Secretary Michael Lenasalon

Lesuuda crosses the floor — and takes Samburu with her

The first woman ever elected to represent Samburu West has joined Ruto, and the calculation behind the move runs deeper than development

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Samburu West MP Naisula Lesuuda publicly broke with the Azimio coalition yesterday and declared her support for President William Ruto, telling him at a thanksgiving ceremony in South Horr that she was the last holdout in Samburu to cross over — and that the government's development record, not political pressure, had finally brought her across.

The declaration landed in a room already primed for political theatre. Ruto had travelled to South Horr for a thanksgiving service honouring Devolution Principal Secretary Michael Lenasalon, attended by Samburu Governor Jonathan Lelelit and a gathering of political leaders from northern Kenya. Into that setting, Lesuuda offered the President something worth considerably more than applause: a public break with the coalition she had stood with since 2022, delivered on his terms, in front of his audience.

"I remained in Azimio, and I saw my leaders here like Leuton putting pressure on me every day. My sister Soipan and others were putting pressure on me, but it wasn't actually them who pressured me. It was the work that you have done for Kenyans," Lesuuda told Ruto. The distinction she was drawing — between political inducement and policy persuasion — was careful and clearly rehearsed. In Kenyan political culture, where defections are routinely explained as acts of principle and routinely understood as acts of

calculation, the framing matters as much as the fact.

Lesuuda is not an ordinary defector. She entered elective politics as a nominated senator in 2013 and went on to win the Samburu West parliamentary seat in 2017 on a KANU ticket — becoming the first woman ever elected to represent the constituency. She retained the seat in 2022, again on KANU, cementing her reputation as one of the party's most capable and recognisable leaders in the north. When KANU, under Gideon Moi, joined Raila Odinga's Azimio la Umoja coalition ahead of the 2022 election, Lesuuda went with it. She served on Azimio's national executive council and publicly defended the coalition's rationale.

That is the political history she walked away from yesterday in South Horr. The walk was deliberate, the timing precise, and the implications for both KANU and the broader opposition calculation are not trivial.

For Gideon Moi, Lesuuda's move presents a problem that goes beyond losing a single legislator. KANU has been trying to navigate an increasingly uncomfortable position — nominally within Azimio while individual members drift towards Kenya Kwanza. Lesuuda's public declaration accelerates that erosion and makes it harder for Gideon to present KANU as a coherent political vehicle ahead of 2027. Although she remains listed as a KANU MP, her alignment with Ruto creates a practical split that formal party membership cannot paper over.

For Ruto, the calculus is

straightforwardly positive. Samburu County sits in the arid north — a region defined politically by pastoralist identity, insecurity, and decades of marginalisation from the mainstream development agenda. Lesuuda's endorsement does not merely add a vote in the National Assembly. It signals to pastoralist communities in Samburu and beyond that the administration is delivering enough on the ground for leaders who have been openly critical to change their position publicly. That signal travels.

She made a point of enumerating what had changed. The upgrading of a hospital to a referral facility. Appointments of Samburu residents to senior government positions. School capitation funds arriving in classrooms on time — a detail she was careful to ground in her role on the National Assembly Budget Committee, giving it institutional weight rather than political spin. "During your time, capitation funds arrive in schools on time," she said. "I can state that as an MP and as an individual because sometimes it is easier to just tell lies to be popular, but continue doing what you are doing for Kenya."

Lesuuda also used the platform to raise the issue that most directly affects her constituency's daily life — banditry and insecurity. On 11 July, armed raiders killed three civilians in Samburu West in a single attack. Lesuuda called on Ruto to intensify security operations and facilitate the return of families displaced by repeated attacks. The dual message she delivered in South Horr



Samburu West MP Naisula Lesuuda

— joining the government while also making a demand of it — is a reminder that her calculation involves leverage, not simply loyalty. She was not simply endorsing a president. She was notifying one of what he now owes her people in return.

That backdrop matters when reading the larger political landscape heading into August 2027. Kenya's pre-election period is shaped by the same dynamics it always has been: development delivery as the currency of political allegiance, and regional leaders as the brokers who translate that currency into votes. What has changed is the pace. With the election eleven months away and the opposition's ticket question still unresolved,

leaders across every county are making their calculations faster and more openly than usual. Those aligned with the government can point to projects, appointments, and funds. Those outside it are betting that a unified opposition can still overturn the arithmetic of incumbency.

Lesuuda has looked at both sides and made her choice. She was direct about what she expected the reaction to be. "It is not for any other reason even if politicians say we are liars or that we are just seeking favours from you. Today the priest has said that work has been done," she told Ruto.

There is also a dimension the South Horr crowd understood even if it went unstated. Lesuuda has made no secret of

her ambitions for the Samburu County gubernatorial seat in 2027. Running for governor requires a political base that can survive a tough county-wide contest. Alignment with the administration — and the access to resources and goodwill that comes with it — is not irrelevant to that calculation.

"Let us push Kenya forward, let us roll the wheel forward, and let me join hands to help these others so that all of Samburu is behind you," she told Ruto.

Whether all of Samburu follows remains to be seen — but the first woman to win Samburu West has made her position plain enough.



Congregation attending church

Fraud The buyer, acting with caution, conducted an official search at the Machakos Land Registry before committing to the purchase

Machakos man arrested over KSh2.4m land fraud using stolen identity

Suspect allegedly posed as landowner with forged title deed and fake ID to dupe buyer along Nairobi-Mombasa highway

BY Agnes Mumo
@themtkenyetimes

A Machakos man was arrested yesterday after allegedly using a stolen identity, a forged title deed and a fake national identity card to sell land he did not own for KSh2.4 million, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations said.

Detectives from Kalama Sub-County apprehended David Maitha following an intelligence-led operation in Mtito Andei, where he had allegedly been in hiding after the fraudulent transaction collapsed. Maitha is accused of impersonating Joel Musembi Kiilu, the registered owner of a prime parcel of land along the Nairobi-Mombasa high-

way, and presenting a buyer with documents fabricated to support that false identity.

The buyer, acting with caution, conducted an official search at the Machakos Land Registry before committing to the purchase. The search returned results confirming that the property was indeed registered in Kiilu's name, giving the buyer sufficient confidence to proceed. A sale agreement was subsequently executed before a Machakos advocate, and KSh2.4 million changed hands.

