



Kalonzo and Gachagua to hold presidential ticket talks today as 2027 opposition race takes shape
 Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua and Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka are scheduled to meet today

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Ruto courts Ukambani with roads and a KSh70B clinker plant as 2027 political contest heats up
 President William Ruto yesterday toured Ukambani, announcing a series of road construction projects across Kitui and neighbouring counties

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The Mt. Kenya Times Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027  **"We know you, Ndindi Nyoro. You are a small wheelbarrow," Farouk Kibet**

Exposed: Nyoro's 'small wheelbarrow' moment

Presidential aide Farouk Kibet publicly rebuked Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro, effectively confirming that Nyoro had been operating as a government-sponsored political operative within the opposition ranks, and warning him that he had exceeded the boundaries of his assignment — a disclosure that President William Ruto compounded on Sunday with a pointed public statement on the very Dangote shares controversy that had triggered Nyoro's fall from grace.

The sequence of events has stripped away whatever remained of Nyoro's carefully cultivated image as a genuine opposition figure and laid bare the mechanics of what his critics had long described as a calculated strategy to fragment the Mount Kenya vote ahead of the August 2027 general election. In the space of two public statements from men at the heart of the ruling establishment, what months of opposition accusations had failed to establish was confirmed beyond reasonable dispute.

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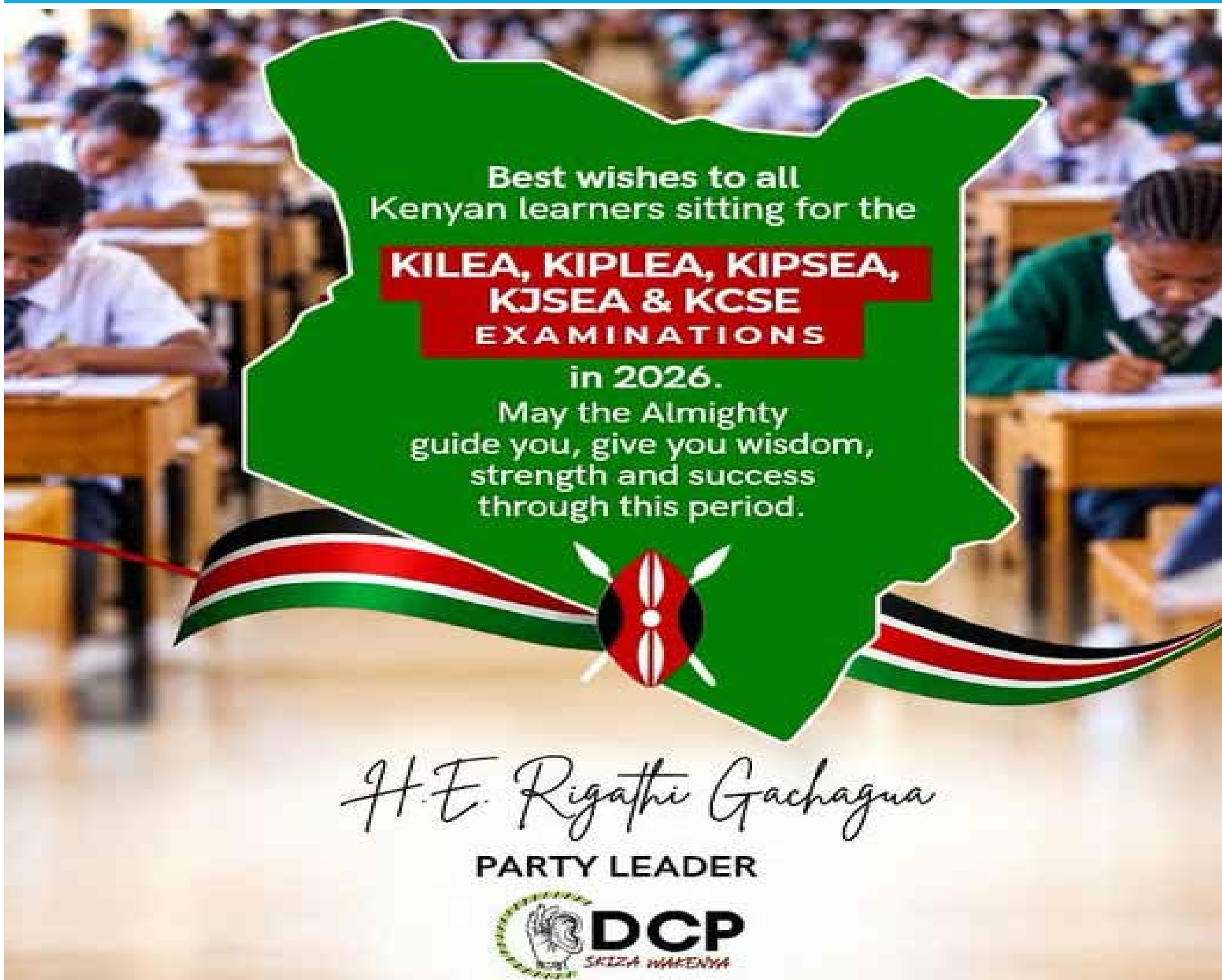


Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro



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H.E. Rigathi Gachagua
PARTY LEADER



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday joined the family of the late Ephantus Muchiri Machangia at his graveside to mark 40 years since his death, in a quiet ceremony that drew together two families bound by decades of friendship and kinship. During the visit, Musyoka came across a tree he had planted at the same homestead on 4th March 2012, while serving as Vice President — now standing tall 14 years on as a living marker of enduring ties. Musyoka traced his connection to the Machangia family through Mzee Machangia's marriage to Nancy Wawira Muchiri, a cousin to his mother, Sarah Malia Musyoka, a bond that has held across generations and bridged communities from Mt Kenya North and Mt Kenya South.



The Kenya Meteorological Department yesterday warned residents and fishing communities along the coastline to brace for dangerous ocean swells, with Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu and Tana River counties identified as being at highest risk. The department cautioned that the anticipated waves posed a significant threat to life and property, particularly for those operating in nearshore and open waters. Fishermen were advised to avoid venturing out to sea until conditions improved, while coastal residents in low-lying areas were urged to stay clear of the shoreline. Local authorities in the five counties were placed on alert to coordinate emergency response should the situation deteriorate. The meteorological service said it was closely monitoring developments and would issue further updates as conditions evolved.



Four suspects held at Itabua Police Station in Embu escaped yesterday after digging a hole through the wall of their holding cell, in what officers described as a calculated and coordinated breakout. The incident, which occurred in the early hours of the morning, left the facility's security arrangements under immediate scrutiny. The four had reportedly been in custody for varying offences and are believed to have used an improvised tool to tunnel through the cell wall over several hours, exploiting what investigators suspect were structural weaknesses in the ageing infrastructure. Station commanders confirmed the escape and said a manhunt was under way. The Director of Criminal Investigations has been notified, and officers from neighbouring stations have been deployed to assist in tracking down the fugitives.



Water and Sanitation Cabinet Secretary Alice Wahome yesterday pushed back against growing political dissent in the Mount Kenya region, insisting that President William Ruto's administration had delivered equitably to the area and that its residents had no cause to shift political allegiance ahead of the 2027 general election. Speaking in remarks that appeared directed at opposition figures intensifying their outreach in the region, Wahome said Mount Kenya had received its fair share of government investment and development resources. She urged residents to resist what she described as attempts to mislead them on the region's political direction. Her comments come amid heightened competition for Mount Kenya's substantial electoral bloc, with several opposition formations, including former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party, actively courting the vote.



Former Kakamega Senator Cleophas Malala yesterday claimed that he and Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua had reached an understanding to back Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna as their joint presidential candidate in the 2027 general election. Malala said the agreement emerged from ongoing political consultations aimed at assembling a broad opposition alliance capable of mounting a credible challenge to President William Ruto's administration. The disclosure, if confirmed, would represent a significant development in Kenya's shifting pre-election landscape, bringing together Gachagua's Mount Kenya base and Sifuna's western alliance networks under a single presidential ticket. Neither Gachagua nor Sifuna had publicly confirmed the arrangement at the time of going to press, and the durability of such cross-regional deals has historically proved difficult to sustain.



Embakasi East Member of Parliament Babu Owino yesterday accused former Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja of approving the construction of the collapsed Eastleigh building despite subsequently claiming it lacked the necessary authorisation, describing the contradiction as a deliberate lie to Kenyans. Owino alleged that Sakaja had collected a bribe of KSh120 million in exchange for approving the structure and demanded that he take full responsibility for the tragedy. The allegations added fresh political heat to an incident already drawing intense public scrutiny. Sakaja had not responded to the accusations at the time of going to press. Authorities are investigating the circumstances surrounding the building's approval and subsequent collapse.



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Politics Muturi was direct. “Any restriction must be lawful, necessary and proportionate.”

Muturi demands binding livestreaming rules for 2027 polls to prevent repeat of 2022 chaos

With the Elections Act row barely resolved, Kenya’s former Attorney General warns that without enforceable protocols, the next results night could prove even more explosive

BY Grace Wanja

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi has called for a binding protocol governing the livestreaming of election results ahead of the August 2027 general election, warning that the disruptions witnessed during the 2022 presidential announcement at Bomas of Kenya must never be allowed to recur.

Muturi, a former Attorney General and Speaker of the National Assembly, urged the Ministry of Information, the Media Council of Kenya, political parties and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to convene urgent consultations and agree on enforceable guidelines well before the next election. His intervention arrives at a moment of heightened public sensitivity around electoral transparency, following weeks of public alarm over proposed amendments to the Elections Act that initially appeared to threaten the legal requirement for livestreaming results at polling stations.

“The 2022 experience at Bomas of Kenya showed how interruptions in the live communication of election results can fuel suspicion, erode public trust and heighten political tensions,” Muturi said. “Kenya must not repeat this mistake.” He called for



Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi opening party office in past

a protocol that would guarantee public access to electoral information, require clear explanations whenever livestreaming is interrupted and establish contingency measures to address technical failures before they become political crises.

The legal backdrop to his call is significant. The Elections (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2024, sparked widespread public concern after reports emerged that Clause 22 sought to replace Section 39 of the Elections Act — the provision that governs the transmission and declaration of results and includes the requirement for an IEBC livestreaming mechanism. The National Assembly subsequently deleted Clause 22 following a High Court judgment delivered on 22nd

September, which upheld the constitutionality of Section 39 and its associated regulations. Parliamentary Affairs Principal Secretary Aurelia Rono confirmed that the deletion preserved subsection 1G, which explicitly requires the IEBC to establish a livestreaming mechanism for results announced at polling stations. Government Spokesperson Charles Owino offered similar assurances, stating that the government remained committed to transparent communication of results.

The Bill, passed by the National Assembly with amendments on 22nd October, now returns to the Senate under Article 110(4) of the Constitution. The legal requirement for livestreaming is intact. Muturi’s concern, however,

goes beyond the statute. His proposal addresses implementation — specifically, the question of what happens when livestreams are cut, signals fail or authorities invoke security justifications to restrict coverage.

On that last point, Muturi was direct. “Any restriction must be lawful, necessary and proportionate,” he said, cautioning explicitly against using national security as a blanket justification for suppressing legitimate journalism or denying Kenyans information of public interest. The warning carries the authority of a man who has sat at the intersection of law, politics and public administration for decades and understands precisely how such justifications can be misapplied.

With Kenya now less than ten months from an election taking place against a backdrop of intense political realignment and public anxiety, the architecture of public trust in the results process is not a procedural detail. It is a democratic necessity.

“The time to act is now, not when tensions are already high,” Muturi said. “Kenyans deserve transparency, accountability and timely access to election information.”

On that, there is no room for ambiguity.

Sakaja challenges Kamukunji police over Eastleigh suspect bail



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja

BY Grace Wanja

[@themkenyaintimes](#)

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja yesterday demanded an explanation from Kamukunji Police Station after ten suspects arrested over the collapsed Eastleigh building were reportedly released on a cash bail of KSh50,000 without being presented in court, exposing a critical gap between county enforcement and criminal prosecution.

Sakaja said the County had approved a change of use for the property but had not authorised the architectural plans required for construction. County officers arrested those involved and transferred them to Kamukunji Police Station, as county governments no longer hold prosecutorial powers.

“We enforced the law and arrested those involved. They were reportedly released on a cash bail of KSh50,000 without being taken to court,” Sakaja said. “We want the police

to explain why the suspects were released without being presented in court and why construction was allowed to continue.”

