



**Githii declares 2027 presidential bid**  
Former Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Moderator David Muhia Githii yesterday announced his intention to contest the presidency in the 2027 General Election as an independent candidate, calling on Kenyans to prioritise integrity, accountability and service to citizens

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**Matiang'i tells critics: Leave Uhuru to do his continental work**  
Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i yesterday came to the defence of retired President Uhuru Kenyatta, arguing that the former head of state should be permitted to carry out his responsibilities

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# The Mt. Kenya Times

## Daily ePAPER

**Countdown 2027** **Nyoro–Methu clash exposes fractures threatening Kenya's opposition unity**

# Opposition cracks widen

A damaging public confrontation between People's Party of Kenya leader Ndindi Nyoro and Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary General John Methu yesterday laid bare the deepening fractures within Kenya's opposition, raising serious questions about whether the anti-government coalition can hold together long enough to mount a credible challenge in the August 2027 General Election.

The dispute, which erupted in public view as Nyoro campaigned in Kajiado County alongside Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i, centres on rival allegations of financial dealings with President William Ruto's administration — accusations that, if true, would confirm what the opposition's critics have long suspected: that the coalition assembled to unseat Ruto is being quietly dismantled from within before it has formally come together.

Methu fired the opening shot. Speaking on Citizen TV's Sunday Live programme, the Nyandarua Senator claimed he had been approached by government operatives and offered KSh30 million to abstain during the impeachment proceedings against former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua — and to establish a new political party designed to split the Mount Kenya vote ahead of 2027.

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People's Party of Kenya leader Ndindi Nyoro and Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary General John Methu



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# Kalonzo takes Kenya's economic case to London

BY Anita Njeri  
@themtkenyatimes

*Some of the moments as captured in pictures*

Wiper Democratic Movement leader Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday addressed policymakers, investors and diplomats in London, delivering a blunt message that Kenya seeks partners, not rescuers, and that its economic future will be built on Kenyan terms. Speaking first at the House of Commons and then at Chatham House, Kalonzo presented the opposition's Komboa Kenya economic roadmap, which he described as a programme to revive the economy, create jobs, restore constitutionalism, defeat corruption and rebuild public trust in state institutions. "A country cannot export raw materials, import finished goods and expect to prosper," he told his London audiences. "Kenya must process, manufacture and add value in Kenya." He was equally direct about the conditions attached to the opposition's investment pitch. "Investment is not extraction, and partnership is not patronage," he said. "Our resources, our strategic assets and our economic decisions must serve the Kenyan people, always." With fourteen months to the 2027 General Election, the London visit signals that the opposition is already prosecuting its campaign on an international stage, seeking to project economic credibility and governmental readiness to an audience well beyond Kenya's borders.



Editor's Desk

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



The government's unpaid electricity bills to Kenya Power climbed to KSh7.35B, the latest figures show, deepening a financial strain that has long undermined the utility's ability to maintain reliable power supply and service its own obligations. The debt, owed by various state agencies that consume electricity without settling their accounts on time, has accumulated despite repeated commitments from the Treasury to clear the arrears. Kenya Power has flagged the growing liability as a threat to operational stability, noting that delayed payments from government entities make it significantly harder to fund infrastructure maintenance, purchase fuel for generation and honour contracts with independent power producers. The situation presents an uncomfortable irony: the state owns a majority stake in Kenya Power yet remains one of its most problematic debtors.



Political commentator Pauline Njoroge has taken up the role of interim head of communication at the Linda Mwananchi presidential campaign secretariat, the political movement aligned with Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna. The appointment places one of Kenya's more outspoken public voices at the centre of an emerging presidential campaign operation that is positioning itself ahead of the 2027 General Election. Njoroge, who has built a visible profile through political commentary and social media engagement, steps into a communications brief that will be central to shaping the campaign's public messaging as the political season intensifies. Sifuna, a prominent figure within the Orange Democratic Movement and one of its most combative voices, has been expanding his political footprint beyond Nairobi as he tests the ground for a national platform.



Kirinyaga Woman Representative Njeri Maina and Senator Kamau Murango met with Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna yesterday for talks centred on building opposition unity ahead of the 2027 General Election. Sifuna, who confirmed the meeting, said the discussions focused on what the opposition must do collectively to return Kenya to what he described as democratic governance. The visit by the two Kirinyaga legislators to Sifuna's office is significant given the Mount Kenya region's strategic weight in national electoral politics — a bloc that competing political camps are actively working to consolidate or peel away as the campaign season takes shape. The meeting adds to a pattern of cross-regional consultations among opposition figures seeking to present a coherent and unified front before the August 2027 polls.



Namibia's ranking as the eighth most gender-equal country in the world in the World Economic Forum's 2025 Global Gender Gap Index marks a notable achievement for Africa, though the picture is more nuanced than it first appears. The ascension of Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah to the presidency in March 2025 — making her Namibia's first female head of state — has drawn fresh international attention to the country's gender record, and the temptation to credit her leadership for the ranking is understandable. The reality, however, is that index scores of this kind reflect structural conditions built over many years rather than the impact of a single administration barely months old. Namibia's progress is real, its significance for the continent genuine, but the causes run deeper than any one leader.



Families in Magadi, Kajiado County, are walking kilometres daily to find water as a prolonged drought tightens its grip on the region, pushing both households and livestock to the edge of a humanitarian crisis. The shortage has emptied traditional water sources that communities have depended on for generations, leaving residents with no reliable alternative within reasonable distance of their homes. Livestock, the economic backbone of many families in the area, are bearing the strain visibly — with herders reporting significant losses as animals weaken from dehydration and the collapse of pasture. Relief interventions have been insufficient to match the scale of the need, and local leaders are pressing both the county and national government to treat the situation with the urgency a crisis of this magnitude demands.



Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru yesterday declared her intention to contest the presidency in 2032, using the Council of Governors Women Caucus G7 meeting as the platform for an announcement that signals her long-term national ambitions. Waiguru, whose political standing has grown steadily since her election as governor, made the declaration in the company of Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga and women leaders drawn from all 47 counties, including women Members of County Assembly, lending the moment a deliberately symbolic cross-regional character. The gathering underscored a broader push by women in elected office to assert greater visibility in Kenya's top-tier political conversation. By planting her flag nine years out, Waiguru is clearly moving to establish herself as a serious national contender well ahead of the cycle.

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**Court** By declining the stay, the court has left the government in an acutely uncomfortable position

# Court refuses to halt ruling on KSh204B Safaricom share sale

Appellate judges decline to suspend the High Court decision nullifying the government's stake sale, leaving a constitutional crisis over transparency and public participation unresolved

BY Anita Njeri

@themtkenyatimes

The Court of Appeal yesterday refused to suspend a High Court ruling that nullified the KSh204.3B sale of the government's 15 per cent stake in Safaricom to Vodacom, dealing a significant blow to the government's efforts to protect a transaction it had already completed and banked. Appellate judges Luka Kiprotich Kimaru, Johnson Okello and Kathurima M'Inoti rejected the government's application for a stay of the September 15 judgment, ruling that it had failed to meet the legal threshold required for the orders sought. The decision means the High Court ruling — which declared the partial divestiture unconstitutional, null and void — remains in full legal force while the government pursues its appeal.

The original judgment, delivered by High Court judges Francis Gikonyo, Roseline Aburili and Tabitha Wanyama, found that the sale of the government's Safaricom stake was a public policy matter requiring meaningful public participation before it could lawfully proceed. The court held that neither the Cabinet nor the National Assembly had subjected the proposed transaction to adequate consultation, and further faulted the government for withholding critical



information — including the identity of the intended buyer — from the public. On those grounds, the court quashed all agreements, approvals and arrangements relating to the sale and ordered the 15 per cent stake restored to the Government of Kenya, to be held on behalf of the people.

The government's response was swift. Attorney General Dorcas Oduor and National Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi moved to the Court of Appeal within days, filing affidavits on September 17 arguing that the KSh204.3B proceeds from the transaction were non-refundable and that the shares had already been transferred to Vodafone Kenya Limited. They warned that an additional KSh40.2B paid in lieu of future dividends compounded the exposure, and that restoring the six million

ordinary shares without a corresponding refund order would inflict serious financial prejudice on the state.

The government's case for a stay rested on the argument that implementing the High Court orders could prove impossible to reverse, and that the dispute raised issues of genuine public interest involving fiscal planning, capital market stability, investor confidence and Kenya's external financial position. Without a suspension, it argued, any successful appeal would be rendered meaningless.

The appellate bench was unconvinced. By declining the stay, the court has left the government in an acutely uncomfortable position: holding a completed financial transaction that a court has declared unconstitutional, with no suspension of that

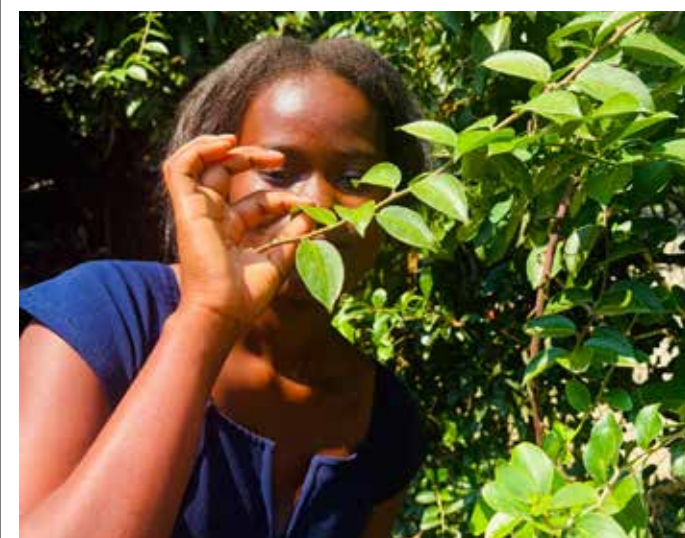
declaration in place and an appeal yet to be heard.

The ruling cuts to the heart of a constitutional requirement that Kenya's governments have repeatedly tested — the obligation to involve citizens meaningfully in decisions of significant public consequence. A transaction worth KSh204.3B, involving a national asset of the scale and strategic importance of Safaricom, conducted without adequate public participation or transparent disclosure of the buyer's identity, was always vulnerable to precisely this kind of legal challenge.

The appeal will now proceed, but the government faces it without the protective cover of a stay. For investors and markets watching the case, the uncertainty is real and unresolved.

## Nail care business opens at Masinde Muliro University

*A professional manicure and pedicure service has set up within the Kakamega campus, targeting students and the surrounding community*



Vanessa Ochieng

BY Pascal Okoth

@themtkenyatimes

A nail care business offering professional manicure and pedicure services has opened at Masinde Muliro University in Kakamega, providing students and residents in the surrounding area with access to grooming treatments within the university grounds.

Vanessa Ochieng, who operates the business, offers a range of services including classic and gel manicures, regular nail polish, nail art, classic pedicures, foot scrubs, foot massages and cuticle care. Customers can select treatments based on their preferences and budget.

Ochieng said the business

was designed with university students in mind, offering services at prices accessible to those managing academic costs alongside everyday expenses. She added that hygiene and customer comfort were central to how the business operates.