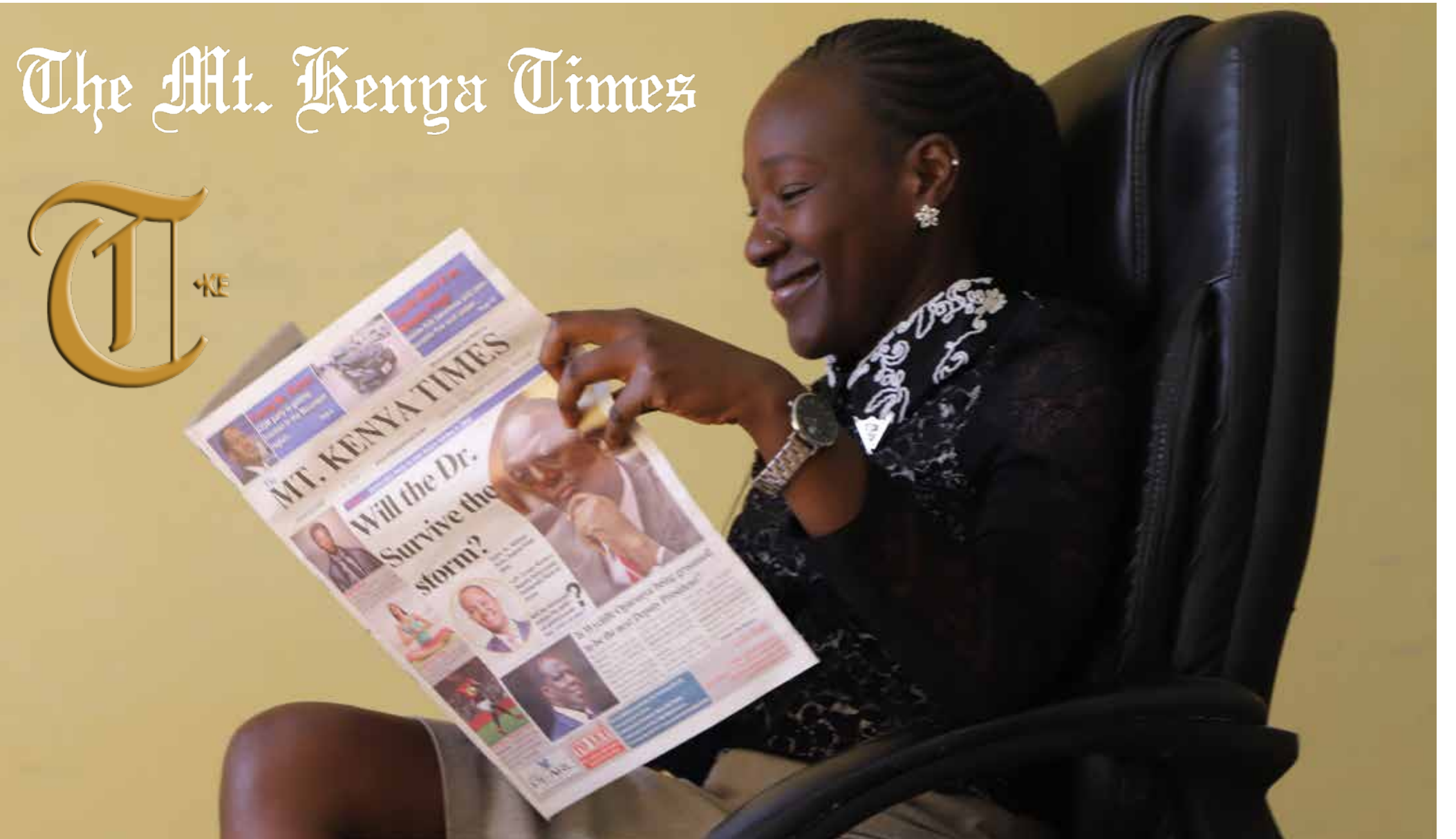
The fraud unravelled almost immediately afterwards. The man posing as Kiilu stopped answering calls, missed scheduled meetings and vanished as the parties moved to complete post-sale procedures. The buyer reported the matter to police, triggering the investigations that led

to Maitha's arrest.

"Beyond verifying the authenticity of documents at land registries, buyers must verify the true identity of the individuals behind those documents," the DCI said, issuing a public caution alongside the arrest announcement.

Maitha remained in custody yesterday as detectives processed his case ahead of arraignment. The DCI did not specify when he would appear in court.

The case reflects a pattern of identity-based land fraud that investigators say is rising across Kenya's peri-urban corridors, where rapid property development and high land values create conditions that fraudsters exploit. Registries confirm documents — but not the person holding them.



My mother



My dearest mother, kind and true,
A sheltering shade for all we do.
She always watches over me,
And works tirelessly, selflessly.

Her love can heal my every pain,
Her words are sweeter than honey and rain.
She holds me close when I am sad,
And makes my troubled heart feel glad.

She never thinks of herself,
But carries my sorrows as if they were hers.
Even when I am mischievous and wild,
She calls me her clever, precious child.

Normurodova Go'zal Uzoqboyevna
Student of Termez State University
Participant in the Republican Stage of the "Zomin
2026" Seminar

Who am I without my name?



So, who am I truly?
Not the letters,
Not the labels,
Not the voice of others.
The world may call me by many things,
But beneath every title, there is me quietly
refusing to vanish.
I'm not only what I am called.
I'm what I carry, what I choose, what I become.
One day, my name will become ink on fading paper.
And if the world forgets my name,
I'll still remain.
Not as a name, but as a presence,
Learning how to be known.

Vijitharani.K
AURCC, Coimbatore.

When the name I answer to is taken away,
Would I still exist?
Or have I spent my life in search of identity?
Yeah, before I had a name, I existed.
Without my name that calls me back,

I am a star



I am a star, not because I am perfect,
But because I never stop trying.
Even when the world feels dark,

I choose to keep my light alive.

I turn my mistakes into lessons,
And my dreams into goals.
I may shine in my own way,
But I hope my light inspires others.

D.DHANYASRI
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The sky never asks for attention, yet everyone admires it.



We should learn to admire and appreciate the
beauty around us. We should also do our work
with responsibility and dedication,
rather than simply seeking attention or praise.
When we do something sincerely and perfectly,
appreciation will come naturally.
Like the sky, which never asks for attention yet is
admired by everyone,
let your beautiful thoughts and good deeds speak
for themselves.
Your kindness and good deeds can inspire and
earn the admiration of others naturally.

G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Attention is a span of time,
but admiration comes naturally when we see
something beautiful.
The human mind naturally appreciates beautiful
things.
We admire the beauty of nature
the sunrise, sunset, rain, rainbow, and many other
natural events.

There's nothing more beautiful than



There's nothing more beautiful than
The God's gift- specifically,
the eyes & the mind That scan & ascertain the
beauty
The care of the mother from the womb
The sprout into a gigantic tree

The dawn & the dusk of the sun
The moon & the stars
The rain & the rainbow
The sea & it's waves
The animals,birds & insects--
Thus everything is beauty uniquely --and The word
"love" empowers
The wordly beauties- by loving it.
There's nothing more beautiful than -
To look thyself beauty
To love thy beautiful attitudes.
(The array of my words also makes my name
beautiful).
G.Sarala.

Rise Again



Do not fear the dusty ground,
For strength is often quietly found.
Every stumble, every scar,
Shapes the person that you are.

Mountains test the climber's will,
Rivers carve the hardest hill.

Failure is not journey's end;
It is a wise and faithful friend.

The brightest stars light up the night,
After darkness hides the light.

Hope returns with every dawn,
Urging every dreamer on.
Stand once more with steady grace,
Wear each challenge on your face.

True glory is not standing tall—
It is rising after every fall.
So lift your heart, embrace the climb,
Each setback serves a greater time.

Victory belongs to those who say,
"I'll rise again—come what may."

D.RENUKAGANDHI
GHSS,MULLAINAGAR,
HOSUR,KRISHNAGIRI D.T.,

The sky never asks for attention yet everyone admires it



An earthworm makes soil fertile
Though its hurdle is not noticed.
A simple act of butterfly can make a beautiful
garden
Great things are done in a simple manner.
Their remarkable results make us admire.