Police records show 14 suspects were booked into custody on 17th June 2026. A separate record indicates ten were subsequently released on the instructions of the Officer Commanding Station. The discrepancy raises unresolved questions about the status of the remaining four suspects.

Sakaja was equally firm on the approvals question. “If the building had been approved for construction, I would have named the officers who approved it so that action could be taken against them,” he said, pushing back against documents circulating online that he described as deliberately misleading.

He has written to the Director of Public Prosecutions arguing for the restoration of county prosecutorial powers. Until that gap is closed, enforcement will keep stopping at the station door.

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Kalonzo and Gachagua to hold presidential ticket talks today as 2027 opposition race takes shape

The meeting between Kenya's two most consequential opposition figures signals the most serious attempt yet to consolidate an anti-Ruto alliance ahead of the August 2027 general election

BY David Kimani

@themtkenyatiimes

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua and Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka are scheduled to meet today for talks over a joint opposition presidential ticket for the August 2027 general election, in what represents the most significant development yet in Kenya's rapidly shifting pre-election political landscape.

The Monday discussions bring together two of the country's most experienced and regionally influential politicians at a moment when the opposition's ability to unite behind a single candidate is widely regarded as the decisive variable in any credible challenge to President William Ruto's re-election bid. The outcome of today's meeting could determine not merely who leads the opposition into 2027, but whether a coherent, disciplined opposition force capable of unseating an incumbent president emerges at all.

Kalonzo, a three-time presidential candidate and former Vice President, commands deep and loyal support across the Ukambani region of eastern Kenya — a bloc whose weight has historically proved decisive in close presidential contests. Gachagua, the impeached former Deputy President, has since his dramatic removal from office established himself as the single most consequential opposition figure in the country. The Democracy for the Citizens Party, which he leads, has grown into one of Kenya's most powerful political forces, commanding formidable organisational depth across Mount Kenya and attracting prominent political heavyweights from Maasailand — giving it a geographic reach that extends well beyond its founding heartland. The party has already demonstrated real electoral credibility, securing three elected ward representatives and one Member of Parliament, a remarkable achievement for a party of its age.

Gachagua's position in the 2027 political equation is, in many respects, unique. He has indicated publicly that he may not personally carry

the party's presidential flag, floating the possibility of passing the baton to DCP Secretary General John Methu. Whether he runs or steps aside, however, his significance is unchanged. As custodian of Kenya's most populous voting bloc — a combined force spanning Mount Kenya and Maasailand — Gachagua is the undisputed kingmaker of the coming election. Whoever secures his endorsement or his party's coalition support enters the race with a structural advantage that no amount of campaign spending can easily replicate. Every serious presidential contender understands this. It is precisely what makes today's meeting with Kalonzo so consequential.

The political arithmetic is compelling for both sides. Mount Kenya, Maasailand and Ukambani together represent an electoral coalition of enormous potential. In 2022, Ruto secured the presidency in part because Gachagua delivered the mountain vote with remarkable discipline, denying the Azimio coalition the regional dominance it needed for victory. A unified Kalonzo-Gachagua arrangement would, in theory, reverse that calculation entirely — assembling the very coalition that denied Azimio victory and redirecting it against the incumbent.

The broader opposition landscape remains complicated, nonetheless. The Wantam brigade — the loose coalition of opposition figures attempting to coalesce around shared anti-government positions — has struggled to translate collective energy into institutional discipline. Questions of who leads the ticket, what each partner receives in return and how regional interests are balanced have bedevilled every previous opposition alliance in Kenyan electoral history. Today's talks are, in that sense, both deeply promising and inherently fragile.

Further complexity is added by reports that Gachagua had separately indicated support for Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna as a potential presidential candidate, a claim made publicly by former Kakamega Senator Cleophas Malala. Neither Gachagua nor Sifuna confirmed that arrangement, and the apparent contradiction



Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua and Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka

between that reported understanding and today's Kalonzo discussions reflects the fluid, multilateral nature of Kenyan opposition negotiations at this stage of an electoral cycle. It also raises a question that today's meeting must begin to answer: is Gachagua conducting genuine negotiations or managing multiple conversations to maximise his bargaining position ahead of a final decision?

The government is watching closely and has not been passive. Water and Sanitation Cabinet Secretary Alice Wahome pushed back publicly against the opposition's intensifying Mount Kenya outreach, insisting that the region had been well served under Ruto's administration. "The entire Mount Kenya region has received its due share from Ruto's administration," Wahome said. "We have not been left behind. Our people have no reason to be persuaded otherwise in terms of political direction for 2027." Her remarks underscored how seriously the ruling establishment regards the threat of a consolidated opposition bloc linking the mountain, Maasailand and Ukambani.

The government's anxiety was further illustrated by the episode involving Kiharu Member of Parliament

Ndindi Nyoro, whom presidential aide Farouk Kibet publicly acknowledged had been deployed as a government-aligned operative within the opposition. "Wewe Ndindi Nyoro, tunakujua. Wewe ni wheelbarrow ndogo," Kibet said — translated: "We know you, Ndindi Nyoro. You are a small wheelbarrow." The disclosure drew widespread attention to the lengths to which the ruling establishment has gone to fragment and manage the mountain vote before it consolidates decisively behind a credible opposition alternative.

For Kalonzo, today's meeting represents both opportunity and risk. His reputation as a man of principle and patience — the persistent bridesmaid of Kenyan presidential politics — has earned him credibility but also raised enduring questions about his ability to close a decisive political deal when it matters most. An alliance with Gachagua, whose political brand is combative and whose regional support rides a powerful wave of genuine grievance, could provide Kalonzo with the electoral momentum and geographic breadth his previous campaigns have lacked. The risk is managing perceptions of seniority on the ticket without alienating his own base in the process.

Both men are also operating against a backdrop of significant economic discontent. Kenya's cost of living crisis, sustained pressure on household incomes and widespread frustration with the pace and fairness of government delivery have created a political environment in which incumbent vulnerability is higher than at any comparable point in recent memory. An opposition that speaks directly to that frustration, and can demonstrate the unity required to act on it, will find receptive audiences from Mombasa to Moyale.

Whether today's meeting produces a durable alliance or merely another chapter in Kenya's long catalogue of promising pre-election coalitions that dissolved under the weight of competing ambitions remains to be seen. Both men know that history intimately. Both have lived its consequences.

The mountain, Maasailand and the east meet today. Whether they march together in August 2027 will define the election — and the country.

Politics The statement was remarkable not merely for its contemptuous tone but for what it revealed. Kibet was not denying that Nyoro had been given a political role

Nyoro's 'small wheelbarrow' moment: How a presidential aide exposed Mount Kenya's most controversial politician

Farouk Kibet's public rebuke of Ndindi Nyoro has confirmed what opposition leaders suspected all along — and President Ruto's Dangote intervention has made the political fallout considerably worse

BY James Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

Presidential aide Farouk Kibet publicly rebuked Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro, effectively confirming that Nyoro had been operating as a government-sponsored political operative within the opposition ranks, and warning him that he had exceeded the boundaries of his assignment — a disclosure that President William Ruto compounded on Sunday with a pointed public statement on the very Dangote shares controversy that had triggered Nyoro's fall from grace.

The sequence of events has stripped away whatever remained of Nyoro's carefully cultivated image as a genuine opposition figure and laid bare the mechanics of what his critics had long described as a calculated strategy to fragment the Mount Kenya vote ahead of the August 2027 general election. In the space of two public statements from men at the heart of the ruling establishment, what months of opposition accusations had failed to establish was confirmed beyond reasonable dispute.

"Wewe Ndindi Nyoro, tunakujua. Wewe ni wheelbarrow ndogo. Hiyo wheelbarrow hatukukupatia uende ukaharibie serikali jina," Kibet said — translated: "We know you, Ndindi Nyoro. You are a small wheelbarrow. That wheelbarrow we did not give you so that you go and damage the government's name."

The statement was remarkable not merely for its contemptuous tone but for what it revealed. Kibet was not denying that Nyoro had been given a political role. He was complaining that Nyoro had gone off-script. The specific offence was Nyoro's public questioning of the allocation of shares in the Dangote refinery — a line of commentary that crossed from permitted political theatre into territory the government found genuinely embarrassing.

Ruto moved to close that embarrassment on Sunday with a characteristically combative explanation.

"Shylocks and brokers wanted to buy shares at the Dangote Refinery for KSh5 so that they could sell them to Dangote himself at more than KSh9," the President said. "But we outsmarted them, and that is why they are making noise everywhere." The statement served a dual purpose — defending the government's handling of the Dangote transaction while simultaneously framing all critics of that process, Nyoro included, as either speculators or their mouthpieces. It was a pointed message, and few who had followed the preceding days' events could have missed its intended target.

Together, the two statements from Kibet and Ruto represent an extraordinary moment of political transparency, however unintentional. A sitting president and his closest aide had, within days of each other, publicly addressed the conduct of a man who had been loudly insisting he was an independent opposition figure. Neither statement treated him as one.

Nyoro had for months positioned himself within the Wantam brigade — a broad opposition coalition bringing together political leaders from across the country — while simultaneously maintaining evident links to the ruling establishment. Democracy for the Citizens Party Secretary General designate John Methu had been among the most vocal in naming the arrangement plainly. During a televised interview, Methu stated that Nyoro was a political project, a carefully placed operative whose purpose was to divide Mount Kenya's substantial electoral bloc rather than provide it with coherent opposition leadership.

Nyoro had fought back with the indignation of a man either genuinely wronged or expertly briefed. He attacked Methu's credibility, denied the mole tag forcefully and presented himself as a principled political figure unfairly targeted by those threatened by his growing influence. Without definitive proof, the accusation could be dismissed as the standard

currency of Kenyan pre-election combat. Kibet and Ruto, between them, supplied that proof.

The political significance of this moment extends well beyond Nyoro's personal fortunes. Mount Kenya remains the single largest electoral bloc in Kenya, and its political direction in 2027 will be decisive. President Ruto carried the region in 2022 through his alliance with then Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, who delivered the mountain vote with precision that proved critical to their combined victory. That alliance has since collapsed spectacularly. Gachagua was impeached, replaced and has since launched the Democracy for the Citizens Party with undisguised presidential ambitions. The mountain is now genuinely contested territory, and both sides understand the stakes.

Into that contest, deploying figures capable of muddying the opposition waters makes obvious strategic sense. A fragmented Mount Kenya vote — split between Gachagua's DCP, a government-aligned faction and various independent operators — is considerably less dangerous to Ruto's 2027 prospects than a unified bloc marching behind a single opposition candidate. Nyoro, positioned within the opposition while remaining tethered to the establishment, was presumably intended to contribute to that fragmentation — attending the right meetings, making the right speeches, raising sufficient doubt about the opposition's coherence to keep potential supporters uncertain.

That strategy has now been publicly compromised by the very people tasked with managing it. Kibet's frustration appears genuine, which raises its own questions about the discipline and coordination of the government's Mount Kenya political operation as 2027 draws closer. An operative whose cover is blown by his own handler is of severely limited further use. Whether Nyoro can recover enough credibility to remain politically relevant in the region is,



Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro



Presidential aide Farouk Kibet

at this point, doubtful.

What is beyond doubt is that the Mount Kenya electorate is watching, and watching with increasing sophistication. The region's voters have demonstrated in successive elections a capacity for collective political decision-making of considerable power. They are also, as this week's disclosures inadvertently demonstrated, the subject of elaborate and sustained political engineering by those who fear what a united mountain vote could achieve.

Methu, whose television accusation Nyoro so forcefully rejected, will be entitled to considerable satisfaction.

He called it early, he called it accurately, and the confirmation came not from an opposition researcher but from the inner circle of State House itself.

In Kenyan politics, the truth has a habit of emerging eventually. This week, it arrived courtesy of a presidential aide with a memorable turn of phrase, a president defending a share deal, and a wheelbarrow that rolled too far from its prescribed path.

The mountain is watching. In 2027, it will remember.

Politics “I have seen others from this region saying that they are also vying for the Deputy President’s seat,” Ruku said.

Ruku turns on Waiguru over deputy president ambitions: ‘That seat is not being contested for’

The Cabinet Secretary’s public rebuke of the Kirinyaga governor exposes deepening tensions within the Mount Kenya wing of Ruto’s coalition ahead of 2027

BY Jack Kamande

📧 @themtkenyatimes

Public Service Cabinet Secretary Geoffrey Ruku publicly rebuked Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru yesterday, accusing her of undermining

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki by openly campaigning for his position and warning that such behaviour threatened to destabilise President William Ruto’s political standing in Mount Kenya ahead of the August 2027 general election.