Nail care services at campus level remain relatively uncommon in many Kenyan university towns, and the venture positions itself to fill a gap for students who would otherwise travel into town for similar treatments.

The business operates from within Masinde Muliro University. Customers seeking bookings or further information can contact Ochieng directly through the business.

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IN BUSINESS



## The Mount Kenya Times

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**Politics** “I will vie as an independent candidate, and I will fight corruption and improve the healthcare of the country,” he said, identifying two priorities at the centre of his presidential bid.

# Githii declares 2027 presidential bid

*Former PCEA moderator enters race as independent, vowing to fight corruption and reshape public service delivery*

**BY John Kariuki**

@themtkenyatimes

Former Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Moderator David Muhia Githii yesterday announced his intention to contest the presidency in the 2027 General Election as an independent candidate, calling on Kenyans to prioritise integrity, accountability and service to citizens when choosing their next leader.

Githii made the declaration at a press briefing in Kiambu County, where he outlined his intention to enter the presidential race outside established political parties and laid out a governance philosophy he said would distinguish his campaign from those of party-backed aspirants.

Speaking to The Mt Kenya Times in an exclusive interview, Githii explained that his proposed approach to governance would be anchored in listening to citizens, assessing their needs, conducting research, consulting relevant stakeholders and implementing practical solutions. He was emphatic that the process would not be selective — it would apply across all government ministries and sectors of the economy without exception.

“I will vie as an independent candidate, and I will fight corruption and improve the healthcare of the country,” he said, identifying two priorities at the centre of his presidential bid.

The former church leader said Kenya needed a fundamentally different approach to political leadership, arguing that the country should elect leaders whose decisions are guided by integrity and the interests of citizens rather than loyalty to political factions. His declaration introduces another prospective contender into the race for State House as political activity gradually intensifies ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Central to Githii’s emerging political message is his decision to pursue the presidency without aligning himself with any political camp. He argues that independent candidates hold a distinct advantage because they are not tied to party patronage, which can influence political decisions and distort the priorities of elected leaders once in office.

In Kenya’s competitive political environment, party structures play

a significant role in candidate nominations, coalition negotiations and campaign mobilisation. Candidates seeking office through political parties must operate within those structures, and the obligations that flow from party affiliation can shape governance decisions long after an election is won. Githii says his independence from those arrangements would allow him to govern without those constraints.

However, running independently carries its own demands. Presidential aspirants outside established parties must organise their campaigns, mobilise resources, build nationwide support networks and satisfy constitutional and electoral requirements for nomination. Under Kenya’s Constitution, independent presidential candidates must secure support from a prescribed number of registered voters drawn from a majority of counties — a threshold that will test the organisational reach of his nascent campaign.

Githii will therefore face the task of demonstrating how his stated independence would translate into practical governance principles, and how he intends to build the infrastructure necessary to mount a credible national campaign.

Corruption is among the concerns he has placed at the centre of his presidential ambition. He has linked his decision to seek the country’s highest office to what he describes as the urgent need for proper leadership, arguing that Kenya needs leaders who can be trusted to manage public resources responsibly and who place the welfare of ordinary citizens at the heart of public decision-making.

The emphasis on integrity comes amid longstanding public debate over the management of public resources, accountability in government institutions and the effectiveness of measures intended to prevent the misuse of public funds. For Githii, the process of addressing such challenges would begin with listening to the people affected, assessing the problems, undertaking research and consulting relevant stakeholders before implementing solutions — an approach he says would guide decision-making throughout government rather than being confined to selected sectors.

Githii cited healthcare and educa-



Independent Presidential Candidate Rev. Dr. David Muhia Githii on this photo taken on Tuesday 13th October 2026.

tion as examples of how his proposed administration would approach national challenges. In the healthcare sector, he said effective reform must begin with listening to patients, healthcare workers and other stakeholders, assessing the challenges affecting service delivery, conducting research and consulting relevant experts before any intervention is designed or implemented.

Healthcare remains a major national concern, with persistent questions surrounding access to treatment, affordability of medicines, the welfare of healthcare workers and the long-term sustainability of health financing. Githii’s proposed approach would require a detailed assessment of those challenges before determining appropriate interventions — a departure, he argues, from a political culture that too often announces solutions before understanding problems.

Similarly, in education, his process would involve listening to learners, parents, teachers, school administrators and other stakeholders to establish the challenges affecting learning outcomes and identify prac-

tical responses. Education policy in Kenya encompasses school financing, teacher recruitment and deployment, learning facilities, curriculum implementation and opportunities for young people to acquire relevant skills — all areas he says would be subjected to the same consultative framework.

Rather than treating healthcare and education as isolated campaign pledges, Githii said the same process of listening, assessing, researching, consulting and implementing would serve as a common framework for developing and executing public policy across all government departments. Translating that framework into measurable results, however, would require clear policy proposals, implementation timelines, budgetary commitments and mechanisms for evaluating performance — details that his campaign will be expected to produce as 2027 draws closer.

Githii brings a background in church administration, education and previous political contests to his latest declaration. He served as PCEA Moderator from 2003 to 2009, leading one of Kenya’s most established

religious institutions for six years. In the 2013 General Election, he contested the Kiambu gubernatorial seat on a United Democratic Forum ticket, finishing fourth. He subsequently announced a presidential bid ahead of the 2022 General Election before withdrawing from that race.

His latest declaration signals a renewed attempt to pursue national political leadership, this time with an explicit and unambiguous commitment to running as an independent. For voters assessing his candidature, his record in church leadership and previous campaigns forms part of his public background — but the test ahead is whether he can convert a consultative governance philosophy into a concrete, costed national programme capable of winning the confidence of Kenyans across the country’s diverse regions.

As the campaign season takes shape, Githii’s ability to translate his principles into detailed policies, measurable targets and a credible organisational presence will be central to how the electorate evaluates his presidential ambition.

**Politics** “Ruto offered me KSh30 million to abstain from the impeachment process of Rigathi Gachagua,” Methu said.

# Opposition cracks widen as Nyoro and Methu trade Ruto bribery claims

*A public brawl between two senior opposition figures over alleged state payments exposes the fragility of Kenya’s anti-government coalition with fourteen months to the election*

**BY David Kimani**

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

A damaging public confrontation between People’s Party of Kenya leader Ndindi Nyoro and Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary General John Methu yesterday laid bare the deepening fractures within Kenya’s opposition, raising serious questions about whether the anti-government coalition can hold together long enough to mount a credible challenge in the August 2027 General Election.

The dispute, which erupted in public view as Nyoro campaigned in Kajiado County alongside Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang’i, centres on rival allegations of financial dealings with President William Ruto’s administration — accusations that, if true, would confirm what the opposition’s critics have long suspected: that the coalition assembled to unseat Ruto is being quietly dismantled from within before it has formally come together.

Methu fired the opening shot. Speaking on Citizen TV’s Sunday Live programme, the Nyandarua Senator claimed he had been approached by government operatives and offered KSh30 million to abstain during the impeachment proceedings against former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua — and to establish a new political party designed to split the Mount Kenya vote ahead of 2027. He said he had consulted Nyoro, who advised against accepting the offer, only to watch Nyoro form his own party shortly afterwards.

“Ruto offered me KSh30 million to abstain from the impeachment process of Rigathi Gachagua,” Methu said. “Now it makes me wonder, because Ndindi Nyoro himself abstained. Maybe he had gotten the same offer. When we went to the Finance Bill he really opposed, and when the real thing came — the actual vote — he kept off.”

The implication was unmistakable: that Nyoro, far from being a committed opposition figure, is a state operative embedded within the coalition to weaken it from the inside.

Nyoro’s response was equally direct and considerably more personal.



People’s Party of Kenya leader Ndindi Nyoro and Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary General John Methu

Standing in Kajiado, he turned the allegations back on Methu with a series of specific counter-claims — that Methu had met Ruto, that his house was purchased for him by the President in 2024, and that money raised collectively for the Ol Kalou by-election had been misappropriated to buy a vehicle rather than support the campaign. He described Methu as a man lecturing the opposition on integrity while maintaining his own undisclosed arrangements with the government.

The exchange was conducted partly in Swahili — a signal that it was aimed as much at the grassroots political audience in Mount Kenya and beyond as at the media. Both men understand that in Kenyan politics, perception shapes reality long before facts are established. To be seen as the one exposing treachery is to claim the moral high ground, even when the accuser is simultaneously

being accused.

What makes the confrontation particularly significant is its timing and its location in the political geography of 2027. Mount Kenya — the electoral heartland that delivered Ruto his 2022 victory in partnership with the Kenya Kwanza coalition — is now the most contested terrain in the country. Ruto won it comprehensively three years ago. His administration has since presided over economic conditions that have made that alliance deeply uncomfortable for many of its architects. The opposition’s central strategic objective is to peel that bloc away from the government and consolidate it behind a unified alternative. Any fragmentation of opposition leadership from within that region is, therefore, not merely a political embarrassment — it is a structural threat to the entire opposition project.

Matiang’i, who was present in Ka-

jiado and who has emerged as one of the opposition’s most formidable organisational voices, attempted to contain the damage. “Whether you are in DCP, Wiper, DP, PLP or DAP-K, you are in our one family,” he said, appealing for restraint and focus. “Let us not spend too much of our time fighting. Let us speak to the people calmly, and in the end they will judge us.” It was the voice of a man who recognises that the opposition’s greatest vulnerability in 2027 will not come from Ruto’s political machine — it will come from its own internal contradictions.

Both Nyoro and Matiang’i also took aim at Ruto’s recent public commentary about former President Uhuru Kenyatta, signalling that the defence of Kenyatta’s legacy remains a point of opposition solidarity even as everything else fractures. “The President should do his work and stop the nonsense,” Matiang’i said. “That of-

fice he sits in is an office we respect.” The message was pointed: criticism of Ruto’s conduct in office is one of the few remaining adhesives holding the coalition together.

The deeper problem for the opposition is structural. Kenya’s political coalitions are historically transactional — assembled from parties with different regional bases, different ideological orientations and different calculations about what victory would mean for their leaders personally. The broad anti-government front forming around figures like Matiang’i, Kenyatta, Nyoro and Methu has never been tested by the disciplines of a formal coalition agreement, a shared manifesto or a jointly selected presidential candidate. It is, at this stage, less a coalition than a loose alignment of ambitions united primarily by opposition to the current administration.

That is a brittle foundation. And Ruto’s political strategists — who have demonstrated considerable skill in exploiting opposition divisions in previous cycles — will have watched yesterday’s events with satisfaction. If Nyoro and Methu are publicly trading allegations of state corruption and financial inducement fourteen months before the election, the question is not whether the opposition will face internal challenges. The question is whether it can survive them.

For ordinary Kenyans watching this unfold, the spectacle is a familiar and dispiriting one. A country grappling with the cost of living, rising unemployment and eroding public services deserves an opposition focused on articulating a credible governing alternative. What it is getting, at least this week, is a public row over who received money from whom — and when.

The 2027 election remains Kenya’s to shape. But the opposition’s window for building a genuinely unified front is narrowing, and it is the opposition, not the government, that is doing the narrowing.