The darker the sky is,
The brighter the Moon is.
The sun gives us light
The clouds give us rain
They prefer to shine
To leave a moral
When we act for others
The world admires our role.

The flow of a river is unnoticed
Yet it develops a beautiful garden on its course
The shadow of a tree is not glorified
yet it spreads its branches to shelter all.

Penned by
Ranganathan E
B.T.Asst(Eng)
Marwar Govt.Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

Politics Kenya Moja — branded K1 — now positions itself within the opposition bloc as the country enters the most consequential phase of its electoral cycle

Bishop Wanjiru launches opposition bid for Nairobi governorship

Preacher-turned-politician eyes City Hall as Kenya’s pre-election battle lines harden ahead of 2027

BY Mary Atieno
@themkenyaintimes

Bishop Margaret Wanjiru declared yesterday that her Kenya Moja party had aligned with the opposition and that she would contest the Nairobi governorship in 2027, marking her most significant political move since leaving a government appointment last month.

The announcement, made from the pulpit of Jesus is Alive Ministries in Nairobi, drew together strands of religious authority, civic grievance and opposition politics that increasingly define the city’s volatile pre-election

landscape. Wanjiru resigned on August 13 as Chairperson of the Nairobi Rivers Commission, a post she had held for roughly 20 months, giving 30 days’ notice and departing on August 31. Her resignation letter to Head of Public Service Felix Koskei offered no detail on her next move beyond a desire to “give my full attention to other work.” Weeks later, that work is unambiguously political.

Kenya Moja — branded K1 — now positions itself within the opposition bloc as the country enters the most consequential phase of its electoral cycle before the August 2027 general election. With President William Ruto’s Kenya Kwanza administra-

tion facing sustained pressure over the cost of living, youth unemployment and governance concerns amplified by last year’s Gen Z protests, the opposition field is crowding rapidly. Wanjiru’s entry adds a dimension that her rivals will find difficult to dismiss: a mass congregation, a recognisable face and a city-wide profile built across three decades of ministry and two terms representing Starehe constituency in parliament.

Her immediate overture was to Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, who leads the Linda Mwananchi faction that broke from ODM, and to other figures navigating the shifting post-Azimio terrain. The invitation signals K1’s intent to

function as a coalition anchor rather than a lone vehicle, a strategic calculation given that no single opposition outfit currently commands a plurality in Nairobi’s fragmented electorate.

“This is not a personal ambition. It is a call to serve. And today I am answering and committing to that call,” Wanjiru said, addressing a congregation that doubled as a political audience. She said her programme for Nairobi would centre on restoring dignity, order, accountability and economic opportunity to residents of a city where infrastructure decay and informal settlement neglect have become defining political fault lines.



Bishop Margaret Wanjiru

In her resignation letter, Wanjiru asked Koskei to convey her appreciation to Ruto for the opportunity to lead the commission and expressed hope that the two could “collaborate on other matters in future.” That diplomatic postscript now reads as the careful exit of a politician who had already made her calculations.

Nairobi’s governorship race is shaping up as one of the defining contests of 2027. Incumbent Governor Johnson Sakaja faces questions over his first term’s record, while a crowded field of aspirants — from within both government and opposition — is forming.

The entry of a figure with Wanjiru’s ecclesiastical reach and name recognition raises the stakes further in a city of five million that accounts for a disproportionate share of national political momentum.

How Sifuna and other opposition figures respond to her overture will be the first test of whether K1 can build the coalition it needs — or whether the pulpit proves a narrower political platform than its newest occupant believes.

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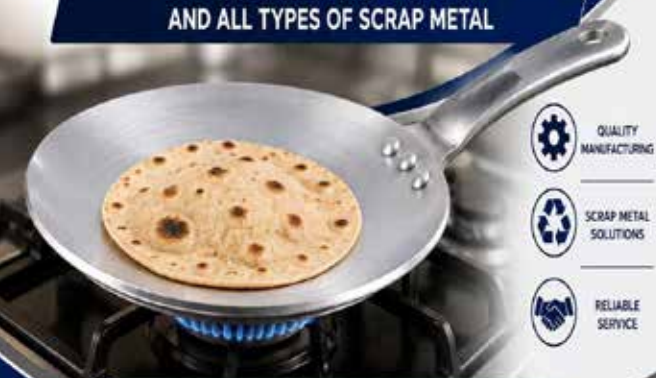
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Run “There is a need to help poor students, and that is why I want to thank the people who have come here and stood with us to achieve this today,” Odhiambo said.

A run with purpose: MUST takes aim at cancer and conservation

Meru University’s Mountain Run raises funds for needy students while sparking plans for a county-wide cancer research centre



Meru University Mountain Run 2026 | Photo: Brian Gitonga

BY Brian Gitonga

@themkenyaintimes

On the slopes of Mount Kenya, a university run has quietly become something larger than a sporting event. Meru University of Science and Technology is considering establishing a cancer research centre to examine the true extent of the disease in Meru County — and the funds raised through its 2026 Mountain Run are expected to help make that ambition a reality.

Speaking at the university’s Marimba Campus, Vice Chancellor Prof Romanus Odhiambo said the run carried three distinct purposes: raising funds for needy students, supporting cancer research, and promoting environmental conservation through tree planting. The event, he said, forms part of a broader vision to build an endowment fund that would give students facing financial hardship a genuine chance to continue their education.

“There is a need to help poor students, and that is why I want to thank the people who

forest cover,” Odhiambo said. “From a desert to above the national average.”

It is the cancer research angle, however, that has generated the most attention. Meru County has long been associated with high cancer prevalence, but Odhiambo — himself a statistics professor — is careful about accepting that claim without scrutiny. He said the university decided it was time to examine the available evidence rigorously before drawing conclusions.

“As professors in the university, we have decided that we want to do research, first of all, to confirm whether this hypothesis is true or not,” he said. Should the findings validate the concerns, the university intends to establish a ded-

that warranted institutional attention.

“When this idea was brought before the council, it was readily accepted, and my council gave it their support because we understand the problem of cancer,” Kanya said. He added that the university was also actively seeking partners to strengthen its research capacity as the initiative develops.

The event attracted senior government representation. Principal Secretary for the State Department of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Elijah Mwangi, commended the university’s contribution to talent development and drew attention to a financial incentive that organisers and sponsors may not be aware of. Under the Sports Act, the Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs has the mandate to recommend tax rebates for spending on eligible sporting initiatives.

“The money that you spend on this course is money that you can reclaim from the tax that you would have paid to

KRA. What you need to do is seek a recommendation from the Cabinet Secretary, and this money will be considered,” Mwangi said.

Meru County Executive Committee Member for Youth Affairs, Sports, Gender and Social Development, Elias Murega, welcomed the university’s focus on cancer research from a county government perspective, confirming that Meru is indeed among counties carrying a high burden of the disease. He said the county, in partnership with the Africa Now Mountain Run Initiative, is also working to connect mountain runs across East Africa as a regional platform for environmental conservation.

“We really appreciate Meru University on matters of cancer because we are among the counties with a high burden of cancer,” Murega said. “That shows Meru University has a thought for us, and even as the county government, we must continue to partner.”

He called on additional partners to join the effort, warning that the economic burden of cancer in Meru was rising and would require collective action involving the university, the county government, and the wider community.