Speaking at the ACK St. John’s Church in Kiambu County, Ruku was unambiguous in his target and his message. The Deputy President’s position, he argued, is not a prize to be publicly contested — it is the President’s sole prerogative to de-



Public Service Cabinet Secretary Geoffrey Ruku

termine, and anyone who believes otherwise is not merely being presumptuous but is actively undermining the second-in-command’s authority and, by extension, the presidency itself.

“I have seen others from this region saying that they are also vying for the Deputy President’s seat,” Ruku said. “The President is the only one who knows who can help him work — not going online and on podiums saying you will be in the race. That is undermining the President’s seat.” He then made his target explicit. “That kind of behaviour we have seen with the governor of Kirinyaga should stop. If you want that seat, look for President Ruto, you sit down and talk. That seat is not being contested for. The only person who knows the person to occupy it is the President.”

The remarks represent a significant escalation in what has been a quietly simmering tension within Ruto’s Mount Kenya political architecture. Waiguru formally declared her interest in the Deputy President’s slot on 10th October, positioning herself as a candidate for Ruto’s running mate in 2027 with stated ambitions to run for the presidency herself in 2032. She cited her presence alongside Ruto during key international engagements as evidence of her readiness for national leadership and reaffirmed her loyalty to the President, dismissing suggestions she might cross to the Democracy for the Citizens Party led by impeached former Deputy President

Rigathi Gachagua.

Waiguru’s declaration, however bold, landed in politically treacherous terrain. Mount Kenya’s relationship with the Ruto administration has grown considerably more complicated since Gachagua’s impeachment — an event that many in the region experienced as a calculated diminishment of their political representation. Kindiki, a Meru native, was installed as replacement, but his consolidation of genuine Mount Kenya loyalty remains a work in progress. Into that unsettled environment, Waiguru’s public campaign for the deputy presidency introduces fresh variables that the ruling coalition can ill afford.

Ruku’s intervention signals that at least part of Ruto’s inner circle regards her manoeuvring as a net negative — one that risks fragmenting a regional bloc the President

needs unified and focused as the opposition, led by Gachagua’s DCP in alliance with Wiper’s Kalonzo Musyoka, intensifies its own consolidation efforts across the same territory.

The deeper irony is that Waiguru’s public ambition, however disruptive it may be to coalition discipline, reflects a reality that Ruto himself must eventually address. The Deputy President’s position on the 2027 ticket remains, technically, an open question. Every ambitious figure within the President’s coalition knows it. Ruku’s message — sit down, speak privately, stop the public theatre — may well be sound political advice. Whether Waiguru heeds it is another matter entirely.

In Mount Kenya’s volatile pre-election politics, ambition rarely stays quiet for long.



Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru

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Energy There is a necessary distinction between assigning a mandate and establishing the capacity to fulfil it. Formal designation identifies the responsible institution

Kenya's nuclear ambitions: Getting the Konza reactor right

NuPEA's designation as operating agency for the Konza research reactor is a significant step — but institutional competence, regulatory independence and public accountability must now follow

BY James Kilonzo Bwire

@themtkenytimes

The designation of the Nuclear Power and Energy Agency as the operating organisation for Kenya's proposed nuclear research reactor at Konza Technopolis deserves serious public attention. It is not merely an administrative decision about which government body manages a construction project. It is a statement about how Kenya intends to develop scientific expertise, organise institutional responsibility and prepare for the considerable demands of nuclear technology. Its significance extends well beyond the facility itself, touching on whether Kenya can build a nuclear programme defined by genuine competence, rigorous accountability and sustained public value.

The government has placed the development, construction, commissioning, operation and maintenance of the research reactor under NuPEA, along with oversight of its utilisation and eventual decommissioning. That breadth of responsibility makes clear that this project cannot be judged by construction milestones alone. A nuclear research facility requires an organisation capable of managing its entire operational life, including the long period after active research ends. Kenya should treat the designation as the beginning of a demanding institutional obligation, not as evidence that the hardest work is already done.

There is a necessary distinction between assigning

a mandate and establishing the capacity to fulfil it. Formal designation identifies the responsible institution. Effective delivery requires qualified personnel, reliable management systems, adequate resources and clear internal accountability. NuPEA must demonstrate that its organisational arrangements are genuinely appropriate for the responsibilities it has received. Public confidence will depend on that distinction being recognised and respected throughout implementation.

The proposed facility must also be understood on its own terms. A research reactor is not a commercial nuclear power plant, and conflating the two would seriously distort public understanding. The Konza facility is intended to support scientific experiments, materials testing, training and medical applications — not commercial electricity generation. Its relationship with Kenya's broader nuclear power ambitions lies in the expertise and institutional experience it is expected to generate. That relationship matters, but it should never obscure the research reactor's distinct purpose or encourage expectations it cannot meet.

The strongest justification for the project is its potential contribution to domestic scientific capacity. NuPEA has identified the development of scientists, engineers and technical specialists as a central objective. This must remain a practical commitment throughout the programme, not a rhetorical one. Kenya needs more than a completed facility. It needs professionals who can operate it competent-

ly, conduct relevant research and maintain the standards required for its continued responsible use. The value of the reactor will depend substantially on whether the country develops the expertise to use it consistently, rather than relying indefinitely on overseas technical support.

The relationship between the research reactor and Kenya's education system therefore deserves close attention. Universities and technical training institutions should have a clearly defined role in the programme's implementation — not occasional consultations, but sustained involvement in training plans, research priorities and practical learning opportunities. NuPEA should work with these institutions to identify the competencies the facility will require and how they can be developed locally, giving practical meaning to the promise of strengthening national scientific capacity.

Training arrangements must provide a clear progression from classroom learning to supervised practical experience and verified professional readiness. Staff retention deserves equal attention. Investment in specialised training must be accompanied by credible arrangements for career development, professional recognition and continuity of employment. Without these, the objective of building domestic capability risks being undermined by the loss of precisely the people whose preparation demands the greatest sustained institutional commitment. Knowledge must be documented and shared so that essential functions do not become danger-



Cabinet secretary for energy and Petroleum Opiyo Wandayi. | Photo: Courtesy

ously dependent on particular individuals.

Reducing reliance on overseas training should not, however, be confused with reducing international cooperation. Kenya's engagement with the International Atomic Energy Agency supports the development of the technical, regulatory and institutional arrangements required for peaceful nuclear applications. The appropriate objective is a programme in which Kenyan institutions progressively assume greater technical responsibility while remaining open to independent assessment and professional exchange. National ownership becomes meaningful when local competence grows stronger — not when external expertise is dismissed as unnecessary.

The separation of policy direction, regulation and project implementation is particularly important and must be maintained in practice, not merely on paper. The State Department for Energy provides policy direction and oversight; the Kenya Nuclear Regulatory Authority regulates safety, security and safeguards; NuPEA delivers and operates the facility. These responsibilities must remain genuinely distinct. Policy support should never become pressure on the regulator to accommodate implementation deadlines, and NuPEA should not treat government endorsement as a substitute for regulatory approval. Each institution must be free to perform its role without compromising the responsibilities attached to it.

Regulatory independence is an essential condition of credible implementation. A regulator must be able to request

further information, require corrective action and withhold approval when necessary conditions have not been satisfied. Such decisions are not obstacles to national development — they are part of the discipline that makes any nuclear programme credible. Kenya's commitment to this project will be demonstrated as much by its willingness to accept rigorous scrutiny as by its determination to proceed.

The choice of research priorities will be another important test of the programme's seriousness. Broad justifications in healthcare, agriculture and industry provide a general rationale but are insufficient to guide day-to-day scientific work. A detailed research agenda should identify the specific questions the facility is expected to address, the institutions that will participate and the intended users of the results. The anticipated medical applications — particularly the proposed production of isotopes used in diagnosis and treatment — provide an important public interest justification. But the distinction between an anticipated benefit and an established service must remain clear. Public discussion must move beyond general promises about supporting cancer care and address the practical arrangements required to connect research capacity with healthcare delivery.

Public accountability must extend to the project's financial and management arrangements. Procurement, expenditure and institutional performance should all receive appropriate scrutiny. The public deserves clear explanations of what has been

approved, what remains under consideration and which institution is responsible for each decision. Long-term financial preparedness deserves as much attention as the initial development decision. The responsibilities assigned to NuPEA — operation, maintenance and eventual decommissioning — require planning that extends well beyond construction, and approval to establish the facility should not be treated as sufficient assurance that every later requirement has been resolved.

Kenya's nuclear ambitions should ultimately be measured by the quality of the institutions built to implement them. The designation of NuPEA as operating organisation for the proposed Konza research reactor provides a genuine opportunity to strengthen national scientific capacity and develop the experience required for peaceful nuclear applications. But the designation alone guarantees nothing. The agency must demonstrate that it can manage the facility responsibly throughout its operational life while maintaining the standards expected of a credible national nuclear institution.

The real measure of Kenya's nuclear ambition will not be how quickly it announces progress, but how responsibly it develops the capacity to deliver on it. If NuPEA fulfils its mandate with competence and transparency, the Konza research reactor can become an important foundation for Kenya's peaceful nuclear future. The responsibility now is to ensure the promise of the project is matched by the quality of its implementation.

Politics The timing is difficult to read as coincidental. Ukambani is Kalonzo's political heartland, and any serious contest for the presidency must reckon with the region's loyalties

Ruto courts Ukambani with roads and a KSh70B clinker plant as 2027 political contest heats up

The President's development offensive in Kalonzo's backyard carries unmistakable electoral calculation as opposition talks gather momentum

BY Grace Wanja

@themkenyaintimes

President William Ruto yesterday toured Ukambani, announcing a series of road construction projects across Kitui and neighbouring counties and pledging to launch a KSh70 billion clinker manufacturing plant in the region, in a development offensive that carries as much political weight as economic ambition. Speaking during a church service in Mwingi, Ruto outlined an infrastructure programme that his administration says will transform connectivity, industrialise the region's natural resources and create thousands of jobs for young people. The visit, however, arrives at a moment of acute political significance — the day before Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka is scheduled to hold presidential ticket talks with Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, a meeting that could reshape the opposition's challenge to Ruto's re-election bid in August 2027.

The timing is difficult to read as coincidental. Ukambani is Kalonzo's political heartland, and any serious contest for the presidency must reckon with the region's loyalties. By arriving with roads, jobs and a major industrial investment, Ruto is making a direct argument to Ukambani voters: that tangible delivery, not political alliance-building, is the measure by which leadership should be judged.

"I am coming to launch a major clinker company in this area," Ruto told the congregation in Mwingi. "God has

blessed us with various resources. Now we are here in a place where we can get a clinker plant." The announcement was greeted with considerable enthusiasm, and understandably so. The plant, which already supports more than 3,000 workers during its construction phase, is projected to create approximately 4,000 additional jobs for young people once fully operational — a figure that resonates powerfully in a region where youth unemployment remains a persistent and painful reality.

On roads, the President was specific. Construction has already begun on the Vonza-Kisusani road, which will eventually extend to Chandula. A separate road linking Kandwia, Kyuso and Tseikuru towards Usueni is scheduled to begin shortly. In Kibwezi East, Makueni, Ruto announced plans to commence work on the Machinery Road, responding to direct requests from local residents for improved connectivity. He framed these projects as part of a broader national strategy to open up rural areas, link communities to markets and create the economic conditions in which investment can thrive.

Beyond Ukambani, Ruto referenced a wider portfolio of industrial investments to reinforce the narrative of a presidency delivering equitably across the country. He pointed to a factory in West Pokot where 2,500 young people have secured employment, projects under construction in Taita Taveta and a refinery in Lamu as evidence that his administration's development agenda extends from coast to border. "We must keep petty

politics out of our investors and our investment opportunities as a nation," he said, in remarks that served simultaneously as a policy statement and a pointed message to opposition figures he accuses of prioritising political positioning over national progress.

The Mui Basin, one of the region's most significant untapped economic assets, also featured in the President's announcements. Ruto said his government is actively exploring investment opportunities in the basin, where another major industrial project is expected to be developed in partnership with local leaders and communities. The basin, known for its substantial coal deposits, has long been identified as a potential driver of industrial development in Kitui County, and any credible plan to activate it would represent a meaningful economic intervention for the region.