**Ebola** During a recent public webinar, the Ministry reported 241 isolation beds across five designated facilities, three of them in Nairobi

# Ebola in Kenya: Are we really ready?

*One confirmed case and one death should be enough to demand honest answers about whether the country's preparedness extends beyond Nairobi and beyond announcements*



BY Deborah Monari  
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's first confirmed imported case and fatality from the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, recorded yesterday, should serve as a clear and urgent wake-up call. The Ministry of Health moved quickly — strengthening surveillance, initiating contact tracing and launching public sensitisation — but one question cuts through the official response: is Kenya genuinely prepared



to contain an outbreak should this go further?

During a recent public webinar, the Ministry reported

241 isolation beds across five designated facilities, three of them in Nairobi. That figure is a starting point, but it immediately raises a concern that deserves direct attention: what about the rest of the country? Kenya's porous borders create heightened cross-border risks in counties far from the capital, yet the concentration of isolation capacity in major urban centres leaves those areas exposed. Equitable preparedness is not a secondary consideration — it is central to any credible containment strategy.

Sensitising healthcare workers is necessary, but it is not the same as being prepared. The harder questions are more specific. Do healthcare workers across all counties have the training, the protective equipment and the practical experience to identify, isolate and safely transfer a suspected case? Are referral pathways clearly established? Are there adequate transport systems and regular simulation drills? Preparedness must extend beyond webinars and press statements to the actual, tested capacity to respond safely and effectively when a suspected case appears in a remote county at two in the morning.

The public response has added a layer of concern that cannot be ignored. A segment of

Kenyans dismissed the initial announcement as fake news, a reaction shaped by political tensions, accumulated misinformation and a broader erosion of trust in public institutions. Kenya's capacity for humour in difficult moments is a genuine cultural strength. But when serious public health threats become the subject of ridicule or political point-scoring, the consequences can reach well beyond social media timelines.

Public trust is itself a public health asset. When people do not believe the institutions responsible for protecting them, even well-designed interventions can fail. Transparent communication, verifiable information and demonstrated action — not assurances — are what rebuild that trust. Legitimate criticism of government preparedness is not only acceptable but necessary, particularly when it exposes real gaps in readiness. What matters is that criticism and personal public health responsibility are not treated as mutually exclusive. They are not.

Ebola demands vigilance precisely because of its potential for severe disease and the speed with which delayed detection can turn a manageable situation into a crisis. One confirmed case does not automatically mean widespread transmission, but it

warrants urgent and proportionate action from every part of the system — not only the Ministry of Health, but county governments, border communities, healthcare workers and the media. Containment is a collective responsibility, and it works only when all parts move together.

Kenya may have taken important first steps. But preparedness is not a declaration. It is the demonstrated capacity to respond effectively when the next suspected case appears — wherever in the country that may be, and however inconvenient the timing.

The question every Kenyan should be sitting with is straightforward: what is more costly — demanding accountability while taking sensible precautions, or allowing distrust, misinformation and complacency to quietly undermine the very measures that could protect us all?

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# Why helicopters crash more often than aeroplanes

*Their versatility is also their vulnerability — understanding the risks behind the rotor blades*

BY Collins Kibet

@themkenyaintimes

Aircraft accidents invariably prompt a familiar public question: why do helicopters appear to crash more frequently than aeroplanes? From emergency medical missions and military operations to private travel, tourism and search-and-rescue services, helicopters perform some of the most demanding tasks in aviation. When a helicopter accident occurs, it tends to attract significant attention — partly because of the severity of the impact and partly because the circumstances are often dramatic. Although the perception that helicopters crash more frequently is not universally accurate in every statistical comparison, differences in their design, operating environments and flight patterns help explain why they can face greater risks under certain conditions.

The most fundamental difference lies in how the two aircraft types stay airborne. Aeroplanes rely on forward movement to generate lift through fixed wings. As long as they maintain sufficient airspeed, they remain airborne with considerable mechanical simplicity relative to their size. Helicopters depend on rotating rotor blades to generate lift, which gives them the ability to hover, fly sideways and operate in confined spaces where no fixed-wing aircraft could function. That versatility is genuinely remarkable — but it comes with mechanical complexity and flight characteristics that introduce risks requiring specialised training, meticulous maintenance and continuous judgement from the pilot. The complexity of a heli-

copter's mechanical systems is one of the most significant contributors to its accident profile. The main rotor, tail rotor, transmission, engine and interconnected control mechanisms must all function in precise coordination to maintain stable flight. A pilot continuously manages several controls simultaneously to regulate altitude, direction and movement. A failure in any critical component can escalate rapidly, particularly when the aircraft is operating close to the ground with little margin for recovery. Modern helicopters incorporate engineering safeguards designed to reduce these risks, but mechanical failures can still occur, and when they do at low altitude the consequences are often severe.

Low-altitude operations are themselves a defining characteristic of helicopter flying — and a major source of risk. Helicopters are routinely deployed for search-and-rescue missions, medical evacuations, aerial photography, policing, power-line inspection and transportation to remote locations. These activities require pilots to fly near buildings, trees, hills, power lines and other obstacles, often with minimal clearance. At such altitudes, a developing emergency leaves the pilot far less time to recognise the problem and respond effectively than a commercial aircraft cruising at altitude would have. When power is lost suddenly, or control is compromised, the combination of low height and surrounding obstacles can be lethal.

Weather adds another layer of complexity. Helicopters often operate in environments where visibility is poor, winds are unpredictable or terrain is difficult to assess. Fog, heavy

rain, strong crosswinds and darkness all make navigation significantly more dangerous. In mountainous areas, conditions can deteriorate within minutes, leaving a pilot with limited options and no safe escape route. Low visibility creates a particularly serious hazard known as spatial disorientation, in which a pilot loses the ability to accurately determine the aircraft's position and attitude relative to the ground. Without visual reference points and without the instruments and training to compensate, disorientation can be fatal within seconds.

Human factors account for a substantial proportion of aviation accidents across all aircraft types, and helicopters are no exception. Pilot fatigue, inadequate training, poor risk assessment, distraction and the pressure to complete a mission all feature in accident investigations. A helicopter pilot conducting a rescue in deteriorating weather may feel intense pressure to push on — the knowledge that someone is stranded and waiting is not easy to set aside. But aviation safety depends fundamentally on the willingness to recognise when conditions have moved beyond safe limits and to delay, divert or abandon a flight accordingly. Safety cultures that allow pilots to refuse unsafe missions without professional consequence save lives. Those that do not have a poor record.

The environments in which helicopters operate further compound these challenges. Unlike commercial aeroplanes, which travel between established airports along carefully managed routes, helicopters routinely land and depart from hospitals, rooftops, farms, temporary construction sites and remote ter-



rain. These locations lack the safety infrastructure of major airports — no instrument landing systems, no ground crew, no cleared approaches. Uneven ground, loose debris, unexpected obstacles and power lines all complicate operations. Offshore platforms, mountain ridgelines and flood-affected communities present conditions that are inherently demanding, and the missions undertaken in those environments are rarely routine.

The way accident data is reported and interpreted also shapes public perception. A dramatic helicopter crash in an accessible location tends to generate extensive media coverage, reinforcing the impression that such accidents are common. A meaningful statistical comparison, however, requires more than counting headlines. Analysts must account for the number of flight hours, the type of operations being conducted, aircraft categories, mission profiles and the severity of reported incidents. Comparing a commercial aeroplane carrying three hundred passengers on a scheduled intercontinental route with a helicopter produces a misleading conclusion unless differences in exposure, purpose and operating conditions are factored in carefully.

Fixed-wing commercial aircraft do benefit from structural advantages in certain circumstances. They typically operate with two trained pilots, established procedures for almost every conceivable emergency, sophisticated navigation and warning equipment, and rigorous maintenance programmes funded by large organisations. Their fixed-wing design allows many aeroplanes to glide for considerable distances if engine power is lost, buying time for the crew to manage the situation. Helicopters have an equivalent emergency capability called autorotation, which allows the rotor to continue spinning using airflow during a power loss. A trained pilot can use this technique to execute a controlled emergency landing — but its success depends critically on available altitude, airspeed, terrain and the pilot's reaction time. The margin is narrow.

Preventing helicopter accidents requires commitment from every part of the system. Pilots must maintain rigorous standards and the professional courage to prioritise safety over schedule pressure. Operators must enforce maintenance schedules, invest in appropriate equipment and establish clear policies allowing flight crew to refuse unsafe missions. Regulators must apply standards consistently, investigate accidents thorough-

ly and ensure that findings are applied across the industry rather than filed and forgotten. Governments must fund the infrastructure and oversight mechanisms that make meaningful enforcement possible.

None of this should diminish the extraordinary value of what helicopters do. Their ability to reach isolated communities, deliver critically ill patients to hospital, support disaster response and conduct rescues in conditions that would ground any other aircraft makes them genuinely indispensable. The central lesson is not that helicopters are inherently more dangerous than aeroplanes, but that their unique capabilities expose them to demanding conditions that demand exceptional preparation, discipline and respect for the limits of both the aircraft and the people who fly them.

In aviation, the true measure of progress is not how far an aircraft can travel or how many lives it can reach. It is how consistently it brings its passengers and crew safely back to the ground.

**Politics** Yet stepping back has not meant disappearing. Former presidents rarely do in Kenya, and for understandable reasons

# Matiang'i tells critics: Leave Uhuru to do his continental work

*The former interior minister's defence of the retired president raises a broader question about how Kenya treats leaders after they leave office*

BY Hadassah Karangu  
@themtkenyatiimes

Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i yesterday came to the defence of retired President Uhuru Kenyatta, arguing that the former head of state should be permitted to carry out his responsibilities at the continental level without being dragged into Kenya's increasingly fractious domestic political competition.

Speaking at a rally in Kamana, Oloitoktok, Matiang'i maintained that Kenyatta had stepped away from active politics and should be free to concentrate on his work with the African Union and the East African Community. The remarks have reignited debate about the place of former presidents in Kenya's political landscape and the expectations placed on leaders long after they vacate the country's highest office.

At the heart of Matiang'i's argument is a question that Kenyan politics has never resolved cleanly: when a president leaves State House, should the country allow that individual to step into a different chapter of public life without treating every appearance, association or engagement as a political manoeuvre? It is a question that goes well beyond the relationship between two political figures from a shared administration. It touches on democratic culture, the legacy of presidential leadership and the difficulty of separating political history from present-day public responsibility.

Kenyatta served as Kenya's fourth president from 2013 to 2022. His tenure is

remembered for substantial infrastructure investment and ambitious policy decisions, alongside persistent criticism over rising public debt and the cost of living. Those competing assessments ensure that his presidency remains alive in contemporary political conversation, even as he has, by all public appearances, stepped back from domestic electoral politics.

Yet stepping back has not meant disappearing. Former presidents rarely do in Kenya, and for understandable reasons. They carry institutional knowledge, diplomatic relationships and an understanding of regional and international affairs that does not simply expire when their term ends. That experience can be genuinely valuable — in mediation, peacebuilding, conflict resolution and multilateral cooperation. The African Union has historically drawn on experienced African leaders for precisely these purposes, and the East African Community remains an important vehicle for regional cooperation on trade, infrastructure, security and economic integration.