Meru University of Science and Technology Vice Chancellor Prof Romanus Odhiambo speaks during the 2026 Mountain Run | Photo: Brian Gitonga

have come here and stood with us to achieve this today,” Odhiambo said.

On environmental conservation, the vice chancellor pointed to Nchiru Campus as evidence of what sustained commitment can achieve. The university has planted trees there consistently for more than a decade, transforming what was once barren land

into a site with over 15 per cent forest cover — above the national average. The university’s tree-planting work also contributes to President William Ruto’s national target of planting and growing 15 billion trees.

“When we started some 13 or 14 years ago, Nchiru Campus was basically a desert. But today, we are at over 15 per cent

icated cancer research centre to help address the challenge head-on.

The proposal has already received the backing of the MUST Council. Chairperson Prof James Kanya said council members readily supported the initiative when it was presented to them, recognising cancer as a pressing concern



Principal Secretary for the State Department of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Elijah Mwangi who was the chief guest. | Photo: Brian Gitonga

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Faith The caravan is built on seven pillars — unity, spiritual development, economic empowerment, education, leadership, health, and environmental sustainability

Love came home to Sheema

How AMDA's 12th caravan turned a quiet hillside parish into a place of healing, holy matrimony, and hope



By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
mukphix@gmail.com

There are events, and then there are moments that a community carries in its chest for the rest of its life. What happened at St. Claret Catholic Parish Nyabwina in Sheema District this week was firmly the latter.

For three days, this quiet, deeply faithful parish perched on the green hills of Greater Bushenyi became the centre of something extraordinary. The Archdiocese of Mbarara Development Association — known simply as AMDA — arrived in Nyabwina for its 12th Annual Caravan, and what unfolded over those three days was, by any measure, remarkable: thousands of patients treated, 32 couples finally wed before God, trees planted, children given books, and a community reminded that it has not been forgotten.

To understand why any of it matters, you first have to understand where AMDA came from.

In the early 1990s, a small group of Banyankole Catholics who had left home for Kampala began meeting quietly — in Entebbe, Mukono, Wakiso, and Jinja — missing the 66 parishes that had raised them. They called themselves the Mbarara Diocese Development Association. Their dream was modest but sincere: to stay united, to worship together in Runyankole, and to find a way to give something back. From that small flame, a movement grew. Today, AMDA has over 3,000 members and serves as the official umbrella body for all Catholics from the Mbarara Archdiocese living in Uganda's Central region.

In 2013, under the guidance of its chaplain, AMDA launched what would become its most enduring idea — the Annual Caravan. Every year, members travel back to a different parish in the archdiocese, not as donors making a grand gesture, but as children returning home. Since 2013, the caravan has touched 27 parishes. This year, it was Nyabwina's turn.

The caravan is built on seven pillars — unity, spiritual development,

economic empowerment, education, leadership, health, and environmental sustainability — and it was on all seven that Nyabwina was served this week.

When the AMDA convoy arrived on Thursday morning, the parish was already waiting. Children lined the road waving branches. Women ululated. Drums carried the news across the hills. More than 280 AMDA members — lawyers, doctors, business people, clergy, and young professionals — had driven over 300 kilometres from Kampala, not for politics or profit, but for this.

The medical camp that followed was, by any honest account, staggering in scale. The compound of St. Claret was transformed into what amounted to a referral hospital, staffed by over 150 health workers in partnership with Mulago National Referral Hospital, Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital, and the Sheema District Health Office. People began queuing from 4:00am. By the end of two days, more than 3,800 had received free treatment, screening, and counselling.

An elderly woman who had lost both her sight and hearing over 22 years — due to cataracts — received

surgical intervention and was referred for a full operation. Mothers brought malnourished children. Men who had never once checked their blood pressure discovered they were hypertensive. The dental clinic extracted teeth that had caused years of pain. Counselling tents were packed — with families, with trauma, with young people carrying things they had never told anyone.

"We came here thinking we were just going to give out paracetamol," said Dr Rosemary Byanyima, a senior AMDA member and Executive Director of Mulago Hospital, her voice faltering. "But what we found is deep pain. People walking 20 kilometres to see a doctor for the first time in a decade. This is why AMDA exists."

All medicines, lab tests, and reading glasses were provided free of charge.

Then came Friday — and the moment that made an entire church weep.

In a solemn, deeply moving Holy Mass presided over by Bishop Callist Rubaramiira of Kabale Diocese, assisted by parish priest and AMDA chaplain Fr Darius Magunda, 32 couples who had been living together — some for over 20 years — were

finally married in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. AMDA's Spiritual Development Council had spent months preparing them: catechising, counselling, sourcing wedding rings, veils and suits, and covering all church dues.

Mothers in their fifties stood at the altar in borrowed white gowns, holding the hands of the fathers of their children, trembling as they said "I do." Their children, many of whom had never seen their parents in a church wedding, wept openly. The entire congregation wept with them.

"You can give a man seedlings and medicine," AMDA chairman Gumisiriza Chris said, his own eyes red, "but if his family is not blessed in the church, he is not complete. Today, we have not just given Nyabwina a hospital. We have given it 32 new holy families."

The mass also saw hundreds receive their First Holy Communion, Baptism, and Confession. A night vigil of adoration followed, the whole parish praying together into the early hours.

The caravan's other pillars left their mark too. Over 6,000 seedlings — 3,000 high-yielding clonal coffee seedlings and 3,000 Hass avoca-

do seedlings — were distributed to boost household incomes, alongside indigenous trees for environmental protection. Scholastic materials and new curriculum textbooks were donated to St. Claret Nyabwina Primary School. More than 500 students attended career guidance sessions on leadership and entrepreneurship. The Leadership Development Council ran workshops on family legacy, will writing, inheritance planning, and the quiet crisis of domestic violence in Ankole homes.

As the AMDA convoy prepared to leave, the women of Nyabwina gathered and sang: "Mureebe, ab'AMDA, mugaruke" — Come back again, people of AMDA, come back.

The caravan torch has been passed to the next parish for 2027. But AMDA's heart, as Chairman Gumisiriza put it, will remain beating in Nyabwina — in 32 marriages, in thousands of bodies healed, and in the trees now taking root in Sheema's soil.

"We are not donors," he said at the closing ceremony. "We are children who came back home. Giving back is our way of honouring that legacy."



Archdiocese of Mbarara Development Association — known simply as AMDA

Mental health Women’s mental health is not simply a medical concern. It is a human rights issue, a family issue, and a development issue. And it is long overdue for a frank conversation

When strength becomes silence

Why women’s mental health is a family issue, a community issue, and a conversation we can no longer afford to avoid



By: Wanjohi P. Mugambi
@themkenyatimes

Women carry worlds within them. They are mothers, daughters, leaders, caregivers, professionals, and peace-makers. Yet behind so much of that strength lies a silent struggle that society rarely pauses to acknowledge — and almost never discusses honestly.

Women’s mental health is not simply a medical concern. It is a human rights issue, a family issue, and a development issue. And it is long overdue for a frank conversation.

The forces that shape a woman’s mental wellbeing are layered and complex. Biology plays a significant role. Hormonal changes across a woman’s life — menstruation, pregnancy, the postpartum period, and menopause — can profoundly affect mood and emotional regulation in ways that are frequently misunderstood, dismissed, or suffered through in silence. Postpartum depression, for instance, affects roughly one in five mothers in Kenya, yet many women endure it without seeking help, unsure whether what they are experiencing is even real, or quietly convinced that struggling after childbirth is simply part of the job.