The political subtext of Sunday's tour, however, is impossible to ignore. Kenya is now less than ten months from a general election that analysts describe as the most consequential in a generation. Ruto faces a re-election environment defined by public anxiety over the cost of living, frustration with the pace of economic delivery and a growing opposition coalition that, if it achieves the unity its constituent parts have been discussing, could present the most formidable electoral challenge the incumbent has faced.

Ukambani sits at the centre of that political calculation. Kalonzo has three times run for the presidency and three times fallen short, in part because he has never commanded the



President William Ruto launches project Ukambani

kind of cross-regional coalition that wins Kenyan elections outright. His talks with Gachagua, whose Democracy for the Citizens Party commands both Mount Kenya and significant influence in Maasailand, represent precisely the kind of alliance-building that could change that equation. Together, a Kalonzo-Gachagua arrangement would link Ukambani, Mount Kenya and Maasailand into a coalition of formidable electoral weight.

Ruto's visit to Mwingi, laden with announcements and the promise of imminent ground-breaking ceremonies, is his most direct response yet to that threat. The message is clear: whatever the opposition is offering in meeting rooms

in Nairobi, his administration is offering it in tarmac and factory jobs on the ground in Kitui.

Water and Sanitation Cabinet Secretary Alice Wahome made the same argument for Mount Kenya earlier this week, insisting that the region had received its fair share from the Ruto administration and had no reason to shift political allegiance. The President's Ukambani tour suggests the government is now extending that message eastward, seeking to demonstrate relevance and delivery in territory that opposition figures are actively trying to consolidate.

Whether the strategy succeeds will depend on how

Ukambani voters weigh the two competing propositions on offer. On one side, a sitting president bearing construction contracts and industrial investment. On the other, a political alliance promising regional dignity, electoral leverage and the tantalising possibility that one of their own could finally reach State House.

In Kenyan politics, development announcements and political alliances have both, at different times, proved decisive. In August 2027, Ukambani may determine which one matters more.



President William Ruto launches project Ukambani

Health The statistics carry a particular urgency when considered alongside the age at which African women are being diagnosed

Breast cancer is killing African women too young — and the system is failing them

New global data exposes a continent-wide crisis in early detection, as experts call for risk-based screening and greater investment in diagnostic infrastructure

BY Tonia Frame

@themtkenyatimes

Breast cancer is the most diagnosed cancer among women across Africa and the leading cause of cancer-related deaths on the continent, yet the systems needed to detect and treat it remain dangerously inadequate for millions of women. New estimates published in 2026 by the International Agency for Research on Cancer reveal that Africa recorded approx-

imately 225,643 new breast cancer cases and around 100,070 deaths in 2024 alone — figures that experts say reflect not just the scale of the disease but the depth of a healthcare crisis that demands urgent attention.

The statistics carry a particular urgency when considered alongside the age at which African women are being diagnosed. A 2025 study spanning five sub-Saharan African countries found that nearly one in five women diagnosed with breast cancer — 21.9

per cent — was under the age of 40. That finding challenges assumptions about who is most at risk and raises serious questions about screening programmes designed around age thresholds that may not reflect African realities.

St. George's University public health expert Dr. Tonia Frame, who serves as Assistant Professor and Director of the Global Health Unit in the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, argues that age alone is an insufficient guide to screen-



Dr. Tonia Frame, Assistant Professor and Director of the Global Health Unit at SGU.

ing decisions. “Breast cancer risk does not suddenly begin at a particular birthday, and two women of the same age may have very different risk profiles,” she said. “Women should be encouraged to become familiar with the usual appearance and feel of their breasts and to seek prompt clinical evaluation for unexplained breast changes.”

Frame added that in Africa, where breast cancer often presents at a comparatively younger age and access to high-quality imaging is uneven, discussions about early detection must extend well beyond age-based thresholds. Family history, inherited susceptibility, previous breast findings and other recognised risk factors, she said, can all help determine whether a woman may benefit from earlier assessment, specialist referral or additional imaging.

The case for a risk-informed approach is compelling. Women with a family history of breast or ovarian cancer — particularly where diagnoses occurred at younger ages, where cancer affected both breasts, or where multiple relatives were affected — may warrant earlier assessment before the age of 40. Those carrying BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene variants may require screening beginning as early as 25. Women with dense breast tissue, which can reduce the effectiveness of mammography and is independently associated with higher risk, may need supplemental imaging such as an MRI. Women with pre-

vious high-risk breast lesions or abnormal biopsy results should be managed through an individualised plan developed in consultation with their physician.

The challenge, however, is that millions of African women have no meaningful access to any of these options. A 2026 systematic review and meta-analysis found that only 13 per cent of women in sub-Saharan Africa had ever undergone a clinical breast examination, with uptake shaped by education levels, household wealth, health insurance coverage and contact with healthcare services. The World Health Organisation's Regional Office for Africa has identified significant gaps in diagnostic infrastructure and critical shortages of specialist healthcare personnel as key drivers of late diagnosis and poor survival outcomes.

Closing those gaps requires sustained, structural investment. Experts point to several immediate priorities: strengthening clinical breast examination and referral pathways; training frontline health workers to identify and respond to concerning symptoms; expanding access to diagnostic imaging and pathology services; ensuring timely follow-up after abnormal findings; and monitoring outcomes across socioeconomic and geographic groups to identify where the system is failing most acutely.

Artificial intelligence is also being evaluated as a potential tool to support early detection

in settings where imaging capacity and specialist availability are limited. Depending on the technology and clinical context, AI systems may assist with triage, image interpretation, workflow prioritisation or risk estimation. Frame urges caution, however, about treating technology as a solution in isolation. “Integrating community health workers, portable AI technology and digital referral pathways within primary health care could potentially help reach women who face geographic, financial or health-system barriers,” she said. “The most important feature is not the algorithm alone, but the complete pathway linking awareness, initial assessment, referral, diagnostic confirmation and treatment. AI output is not a diagnosis.”

For individual women navigating an unequal system, Frame and her colleagues advocate a shared decision-making approach in which patients are encouraged to ask their physicians direct questions: when should screening begin given their personal risk factors; whether their family history warrants formal risk assessment; whether genetic counselling is appropriate; how breast density affects the interpretation of their mammogram; and which services are locally available should an abnormality be found. A more personalised approach, Frame emphasises, does not mean more tests for every woman. It means ensuring that those most likely to benefit from earlier or more intensive screening are identified, while avoiding unnecessary procedures for those who are not.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month serves as an annual reminder of how much remains undone. Across Africa, the most urgent task is not simply raising awareness but ensuring that every woman with a concerning symptom or abnormal finding receives timely assessment, accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment — without the delays that are currently costing lives.

The data is unambiguous. The knowledge exists. What Africa needs now is the political will, the investment and the infrastructure to act on both.



What is not started today will not be completed tomorrow



When it is not started, how will it be completed?
When there is no basement, there is no building.
Never postpone the work you can do today.
Never say, "I'll do it tomorrow,"
Or, "I'll start when I am fully prepared and fully

ready"
Such occasions will never come.

A monument starts with a small brick,
A book starts with only a word.
Everything has a humble beginning.
If you start, the work will continue slowly,
And gradually, it will be completed
Without even noticing how it started.
If we don't start, then how will it finish?

Brinda. D
Creative writers
GHS Melpattampakkam
India

Anger is like a matchstick; it destroys itself before destroying others



Anger is not a good emotion.
It destroys the person who has it.
Whoever gets angry may lose everything.
If you get angry,
you may end up empty-handed.
Anger is like a flood
it washes away all the treasures.

It is like a storm that destroys beautiful things,
too.
So, never let anger control you. When you feel
angry,
stay calm for some time.
Then, you can speak and make decisions wisely.
Remember,
do not let anger control you because it is a
harmful emotion.
So, live with a peaceful mind and without anger.
This will lead you to a pleasant life.

__G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Status signifies one's social capacity in society



But greater is humanity
As it measures the inner value of ability
Honour / possessions are merely acquired
prosperity

Whereas gratitude & kindness dignifies integrity
Humanity satisfies soul exhibiting beauty
And refers to be loyal without publicity
It judges the soul confining mutuality
Status is only the sheild providing respectability
But humanity is the content of emotional
sensitivity
Proving to be greater than status shaping
cultured identity.

G.Sarala.

My dreams



I have many beautiful dreams in my life. Every
day, I learn something new and discover the world
around me. I love reading books, writing stories,

and spending time with my family.
I want to become a kind and helpful person. I
believe that every mistake teaches me a lesson.
I will always try my best and never give up on my
dreams.
My dream is to make my parents proud and bring
happiness to others. I hope to create a better
world through love, kindness, and care.

M.R.Hanshiga
Grade 8-C
John Dewey Matriculation Higher Secondary
School Panruti Cuddalore.

My winged visitor



A pleasant morning, with a cool breeze blowing,
I saw something on my windowsill, gently glowing.
Silky and shiny, with a glimmering guise,
I wondered if a butterfly lay hidden inside.

Then my eyes fell upon a picture-perfect sight,
A baby bird perched, delicate and bright.
I offered some grains and water to my guest,

But it neither ate nor drank, nor seemed at rest.

I moved away to show my benevolence,
Giving the little bird space and silence.
It turned its head, searching all around,
As if its mother's presence were the comfort it
found.

Then the mother arrived, her wings fluttering
wide,
And took her little one safely by her side.
In the blink of an eye, they vanished from view,
Leaving me with a memory tender and true.

By, Mrs. Gulzar Jahan
PUMS CHINNA OBULAPURAM
Gummidipoondi
Tiruvallur Dt

Prayer of Linganaickanahalli Students



Oh! Sky, you cry for us with drops,
To declare holiday today,
But oh! Administration, you think differently,
Our prayer may go in vain.
We students experience pain,

When it is raining without a gain.

Oh admin, open your eyes,
See the dark rainy sky,
And see our tearful eyes.
We see the news with blurry eyes.

Oh no, our district not in the news,
We hate news, all useless news.
Oh heaven, you showed mercy with rain,
But we go with pain.
What a district! What a district!

Written by
N. Sivakumar
GHS. Linganaickanahalli

Success takes time



A teacher works for years,
To guide young minds and calm their fears.
Step by step, the students learn,
With every lesson, their knowledge grows in turn

When things go wrong, we stop our fight,
And leave our dreams far from our sight.

Success is not a race to win,
It takes hard work and strength within.
Let struggles come, let challenges stay,
We will find our own successful way.

We have our dreams, we have our will,
With faith and effort, we climb the hill.
No matter how long the journey may be,
We must believe in what we wish to see.

No one becomes a doctor overnight,
Nor does an engineer reach heights in a night.
Every dream needs time to grow,
Like a tiny seed that we carefully sow.

So never give up, never lose hope,
With courage and patience, we learn to cope.
Keep working hard, let your dreams shine bright,
Your day will come, just keep up the fight!

Yet why do we hurry to achieve success?
Why do we lose hope in times of distress?

V JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer

Safety The crash occurred at approximately 7am in the Kanga area when a bus and a lorry collided head-on. Twenty people died at the scene.

NTSA calls for road safety to be declared a national disaster after 24 die in Mtito Andei crash

Kenya loses more than 5,000 lives on its roads every year — and the authority charged with preventing those deaths says the crisis has now reached emergency level

BY Anne Njeri

 [@themtkenyatimes](https://twitter.com/themtkenyatimes)

The National Transport and Safety Authority yesterday called for road safety to be declared a national disaster following a collision on the Nairobi-Mombasa Highway near Mtito Andei on Sunday that killed 24 people, making it the second fatal mass-casualty accident on the same road within a month.

The crash occurred at approximately 7am in the Kanga area when a bus and a lorry collided head-on. Twenty people died at the scene. Four others succumbed to their injuries while receiving treatment at nearby hospitals. The

dead are the latest addition to a toll that NTSA Director General Nashon Odhiambo Kondiwa says has long since passed the threshold of a manageable transport problem and entered the territory of a national emergency.

