

ODM tops KSh 2.26B political parties fund as UDA and Jubilee trail behind

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) has emerged as the biggest beneficiary of Kenya's KSh 2.26 billion Political Parties Fund, receiving KSh 801.85 million Page 8



Waiguru leads Kindiki in running mate poll as Ruto's 2027 ticket takes shape

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru has emerged as the leading preferred running mate for President William Ruto in the 2027 General Election, commanding 42% Page 12

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Countdown 2027 The Presidential Escort Unit and General Service Unit responded swiftly, forming an all-round cordon around Ruto

Politics tears Narok apart at Maa festival

The Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival in Narok County descended into violence on Saturday when clashes between rival political factions erupted at Sekenani Gate, injuring at least ten people, scattering chairs across the dais and forcing security forces to form a protective cordon around President William Ruto as chaos swept through what was meant to be a celebration of Maasai heritage and cultural pride.

The incident lasted only minutes before order was restored, but its significance will outlast the broken chairs and scattered tents by a considerable margin. What unfolded at Sekenani was not a random eruption of crowd disorder. It was a glimpse into the state of Narok County's politics — fractured, increasingly personal and dangerously volatile — at a moment when Kenya's broader electoral competition is beginning to reach its most combustible temperature ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The immediate trigger was a confrontation between supporters allied to Narok West MP Gabriel Tongoyo and those of Governor Patrick Ole Ntutu, two figures whose rivalry has been building for months and whose competing ambitions for dominance in one of Kenya's most politically and economically significant counties have created precisely the kind of pressure that explodes in crowded public spaces. Page 9



A collage of the chaos that erupted at the Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival in Narok County where President William Ruto was attending on November 14, 2026. | *Photo*: Courtesy



Gachagua warns Ruto to respect Kenyatta: 'In nine months you will also be a former president'

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has warned President William Ruto to treat retired President Uhuru Kenyatta with respect, telling him directly that in nine months he too will be a former president and that the courtesy he withholds today will be the courtesy he cannot claim tomorrow.

Gachagua made the remarks in a video circulated widely on social media, delivering what has become his most pointed personal challenge to Ruto since his impeachment from the deputy presidency. "Respect the former president," he said. "In nine months' time you will also be a former. Respect is mutual." The statement was brief, deliberate and calculated — the kind of message designed not merely to be heard but to land.

The warning comes at a moment of intensifying pre-election tension, with opposition leaders coalescing around the shared position that Ruto's administration has treated Kenyatta with a contempt unbefitting of a former Head of State. Gachagua, who now positions himself as a central figure in the emerging opposition architecture, has repeatedly invoked Kenyatta's treatment as evidence of the administration's character. The subtext of his message is as important as the words themselves. With August 2027 drawing closer, Gachagua is telling Ruto — and telling Kenya — that power is temporary, accountability is not, and that the clock is already running.

Some of the moments as captured in pictures














Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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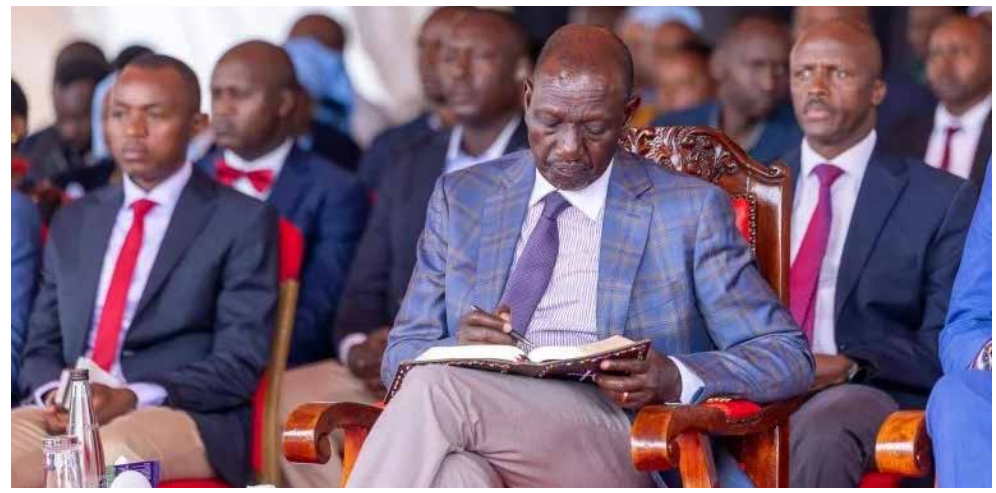
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NEWS IN BRIEF



Rigathi Gachagua yesterday dismissed a TIFA Research poll identifying him as the opposition's most divisive figure, insisting he is instead the architect of its unity. "I am the glue that is putting the leaders together," he said at AIC Bathi church in Lari Constituency, Kiambu County, citing recent meetings with Kalonzo Musyoka, Fred Matiang'i, Edwin Sifuna and Martha Karua as evidence. He claimed Matiang'i had privately assured him he would not defect to Ruto's camp, and that Kalonzo had firmly rejected any such suggestion. The TIFA survey, released on November 12, told a starkly different story — 43 per cent of opposition supporters identified Gachagua as the principal source of divisions within the bloc, nearly three times the 15 per cent recorded for Ruto and UDA.