Then there is the psychological load — the invisible weight that rarely appears on any list of responsibilities but is felt every single day. Many women are conditioned from childhood to be the emotional caretaker of everyone around them: their children, their spouse, their parents, and their wider community. Their own emotional needs get quietly pushed to the back of the queue, if they make the queue at all. The unrelenting pressure to appear strong, to hold



UNDERSTANDING WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

— The Unseen Strength and Struggle —

She may not say "I'm depressed," she will say

Nimechoka sana.

- Mental health is NOT witchcraft.
- NOT weakness,
- NOT lack of prayer,
- It is HEALTH.



Amb. Wanjohi P. Mugambi, Founder & Director
Ulumbi Language and Translation Organization • +254718770343

Mental health

to burnout, chronic anxiety, and a kind of exhaustion that sleep alone cannot fix.

In many African contexts, these pressures are compounded further by structural realities: gender-based violence, economic dependence, unequal distribution of domestic labour, early marriage, and systemic discrimination. Research shows that a woman who has experienced abuse, rejection, or sustained financial hardship is three times more likely to develop depression or anxiety. These are not personal failings. They are predictable responses to very difficult circumstances.

It helps to understand what these conditions actually look like in practice, because mental illness rarely announces itself cleanly. Depression is not simply sadness. It can look like persistent fatigue, a loss of interest in things that once brought joy, a pervasive sense of worthlessness, disrupted sleep and appetite, or tears that arrive without an obvious reason. Anxiety presents as constant worry, relentless overthinking, a fear of failing as a mother or wife, heart palpitations, and an inability to rest even when the body is genuinely exhausted. Postpartum depression is not the

birth and passes within a couple of weeks. It is intense sadness, emotional detachment from the baby, overwhelming guilt, and a hopelessness that persists for weeks and requires proper medical support, not judgment. Burnout, meanwhile, often looks like a woman who is simply doing too much — juggling work, business, church, children, and the demands of home with little meaningful support — until her body eventually forces the rest her mind refused to take.

One of the most important things to understand is that a woman in distress may not use the words we expect. She may not say, “I am depressed.” Listen instead for what she does say: “Nimechoka sana” — I am very tired. “Siwezi tena” — I cannot do this anymore. Watch for withdrawal from friends, church, or social groups. Watch for increased irritability, a creeping neglect of self-care, or persistent physical symptoms — headaches, back pain, a body carrying what the mind cannot express.

To every woman reading this: mental health is not witchcraft, weakness, or a failure of faith. It is health — as real and as legitimate as any phys-

to ask for help.

And to the communities, families, and institutions that surround women, the responsibility is shared. Creating safe spaces — in homes, in churches, in workplaces, in community organisations — where women can speak without being labelled or advised to simply pray harder, is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Sometimes a woman does not need solutions. She needs someone to listen, to stay, and to say: “I hear you. You are not alone.” Husbands, brothers, and sons have a practical role here too. A woman who receives genuine help with children, with domestic responsibilities, and with emotional support is a mentally healthier woman. That is not sentiment — that is evidence.

Seeking professional help is also not a sign of weakness. Just as we see a doctor for

malaria, visiting a counselor, psychologist, or trained pastoral counsellor for mental distress is a sign of wisdom. For those experiencing severe symptoms, support is available at the nearest Level 4 hospital, or through the Kenya Red Cross toll-free line: 1199.

Beyond crisis support, the everyday habits matter. Rest. Seven to eight hours of sleep. Nutritious food. A walk. Prayer or meditation. Maintained friendships. A woman cannot pour from an empty cup — and nobody benefits when she runs dry.

When a woman is mentally healthy, her family thrives, her business grows, and her community is stronger. Understanding women’s mental health is understanding the foundation of our society. It is time we stopped telling women to persevere through pain in silence, and started telling them instead: you deserve support.

This article is produced for community education purposes. ULTO is available to partner with local counsellors and community health organisations in Nairobi for support programmes.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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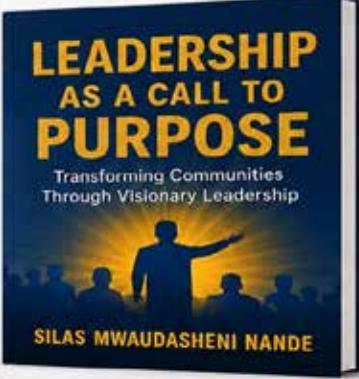
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Debt “Ganira Pashayeva was a very valuable person of struggle for the Turkic world,” Rehimli said. “The ideal of unity and solidarity was not merely a thought or political discourse for her

Keeping a flame alive: The Turkic world’s debt to Ganira Pashayeva

By: Oguzhan Ozbek

@themtkenyatimes

When the Turkish Academicians Association announced that its upcoming international congress would be dedicated to the memory of the late Ganira Pashayeva, it was making a statement that went well beyond ceremony. It was asserting that ideas outlive the people who champion them — and that the most powerful way to honour a legacy is not to bronze it, but to put it to work. Prof Dr Terane Turan Rehimli, a senior figure within the association, sat down with BÖRTE Media to explain what the congress hopes to achieve, and why Pashayeva’s particular vision of Turkic unity remains as urgent today as it was during her lifetime.

“Ganira Pashayeva was a very valuable person of struggle for the Turkic world,” Rehimli said. “The ideal of unity and solidarity was not merely a thought or political discourse for her. It was the fundamental purpose of her life — a great cause for which she fought with complete sincerity.”

Pashayeva, who served for many years as a prominent cultural diplomat and parliamentarian in Azerbaijan, was known across the Turkic-speaking world for her tireless advocacy of shared civilisational values. She did not regard the different geographies of the Turkic world as regions separated by borders on a map. She saw them as parts of a whole, connected by a common history, language, and culture that no political boundary could sever. Her death left a gap that her admirers are determined not to allow to become permanent.

The congress, scheduled to be held online on 27 and 28 September, will bring together academics from across the Turkic world to examine her intellectual legacy through the lenses of literature, culture, politics, diplomacy, and history. Papers will be collected into a formal congress publication, creating what Rehimli described as “a permanent academic resource” — one that records not only what Pashayeva believed, but why it matters now.

At the heart of the association’s ambition is a conviction that the unity of the Turkic world cannot rest on sentiment alone. History and emotional ties provide the foundation, Rehimli

argued, but a vision of unity that is to endure must also be grounded in scientific knowledge, realistic objectives, and strategic planning. Academia, she said, has a critical role to play — not merely in studying the past, but in generating the kind of evidence-based analysis that can translate ideals into practical policy. “Rather than simply saying ‘the Turkic world should unite,’ we seek scientific answers to the question of how this unity can be made stronger, more sustainable, and more functional for future generations,” she said. “That is one of the most important issues facing the Turkic world today.”

The practical proposals emerging from the congress, Rehimli hoped, would include joint educational programmes, student and academic exchange initiatives, shared research centres, stronger communication across Turkic language varieties, and common cultural and digital platforms. None of these would require academia to substitute for political institutions. The role of researchers and scholars, she was careful to note, is to conduct rigorous analysis and present grounded recommendations — what governments do with those

recommendations is ultimately their own strategic decision.