“Road crashes have reached a national emergency level, with about 20,000 crashes claiming over 5,000 lives annually, destroying families, overwhelming our health system and eroding economic productivity,” Kondiwa said in a statement released on Sunday. He argued that a formal disaster declaration would unlock whole-of-government coordination, secure adequate and dedicated funding and establish measurable

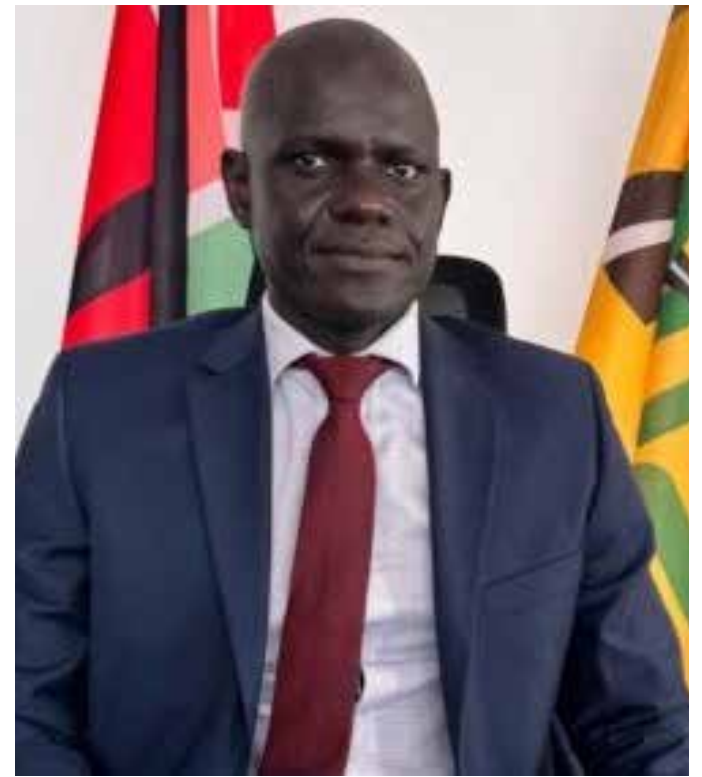
accountability across road agencies, the National Police Service, the health sector and county governments. “Our goal is simple: save lives, reduce fatalities and serious injuries, and protect Kenya’s human capital. Road safety is not just a transport issue — it is a national development and security priority,” he added.

The weight of those words is sharpened considerably by the timing. On 3rd October, Catholic pilgrims from St. Mathias Mulumba Catholic Church in Mikindani, Mombasa County, died in a multi-vehicle crash at Mlima Kiu in Makueni County, killing 17 people. The Kanga collision, occurring on the same highway less than four weeks later, has reignited

public anger over a stretch of road that has become synonymous with carnage and institutional failure.

The Nairobi-Mombasa Highway is Kenya's most economically critical road corridor, carrying the bulk of freight traffic between the port of Mombasa and the interior. It is also, by any honest reckoning, one of the country's most dangerous. The combination of heavy commercial vehicles, long-distance buses, inadequate road markings on certain sections and drivers operating under severe fatigue creates conditions in which tragedy is not merely possible but statistically predictable.

NTSA's call for a disaster declaration is significant because it represents the authority openly acknowledging that the existing framework — periodic enforcement campaigns, public awareness



NTSA Director General Nashon Kondiwa

messaging, post-accident investigations — is insufficient. What is required, Kondiwa argues, is a structural escalation: emergency-level resourcing, cross-agency coordination and political commitment at the highest level of government.

Whether that commitment materialises will determine whether Sunday's 24 deaths become a turning point or

simply another entry in a register that grows longer every year.

Kenya has the data. It has the recommendations. What it has consistently lacked is the sustained political will to act on them before the next disaster strikes.

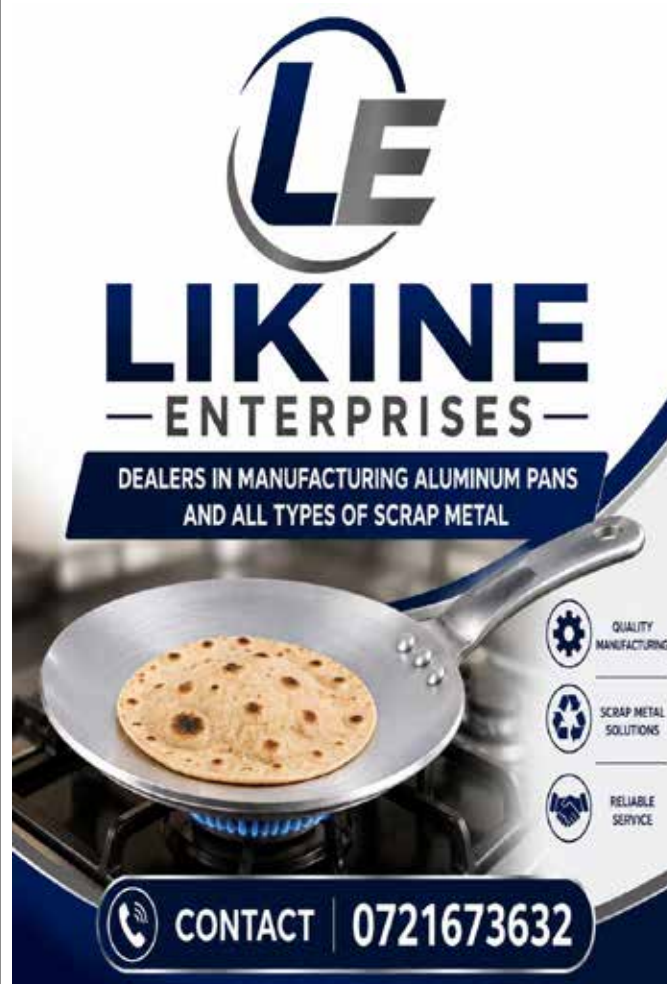
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Education Supporting the formation of this task team does not mean assuming it will automatically solve every problem facing schools

Julius Ogamba's task force: The answer to Kenya's school unrest crisis?

Kenya's newly appointed multi-stakeholder team has a rare mandate — to ask the hard questions previous inquiries never resolved

BY Ashford Kimani

@themkenyatimes

The appointment of a Multi-Stakeholder Task Team on Unrest in Schools by Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba is a welcome development that deserves the support of every stakeholder who cares about the future of education in Kenya. At a time when school unrest continues to raise questions about safety, discipline, institutional leadership and the welfare of learners, the country needs a sober, comprehensive and evidence-based examination of the problem.

The decision, published in the Kenya Gazette yesterday, offers an opportunity to move beyond the familiar cycle of condemnation, speculation, punishment and temporary calm. Kenya must establish why school unrest keeps recurring, why previous recommendations have not sufficiently addressed the problem, and what must change to prevent future incidents.

Supporting the formation of this task team does not mean assuming it will automatically solve every problem facing schools. Rather, it means recognising that a persistent national challenge deserves a coordinated investigation, informed by evidence and involving people who understand the education system from different perspectives.

The first reason to support the task team is the need to confront the root causes of school unrest. Whenever unrest occurs, public discussions often gravitate towards student indiscipline, bad influence, social media and the apparent failure of school administrators. These explanations may contain elements of truth, but they cannot adequately explain every incident.



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba

Why do learners in different schools, regions and categories sometimes resort to unrest? Are the causes similar, or does each institution have its own particular circumstances? What role do school leadership, relationships between teachers and learners, peer pressure, bullying, examination anxiety and the general school environment play? These are questions that require investigation rather than assumptions. The task team's mandate to examine immediate, underlying and systemic causes is therefore particularly important. By considering differences in region, gender, age, disability and boarding status, the team can avoid treating every school as though it operates under identical conditions.

The second compelling reason is the opportunity to examine previous recommendations. Kenya has repeatedly responded to education challenges through committees, inquiries and policy reviews. Yet the recurrence of similar problems raises a fundamental question: have earlier recommendations been implemented effectively? The Gazette specifically directs

the team to study previous reports, establish their implementation status and identify barriers to implementation. This is an important departure from simply producing another report containing recommendations that may eventually gather dust on government shelves.

The country does not necessarily suffer from a shortage of ideas. In some instances, the real problem may be inadequate implementation, weak enforcement, insufficient resources or institutional resistance to change. The task team should establish which recommendations remain relevant, which were never implemented and why. There is little value in repeatedly prescribing solutions without examining why previous prescriptions failed. A thorough implementation audit could help the Ministry of Education distinguish between problems requiring new policies and those demanding better execution of existing ones.

Third, the task team deserves support because it places school safety and disaster preparedness at the centre of the investigation. Every parent expects a school to provide a

secure environment in which children can learn and develop. Every teacher deserves to work in an institution where safety is taken seriously. School safety cannot, however, be reduced to locking gates, conducting occasional inspections or increasing surveillance. It requires functional infrastructure, reliable emergency procedures, appropriate safeguarding measures and clearly understood responsibilities. The proposed review of safety policies, security arrangements, emergency preparedness and school infrastructure could expose weaknesses that might otherwise remain unnoticed until tragedy strikes.

Fourth, the task team's composition offers an opportunity to bring different perspectives into a national conversation often dominated by isolated explanations. The Gazette names 52 members and eight joint secretaries. This broad representation creates room for a more comprehensive examination of a challenge that cuts across several dimensions of education and society. The value of a multi-stakeholder team will, however, depend on the quality of its deliberations, the evidence it gathers and its willingness to listen to those directly affected. Learners, teachers, parents, school heads and other education stakeholders should have meaningful opportunities to contribute their experiences.

Students must not be treated merely as subjects of investigation. Their experiences of school life, relationships with authority, academic pressure and access to support services may provide important clues about the conditions that precede unrest. Equally, teachers and school administrators should be heard without automatically being portrayed as either the problem or the solution. Effective investigation requires fairness, confidenti-

ality where appropriate and a willingness to distinguish individual misconduct from institutional shortcomings.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the task team's mandate is its willingness to examine the cost and organisation of education. The Gazette directs the team to assess boarding school models, uniform costs, household financial circumstances, government capitation grants and the unit cost of education from primary through senior school. Educational unrest cannot responsibly be investigated without examining the environment in which learners live and study. The cost of uniforms, food, learning materials and other requirements can place real pressure on families, while questions surrounding the adequacy and timely disbursement of capitation funding may affect an institution's ability to provide essential services. These factors should not automatically be blamed for unrest — their actual influence must be established through evidence — but examining them is necessary if Kenya hopes to address underlying difficulties rather than merely respond to visible symptoms.

The review of boarding schools is equally timely. Boarding institutions serve important educational and social purposes, but their organisation requires careful attention to learner welfare, supervision, recreation and the management of daily routines. The task team should avoid blanket conclusions that condemn boarding schools as a category, identifying instead practices that work, weaknesses requiring correction and circumstances under which different school models best serve learners.

The influence of changing social and technological realities also demands attention. Smartphones, social media,

misinformation and peer networks affect how learners communicate, organise and respond to events within and beyond school. Technology should not, however, become a convenient scapegoat. The investigation must establish when and how these factors contribute to unrest, while recognising that digital communication can equally support learning and responsible engagement.

The success of this initiative will ultimately depend on what happens after the investigation concludes. The task team must work within a clear timetable, consult widely and present practical recommendations with defined implementation responsibilities. The Ministry of Education should communicate which recommendations it will adopt, the resources required and the timelines involved. Progress must be monitored, and where recommendations are not implemented, responsible institutions should account for why. Otherwise, Kenya risks repeating the familiar experience of commissioning investigations without achieving meaningful change.

The country must also resist approaching school unrest exclusively through punishment. Learners who engage in violence or destruction must be held accountable, but accountability should accompany prevention, guidance, counselling and the creation of genuinely safe learning environments. The objective must be bigger than stopping the next disturbance. It must be about building institutions where learners feel safe, teachers are respected, school leaders are supported and parents have confidence in the system. Kenya does not need another season of outrage followed by silence. It needs evidence, accountability and sustained reform. If this task team delivers on those three fronts, its work could mark a genuine turning point in the nation's effort to make schools safer and better equipped to fulfil their mission.

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Politics The coming week is therefore likely to feature further consultations, regional meetings and public declarations about unity

Kenya's political weather: Opposition realignments, public accountability and the test of leadership

“Political promises are made in the language of hope, but their true meaning is revealed in the lives of the people. A government is judged not by the applause it commands, nor an opposition by the crowds it gathers, but by the answers both provide to a citizen struggling to make ends meet.”



BY Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo

fkkipchelimo@yahoo.com

As Kenya enters the final week of October, the political atmosphere is shifting from the spectacle of Mashujaa Day in Eldoret to the more exacting business of accountability. H.E President William Ruto used the October 20 celebrations to defend his administration's record and outline his economic ambitions ahead of the 2027 General Election. Yet the national mood will be shaped less by ceremonial assurances than by household expenses, political realignments, public safety and the government's capacity to turn commitments into measurable improvements.