Kenya's standing within both institutions makes this kind of engagement particularly relevant. As a country with considerable economic and diplomatic weight in East Africa, Kenya stands to benefit when its former leaders contribute constructively to regional affairs rather than being consumed by domestic political battles long after their time in office has passed.

Matiang'i's defence rests on this distinction — between examining a former president's record, which is entirely legitimate, and treating every sub-

sequent public engagement as evidence of a political comeback. A former leader can be held accountable for decisions made in office while still being allowed to undertake recognised responsibilities after retirement. These are not mutually exclusive positions, even if Kenya's political environment frequently treats them as though they are.

His intervention is also notable because of his own history. As a Cabinet Secretary who served in influential positions during the Kenyatta administration, Matiang'i is closely associated with that political era. His decision to speak publicly in Kenyatta's defence places him within a broader conversation about loyalty, public service and how former governments are treated once power changes hands. That context matters, but it should not be allowed to obscure the legitimate principle his argument raises.

Defending a former president's right to undertake public responsibilities is not the same as endorsing every decision that president made in office. Political leaders should be capable of agreeing on certain principles — among them, that public figures deserve evidence-based scrutiny rather than politically motivated harassment — even when they differ sharply on policies, personalities and electoral strategies.

Kenya's political discourse, however, has a well-established tendency to collapse those distinctions. The country's competitive environment is built around powerful personalities whose influence can stretch across electoral cycles. A former president possesses public recognition,



Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i

established networks and knowledge of the state that does not simply vanish with the handing over of instruments of power. That continuing presence can be useful — or it can become a source of controversy, depending on how it is exercised and how it is interpreted by rivals.

The challenge is not to pretend that former presidents cease to matter politically the moment they leave office. They do not, and no serious person argues otherwise. The challenge is to insist that their influence be discussed honestly, judged according to their actual conduct and assessed against verifiable evidence rather than speculation or partisan assumption. Criticism grounded in specific actions serves the public interest. Criticism that reduces every public engagement to an alleged political plot does not.

There is also a broader cost to consider. When political conversation becomes dominated by questions about the intentions of former leaders, more pressing national concerns tend to receive less attention. Young people searching for employment, families managing the cost of living, farmers navigating difficult seasons, students uncertain about the continuity of their education — these concerns require sustained engagement from political leaders and the public alike. A political environment perpetually consumed by ri-

valries between prominent personalities leaves less room for the kind of deliberate, policy-focused debate that actually moves the country forward.

This does not mean that conversations about Kenyatta, Matiang'i or any other political figure are unimportant. It means they should be connected to meaningful questions about governance and public accountability, not reduced to exercises in political positioning.

Kenya also faces a structural question that Matiang'i's remarks bring into sharper focus: how should the country manage the transition of its presidents from executive leadership to retirement and other forms of public service? Greater clarity about the responsibilities of former presidents, the nature of any official mandates they hold and the distinction between public service and partisan activity would reduce unnecessary controversy and help citizens distinguish established facts from political claims.

Former leaders should not be shielded from legitimate scrutiny, and retirement does not place anyone beyond accountability. The decisions made during a presidency can have consequences that extend for years, particularly in matters of public finance and institutional integrity. Democratic societies must preserve the freedom to examine those de-

cisions and question the individuals responsible for them.

But accountability and respect are not opposites. A former president carrying out legitimate regional responsibilities deserves to have those duties assessed on their merits. Where concerns exist about specific conduct, they should be presented with evidence. What should be avoided, in the interest of both democratic health and national focus, is a political culture in which assumptions about personal motives permanently overshadow substantive issues.

Matiang'i's defence of Kenyatta will be read differently depending on who is doing the reading. For some, it is a statement of political loyalty from a close ally. For others, it raises a principle worth taking seriously regardless of the personalities involved. Both readings can coexist. What matters is whether Kenya's political class — and the public that watches it — can hold that complexity without reducing everything to yet another episode in an endless contest between rival camps.

A mature democracy should be capable of respecting the contributions of its former leaders while preserving the full right of citizens to question, scrutinise and hold them to account. Kenya is capable of that balance. Whether it chooses to apply it is a different question entirely.

**Misuse** Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o did not soften her assessment. The scale of the figure is significant, but it is the trend she finds most troubling

# Kenya's budget watchdog flags record KSh209B in unplanned government spending

BY Grace Wanja  
@themkenyatimes

Kenya's Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o yesterday flagged a record KSh209.37B in government expenditure approved outside the national budget in the 2025/2026 financial year, the highest deployment of emergency constitutional spending powers recorded in at least four years and a figure that directly contradicts the Treasury's stated commitment to

fiscal consolidation.

The spending was authorised under Article 223 of the Constitution, a provision that permits urgent, unforeseen expenditure not previously appropriated by Parliament. In a single financial year, the government used that provision to approve KSh21.47B in development expenditure and KSh187.90B in recurrent expenditure — routine operational costs that, by their very nature, raise the most pointed questions about why they were not anticipated and budgeted for in the first place.

Controller of Budget Marga-

ret Nyakang'o did not soften her assessment. The scale of the figure is significant, but it is the trend she finds most troubling. "What we should be asking is why it's getting more and more frequent," she said. "One of the reasons we cannot ignore, and that most of these entities raise, is that they tried to budget for these items but were not given the funds. Later, they find that they cannot operate without the funds, so they now come through the door of Article 223." In other words, Article 223 is increasingly functioning not as a safeguard for



Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o

genuine emergencies but as a back channel for funding that was denied through the normal appropriations process — a distinction with serious implications for parliamentary oversight and budget credibility.

The historical trajectory sharpens the concern. In the 2022/2023 financial year, KSh103.68B was approved under the provision, with KSh69.2B ultimately disbursed. The following year saw approvals fall sharply to KSh65.4B, with only KSh19.2B spent. In 2024/2025, approvals rose again to KSh72.24B, of which KSh66.56B was utilised. The leap to KSh209.37B in the current financial year is not a gradual drift — it is a dramatic acceleration that demands explanation from the National Treasury.

Stephen Otieno, Assistant Director of Budget Implementation at the Controller of Budget's office, confirmed that the nature of the spending is as troubling as its volume. "Our concern is that some of them are related to day-to-day operations," he said. "Our concern was the rising use rather than the increase, as well as the nature of some of the operations that were being funded." Day-to-day operational costs — salaries, utilities, supplies — are precisely the categories that should never require emergency constitutional authorisation. Their appearance under Article 223 in such quantities suggests a budgeting process that is either deeply dysfunctional or being deliberately circumvented.

The implications for Kenya's

fiscal position are direct. The government has repeatedly committed to reducing its spending and narrowing the deficit, commitments made to both domestic audiences and international creditors monitoring Kenya's debt sustainability. A KSh209B spike in off-budget expenditure — equivalent to a significant share of total government spending — undermines those commitments in the most visible way possible. It also makes it considerably harder for Parliament, civil society and the public to hold the executive accountable, since spending approved under Article 223 bypasses the standard appropriations scrutiny that gives the legislature its primary oversight role.

Nyakang'o raised two additional concerns that extend the accountability problem beyond emergency spending. The first involves county investment conferences and the bodies organising them. An increasing number of counties have established investment promotion entities to attract private capital to their regions — an initiative with obvious developmental merit. But Nyakang'o pointed out that these bodies operate entirely outside the legal framework governing public financial management. "These investment bodies are not legal entities. They are not allowed; they are not in the PFM Act," she said. "You can't find it anywhere, and so they don't even report on these investment forums." The practical consequence is that significant financial activity connected to public entities is occurring with no reporting

obligation, no audit trail and no accountability mechanism.

The second concern involves Parliament itself. The Controller of Budget acknowledged that her office's visibility into how the National Assembly utilises its annual Exchequer allocations is severely limited. "From the CoB's point of view, we cannot really go further than taking it as other expenses," Nyakang'o said. "The Auditor-General is allowed to dive in and find out what they are all about. To answer you, we don't have visibility beyond the budgetary limits and what has been reported to us." A legislature that scrutinises executive spending while shielding its own allocations from equivalent scrutiny creates an accountability gap that weakens the entire oversight architecture.

Taken together, these findings present a damaging picture. Kenya's budget watchdog is raising alarms about off-budget executive spending at record levels, county bodies operating outside the law and parliamentary expenditure that falls beyond effective independent review — all in the same financial year that the government is publicly committed to fiscal discipline. The question Nyakang'o is really asking is not a technical one. It is whether Kenya's public financial management framework is being treated as a binding constraint or as a set of procedures to be worked around when inconvenient. At KSh209B and rising, the answer is becoming harder to avoid.



# Attached to nothing, connected to everything



Attach to nothing specifically,  
But stay connected to everything  
There lies greatness.

All great people hold a deep connection to everything,  
Yet they have no great attachment to anything.

Their mind is as broad as the sky.

If they achieve something, they don't show it as a big achievement,  
Even if they lose something, they don't feel broken.  
Their mind is broad and accepts all.

They never feel too sorry, nor too proud, nor too elated,  
Because all is merely temporary  
Nothing is permanent.

Brinda. D  
Creative writers

Ghs Melpattampakkam  
Cuddalore dist  
Tamilnadu India

# Nothing destroys you faster than your own mind



Whatever happens in life, don't worry;  
Don't let your mind fill your heart with fury.  
Adjust to the changes, let problems go;  
Don't carry yesterday's pain wherever you go.

Your mind may disturb you, making you weak,  
Even when your heart has the strength you seek.  
Your intuition may guide you to the right way,  
But overthinking can lead your dreams astray.

You may know what to do, yet struggle to start;  
Too many thoughts can burden your heart.  
So pause for a while, let your worries unwind,

And bring back the peace you deserve to find.

Not every thought deserves your attention;  
Not every fear needs your prevention.  
Keep your thoughts peaceful, let your heart be kind;  
Nothing destroys you faster than your own mind.

So breathe in hope and leave your worries behind;  
Keep your heart peaceful and your mind refreshed.  
Life feels lighter when you choose peace of mind,  
And happiness blooms when your thoughts are kind.

V. JAYANTHI  
Graduate teacher  
Creative Writer  
PUMS Konganancherry  
Chengalpattu district

# Real and Solid



we should value them, cherish them,  
and never let them go.

Life is not measured  
by the number of people around us,  
but by the sincerity of the hearts beside us.

One loyal friend,  
one honest soul,  
one compassionate heart  
is worth more than a thousand strangers.

Choose quality over quantity.  
A small circle with genuine people  
is one of life's greatest blessings.

V. Jayanthi  
Graduate teacher  
Creative writer  
PUMS KONGANANCHERRY  
Chengalpattu district

Your circle doesn't need to be big;  
it only needs to be real and solid.

We do not know  
how long we will live in this world.  
Yet our minds are often filled with questions  
Whom should we trust?  
Who is a true companion?

A kind heart is a precious gift.  
A gentle soul is a rare treasure.  
When we find such a person,

# My Birthday



Beautiful flowers start to bloom.  
I wear my favourite dress today,  
My friends come over to play.  
A yummy cake is on the table,

I cut it with my family near.  
We take pictures and make memories,  
My birthday is full of happiness.  
My cousins come and play with me,

We laugh together happily.  
I open gifts with curious eyes,  
I feel like the happiest child.  
I will remember this special day.