One of the most sensitive and consequential issues the congress will address is that of a common language and alphabet among Turkic-speaking peoples. It is a subject that carries both enormous symbolic weight and significant practical implications for education, publishing, science, and digital communication. Rehimli was measured but clear on where she stands.

“We do not aim to eliminate the differences among all the varieties and languages of the Turkic world,” she said. “We aim to create common areas of communication where we can understand one another more easily, while preserving this richness. Our linguistic differences are not an element of division — they are the richness of our common cultural heritage.”

A shared writing system, she argued, would significantly ease scientific exchange and cultural interaction across the Turkic world. The goal is not a single homogenised language, but a common linguistic and communicative ground — one that allows an Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Turkmen, or Turk-

ish academic to share knowledge with peers across the region without the barrier of incompatible scripts or divergent technical vocabularies.

Beyond the conference hall, the association is thinking carefully about how to reach the generation that will carry these ideas forward. Today’s young people have grown up in a digital world shaped by global culture and saturated with competing narratives. Simply telling them about the past, Rehimli acknowledged, is not enough.

“We need to show what the past means for our present lives and our future,” she said. “We should tell young people about the examples from Ganira Pashayeva’s life, rather than merely her words. We must use digital platforms, social media, literature, art, documentaries, and youth projects more effectively. We should give young people the feeling that they are not merely inheritors of the past — they are the generation that will build the future of the Turkic world together.”

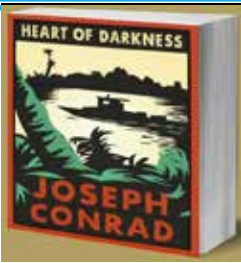
In an era of rising disinformation and contested historical narratives, that sense of ownership matters more than ever. Rehimli was direct about the responsibilities that academics

and intellectuals bear at this particular moment. The Turkic world, she said, cannot afford to wait for others to tell its story. It must invest in its own archives, its own publications, and its own media platforms — and it must do so on the basis of documents, data, and scientific research rather than emotional assertion.

“Academics should be not only researchers but also reliable sources in conveying accurate information to society and to the world,” she said. “One of Ganira Pashayeva’s most important sensitivities was that the realities of the Turkic world should be conveyed accurately. We want to carry that approach forward.”

The congress on 27 and 28 September will not resolve all of these questions. But if it achieves what the Turkish Academicians Association intends, it will do something equally important: establish that the conversation is serious, the commitment is lasting, and the legacy of Ganira Pashayeva is in capable hands.





BOOKS & LITERATURE

with Jasia Jabeen

M.A. English, 1st Semester University of Chenab, Gujrat

Book Review:

Book Review:

Author: Joseph Conrad

Book: Heart of Darkness

Reviewer: Jasia Jabeen

Suggested by: Muhammad

Adnan Gujjar

Student ID: BSEN-2Y012515006

Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* was written in 1899 and published in the same year. The novella is regarded as one of Conrad’s most widely known works. As a seaman, Conrad travelled extensively throughout the world. His journey to the Congo in 1890, during a period of severe atrocities under the rule of King Leopold II, became a significant turning point in his life and later influenced his writing. In *Heart of Darkness*, the idea of “darkness” is not limited to the colonial territories of Africa; rather, it extends from the European centres of colonial power to the African continent. The work draws substantially on Conrad’s personal experiences, and both Conrad and the central character, Marlow, are sailors. Many events and scenes in the novella have connections with Conrad’s experiences.

Joseph Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski, better known by his pen name Joseph Conrad, was born in Poland in 1857. English was his second language. He joined the French merchant marine as a young man and later served in the British merchant service. He spent many years at sea, an experience that is reflected throughout his literary works. His journey to the Congo had a profound impact on his understanding of European colonialism and its consequences. He later drew upon these observations in *Heart of Darkness*.

The title *Heart of Darkness* is symbolic and meaningful. It does not refer to a single idea but contains several layers of meaning. On one level, it represents the greed and lust that can exist within human nature. It also reflects inner and spiritual weakness. Psychologically, “darkness” represents evil, sin, greed, lust, and moral corruption. As Marlow travels deeper into the African jungle, he encounters the darker side of human nature. He gradually realizes that darkness is not simply an external condition; it can exist within every human being. Kurtz is the strongest example of this idea. At the beginning, he is described as an idealistic, kind, and civilized man, but his pursuit of power ultimately destroys his morality and humanity.

The novella is presented through a frame narrative and is largely narrated through Marlow. Five men aboard the *Nellie* are anchored in the Thames Estuary at dusk. One of them introduces Marlow’s account of his journey to Africa and up the Congo River. Marlow describes his experience as a steamboat captain working for a trading company. His main purpose is to find Kurtz, an ivory trader whose reputation has become legendary. During his journey, however, Marlow increasingly focuses on the treatment of African people and the exploitation of the continent’s natural resources, particularly ivory. Through his encounter with Kurtz, Marlow discovers different forms of moral and psychological darkness.

Colonialism is one of the major themes of *Heart of Darkness*. When Marlow reaches Africa, he witnesses moral corruption, cruelty, exploitation, and the brutal treatment of Africans. He sees people subjected to forced labour and suffering from hunger, poverty, and disease. The supposed European “civilizing mission” appears deeply hypocritical because Europeans claim to bring education and civilization while exploiting African people and natural resources for material gain. Conrad’s famous observation about conquest emphasizes the brutality underlying imperial expansion: “The conquest of the earth ... is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.” The statement criticizes the colonial system and exposes the destructive consequences of greed and the pursuit of power.

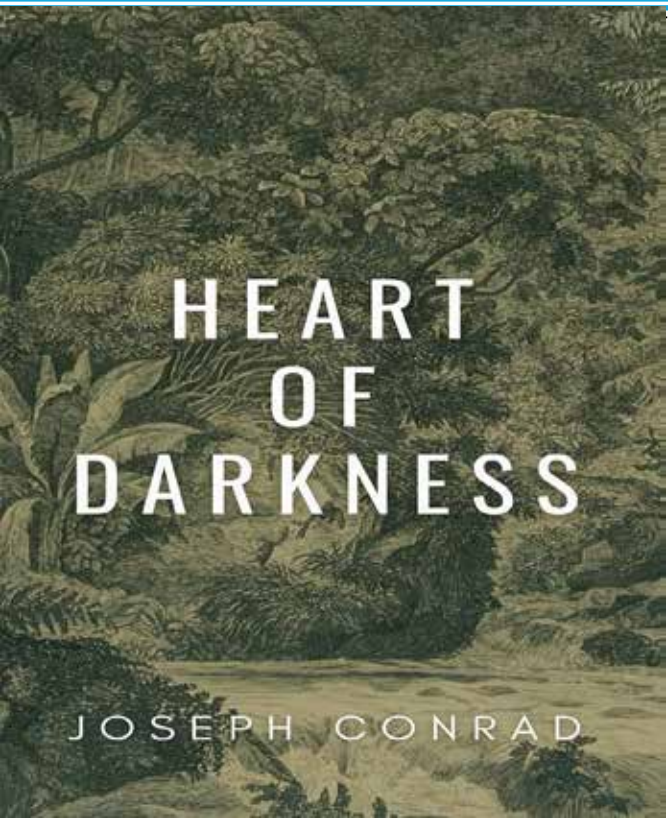
Darkness is one of the most powerful symbols in the novella. It refers not only to the physical jungle but also to the inner and spiritual darkness of human beings. The portrayal of Africa has also generated considerable critical debate. Chinua Achebe, most notably, criticized Conrad for representing Africa through stereotypical and dehumanizing images and for failing to portray Africans as fully independent individuals. Achebe’s criticism is important because it draws attention to the racial assumptions embedded in parts of Western literary representations of Africa. At the same time, Conrad’s central concern with moral corruption is evident throughout the novella. The “darkness” of the heart is particularly associated with supposedly civilized Europeans, especially Kurtz.