The opposition's activities provide the first important signal. On October 25, Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka attended a memorial service in Kirinyaga ahead of planned Mount Kenya engagements, while Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party prepared separate mobilisation activities in Nyahururu. Meanwhile, Fred Matiang'i, Martha Karua and Ndindi Nyoro had appeared together at a Njoro engagement on October 21. These parallel ini-

tiatives suggest an opposition with substantial mobilisation potential but several competing centres of influence. These scenarios captures the central dilemma: whether separate political ambitions can eventually produce a coherent national alternative.

The coming week is therefore likely to feature further consultations, regional meetings and public declarations about unity. Nevertheless, political proximity should not be confused with a concluded coalition. The decisive questions concern candidate selection, leadership arrangements, shared economic policies and the management of competing ambitions. President Ruto retains the advantages of incumbency and an established national political platform, but the opposition could strengthen its position if it replaces personality-driven competition with credible policy coordination. The likeliest immediate development is continued bargaining rather than a definitive settlement of the presidential contest.

Mashujaa Day remains important because the President's Eldoret address effectively placed his administration's record before the electorate. The speech highlighted economic stabilisation, agricultural reforms, affordable housing, health financing, education and employment initiatives. These are claims and commitments that now require closer ex-

amination against implementation evidence. The political significance of the North Rift extends beyond the celebrations: residents of Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Nandi, Elgeyo-Marakwet, West Pokot and Baringo will increasingly measure national leadership against roads completed, markets improved, farmers' incomes protected and employment opportunities created. Regional loyalty cannot indefinitely substitute for tangible delivery.

Economic pressure will remain the electorate's most persistent concern. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reported annual inflation of 6.8 per cent in September 2026, with food and non-alcoholic beverages rising by 9.5 per cent and transport by 15.6 per cent over twelve months. These statistics provide a more meaningful measure of public anxiety than political rhetoric. For a household balancing food, rent, health, electricity, transport and school expenses, even claims of macroeconomic improvement offer limited reassurance when disposable income remains under pressure. The government will need to demonstrate that economic growth is translating into affordable living, while opposition leaders must explain how their alternatives would be financed and implemented.

The Eastleigh building collapse has introduced a more immediate test of institu-



Rigathi Gachagua of Democracy for the Citizens party and Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka

tional accountability. Rescue operations continued over the weekend as authorities sought people believed to be trapped. Reports indicated that the building lacked an occupation certificate, raising serious questions about construction oversight and enforcement. The coming week should bring closer scrutiny of approvals, inspections, professional responsibility and the effectiveness of disaster preparedness. Investigations must establish the facts before assigning blame, but the recurring pattern of structural failures demands more than condolences and temporary enforcement campaigns.

Public health presents another consequential challenge. By October 24, Kenya had recorded nine confirmed cases of Bundibugyo Ebola virus disease and two deaths, according to the Kenya News Agency. Authorities reported that the cases remained within one cluster of known contacts, with no evidence of community transmission. The official report underscores the importance of surveillance, quarantine, protective equipment and reliable public communication. The week ahead will test whether containment efforts remain effective. Government communication must be prompt and evidence-based, reassuring the public without minimising the seriousness of the outbreak.

Education financing could also intensify public pressure. On October 25, Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Og-

amba said the government was negotiating with the National Treasury and the Salaries and Remuneration Commission to improve its rejected KSh9.7 billion offer to university lecturers. The nationwide strike, which began on October 2, remained unresolved. The latest report suggests that renewed negotiations may be possible within days. A credible funding commitment could offer relief; continued delay would deepen disruption for students and universities.

Electoral transparency will increasingly occupy political debate as parties prepare for 2027. Any proposed changes to election-result transmission or publication must be assessed against constitutional requirements, institutional independence and public confidence. The same accountability standard should apply to unresolved concerns such as the Finland education programme in Uasin Gishu and the reported KSh15 million county disability allocation. Families deserve credible avenues for redress, while ben-

eficiaries of public funds deserve transparent information on approvals, disbursements and outcomes.

Between October 26 and November 1, Kenya is therefore likely to experience intensified opposition mobilisation, continued coalition negotiations and mounting scrutiny of government performance. No rally, speech or political meeting can reliably predict the eventual election result. The stronger indicators will be whether leaders demonstrate unity without sacrificing principle, respond constructively to emergencies and provide verifiable evidence of delivery. Kenya's political weather remains unsettled, but its underlying demand is unmistakable: citizens want leadership that listens, institutions that work and promises that survive contact with reality.

“The real measure of leadership is not how loudly it speaks when the nation is watching, but how faithfully it serves when the cameras have turned away.”



Fred Matiang'i, Martha Karua and Ndindi Nyoro

Accidents What makes this tragedy particularly difficult to accept is that it follows closely on another accident along the same highway just weeks ago, which claimed 17 lives

Kenya’s deadly roads: At least 22 die in Nairobi–Mombasa Highway crash near Mtito Andei

The Nairobi–Mombasa Highway has claimed dozens of lives in weeks — and Kenyans are running out of patience for condolences without action

BY Yvonne Wambui
@themkenyentimes

Kenya is mourning again. At least 22 people died yesterday when a passenger bus and a lorry collided in the Kanga area near Mtito Andei along the Nairobi–Mombasa Highway. Among the dead were passengers returning from a funeral in western Kenya — people who had gone to bury one of their own, only to meet the same fate on the road home.

Behind every statistic is a hu-



Kanga head-on collision

man being. A parent. A breadwinner. A child. Families who were waiting for a joyful return are now preparing for another burial. The grief is immeasurable, and for many households, the loss extends beyond sorrow into financial ruin.

What makes this tragedy particularly difficult to accept is that it follows closely on another accident along the same highway just weeks ago, which claimed 17 lives. The same road. The same pattern. The same unanswered questions. Are enough measures being taken to protect Ken-

yans on their roads?

The familiar cycle must end. Leaders issue condolences. Kenyans grieve. Promises are made. Then another accident happens, and the conversation begins again from scratch. This country deserves more than sympathy. It deserves action.

Drivers must internalise a simple truth: every passenger aboard their vehicle is a human being with a family, a future and people who love them. Speeding, reckless overtaking and driving while fatigued are not personal risks — they are decisions that can

destroy entire families in seconds. Transport companies bear equal responsibility. Vehicles must be roadworthy, and drivers must be qualified, rested and held to account.

The government and road safety authorities must move beyond investigations that produce reports and nothing more. Dangerous stretches must be identified and fixed. Traffic law enforcement must be consistent and consequential. Fatal accidents must be thoroughly investigated, with findings made public and action taken against those responsible.

Kenya cannot keep burying its people and treating each crash as inevitable. Some accidents are genuinely unforeseeable. Dangerous driving is not. The Kanga tragedy must be the moment this country decides that enough lives have been lost.

No journey should end in a coffin.

Can I live the life my mother could not?



BY Kurtklicheva Sabrona Umarovna
@themkenyentimes

Sometimes, when a girl thinks about her dreams, she instinctively looks back at her mother’s life. What did she wish for when she was young? Which dreams came true, and which dissolved quietly amid the daily demands of survival? Perhaps an unspoken dream still lives in her

heart, patient and silent after all these years.

Sometimes I find myself asking: can I live the life my mother could not?

This is not merely the private thought of one girl. It is a question shared by millions of daughters across different countries and languages, each carrying similar hopes. Every mother wants her daughter to be happy, to be spared the hardships she endured and to reach the heights she herself could not. Yet economic pressures, social expectations and limited opportunities can quietly narrow a woman’s choices until some dreams go unfulfilled, passed to the next generation as both inheritance and hope.

A daughter’s responsibility, however, is not simply to complete her mother’s unfinished story. She has her own voice, her own interests and her own path. Understanding her mother’s struggles and

valuing her own opportunities creates one of the most powerful connections between generations. When girls receive education, choose their professions and demonstrate their abilities, the benefits extend far beyond their personal lives, strengthening families and society as a whole.

For dreams to become reality, family trust, educational access and social support are equally essential. And a mother’s dreams need not be fulfilled exclusively through her daughter. Women themselves have every right to begin again at any age. Dreams carry no expiry date.

Can I live my mother’s un-lived life? Perhaps. But the greater question is whether I can live my own.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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A Critical Review of Robinson Crusoe By Daniel Defoe:

Title: Survival, Self-Reliance, and Faith in God. Reviewed by Mahnoor Naeem Butt

Introduction

Robinson Crusoe is one of the most celebrated novels in English literature. Written by Daniel Defoe and published in 1719, it is regarded as one of the earliest English novels. Its engaging narrative and valuable life lessons have kept it popular for centuries. Although it is an adventure story, it also highlights the importance of patience, self-reliance, courage, hard work, and faith in God.

The story revolves around Robinson Crusoe, a man who becomes stranded on a deserted island and survives there for twenty-eight years. Born into a middle-class family in England, Crusoe is expected by his parents to lead a secure and peaceful life. However, he longs for adventure and dreams of travelling across the seas and exploring the world. Despite his father's warnings about the dangers of life at sea, Crusoe ignores his advice and decides to become a sailor. This decision marks the beginning of many exciting but dangerous experiences.

Crusoe's Adventures and Shipwreck

During his early voyages, Crusoe experiences shipwrecks, storms, and even captivity by pirates. Nevertheless, his passion for adventure remains strong, and he continues to travel by sea. Eventually, during another voyage, his ship encounters a terrible storm. The vessel is destroyed, and all the sailors drown except Crusoe. He manages to swim to a nearby island, where he finds himself completely alone.

At first, Crusoe feels frightened, hopeless, and shocked. There is nobody else on the island, and rescue seems unlikely. He misses his family, friends, and comfortable life in England. However, rather than surrendering to sadness and fear, he gathers his courage and begins to plan for his survival.

Crusoe returns to the wrecked ship and collects useful supplies, including tools, food, weapons, ropes, gunpowder, and clothes. These items help him survive during his first days on the island. He builds a

shelter that gradually becomes his home, along with storage spaces, fences, and furniture. Through courage, intelligence, and determination, he transforms the deserted island into a place where he can live more safely.

Self-Reliance and Hard Work
Crusoe gradually develops a range of practical skills. He grows crops such as wheat and barley, hunts animals for food, and domesticates goats for meat and milk. He also learns to bake bread, make pottery for cooking and storage, and prepare clothing from animal skins.

Since he is completely alone, Crusoe must depend on his own abilities and resources. This part of the novel is especially important because it highlights the value of self-reliance, perseverance, and hard work. Crusoe demonstrates that people can adapt to difficult circumstances when they remain determined, patient, and resourceful.

His experiences also show that survival requires careful planning and the effective use of available resources. Instead of wasting time complaining about his situation, Crusoe works continuously to improve his living conditions. His achievements illustrate human ingenuity and the ability to overcome adversity through sustained effort.

Loneliness, Faith, and Spiritual Growth

Although Crusoe becomes increasingly capable of providing for himself, loneliness remains one of his greatest challenges. Living alone on the island makes him feel depressed and isolated, and he sometimes fears that he will never return home. To keep himself occupied and record his experiences, he maintains a journal in which he writes about his daily activities and thoughts.

During his isolation, Crusoe also develops a deeper relationship with God. He spends time reading the Bible, which he has salvaged from the ship. Gradually, he comes to believe that his survival is not the result of his own efforts alone but also a blessing from God. Throughout his years on

the island, he becomes more thankful, humble, and spiritually aware.

His experiences suggest that hardship can encourage personal reflection and spiritual development. The island becomes not only a place of physical survival but also a setting for moral and religious transformation. Through suffering and isolation, Crusoe learns to appreciate life, recognise what he owes to divine mercy, and remain grateful for what he has.

The Discovery of Footprints and the Arrival of Friday

After spending many years alone on the island, Crusoe discovers a human footprint in the sand. The discovery frightens him because he realises that other people may be visiting the island. He later learns that groups of Indigenous people, whom the novel portrays as cannibals, occasionally come there.

One day, Crusoe saves a man from a group of these people. He names him Friday because he rescues him on that day of the week. Friday becomes Crusoe's companion and an important presence in his life on the island.

The relationship between Crusoe and Friday is significant to the development of the story. Crusoe teaches Friday English and introduces him to his own customs and beliefs. In return, Friday helps him with daily tasks and provides companionship. Friday's presence makes Crusoe's life less lonely and more manageable.

However, their relationship also raises questions about colonialism, cultural superiority, and power. Crusoe assumes the role of Friday's teacher and master, expecting him to adopt his language, religion, and way of life. From a modern critical perspective, their relationship can be examined as an example of the colonial attitudes prevalent in eighteenth-century European literature. Although Friday becomes Crusoe's loyal companion, their relationship is unequal because Crusoe exercises considerable authority over him.