V.Joshika  
Grade 8  
John dewey matric higher secondary school, Link road, panruti.

Today is my special birthday,  
I wake up with a happy face.  
My family wishes me with love,  
I feel like a little star above.

Colourful balloons fill the room,

# Listen Twice - What and Who



"I love you," said by a boy to his girlfriend,  
Carries a promise of a different kind altogether.

"Take care," from a dear friend  
Can sound like a warm embrace.  
"Take care," from an opponent,  
May simply be a threatening phrase.

Words carry different meanings,  
Depending on who speaks them.  
So listen twice, before you react,  
First to what and then to who.

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

Words carry different meanings,  
Depending on who speaks them.  
The same words may touch us differently,  
Depending on who hears them.

"I love you," said by a child to its mom,  
Carries a warmth so pure and tender.

# Dear God,



With my sorrows and cries.

Dear God....

Dear God,  
I don't need You to solve  
Every problem I share,  
I just need You to listen,  
To let me pour out my heart.

I know my loved ones are there,  
But somehow, dear God,  
Just talking to You  
Makes my heart feel lighter.

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

I have my husband who'll  
Give me a shoulder to lean on,  
I have my children who'll  
Make sure I get what I want.

Dear God,  
I have a loving family  
But I turn towards You because  
I don't want to burden them

**Farming** For the first time in many years, the endless green plantations stretching from Kitale to Endebess to Kwanza have turned brown, dry and empty. Farmers are counting losses, not bags.

# Trans-Nzoia: Why Kenya’s breadbasket has no maize this season

Drought has devastated the North Rift’s harvest, cutting national maize output in half and pushing farmers, dairy producers and consumers toward a deepening crisis

BY Simon Juma  
@themtkenyatimes

Trans-Nzoia is known as Kenya’s breadbasket — the county that feeds the nation. When Trans-Nzoia sneezes, Kenya catches a cold. This season, Trans-Nzoia is not sneezing. It is crying. There is no maize.

For the first time in many years, the endless green plantations stretching from Kitale to Endebess to Kwanza have turned brown, dry and empty. Farmers are counting losses, not bags.

According to the Trans-Nzoia County Department of Agriculture, more than 50,000 acres out of the 250,000 acres under maize have been destroyed by prolonged drought — 20 per cent of the county’s entire maize crop wiped out before maturity. The county



normally produces over seven million bags annually, but this year production is projected to fall by more than 40 per cent.

The reason is straightforward.

The March-to-May long rains, the lifeline of North Rift farmers, were inadequate and poorly distributed. Crops were stressed, withered and died in the field.

In a good year, a farmer in Bidii harvests between 300 and 350 bags from ten acres. This season, getting 150 bags would be considered a minor miracle. Farmers who would

normally collect 300 bags from 15 acres now expect barely 80. Some have abandoned the harvest altogether because the maize will rot and bring aflatoxin contamination.

This is not a Trans-Nzoia problem alone. It is a national disaster. Close to half of the planted area across Uasin Gishu, Trans-Nzoia and Nakuru has been lost. Kenya’s national maize production forecast has crashed from 4.5 million metric tonnes to just 2.2 million metric tonnes — a 51 per cent drop that will be felt in every household in the country.

The consequences are already unfolding across three distinct groups. Farmers invested everything this season — subsidised fertiliser, certified seeds, ploughing costs and labour — only to watch their crops wither. Many borrowed to finance the planting and now face the coming months without the income to repay. The losses are not abstract; they are devastating and personal.

Dairy farmers face a separate but related crisis. In Trans-Nzoia, maize is not only food for people — it is feed for livestock. With the crop failing, fodder has disappeared. Daily milk output on affected farms has dropped from 700 litres to 460 litres, while the price of dairy meal has risen

from KSh2,500 to KSh3,000 per bag, compressing margins that were already thin.

For the ordinary consumer, less maize means higher unga prices at a time when household budgets are already stretched. The government has announced plans to import up to 25 million 90-kilogramme bags to bridge the deficit — a measure that may stabilise short-term supply but one that has historically undermined local farmers by suppressing the prices they depend on to recover their costs.

Three interventions are urgently needed. The National Cereals and Produce Board must reopen its drying facilities to salvage what remains of the harvest. Investment in irrigation infrastructure and drought-resistant maize varieties must be accelerated to reduce the county’s exposure to future rainfall failure. And the NCPB must commit to purchasing maize at a fair price of KSh4,500 per 90-kilogramme bag to give farmers a fighting chance of recovering their losses.

Trans-Nzoia has fed Kenya for decades without complaint. This season, it is Trans-Nzoia that needs help. If the county is left to absorb this crisis alone, the hunger that follows will not stop at its borders.

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**Stress** Stress is the body's natural response to pressure, and in small doses it is not harmful. It sharpens focus, drives performance and helps us respond to danger

# Silence and stress: How quiet can heal — and how it can harm

*In a world drowning in noise, learning to distinguish between restorative silence and the silence of unspoken pain may be one of the most important things we can do for our mental health*

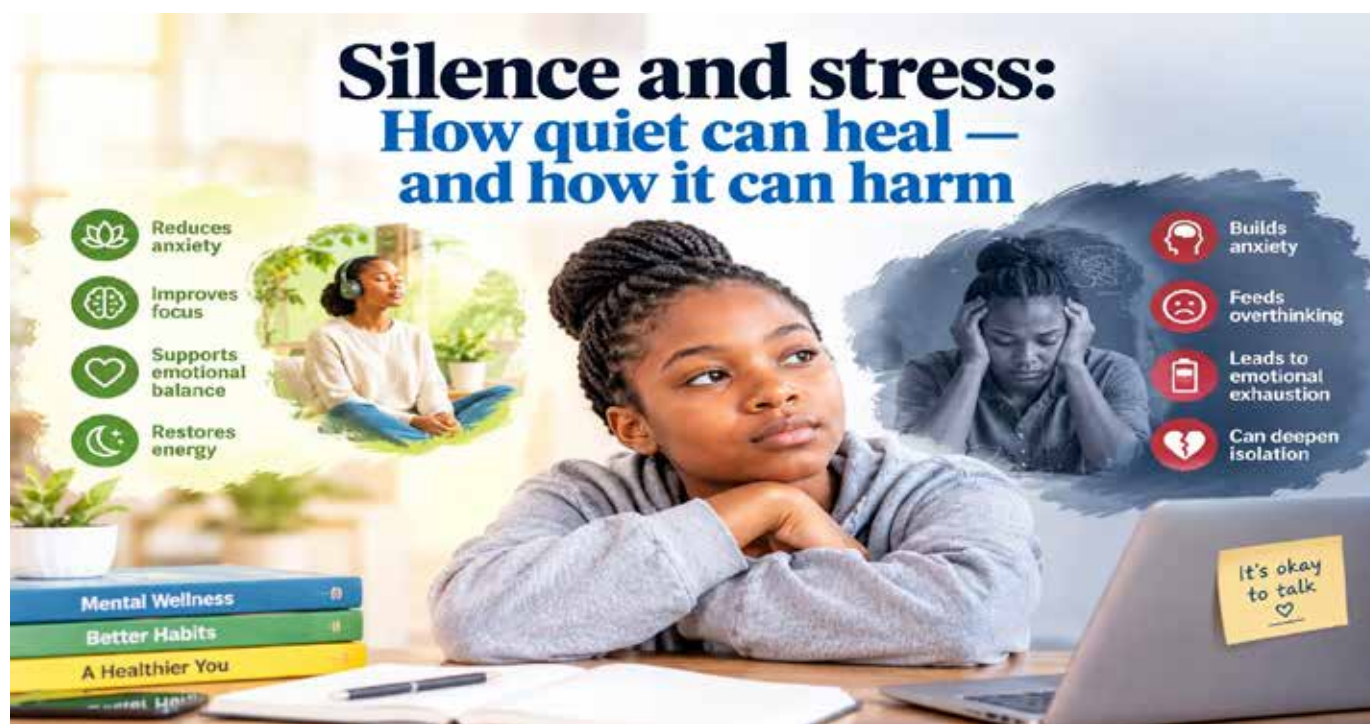


By: Wanjohi P. Mugambi  
@themkenytimes

Noise is everywhere. Traffic, phones, social media, conversations and the relentless chatter of our own racing thoughts fill almost every waking hour. Many people assume that stress comes primarily from having too much to do. But a deeper and less discussed cause of stress is having too little silence. At the same time, silence itself can be a source of suffering when it is forced, lonely or filled with pain that has nowhere to go. Understanding both faces of silence is essential for anyone serious about protecting their mental health.

Stress is the body's natural response to pressure, and in small doses it is not harmful. It sharpens focus, drives performance and helps us respond to danger. The problem arises when stress becomes constant and there is no space to recover. The heart races, sleep deteriorates, the stomach aches, the mind grows irritable and hope begins to fade. In Kenya, many young people and adults live with chronic stress rooted in unemployment, financial pressure, family conflict, academic demands, loss or trauma. Because there is rarely a moment to pause, the nervous system remains locked in a state of high alert, draining the body and mind of the resources needed to cope.

This is where intentional silence becomes genuinely healing. Intentional silence is not about withdrawal or refusing to engage — it is



about creating deliberate moments of quiet that allow the brain and body to rest and reset. When we spend our days listening to music, scrolling through feeds, chatting or worrying, the brain's stress centres remain continuously active. But when we sit in quiet, even briefly, the parasympathetic nervous system — the part responsible for rest and recovery — begins to take over. Breathing slows, blood pressure drops and cortisol, the primary stress hormone, begins to fall.

Silence also helps us hear what noise conceals. Much of our stress is carried in emotions and thoughts we have never had time to process. We push them aside and stay busy, but they do not disappear — they accumulate as tension, sudden anger or unexpected tears. Taking a few minutes of quiet each day creates space to check in honestly with ourselves. Sitting in a corner of the house, resting under a tree or walking alone without earphones and simply asking — what am I feeling right now, and what does my

body need — is a practice that prevents stress from building into burnout, anxiety or depression.

Silence also sharpens focus and improves decision-making. When the mind is constantly overstimulated, every problem feels equally urgent and overwhelming. In quiet, clarity returns and it becomes easier to separate what is genuinely important from what is merely loud. Students who revise in silence, away from phones and noise, consistently report better retention and less pre-examination panic. Workers who begin their day with five to ten minutes of silence, prayer or deep breathing report feeling calmer and more in control, even when the day becomes demanding.

In relationships, too, silence carries underappreciated value. We often cause unnecessary stress in our families and friendships by speaking too quickly, defending ourselves reflexively or failing to truly listen. Practising intentional silence in conversation — listening without already preparing a reply — builds trust and

reduces conflict. In moments of anger, choosing a brief silence before responding frequently prevents words that cannot be taken back. Silence, in this sense, is not weakness. It is wisdom.