Marlow discovers human skulls around Kurtz’s station, providing shocking evidence of brutality. He also observes the extent of Kurtz’s influ-

ence over the local people, who regard him with extraordinary reverence. These experiences completely challenge Marlow’s earlier belief that Kurtz is a civilized and admirable man. Kurtz becomes a disturbing contrast to the European claim of civilization. Marlow’s statement, “I have seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed,” expresses his recognition of the darker aspects of human nature and the consequences of moral corruption.

The novella also explores the contrast between civilization and savagery. European imperial powers consider themselves educated, civilized, and superior, while Africans are frequently described by Europeans as uncivilized or savage. Conrad exposes the hypocrisy behind this supposed civilizing mission. The European pursuit of ivory and other resources reveals that economic interests often lie beneath the language of civilization. The statement, “Your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others,” suggests that imperial power is dependent upon the exploitation and weakness of others rather than upon genuine moral superiority.

Marlow is the central character and narrator. He not only tells the story but also shares his thoughts, observations, and experiences. In the Congo, he witnesses the suffering of Africans and feels sympathy for them. At the same time, his character remains conflicted because, although he is critical of colonial practices, he continues to work for a colonial trading company. His journey is therefore both physical and psychological. As he travels deeper into the jungle, he also explores the darker dimensions of his own consciousness and gradually realizes that true darkness can exist within human beings.



Kurtz is the second major character in the novella and the central figure of Marlow’s quest. Before meeting him, Marlow hears many accounts describing Kurtz as an exceptionally civilized and talented man. However, when Marlow finally encounters him, his opinion changes dramatically. Kurtz has become cruel and tyrannical as a result of his unchecked pursuit of power. His final words, “The horror! The horror!”, suggest a moment of profound recognition and judgment. They reveal his awareness of the horror surrounding his actions and the consequences of his moral collapse.

The Manager of the Central Station represents another form of colonial corruption. He is portrayed as ambitious, self-interested, and concerned with material gain. He secretly hopes that Kurtz will die so that he can continue to benefit from the ivory trade. Marlow describes him as a “hollow man,” suggesting that outward authority can conceal inner emptiness.

The Chief Accountant is another official who represents the bureaucratic side of colonialism. Although Marlow admires his neat appearance and disciplined work habits, this admiration does not extend to his personality. His character illustrates the contrast between outward order and the moral disorder of the colonial enterprise.

Marlow’s aunt helps him obtain his position in the Company and supports the idealistic language of European

colonialism. Her views resemble the ideology associated with the so-called “White Man’s Burden,” which presented imperialism as a civilizing responsibility while often concealing economic and political interests.

Heart of Darkness is a rich and complex work that allows for several interpretations. On the one hand, it exposes the violence and hypocrisy of colonialism; on the other, Marlow himself remains connected to the colonial enterprise through his employment by the Company. This creates an important moral tension in the narrative. Conrad’s use of symbolism, especially darkness and the river, adds further depth to the text. His indirect and complex style can make the novella challenging to read, but it also encourages readers to examine its meanings carefully.

In conclusion, *Heart of Darkness* remains a powerful modern work because it explores both the brutality of colonialism and the psychological darkness within human nature. Through Marlow’s journey and Kurtz’s tragic transformation, Conrad demonstrates how unchecked power can corrupt an individual. Although the novella can be difficult to interpret, its complex themes, symbolism, and thought-provoking treatment of imperialism continue to make it an important work for literary study.

Written by:
Jasia Jabeen

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Haaland's historic header and a polished Fernández debut give Maresca's Manchester City a perfect start

Three from three: City's new era is up and running

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

For months, the question hanging over the Etihad Stadium has been a simple but weighty one: what does Manchester City look like after Pep Guardiola? On Saturday afternoon, Enzo Maresca's side took another step toward answering it — though the 1-0 win over newly promoted Coventry City came with enough anxiety in the closing stages to remind everyone that the work is still very much in progress.

The result, City's third consecutive Premier League victory, puts them top of the table with a perfect nine points. Maresca, charged with the daunting task of following in Guardiola's footsteps, will take the three points gladly — even if, as he admitted afterwards, his side made things harder for themselves than they needed to.

City finished the match with 78 per cent possession and 11 shots to Coventry's eight. The numbers tell a story of control, but control that too rarely translated into clear-cut opportunities. Coventry, managed by Frank Lampard and hungry for their first Premier League point since returning to the top flight, defended with discipline and organisation, sitting deep and making space around the box extremely difficult to find. The visitors frustrated City for long stretches, and when the second half brought a more adventurous Coventry, the hosts found themselves having to defend a lead that felt slimmer than it should have been.

The decisive moment arrived in the 26th minute — and it was, fittingly, Erling Haaland who provided it. The Norway striker's header proved decisive as City maintained their 100% record under Maresca and stayed top of the Premier League. The goal itself was built on a fine move: Fernández's pass to Antoine Semenyo was the precursor



Haaland edges Manchester City past Coventry as Fernández sparkles on debut

to Haaland's header, the Argentine picking out the winger with a pass of real quality before Semenyo delivered a precise cross that Haaland met powerfully.

What made the moment even more significant was its place in history. The goal was the 300th of Haaland's club career, reached in just 384 appearances — slightly slower than Lionel Messi, who reached that mark in 365, but ahead of both Kylian Mbappé and Cristiano Ronaldo. For a 26-year-old still at what should be the peak of his powers, the milestone underlines just how fortunate City are to have him.

Alongside Haaland, all eyes were on the man making his debut in blue. Enzo Fernández joined City from Chelsea in a British-record-equalling £125m deal, signing a five-year contract at the Etihad. He started as an emergency replacement for Nico O'Reilly, who was injured just before kick-off, which meant the Argentine was thrown straight into the deep end rather than introduced gradually. He handled it well. Fernández looked assured on the ball, took responsibility in midfield, and showed exactly

the kind of technical quality and positional intelligence that persuaded City to spend so heavily to bring him across from west London. His assist in the build-up to the goal gave his debut a tangible contribution to point to.

Maresca's appointment marked his third spell at the club, and the Italian has wasted little time making his presence felt in the transfer market. The squad has been significantly reshaped this summer, with Fernández joined by fellow new signings Iliman Ndiaye — who also started on Saturday — and Elliot Anderson, among others. The pieces are still finding their places, and there were moments against Coventry where City's attacking play felt laboured and short of invention. But the early indicators are encouraging.

The concern, if there is one, is what happens when the opposition is not simply defending for a point. Coventry are a promoted side finding their feet in the Premier League, and yet they pushed City hard enough in the closing stages to make the final whistle feel like genuine relief. Donnarumma pulled off two crucial saves to preserve the clean

sheet, with Coventry's Ellis Simms going close to snatching a late equaliser that would have been deeply against the run of play — but not entirely undeserved.