Crusoe's Return to England

Eventually, Crusoe and Friday encounter English sailors who arrive on the island. Crusoe helps the captain regain control of his ship from rebellious members of the crew. In return, the captain agrees to take Crusoe back to England.

After approximately twenty-eight years on the island, Crusoe finally returns home. His experiences have transformed him into a more resourceful, patient, and reflective person. His return marks the end of his long struggle for survival and the beginning of a new chapter in his life.

Major Themes of the Novel

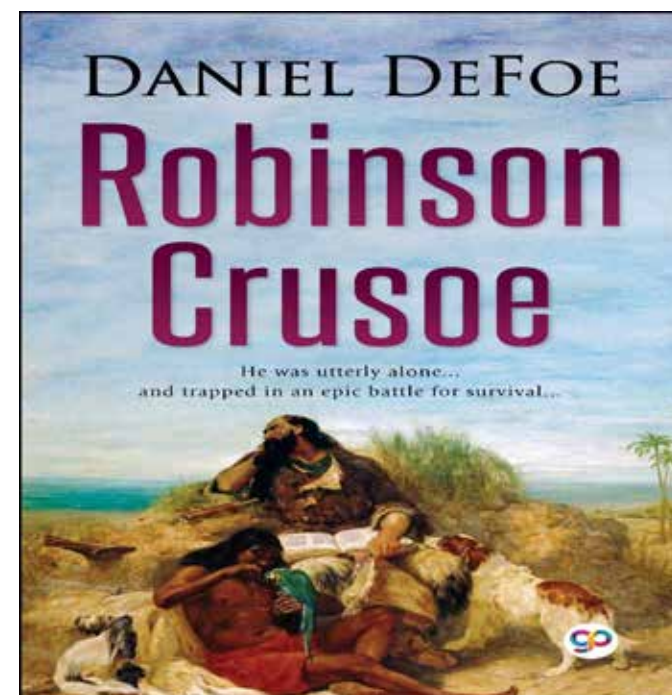
1. Survival: Survival is the central theme of Robinson Crusoe. The protagonist faces numerous hardships, including shipwreck, isolation, shortages of supplies, and fear. His ability to overcome these difficulties demonstrates the importance of adaptability, intelligence, and perseverance.

2. Self-Reliance: Crusoe learns to depend on himself rather than simply waiting for others to rescue him. He develops practical skills and makes effective use of the resources available to him. His experiences suggest that independence and determination are essential for overcoming life's challenges.

3. Hard Work and Perseverance: Crusoe does not give up, even when his circumstances appear hopeless. He works continuously to improve his living conditions. His struggle illustrates how patience, consistent effort, and determination can help people overcome difficult situations.

4. Faith in God: Religion plays a significant role in Crusoe's personal development. Through reading the Bible and reflecting on his experiences, he develops a stronger sense of gratitude and spiritual awareness. The novel presents faith as a source of comfort and strength during suffering.

5. Hope and Optimism: Despite his loneliness and uncertainty, Crusoe continues to seek ways to improve his situation. His refusal to abandon



don hope teaches readers to remain courageous and positive during difficult times.

6. Colonialism and Power: The relationship between Crusoe and Friday reflects colonial attitudes of the period. Crusoe assumes authority over Friday and attempts to shape his beliefs and behaviour according to European values. This relationship invites readers to question unequal power relations and assumptions of cultural superiority.

Personal Response and Lessons Learnt

I have learnt several valuable lessons from Robinson Crusoe. The novel teaches me the importance of hard work, self-reliance, patience, and determination. Crusoe does not remain idle or continually complain about his circumstances. Instead, he uses his time wisely and works consistently to improve his life.

His struggle demonstrates that success often requires effort, discipline, and the courage to face difficulties. I have also learnt that hope is essential during challenging times. Even when Crusoe feels frightened and lonely, he continues to search for solutions rather than surrendering to despair.

Furthermore, the novel encourages readers to appreciate faith, gratitude, and practical wisdom. It reminds us that difficult circumstances can become opportunities for learning, personal growth,

and self-discovery.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Robinson Crusoe is a timeless novel that continues to inspire readers around the world. It is not merely an adventure story; it also offers powerful lessons about survival, faith, patience, and perseverance. Crusoe's journey demonstrates that determination, intelligence, and positive thinking can help individuals overcome even the most difficult circumstances.

The novel encourages readers to remain hardworking, courageous, and hopeful, regardless of the challenges they encounter. At the same time, its portrayal of Crusoe's relationship with Friday invites critical reflection on colonialism and cultural inequality. These dimensions make Robinson Crusoe a significant work in English literature and an enduring example of survival fiction.

Even today, the novel highlights human resilience in the face of isolation and hardship. Its combination of adventure, moral reflection, and social questions ensures its lasting importance in the history of the English novel.

Submitted to: Muhammad Adnan Gujjar

Project: Victorian Novel
Programme: BS English Literature, 4th Semester

Institution: University of Chenab, Gujrat, Pakistan

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Politicians turn Nabwera funeral into a political battleground

By Job Mwavuwa

The funeral of Burudi Nabwera, a respected Kenyan politician and diplomat, should have been a moment of quiet dignity and collective mourning. Instead, it became a public spectacle when Trans Nzoia Governor George Nitembeya and Kiminini Member of Parliament Kakai Bisau clashed openly over control of the microphone during Saturday's ceremony.

Nitembeya's address was interrupted repeatedly as attendees argued over speaking rights. Tensions escalated when the governor faced pushback while commenting on national political matters, prompting him to rebuke what he described as deliberate disrespect towards a democratically elected leader.

Whatever the provocation,



the incident was an embarrassment — not merely to those involved, but to everyone present who had come to honour the dead.

Funerals are not political platforms. They are sacred occasions for families to grieve, for communities to come together and for the life of the deceased to be remembered with the dignity it deserves. Nabwera served Kenya in both politics and diplomacy. He merited better than to have his send-off

reduced to a contest over who holds the microphone.

The deeper concern is what this episode reveals about political culture in Trans Nzoia and, frankly, across Kenya. When leaders cannot set aside rivalry even in the presence of a coffin, it signals a troubling absence of restraint, maturity and basic human decency.

Kenyans are watching. And they are taking note.

As KPSEA and KJSEA begin: Kenya must remember the children behind the papers

By Yvonne Wambui

Thousands of Grade 6 and Grade 9 learners today sit the Kenya Primary School Education Assessment and the Kenya Junior School Education Assessment, marking months of preparation, sacrifice and quiet determination. For many, the pressure in those examination rooms extends far beyond the papers in front of them.

Kenya must ask itself an honest question: are we preparing children for life, or teaching them that their value depends entirely on their results?

In too many homes, examination performance is treated as a measure of intelligence and worth. Children who struggle face comparisons and criticism rather than encouragement. This culture breeds anxiety, not ability. Every child carries unique strengths — in creativity, communication, problem-solving and practical skill — that no single assessment



can capture.

Behind today's papers lies a deeper inequity that demands attention. Some learners walk into well-resourced classrooms having eaten breakfast, supported by technology and qualified teachers. Others arrive hungry, into overcrowded rooms with inadequate materials. Expecting identical outcomes from such unequal conditions is neither fair nor honest. The government must accelerate investment in public schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas, ensuring every child has a genuine opportunity to learn.

Parents carry significant responsibility today. Encouragement builds confidence; pressure and threats destroy it. A child who feels supported at home approaches challenges with far greater composure than one burdened by fear of disappointing their family.

To every learner sitting an assessment today: read carefully, manage your time and trust your preparation. A difficult question is not a defeat. Your future is considerably larger than one examination.

Kenya's children are its next doctors, teachers, engineers and leaders. Their potential must never be reduced to a single score.

Let these assessments measure progress — never worth.

Are we going to Singapore or are we going to sink?

By Simon Juma

Kenyans are asking a simple, devastating question: are we going to Singapore, or are we going to sink?

It is not a question born of cynicism alone. It comes from people struggling to put food on the table while their elected representatives post triumphant photographs online, brag about bridges built and roads opened, then return to comfortable lives entirely insulated from the hardship their constituents endure daily.

The gap between political rhetoric and lived reality in Kenya has never felt wider. Campaign manifestos promised transformation. Some of those promises were genuine. Many were not. A significant number of leaders entered public office treating it as a return on campaign investment — recovering the cost of posters, rallies and the KSh50 notes handed out to buy votes — rather than as a



mandate to serve.

The crisis in public universities makes the point brutally. Lecturers have been on strike for three weeks. Students sit idle. Academic calendars are in disarray. Yet the legislators who should be demanding resolution are largely silent, because their own children study abroad or in private institutions where no strike touches them. When those you govern cannot hurt you personally, urgency disappears.

Questions about academic credentials held by some governors, members of parliament and county assembly representatives compound the problem.

Integrity in leadership begins with honesty about qualifications. Kenya deserves better than officials who produce dubious documents under pressure and expect the matter to end there.

The opposition offers little comfort. Too many who claim to challenge the government are doing so for tenders and financial positioning, not principle or alternative vision.

Kenya does not need more politicians. It needs leaders who feel the weight of what they were elected to carry.

Singapore was built by people who meant what they said.

Media as the fourth arm of government

By Job Mwavuwa

Without a free press, democracy is a performance. Citizens applaud leaders they cannot scrutinise, vote on information they cannot verify and trust institutions they cannot question. That is why the media's role as the fourth arm of government is not a courtesy title — it is a constitutional necessity.

Through investigative reporting, journalists interrogate decisions made by public officials, examine how public resources are used and surface matters that those in power would prefer remained buried. This scrutiny enables citizens to demand accountability and compels public institutions to operate with greater transparency. When the media works as it should, governments cannot act with impunity and expect silence.

Beyond accountability, the media strengthens public participation. Political debates,



policy interviews and digital platforms give citizens the tools to understand government decisions, raise concerns and engage meaningfully in national conversations. Radio, television, newspapers and online platforms extend that reach into communities where access to reliable information directly influences decisions on health, education, security and economic life.

Yet serious threats persist. Journalists face intimidation, financial pressure and political interference. Public confidence in some media institutions has eroded. These pressures do not merely inconvenience individual reporters — they weaken the entire ecosystem of independent information on which democracy depends.

The response must be unambiguous. Media institutions must uphold professional ethics, separate fact from opinion, correct errors promptly and afford all relevant parties a fair hearing. Government and citizens must protect press freedom and guarantee the safety of journalists.

As Kenya approaches another election cycle, an independent press is not optional. It is the difference between an informed electorate and a manipulated one.

SPORTS
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BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *The former United captain has delivered his harshest verdict yet on the current squad, warning that weak management will cost the manager his job

Rooney tears into Manchester United players: 'They're selfish babies'

By Pascal Okoth

Wayne Rooney has launched a blistering attack on Manchester United's current players, accusing them of selfishness, immaturity and a wilful disregard for their teammates, manager, staff and supporters. The former United captain's remarks have reignited a fierce debate about the club's culture, leadership and the deepening malaise at Old Trafford.

Rooney, who spent more than a decade at United winning multiple Premier League titles and the UEFA Champions League under Sir Alex Ferguson, pulled no punches in his assessment of a squad he believes has lost its way. His frustration mirrors that of a supporter base increasingly exasperated by inconsistent performances and a sense that standards have slipped well below what the club demands.

"These players, they're selfish. They care about themselves; they don't care about their teammates, the manager, the staff or the fans," Rooney said.

The words land heavily. Manchester United have endured several turbulent seasons marked by managerial upheaval, disappointing results and a recurring failure to mount sustained title challenges. For Rooney, the rot appears to go deeper than tactics or individual error. It is, in his view, a problem of mentality and character.

He also singled out Bruno Fernandes, United's captain, expressing concern about the Portuguese midfielder's recent form and suggesting the pressures at the club have created an environment where individuals deflect rather than accept responsibility. "Bruno is probably having the worst run of form he has had since joining the club," Rooney said.

Fernandes has frequently been among United's most influential

players since his arrival, contributing goals, assists and creativity from midfield. As captain, however, he carries an additional burden — setting standards, steadying the ship in difficult moments and demonstrating the resilience that senior players are expected to model. Rooney's comments place that leadership role firmly under the microscope.

It would be unfair, nonetheless, to pin United's struggles on one man. Football is a collective endeavour, and the responsibility for a team's underperformance spreads across the squad, coaching staff and boardroom alike. Fernandes' form must be assessed within that wider context.