Yet there is another form of silence that does the opposite of healing — the silence of avoidance, isolation and unspoken pain. Across many communities in Kenya, important issues are never discussed. Gender-based violence, childhood abuse, mental health struggles, financial hardship and grief are kept quiet because of shame, fear or stigma. When pain is silenced, it does not fade. It grows heavier. A person who has been hurt and is told to keep quiet, to forget, or simply to be strong, begins to feel alone, guilty and without worth. This kind of silence is a significant driver of chronic stress, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

Loneliness is its own form of stressful silence. A person can be surrounded by people and still feel completely unseen

and unheard. Many young people who spend hours online but have no one to confide in describe exactly this experience — their phones are loud but their hearts are silent. When nobody asks how someone is really doing, stress accumulates without any outlet. Breaking that harmful silence — by speaking to a trusted friend, elder, counsellor or faith leader — is often the first and most important step toward relief.

Building a daily rhythm of intentional quiet does not require long stretches of solitude. Small, consistent moments are enough. Waking ten minutes earlier and sitting quietly before reaching for a phone tells the nervous system that the day begins with peace rather than urgency. Simple breathing exercises — inhaling slowly through the nose for four counts, exhaling through the mouth for six — repeated five times in silence, can shift the body out of a stress response within minutes. Silent walks, taken without earphones and with attention given to what is

seen, heard and felt underfoot, offer a low-cost and accessible form of recovery that is available to almost anyone.

Digital silence matters as well. Phones deliver hundreds of notifications that keep the brain in a permanent state of urgency. Setting specific times to step away from social media, switching off non-essential alerts, or spending the final hour before sleep away from screens allows the mind to unwind. Many people find that sleep improves noticeably once nighttime scrolling is replaced with silence, prayer or reading.

Breaking harmful silence requires equal intention. Journaling — writing honestly in a private notebook about what one is feeling — gives voice to pain without fear of judgment and is a useful first step. When ready, sharing with a safe and trusted person, even just saying “I have been feeling overwhelmed lately,” begins to lift the weight. Where stress is affecting sleep, appetite, study or work for more than two weeks, professional support is worth seeking. Amani Counselling Centre, the Kenya Red Cross toll-free line on 1199 and county hospital mental health units are among the accessible options available.

In the quieter moments, something else becomes possible — reconnection with what matters beyond the immediate pressures. For many people, that means faith, family, service to others or simply time in nature. Watching the sunset in silence, tending a garden or sitting in prayer or meditation can remind us that life is larger than our current difficulties.

Silence is powerful in both directions. Chosen with intention, it heals stress, restores clarity and returns us to ourselves. Imposed through fear, shame or isolation, it deepens suffering and cuts people off from the help they need. The goal is neither constant noise nor unbroken quiet, but the wisdom to know when to be still and when to speak. Cultivate healing silence daily, and find the courage to break harmful silence when your heart needs to be heard. In that balance, stress becomes manageable and peace becomes genuinely possible.

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**Law** Consider football, the nation's de facto religion. The Football Kenya Federation sits at the apex of a pyramid of clubs, county associations and leagues

# The pitch where fair play goes to die: Kenya's competition law, the beautiful game, and the federations that prefer cartels to contests



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

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In 2010 Kenya repealed its outdated 1989 competition statute and enacted the Competition Act (Cap. 504). The statute's object is unambiguous: enhance the welfare of Kenyans by promoting and protecting effective competition in markets and preventing unfair and misleading market conduct. It applies to every undertaking and every association of undertakings in the Republic. Clubs are undertakings.

Federations are associations of undertakings. The market for football, basketball and rugby talent, sponsorship, broadcasting rights, stadium access and fan entertainment is therefore subject to the same prohibitions that bind banks, telecoms and cement producers. Section 21 outlaws agreements, decisions and concerted practices whose object or effect is to prevent, distort or lessen competition.

Section 22 specifically targets trade associations that exclude participants or recommend prices or terms. Section 24 forbids abuse of dominance. These are not optional courtesies. They are the law. Yet for more than a decade the Competition Authority of Kenya has largely looked the other way while sports federations have treated the pitch as private fiefdom.

That is the factual starting point. The issue is not abstract theory. It is the daily reality that young players from Kibera or Kakamega discover when a federation rule, opaque and unchallengeable, decides who may play, who may transfer, who may broadcast a match, and who may profit from the spectacle the public pays for. Competition law was written to stop exactly this kind of private regulation of a market. In Ken-



yan sport it has been allowed to sleep while the gatekeepers stayed awake.

Consider football, the nation's de facto religion. The Football Kenya Federation sits at the apex of a pyramid of clubs, county associations and leagues. Its decisions determine which teams enter the Premier League, which players are eligible, how transfer windows operate, and on what terms commercial rights are sold.

When the federation issues regulations without the constitutional process required by its own statutes, as the Sports Disputes Tribunal has repeatedly found in recent seasons, it is not merely internal mismanagement. It is an association of undertakings imposing binding rules that can exclude competitors, raise barriers to entry, and allocate markets. The same logic applies when clubs collude, through the federation or outside it, on player wages, ticket prices or sponsorship terms. Section 22 was drafted for precisely such associations. The Authority has pursued clearing agents and professional bodies for price recommendations; it has shown far less appetite for the football equivalent.

Basketball and rugby tell parallel stories, only quieter. The Kenya Basketball Federation runs the national league. Eligibility rules, fixture control and playoff qualification are its exclusive domain. When results are manipulated or players

fielded in breach of the federation's own regulations, as past Sports Disputes Tribunal cases have recorded, the competitive process itself is distorted. Rugby, organised under the Kenya Rugby Union, operates a smaller but equally closed market of clubs and provincial unions. Exclusive arrangements with sponsors or broadcasters, restrictive transfer clauses, or the quiet blackballing of clubs that challenge the hierarchy all sit squarely within the Competition Act's prohibitions. Dominance is not measured only by market share of fifty percent; it is measured by the practical ability to act independently of competitors and consumers. A national federation that alone licenses clubs, alone sanctions competitions, and alone sells national-team rights is dominant by any serious reading of Section 23.

History sharpens the irony. Kenya was among the first African states to adopt a competition statute in 1989. The 2010 Act modernized the regime, created an independent Authority, introduced merger control, and later strengthened rules against abuse of buyer power and professional associations. The OECD's peer review of Kenya's competition policy has noted the progress. Yet the same Authority that processes over a hundred merger notifications a year and opens dozens of behavioural investigations has left the sports market largely untouched. Trade as-

sociations that fix cargo tariffs are fined and forced into compliance programmes. Sports associations that fix the terms of athletic labour and commercial spectacle are left to the Sports Registrar and the Sports Disputes Tribunal bodies designed for governance and discipline, not for market analysis.

The human cost is not theoretical. A talented midfielder whose transfer is blocked by an arbitrary federation rule loses income, exposure and career trajectory. A basketball club locked out of the national league because it refused to accept opaque financial demands loses sponsors and fans. Rugby players who challenge the union's commercial monopoly find themselves frozen out of national selection. Fans pay inflated ticket prices or are denied high-quality broadcasts because exclusive rights deals face no competition-law scrutiny. Sponsors who might have entered the market are deterred by the closed nature of the gatekeeping. The market for Kenyan sporting talent becomes a monopsony on the demand side and a series of local monopolies on the supply side. Competition law exists to prevent exactly this extraction of surplus from players, clubs and the public.

The defence offered by the federations is always the same: sport is special; autonomy is sacred; FIFA, FIBA and World Rugby demand independence from ordinary law. That defence collapses under scrutiny. Competition law does not prohibit legitimate sporting rules necessary for the organisation of competitions: fair play, integrity, calendar coordination. It prohibits rules whose object or effect is the prevention, distortion or lessening of competition beyond what is strictly necessary.

The European Commission and national authorities across the continent have applied this distinction for decades. Kenya's statute contains the same tools. Exemptions under Section 25 exist precisely for arrangements that produce public benefits outweighing competitive harm. Federations that believe their rules are justified should apply for

exemption and subject their claims to evidence. They have not.

What is required now is not polite suggestion but categorical action. The Competition Authority must open market inquiries into the organisation of professional and semi-professional football, basketball and rugby. It must examine player contract terms for restrictive covenants that go beyond legitimate sporting needs. It must scrutinize broadcasting and sponsorship exclusivity for foreclosure effects. It must treat federation regulations that exclude clubs or players without transparent, proportionate criteria as decisions of associations of undertakings.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs, Sports and the Arts must stop treating competition law as an alien intrusion and recognise that a healthy sports market is a public good. The Sports Registrar must condition registration and continued recognition of national federations on demonstrable compliance with the Competition Act. Clubs and players' associations must stop accepting closed-shop arrangements as inevitable and begin filing complaints. Parliament, when it finally enacts the long-promised sports reforms, must insert an explicit duty of cooperation between the Sports Regulatory bodies and the Competition Authority.

The alternative is continued decay. Kenya produces some of the world's finest athletes, yet its domestic leagues remain under-commercialized, under-watched and under-trusted. Talent leaks abroad not only because of higher salaries but because the home market is structured against open contest. Fans who fill stadia and buy jerseys are treated as captive consumers rather than the ultimate beneficiaries of a competitive market. The beautiful game, the flying game of basketball, the physical poetry of rugby all are diminished when the rules of the market are written by those who benefit from their distortion.

Competition law is not the enemy of sport. It is the guardian of the contest that makes sport worth watching. Until the Authority, the federations, the clubs and the government treat the pitch as a market subject to the same disciplines that govern every other sector of the Kenyan economy, the law will remain a paper tiger while the real tigers those who control access, eligibility and commercial rights continue to feast. The statute is already written. The only missing ingredient is the will to enforce it.

*The writer is a lawyer and social commentator*

**Education** This shift is not cosmetic; it is philosophical. It moves classroom management away from authority and towards identity, from enforcement towards ownership

# The 21st century classroom: From rules to relationships

*Modern classroom management demands a shift from enforcing compliance to building communities where roles, routines, rights and responsibilities shape lasting discipline*

**BY Ashford Kimani**  
@themkenyatiimes

For decades, classroom management has largely been defined by rules. Lists pinned on walls, stern reminders at the start of term and escalating consequences for those who step out of line have formed the backbone of order in many learning environments. Yet beneath this structure lies a persistent question: do rules truly cultivate disciplined learners, or do they merely enforce temporary compliance?

A growing body of classroom practice suggests that the traditional rules-based approach, while functional, may be fundamentally limited. It often positions learners as passive recipients of control rather than active participants in a shared learning experience. In response, a quiet but significant pedagogical shift is emerging — one that re-frames the classroom not as a space governed by rules, but as a community shaped by roles, routines, rights and responsibilities.

This shift is not cosmetic; it is philosophical. It moves classroom management away from authority and towards identity, from enforcement towards ownership.

At the heart of this model is the concept of roles. When learners walk into a classroom, they are not merely students expected to behave; they are individuals invited to assume meaningful identities. They become readers, thinkers, collaborators, questioners and even mistake-makers. This last role is particularly transformative. In many traditional classrooms, mistakes are treated as failures to be corrected swiftly. When error is normalised as part of the learning process, however, it ceases to be a source of shame and becomes a tool



for growth. Learners begin to engage more freely, take intellectual risks and participate more authentically.