Maresca will know that the tougher tests are coming. City must now prepare for their Champions League opener on Tuesday as they travel to Porto, before next week's Manchester derby. Those fixtures will tell us considerably more about where this team is and how quickly Maresca's ideas are taking hold.

For now, though, the new era has made an encouraging start. Three games, nine points, a perfect defensive record — and a striker who just scored his 300th club goal and looks like he has plenty more where that came from. The questions about life after Guardiola have not all been answered, but the early responses are promising.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *France’s president steps in as a foiled kidnapping plot puts one of the world’s biggest footballers in the crosshairs

‘No one will touch Kylian’: Macron draws a line

By Pascal Okoth

It was a story that had nothing to do with football — and yet it stopped France in its tracks. Last week, French newspaper Le Parisien published an investigation revealing that Kylian Mbappé, the Real Madrid forward and France captain, was among 26 high-profile individuals named as potential kidnapping targets by an alleged criminal network. The report sent shockwaves through the country and prompted a swift and unambiguous response from the very top: President Emmanuel Macron.

“No one will touch Kylian,” Macron was quoted as saying. “He is a national treasure.”

In three short sentences, the French president said everything that needed to be said.

The alleged plot, as investigators have pieced it together, is as disturbing as it is audacious. French authorities arrested an 18-year-old identified as Clément L., who operated under the alias “Lester Z.” He had already been charged on 21 August in Nanterre for organised gang robbery — but the investigation revealed something far more chilling. From his prison cell, Clément L. was reportedly still running his criminal network, issuing instructions to accomplices on the outside through Snapchat. When authorities seized two mobile phones from him in prison, they found a list of 26 potential targets: business figures, musicians, and athletes. Mbappé’s name was on it.

Investigators have linked the group to a series of home invasions and kidnapping plots carried out or planned between April and August 2026. That a teenager behind bars could allegedly continue orchestrating such operations is a deeply unsettling detail — one that has prompted serious questions about security

vulnerabilities for public figures, and how criminal networks exploit digital platforms even from inside correctional facilities.

For France, the reaction to Mbappé’s inclusion on that list was both immediate and deeply felt. And to understand why, you have to understand what Mbappé means to this country.

He grew up in Bondy, on the outskirts of Paris — a working-class suburb that has become, because of him, something of a symbol of possibility. His rise from the streets of Bondy to the Santiago Bernabéu is one of modern football’s great stories, told and retold with enormous pride across France. At 18, he helped Les Bleus lift the World Cup in Russia in 2018, scoring four goals and becoming one of the tournament’s standout performers. In Qatar four years later, he produced what many consider the greatest individual display in a World Cup final, scoring a hat-trick against Argentina in a match France ultimately lost on penalties. This summer in North America, he won the Golden Boot at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, becoming the first player to win multiple Golden Boot titles in the competition’s history.

At 27, Mbappé is in the prime of his career. He finished the 2025-26 season with 42 goals in 44 games for Real Madrid across all competitions, and has opened the new campaign in similarly devastating form with four goals in his first three La Liga appearances. He is not merely France’s best footballer. He is arguably the best footballer on the planet.

That combination — supreme talent, global visibility, immense financial profile — is precisely what makes athletes like Mbappé attractive targets for criminal networks. Their movements are largely predictable, their routines are public knowledge, and their wealth is well-documented. It is a security challenge that



President Emmanuel Macron with Kylian Mbappé

clubs, families, and law enforcement agencies have long grappled with, but the alleged Mbappé plot has given it an urgency that is difficult to ignore.

French authorities acted decisively, and the network appears to have been dismantled before any harm was done. But the episode has served as a sharp reminder that fame carries risks that go well beyond the scrutiny of the sporting press.

Macron’s intervention, whether symbolic or substantive, matters. By speaking personally about Mbappé — by name, warmly, and with evident feeling — the president placed the full weight of the French state behind the footballer’s protection. For the millions of fans in France and around the world who regard Mbappé not just as an athlete but as a cultural figure, those words offered a measure of reassur-

ance.

Kylian Mbappé scores goals that make entire nations exhale. Right now, France is simply relieved he is safe.

SPORTS NEWS



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Dr Rania Lampou: The woman who turned a classroom into the world

How a Greek science teacher became one of the most decorated educators on the planet



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- Lampou works with the Greek Ministry of Education and teaches STEM at the Greek Astronomy and Space Society, with bases in Salamis and Piraeus. It is a role that might sound modest on paper, but the scale of what she has built around it is anything but. She has delivered more than 4,000 lectures and training sessions across the world — a figure that would be remarkable for any academic, let alone a classroom teacher who never stopped being one.

- Her accolades are staggering. A three-time winner of the Global Teacher Award and a finalist for the prestigious Global Teacher Prize in 2019, Lampou has received more than 200 national and international honours over the course of her career. The awards span continents and institutions, recognising not just her teaching but her broader contribution to science education, international collaboration, and sustainable development.

There is a particular kind of teacher who does not simply deliver lessons — she transforms lives. Dr Rania Lampou of Greece is that teacher, and then some. A STEM educator, researcher, and global peace ambassador whose reach extends from a classroom in Salamis to lecture halls on six continents, Lampou has spent her career doing what many educators only dream of: making science feel urgent, accessible, and deeply human.

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What sets Lampou apart from the many talented educators who collect such distinctions is the sheer ambition of her vision. She does not treat STEM as a collection of subjects to be taught in isolation. Instead, she weaves together astronomy, physics, and language-integrated learning into projects that connect students to some of the most pressing questions facing humanity. Her work is structured around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals — a framework she has embraced not as a box-ticking exercise but as a genuine

organising principle for education that matters.

As the founder and international coordinator of multiple innovative projects, she has created spaces where students from different countries and cultures collaborate on real problems. The classroom, in her world, is not four walls and a whiteboard. It is a global network.

Her influence reaches into some of the world's most respected institutions. Lampou serves on the educational committee of the Ecumenical Delphic Union, a body that works in collaboration with Harvard University — a partnership that underlines the seriousness with which the international academic community regards her contributions. She is also the International Ambassador of Volunteerism and Education for Help Hellas, the Greek humanitarian organisation, a role that reflects her belief that education and service are inseparable.

Beyond the committee rooms and lecture theatres, Lampou is a publishing academic. She sits on the editorial boards of international journals and has an extensive body of research to her name. She is also a member of leading scientific societies, bringing her practical experience as an educator into spaces where policy, research, and pedagogy meet.

It would be easy to focus only on the numbers — the awards, the lectures, the publications — and miss what makes Lampou's story genuinely compelling. At its heart, this is about a woman who looked at the gap between the science students learn in school and the world they are about to inherit, and decided to close it. Not by overhauling curricula from the top down, but by building, project by project, partnership by partnership, a model of education that is international in scope, grounded in real-world challenges, and animated by genuine curiosity.

In an era when educators are often asked to do more with less, and when the relevance of science education to everyday life is more contested than



Dr Rania Lampou.

ever, Lampou offers a compelling counter-argument. She does not argue it in words — she demonstrates it in practice, every time she steps in front of a room and connects a student in Greece to a problem that belongs to the whole world.

There are teachers who teach. And then there are educators who build movements. Dr Rania Lampou is firmly in the second category — and the world of STEM is richer for it.