Rooney's sharpest words, however, were reserved for the squad's response to criticism. His characterisation of certain players as emotionally immature cut to what he sees as the heart of the problem.

"They're like babies and just throw their toys out of the pram and go and deflect the blame onto anyone else but themselves," he said.

At elite level, accountability is not optional. Players who respond to setbacks with excuses, public grievances or blame-shifting do not merely damage their own reputations — they erode the collective confidence of a dressing room already under pressure. Rooney's remarks suggest he wants to see a harder, more disciplined group capable of confronting its failures honestly and responding with action rather than deflection.

His perspective carries weight precisely because of where he has been. He played under Ferguson at a time when accountability was non-negotiable and standards were ruthlessly enforced. The contrast with the current environment at United, at least as Rooney perceives it, appears stark.

His warning to the manager



was equally pointed. In a message that felt directed as much at United's coaching staff as at the players themselves, Rooney argued that leniency is a trap.

"There's no more Mr Nice Guy. You have to come out fighting for yourself because those players will drag you down, and it's going to be you who's going to lose your job over it," he said.

It is a sobering observation. Manchester United managers have repeatedly found themselves paying the price for results that reflect broader squad and structural problems. Rooney's argument is that managers must establish authority early, demand accountability firmly and refuse to allow a culture of excuse-making to take root.

Whether his assessment is entirely fair is a matter of debate. Building a successful team re-

quires more than confrontation — it demands trust, open communication and a shared sense of purpose. But the broader point stands. Manchester United cannot return to sustained success on reputation alone.

Players who pull on that shirt carry a responsibility that extends beyond individual performance. They owe the club, its supporters and each other a standard of commitment and accountability that, if Rooney is to be believed, is currently falling well short of what Old Trafford expects.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Nicolas Jackson’s clinical double at Villa Park exposes City’s defensive frailties and hands the title race a significant new twist

Aston Villa stun Manchester City: Jackson brace ends champions’ unbeaten run

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

Aston Villa delivered one of the results of the Premier League season yesterday, beating Manchester City 2-1 at Villa Park to end the champions’ unbeaten start and send a clear message to every side harbouring title ambitions. Nicolas Jackson was the architect of the upset, scoring twice in a performance that combined sharp movement, physical strength and the kind of clinical finishing that had previously eluded him during an earlier spell in English football.

The victory was built on tactical discipline and ruthless efficiency in transition. Villa identified weaknesses in City’s defensive shape early and exploited them repeatedly, finding spaces behind the visitors’ midfield and exposing a high defensive line that proved vulnerable whenever the home side launched quick counter-attacks. Poor coordination between City’s midfield and defence created dangerous openings, and Villa’s attackers needed no second invitation.

Jackson’s first goal gave Villa the lead and set the tone for the afternoon. Despite Erling Haaland pulling City level with a second-half equaliser that briefly raised hopes of a comeback, Jackson struck again to restore Villa’s advantage and seal all three points. His double was a statement of intent from a forward who has faced scrutiny over his consistency since arriving in the Premier League.

Manchester City, despite dominating possession for long periods, struggled to convert that control into defensive security. Enzo Maresca’s side appeared unable to track forward runs effectively, leaving their central defenders isolated and under sustained pressure. The problems were compounded by a costly error from goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, whose



Nicolas Jackson scoring

mistake further unsettled a back-line that looked short of its usual composure and discipline. The defeat lays bare a challenge that City’s coaching staff must address urgently. Possession football without defensive organisation is a vulnerability at the highest level, and Villa exposed that vulnerability with a directness and conviction that will have concerned those in City’s technical department. Better tracking from midfielders, sharper coordination among defenders and greater concentration in the final third will all be required if City are to mount a credible title challenge. The timing of the result adds further complexity. Arsenal, among other leading sides, stand to benefit from City’s stumble as the competition at the top of the Premier League intensifies. With the leading clubs level on

18 points, the margin for error is minimal and every dropped point carries disproportionate weight. City’s response will be tested almost immediately. They face Brighton and Hove Albion twice in quick succession — first in the EFL Cup and then in the Premier League — before returning to domestic action against Nottingham Forest. Those fixtures will reveal a great deal about the champions’ character and their capacity to correct mistakes under pressure. A swift, convincing response would reassure supporters that yesterday’s defeat was an aberration. Anything less would deepen concerns about the squad’s resilience. For Aston Villa, the win represents far more than three points. It is a statement of genuine ambition from a side that has quietly positioned itself as a dis-

ruptive force in a title race many assumed would be contested by the usual suspects. Their ability to construct a disciplined defensive structure while maintaining a genuine attacking threat makes them a credible danger to every side in the division. Jackson’s contribution, in particular, will do wonders for his confidence and his standing within the game. Forwards are ultimately judged on goals in big matches, and yesterday he delivered precisely that when it mattered most. Villa Park has seen many memorable afternoons. Yesterday’s belonged entirely to the home side.

SPORTS NEWS



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Instruments required for professional oral hygiene procedures and the requirements for these instruments



By: Jamshidbek Tolanboyev

@themtkenyatimes

Professional oral hygiene is an essential component of preventive dentistry. Its effectiveness depends on the appropriate selection and safe use of diagnostic, mechanical, ultrasonic, air-polishing, and auxiliary instruments. This article reviews the main instruments used during professional oral hygiene procedures and outlines their clinical functions, technical characteristics, ergonomic requirements, and infection control principles. Particular attention is given to instrument selection according to dental biofilm, calculus deposits, periodontal condition, and individual patient needs. The importance of sterilization, personal protective equipment, and proper clinical technique is also discussed. The article aims to improve dental students' understanding of instrument functions and their safe application in clinical practice.

Keywords: professional oral hygiene, dental biofilm, dental calculus, scaler, curette, ultrasonic scaler, Air-Flow, polishing, sterilization, infection control.

1. INTRODUCTION

Professional oral hygiene is an important preventive procedure aimed at controlling dental biofilm, removing mineralized deposits, reducing extrinsic stains, and maintaining periodontal health. It includes clinical examination, periodontal assessment, professional cleaning, polishing when indicated, and individualized recommendations for home oral care.

Dental biofilm contains microorganisms associated with dental caries and periodontal inflammation. Effective biofilm control helps maintain oral health and supports the prevention of dental diseases. Therefore, instruments used during professional oral hygiene must be selected according to their intended clinical purpose, the anatomical characteristics of the teeth, the location of deposits, and the patient's periodontal



condition [1–4].

The quality of an instrument is determined not only by its design but also by its durability, precision, ergonomics, and compatibility with cleaning and sterilization procedures. Incorrect instrument selection or improper technique may cause unnecessary discomfort, tissue trauma, or abrasion of tooth surfaces.

2. MAIN INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR CLINICAL FUNCTIONS

Professional oral hygiene instruments can be divided into diagnostic instruments, manual mechanical instruments, ultrasonic devices, air-polishing and polishing instruments, and auxiliary equipment.

Diagnostic instruments include the mouth mirror, periodontal probe, explorer, and college tweezers. The mouth mirror provides indirect vision and helps retract soft tissues. The periodontal probe measures gingival sulcus or periodontal pocket depth. An explorer assists in detecting surface irregularities and dental deposits, while college tweezers are used to handle small materials.

Diagnostic instruments must provide accurate examination, have smooth surfaces, resist corrosion, and remain safe during repeated reprocessing. Periodontal probes should have clear measurement markings and be designed to minimize soft-tissue trauma.

Manual mechanical instruments include sickle scalers, universal curettes, and Gracey curettes. Sickle scalers are primarily used to remove supragingival calculus. Universal curettes can be adapted to various tooth surfaces, whereas Gracey curettes are designed for specific tooth surfaces and periodontal areas.

Correct adaptation of the working end, appropriate finger rests, controlled movements, and suitable lat-

eral pressure are essential. Excessive force may damage dental tissues or cause patient discomfort. Instruments should have sharp, well-maintained working ends and ergonomic handles that allow precise control [1–4].

Ultrasonic scalers remove mineralized deposits through high-frequency mechanical vibrations. Piezoelectric and magnetostrictive systems are commonly used in dentistry. Water irrigation cools the working tip and helps remove debris. The power setting and tip selection must correspond to the clinical task. Excessive pressure, prolonged contact at one point, or inadequate irrigation may increase the risk of tissue damage.

Air-polishing systems use a controlled stream of air, water, and abrasive powder to reduce biofilm and extrinsic stains. Powder selection and application technique should be appropriate for the tooth surface and the patient's clinical condition. Nozzle direction, distance, and movement must be carefully controlled to avoid unnecessary tissue injury.

Polishing instruments include rubber cups, prophylaxis brushes, and polishing pastes. They are used to reduce extrinsic stains and smooth cleaned tooth surfaces when clinically indicated. The abrasiveness of the paste, rotational speed, pressure, and treatment duration should be controlled to minimize damage to enamel, exposed root surfaces, and restorations.

3. TECHNICAL, ERGONOMIC, AND HYGIENIC REQUIREMENTS

Dental instruments must meet several important requirements.

Technical requirements include appropriate working-end geometry, mechanical strength, functional precision, corrosion resistance, and

durability. Working tips must remain suitable for their intended clinical application.

Ergonomic requirements include a comfortable handle, appropriate diameter and weight, slip resistance, and balanced construction. Proper ergonomics help the operator maintain control and reduce excessive strain on the fingers, wrists, and hands. Adequate illumination, correct posture, and stable finger rests also improve clinical precision.

Hygienic requirements include smooth, easily cleanable surfaces without cracks, corrosion, or other defects. Reusable instruments must withstand cleaning, disinfection where applicable, and sterilization according to the manufacturer's instructions. Damaged or deformed instruments should be removed from clinical use until their safety has been assessed [1–5].

4. STERILIZATION AND INFECTION CONTROL

Infection control is essential in every professional oral hygiene procedure. After use, reusable instruments must be handled safely, cleaned, rinsed, dried, inspected, packaged, and sterilized using a validated process appropriate for the instrument.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends heat sterilization for critical dental instruments, including periodontal scalers. Sterilization parameters must follow the instrument manufacturer's instructions and the requirements of the sterilization equipment. Instruments should be inspected before use, and sterile packages must be stored appropriately to maintain their integrity [5,6].

Infection prevention also includes hand hygiene, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), environmental surface disinfection, safe instrument transportation, and proper waste management. Gloves, masks, protective eyewear or face shields, and protective clothing help reduce occupational exposure. Effective aspiration is particularly important during ultrasonic scaling and air-polishing because these procedures can generate aerosols and splashes.

5. CLINICAL SELECTION OF INSTRUMENTS

Instrument selection should be based on the type and quantity of dental deposits, their location, tooth surface anatomy, periodontal status, existing restorations, and individual patient needs.

For supragingival calculus, a sickle scaler or an appropriate ultrasonic tip may be selected. Universal and Gracey curettes are used according to the treatment area and clinical requirements. Air-polishing and polishing systems may be appropriate for reducing biofilm and extrinsic stains when indicated.

The operator must consider the potential effects of each instrument on hard and soft tissues. Proper technique, controlled pressure, adequate visibility, and effective aspiration contribute to patient safety. After treatment, the clinician should assess the cleanliness of the tooth surfaces and provide individualized recommendations for home oral hygiene, including the appropriate use of interdental brushes or dental floss [1–5].

6. BRIEF CLINICAL TABLE FOR INSTRUMENT SELECTION

Clinical situation	Appropriate instrument	Main consideration
Oral examination	Mouth mirror, probe, explorer	Accurate assessment
Supragingival calculus	Sickle scaler or ultrasonic tip	Deposit location and hardness
Various tooth surfaces	Universal curette	Correct adaptation
Specific periodontal areas	Gracey curette	Appropriate working-end selection
Biofilm and extrinsic stains	Air-polishing or polishing instruments	Suitable powder and technique
Aerosol and fluid control	Aspirator and PPE	Visibility and infection prevention

7. CONCLUSION

Professional oral hygiene requires appropriate instruments, correct clinical technique, and strict infection control. Diagnostic instruments support accurate assessment, while scalers, curettes, ultrasonic devices, and polishing systems help remove dental deposits and reduce biofilm according to clinical indications. Instrument quality depends on precision, durability, ergonomic design, and compatibility with reprocessing procedures.

Dental students must understand not only instrument names but also their clinical functions, indications, limitations, and safety requirements. An individualized approach, appropriate instrument selection, proper sterilization, and patient education are essential for safe and effective professional oral hygiene.