Closely linked to roles are routines. Unlike rigid rules, routines provide structure without oppression. They create predictability, which is essential for cognitive and emotional stability. When learners know that each lesson begins with a reflective prompt, transitions into guided instruction and ends with a summary or journal entry, they are less anxious and more focused. Routines reduce the mental energy spent on figuring out what happens next and allow learners to channel their attention into actual learning. More importantly, routines foster independence. Over time, learners internalise these patterns and begin to manage their own engagement. The classroom becomes less about teacher direction and more about shared rhythm.

The third element, rights, introduces a dimension that is often overlooked in traditional classrooms: dignity. Every learner enters the classroom with inherent rights — the right to feel safe, the right to ask questions, the right to be heard and the right to make mistakes without ridicule. When these rights are explicitly acknowledged, the classroom transforms into a psychologically safe environment. This is particularly significant in contexts where

fear has historically been used as a tool of control. Fear may produce silence, but it rarely produces understanding. A rights-based classroom, by contrast, encourages participation. Learners speak, challenge, inquire and contribute because they know they are protected.

Rights without structure, however, can lead to disorder. This is where the fourth element — responsibilities — becomes essential. Every right is paired with an obligation. If a learner has the right to speak, they also carry the responsibility to listen. If they have the right to feel safe, they must contribute to the safety of others. If they are given the freedom to learn, they must take ownership of that learning. This balance creates a powerful dynamic of reciprocal accountability. Discipline is no longer imposed externally; it is cultivated internally. When a learner disrupts the class, the response is not merely punitive — it becomes a moment for reflection: which responsibility was not upheld, and how can it be restored? Such an approach aligns closely with restorative practices, where the goal is not to punish but to repair and rebuild relationships. Conversations replace commands, and understanding replaces fear.

In the context of contemporary education systems, particularly those emphasising

competency-based learning, this framework holds considerable relevance. Modern curricula are increasingly focused on developing critical thinking, communication, collaboration and self-management skills. These competencies cannot thrive in environments that prioritise obedience over engagement. A classroom structured around roles, routines, rights and responsibilities naturally supports their development. Learners are not simply absorbing content; they are practising life skills — learning how to exist within a community, how to manage themselves and how to contribute meaningfully to a shared goal.

That said, this approach is not without its challenges. It demands a high level of intentionality from the teacher. Shifting from a rules-based system to a relationship-based one requires patience, consistency and emotional intelligence. It also requires a redefinition of authority. The teacher does not lose control; rather, control is redistributed. Authority becomes less about command and more about guidance. Learners who are accustomed to strict rule-based systems may initially struggle with this transition — freedom can be misread as the absence of boundaries. Implementation must therefore be gradual and clearly

communicated. Expectations remain high, but they are framed differently.

Ultimately, the question is not whether rules should exist, but whether they should serve as the foundation of classroom culture. Evidence from evolving classroom practice suggests that while rules can maintain order, they rarely inspire ownership. Roles, routines, rights and responsibilities, on the other hand, cultivate a deeper form of discipline — one that is internal, sustainable and transferable well beyond the classroom walls.

The modern classroom must move beyond managing behaviour to shaping character. It must transition from control to connection, from compliance to commitment. In doing so, it prepares learners not just to succeed academically, but to function effectively in an increasingly complex and collaborative world. The future of education will not be built on stricter rules, but on stronger relationships.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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**Youth** The second school of thought takes a different view, arguing that the open information environment of the internet is not a threat to young people but an opportunity

# Television or the internet: The battle for young minds

*The debate over how best to shape the values and worldview of the next generation grows sharper as digital access expands*



**BY Abdullayeva Sarvinoz Aktamjon**

@themtkenyatimes

The question of how best to nurture the spiritual and moral development of young people has never been more contested. As the sources competing for the attention of the younger generation multiply, two broad schools of thought have emerged — those who trust traditional television to provide safe, curated content, and those who argue that the free flow of information, particularly through the

internet, is the more powerful and relevant force in modern upbringing.

Those who favour traditional television make a case rooted in safety and reliability. Programmes broadcast on established television channels pass through editorial and specialist review before reaching audiences, providing a layer of assurance that the content aligns with accepted cultural values and moral norms. In Uzbekistan, for instance, channels dedicated to history, culture and national heritage give young viewers a structured introduction to their own identity and past, free from the disruptive algorithms that compete for attention on digital platforms. For advocates of this approach, the consistency and intentionality of curated broadcast content remains its greatest strength.

The second school of thought takes a different view, arguing that the open information environment of

the internet is not a threat to young people but an opportunity. Exposure to a variety of perspectives, they contend, builds critical thinking and equips young people to analyse information independently rather than accepting a single, pre-approved narrative. Access to the world's largest libraries and educational platforms is available within seconds through a global network — a resource no single broadcaster can replicate. Researchers in education have noted that adolescents who engage purposefully with open information sources tend to acquire foreign languages and contemporary knowledge significantly faster than those who rely exclusively on traditional media, with some studies suggesting the gap is substantial.

The distinction between the two positions is not simply about technology. It reflects deeper assumptions about how character is formed. One

view holds that young people need to be guided and protected, their intellectual diet carefully managed by responsible adults and institutions. The other holds that genuine intellectual and moral development requires exposure to complexity, contradiction and choice — that a generation raised on pre-edited content will be ill-equipped for the demands of an interconnected world.

There is merit in both positions, and the tension between them is unlikely to be resolved by choosing one side entirely. Unfiltered access to the internet carries genuine risks. Misinformation, harmful content and addictive algorithms are not abstract concerns — they are documented features of the digital landscape that affect young users daily. At the same time, a media environment built entirely on restriction and curation cannot produce the adaptable, critically minded individuals that modern so-

ciety requires.

The more productive framing may be the one offered by media literacy advocates: rather than asking whether young people should access free information, the question is whether they are being equipped to navigate it wisely. A generation that can evaluate sources, identify bias, distinguish credible information from manipulation and engage critically with what they encounter online is far better prepared for the challenges ahead than one that has simply been shielded from difficulty.

As the Uzbek educator Abdulla Avloni observed, education is a matter of life and salvation. In today's information age, that salvation lies not in closing doors but in teaching young people how to walk through them with discernment, confidence and purpose.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## Strike pause, brooms out: Laikipia students clean up local market



By Victorine Nekesa

When a strike brought normal academic life at Laikipia University to a halt, most students headed home. A handful stayed behind — and picked up brooms instead.

The students, who remained near the university for various personal reasons, chose to spend part of the unexpected break serving the surrounding community. Their initiative involved collecting litter, clearing waste from the local market and unblocking drainage channels clogged with rubbish — unglamorous work, but work that made an immediate and visible difference to traders, customers and residents who rely on the market daily.

Omar Joram, one of the students who took part, said the decision was straightforward. “Since our studies have been interrupted, we can still use our time to do something useful. A clean market benefits everyone, and we hope our efforts will encourage others to take care of the environment,” he said.

Local residents welcomed the gesture. One trader described the stu-

dents’ presence as a reminder that maintaining clean public spaces is a shared responsibility, not someone else’s problem. “We appreciate seeing young people helping to clean the market and clear the drainage channels. It makes the area better for traders and customers,” she said.

Markets are central to the daily life of communities — places where people earn a living, buy goods and interact. But poor waste disposal and blocked drainage create conditions that deteriorate quickly, particularly during rains when stagnant water accumulates and health risks rise. The students’ intervention addressed those conditions directly, if temporarily, while drawing attention to the need for more consistent collective action from traders, residents and local authorities alike.

For the students involved, the exercise carried a lesson beyond sanitation. Community service of this kind teaches responsibility, teamwork and practical engagement with problems that exist well outside lecture halls. The gap between academic knowledge and its appli-

cation to everyday life is one that universities often struggle to bridge; these students narrowed it with a few hours of physical work and a willingness to show up.

The initiative also reflects something broader about the relationship between Laikipia University and its surrounding community. Universities do not exist in isolation. Their students live alongside, and depend upon, the communities around them — and those communities, in turn, are shaped by the presence and conduct of the institution. When students use their time and energy to improve public spaces, they reinforce that relationship in a tangible way.

The strike has disrupted timetables and created uncertainty. But for this small group of students, it also created a window — one they chose to fill with purpose rather than passivity. Their example is a modest but genuine one: that being a university student is not only about accumulating qualifications but about developing the habits and values that make a person useful to the world beyond campus.

## Kenya’s dairy crisis: Why the milk is running dry

By Nicholas Mwendwa

Kenya is facing a quietly worsening dairy crisis. With a population estimated at 58.6 million in 2026 and rising, demand for milk continues to climb — yet production is struggling to keep pace. The gap between what the country needs and what its farms are delivering is widening, and the consequences are being felt by consumers, farmers and the broader agricultural economy.

Dairy farming is woven into the fabric of Kenya’s agricultural life. It provides food, employment and income to millions of households, with active production concentrated in Kiambu, Nyandarua, Nakuru, Meru and large parts of the Rift Valley. Yet despite its importance, the sector is being held back by a cluster of persistent and interconnected problems: inadequate animal feeds, livestock diseases, poor cattle breeds, water shortages and the mounting pressure of climate change. Each of these factors reduces both the quantity and quality of milk produced, and together they represent a serious drag on an industry that Kenya cannot afford to neglect.

Feed is among the most immediate constraints. When pasture becomes scarce during dry periods, many smallholder farmers have no alternative to fall back on. The practical answer is for farmers to grow their own fodder crops and conserve hay and silage during the rainy season, building reserves that sustain their herds through lean months. Balanced feeding rations, matched to the nutritional needs of individual animals, improve health and directly increase milk yields. This is not complicated knowledge — it is accessible and proven, but it requires deliberate planning and consistent practice.

Breed quality is another central issue. Many Kenyan dairy farmers continue to rely on low-yielding cattle that cannot produce competitive volumes of milk even under good conditions. Transitioning to improved, productive dairy breeds — and supporting that transition with modern breeding technologies such as artificial insemination — would significantly raise the genetic ceiling of the national herd. The productivity gains from better genetics, combined with proper nutrition and care, are among the most reliable levers



available to a smallholder farmer.

Animal health management deserves equal attention. Diseases, both preventable and parasitic, cause substantial losses across the dairy sector every year. Regular veterinary check-ups, timely vaccination programmes and effective parasite control reduce herd losses and allow cows to sustain consistent milk production. Early detection of disease is critical — and it requires both farmer awareness and a functioning veterinary infrastructure that is genuinely accessible beyond major towns.

The role of government in all of this is not peripheral. Agricultural extension officers and veterinary professionals are essential links between research, best practice and the farm. Where they are present, well-trained and adequately resourced, farmers benefit from timely advice on nutrition, disease prevention and modern livestock management. Where they are absent or thinly spread, farmers make do with incomplete information and avoidable mistakes. Strengthening extension services at both national and county level is not optional — it is foundational to any serious effort to raise milk production.

Infrastructure and inputs matter too. Poor rural roads raise the cost of getting milk to market and accelerate spoilage. Expensive commercial feeds squeeze margins for smallholders who have no affordable alternative. Investment in rural infrastructure, affordable agricultural inputs and reliable cold-chain facilities would reduce production costs and post-harvest losses simultaneously. Cooperatives offer a prac-

tical vehicle for giving farmers collective access to milking machines, milk-cooling tanks, fodder choppers and digital livestock-recording systems — technology that improves efficiency but remains out of reach for most individual smallholders acting alone.

Soil fertility, often overlooked in dairy discussions, is also part of the picture. Healthy, productive soil grows better fodder. Erosion control, appropriate fertiliser use and the cultivation of high-yield fodder crops all contribute to a more reliable and cost-effective feed supply, reducing dependence on expensive commercial options.

Low milk production is a solvable problem. The knowledge, the technology and the policy tools required to address it are available. What is needed is coordinated action — farmers investing in better practices, county governments delivering functional extension and veterinary services, and national government providing the research support, infrastructure and affordable inputs that make improvement possible at scale.

Kenya has the agricultural foundation to be a stronger dairy producer than it currently is. Closing the gap between potential and performance will require sustained commitment from every part of the system. The returns — in food security, farmer incomes and rural employment — are more than worth the effort.

SPORTS  
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**Sports >>** \*Barrios struck inside a minute and Lookman sealed victory after Yoro's red card left the visitors with ten men in Madrid

## Atlético punish United with 2-0 Champions League win

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

Manchester United suffered a chastening night in the UEFA Champions League yesterday, losing 2-0 to Atlético Madrid at the Riyadh Air Metropolitano as an early Pablo Barrios goal and a late Ademola Lookman strike gave Diego Simeone's side a thoroughly deserved victory.

United, managed by Michael Carrick, struggled to cope with Atlético's intensity from the first whistle, and Leny Yoro's red card in the 74th minute ended any realistic hope of a comeback, leaving the visitors to see out the final quarter of the match with ten men.

Atlético wasted no time making their intentions clear. Barrios found space at the edge of the penalty area just 53 seconds after kick-off and drove a low shot past the United goalkeeper to give the hosts an electric start. The goal settled Simeone's side immediately, allowing them to press aggressively and force United into a succession of errors as the first half progressed.

Madrid thought they had doubled their lead shortly before the interval when Johnny Cardoso turned the ball home from a set-piece scramble, but celebrations were cut short after a VAR review ruled out the goal for a handball in the build-up. It was a let-off for United, though they had done little to suggest they could find their way back into the contest.

Carrick's side returned for the second half with greater urgency, and Marcus Rashford attempted to stretch the Atlético defence, but he was booked in the 52nd minute as frustrations began to surface. The turning point arrived in the 74th minute when Yoro was shown a straight red card following a VAR review, judged to have denied a clear goalscoring opportunity. The dismissal handed Atlético a



decisive advantage.

Five minutes later, Lookman put the result beyond any doubt, calmly tapping into an empty net to make it 2-0 and close out the contest. The hosts finished with 62 per cent possession and nine shots, four on target. United managed eight efforts, also registering four on target, but lacked the composure and clinical edge to trouble the Atlético goalkeeper when it mattered.

The defeat raises serious ques-

tions for Carrick about United's defensive organisation, discipline and capacity to handle the demands of elite European competition. Conceding inside a minute, losing a player to a straight red card and failing to create enough clear chances against a side playing within their own stadium are problems that point to deeper structural concerns. With the Champions League campaign continuing, United cannot afford to carry the

same vulnerabilities into their next assignment.

Atlético, by contrast, will take considerable confidence from a display that blended attacking directness with disciplined game management. Simeone's side made their chances count, kept a clean sheet and saw out the closing stages without alarm. For United, the work of recovery begins immediately.

# GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Chelsea head coach becomes only the fourth manager in Premier League history to win his first six matches in charge of a club

# Maresca joins Guardiola, Ancelotti and Solskjær in Premier League record books

By Pascal Okoth

Enzo Maresca has entered an exclusive chapter of Premier League managerial history, becoming only the fourth manager to win his first six matches in charge of a club in the competition, joining Carlo Ancelotti, Ole Gunnar Solskjær and Pep Guardiola in that distinction.

The Italian's start at Chelsea has drawn attention across English football, not merely for the results but for the manner in which they have been achieved. Maresca's teams are built on possession-based football, positional discipline and coordinated movement designed to create and exploit space. Translating that philosophy into six consecutive wins from the outset of a managerial tenure — in a league as demanding and competitive as the Premier League — is a significant accomplishment by any measure.

Winning six successive matches at the start of a new role presents challenges that go beyond tactics. A new manager must introduce fresh ideas, earn the confidence of his players, address early weaknesses and manage the expectations that come with a high-profile appointment — all while delivering results. That Maresca has done so without dropping a point places him in company that demands respect.

Guardiola, widely regarded as the most influential manager of the modern era, built Manchester City into English football's dominant force through an obsessive attention to detail, tactical flexibility and a relentless culture of improvement. His inclusion on this short list illustrates the level of performance Maresca has managed to match at the earliest stage of his Chelsea tenure.

Ancelotti, one of the most decorated managers in the history of the game, brought a different quality to the Premier League

— tactical adaptability and a rare ability to manage elite players across different cultures and systems. His early impact in England reflected what an experienced hand can achieve when given the right environment. Solskjær, meanwhile, generated enormous excitement at Manchester United with a run of results that briefly reignited belief among supporters and raised hopes of a sustained revival. Though his tenure ultimately told a more complicated story, the energy and momentum of that opening spell remained a defining feature of his time at Old Trafford.

That Maresca now sits alongside all three is a statement in itself, even if it comes with the caveat that six matches represent a beginning, not a conclusion.

The Italian will know better than most that the Premier League has a way of finding out managers who cannot sustain early momentum. As his methods become familiar to opposing coaches, tactical adjustments will be made and vulnerabilities probed. Injuries, fixture congestion and the physical and mental demands of a long season will test the depth and resilience of his squad. Maintaining intensity and concentration when the schedule becomes relentless is where many promising starts have unravelled.

Expectations, too, will climb. A perfect opening generates ambition among supporters and scrutiny from those who follow the club closely. The margin for error narrows as the bar rises. Sustaining success requires not just tactical clarity but effective squad management, clear communication and the ability to adapt without abandoning the principles that produced the early results.

None of that diminishes what Maresca has achieved. Six wins from six, in the Premier League,



Enzo Maresca

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at the start of a new managerial appointment, is a record that speaks for itself. It offers him a strong foundation of confidence, a settled dressing room and a supporter base that believes in what he is building. Whether that foundation can support something lasting — silverware, a sustained title challenge, a clear identity at Stamford Bridge — remains the question that the rest of the season will begin to answer.

For now, the record stands and the company it places him in is distinguished. The next challenge is to ensure that this opening chapter becomes the first page of a longer, more consequential story.

## SPORTS NEWS



PHOTOS  
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BREAKING NEWS





# Seven languages, one message: Ally Amini Twalib speaks for Africa's future



By: Anila Bukhari  
@themtkenyatimes



## Worth Noting:

- Twalib's education was as wide-ranging as his work would later become. Raised in Dar es Salaam, he studied Human Resource Management and Engineering Science through the University of South Africa before travelling to Russia to train in oil and gas engineering.
- People and machines. Few careers demand mastery of both, but Africa's energy sector does. Power plants need engineering; power deals need people who understand one another.
- And understanding is where Twalib excels. He speaks English, Swahili, Arabic, Portuguese, French and Zulu, and is currently learning Chinese and Afrikaans. In a region where deals worth millions can stall on a single misunderstood phrase, his fluency has become a quiet competitive advantage. Partners trust him because he meets them in their own words.



Ally Amini Twalib

By: Anila Bukhari

In English he negotiates with financiers. In Swahili he reassures a child. In Arabic, Portuguese, French and Zulu he builds the trust that moves Africa forward. Whatever the language, Ally Amini Twalib's message is the same: development means nothing if it forgets the most vulnerable.

Some people speak for a living. Ally Amini Twalib listens for one.

In a negotiating room, he listens for the hesitation behind a minister's question or the concern hidden in an investor's careful phrasing. At a children's home in Tanzania, he listens for something quieter: the needs of a child who may not be able to put them into words at all.

That gift for listening, and for answering in the right language, sits at the heart of everything the Tanzanian executive has built.

A Toolkit Built Across Continents

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ence through the University of South Africa before travelling to Russia to train in oil and gas engineering.

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Translating Africa's Potential Into Power

As Founder and CEO of Global Afrinergergy Company Limited and Afri SADC Business Hub, Twalib connects African governments with the investors, suppliers and financiers who can turn plans into infrastructure. His advisory work spans Uganda, Malawi, Burundi, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic

of Congo, across energy, oil and gas, minerals, finance and development.

His conviction is plain: electricity is where progress begins. Without reliable power, clinics cannot treat patients after dark, students cannot study past sunset, and factories cannot grow and create jobs. Energy, in his view, is the language every other sector depends on.

The Diplomacy of Open Borders

Twalib's work has naturally extended into diplomacy. As Ambassador to the SADC Chamber of Commerce, he advocates for dismantling the barriers that still restrict trade between neighbouring countries. He also serves as Deputy Regional Director for Southern Africa at the World Organisation of Ambassadors and as a Peace Ambassador for World Citizen.

He sees these roles as one continuous argument. Investment requires confidence. Confidence requires stability. Stability requires peace. Remove any link, and the chain breaks.

The Language of Faith

Beneath the business and diplomacy lies something Twalib speaks about with particular conviction: his faith.

He describes success as a trust placed in his hands by the Almighty, not a possession but a responsibility, meant to be shared. Every door that opens, he believes, opens for a purpose beyond himself.

For Twalib, that purpose most often leads to children.

Where Words Are Not Needed

In Tanzania, he is a steadfast supporter of the Nazzar Foundation, home to 52 children living with special needs. Some of these children communicate in ways that have nothing to do with vocabulary: a reaching hand, a smile, a glance that asks to be noticed. For a man fluent in so many languages, this may be the most important one of all.

His support also extends to orphanages in Tanzania and in Zimbabwe, providing food, shelter and access to education for children who began life facing more than their share of hardship. For them, a meal, a bed and a place in a classroom are not charity. They are a message that their lives matter.

"Energy can power a nation, but it is a child's future that gives that power its meaning. I cannot speak about building Africa and forget the children who will inherit it." — Ally Amini Twalib

This commitment to young people has a long history. As former Chairman of Makongo United Football Club, he used sport to create opportunities for youth. As Project Coordinator with Mfuruki Worldwide, he brought partners together to deliver projects communities could see and feel.

Rewriting Africa's Story

Twalib rejects the old narrative of Africa as a continent waiting for rescue. He points instead to its energy reserves, mineral wealth, growing trade, advancing technology and the world's youngest population: a continent ready to build its own future.

Yet he never stops asking who that future is for. Every pipeline passes a village. Every investment touches a household. And every development plan is being watched by millions of children waiting to see whether its promises will reach them.

One Voice, Many Languages

What makes Ally Amini Twalib remarkable is not only how many languages he speaks, but that he says the same thing in all of them. In the boardroom and in the children's home, his message does not change.

Power the nation. Protect the child. And never let one be spoken of without the other.

Ally Amini Twalib is Founder and CEO of Global Afrinergergy Company Limited and Afri SADC Business Hub, Ambassador to the SADC Chamber of Commerce, and Deputy Regional Director for Southern Africa at the World Organisation of Ambassadors.