President William Ruto yesterday appealed for calm in Narok County after supporters of Governor Patrick Ole Ntutu and Narok West MP Gabriel Tongoyo clashed violently at the Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival the previous day, disrupting celebrations at Sekenani Gate and forcing security officers to tighten their cordon around the Head of State. Speaking at a church service in Narok, Ruto urged both factions to pursue their ambitions without violence. "That was not a good picture. I want to ask our brothers, humbly, let us not instigate violence because of politics. Patrick and Gabriel belong to UDA. There is no difference between the two leaders; they are simply seeking votes," he said. At least ten people were reported injured in Saturday's confrontations, which also drew in supporters linked to Kajiado Governor Joseph Ole Lenku. Tongoyo is eyeing Ntutu's gubernatorial seat ahead of 2027, and the festival chaos has laid bare how dangerously that rivalry has escalated inside Ruto's own party.



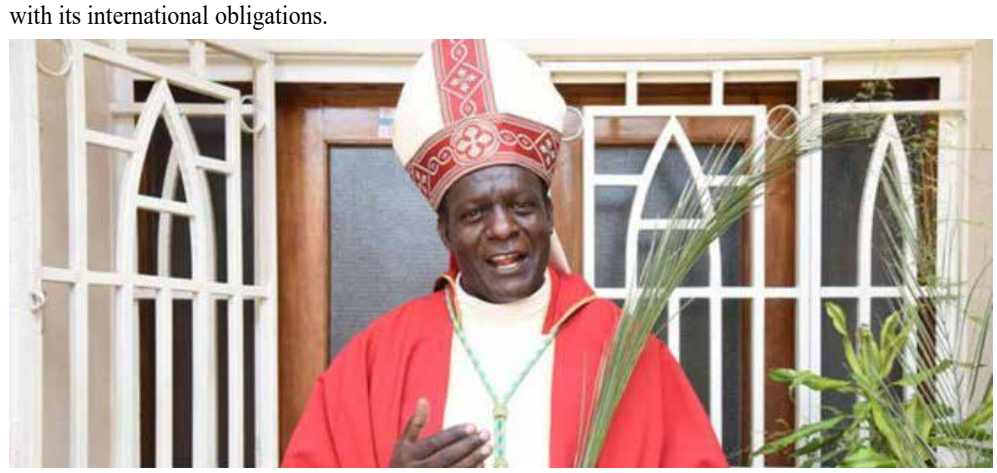
Kenya's push to increase the number of women elected to public office in 2027 is gathering momentum, with advocacy groups and political strategists mapping out a coordinated approach to break the structural barriers that have historically kept women underrepresented in Parliament and county governments. The strategy centres on early candidate identification, targeted civic education in constituencies with low female voter turnout, and pressure on political parties to honour constitutional two-thirds gender principle requirements in their nomination processes. Activists argue that the 2022 election, which returned the lowest number of women to the National Assembly in a decade, demonstrated that goodwill alone is insufficient without enforceable party mechanisms and financial support for female candidates. With 2027 registration and nomination timelines approaching, organisers say the groundwork must be laid now or the opportunity will, once again, be lost.



Kenya's High Court has ordered the Interior Cabinet Secretary and Attorney General to initiate ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, nearly two decades after the country first signed the treaty without following through with the legislative steps required to give it domestic legal force. The court's directive requires the government to enact laws criminalising enforced disappearances, establishing clear accountability for state agents implicated in abductions and creating legal pathways for families of missing persons to seek justice. The ruling arrives at a moment of acute public sensitivity around police abductions, following a wave of enforced disappearances during the 2024 anti-Finance Bill protests that drew international condemnation and renewed pressure on the government to bring Kenya's human rights framework into line with its international obligations.



President William Ruto will on Wednesday deliver his fourth State of the Nation Address before a joint sitting of Parliament, a speech that arrives at one of the most politically charged moments of his first term. With the 2027 General Election less than a year away, Tuesday's address will be measured not against the ambitions Ruto articulates but against the lived experience of Kenyans who have endured successive tax increases, a cost-of-living crisis and persistent concerns about corruption within the public service. The President is expected to highlight his administration's development milestones while outlining priorities for the year ahead — but analysts say the harder task will be explaining the gap between last year's commitments and current realities. For an administration already deep in campaign mode, the State of the Nation Address is as much a political document as a governance one.



Pope Leo has elevated the Diocese of Eldoret to an archdiocese, appointing Joseph Obanyi as its first archbishop in a historic development that significantly raises the profile of the Catholic Church in Kenya's North Rift region. The elevation marks one of the most consequential structural changes to the Catholic Church's presence in Kenya in recent years, recognising Eldoret's growing ecclesiastical importance and the expansion of the faith across the wider region. Obanyi, who previously served as Bishop of Kakamega, brings considerable pastoral and administrative experience to the new role. The archdiocese will serve as a metropolitan see, giving the North Rift its own ecclesiastical province and strengthening the Church's institutional footprint in a region that has historically sat at the periphery of Kenya's Catholic hierarchy.

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Politics Kalonzo's position carries particular weight because his political record shows he has made this sacrifice before

Is Kenya's opposition finally preparing a united 2027 presidential front?

Kalonzo Musyoka's declaration of willingness to step aside for a single candidate has reignited debate about whether the opposition can overcome its historic divisions before 2027.

BY Collins Kibet
@themtkenyatimes



Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka on Saturday threw his weight behind a united opposition presidential campaign for 2027, declaring his willingness to forgo his own presidential ambitions in support of a single candidate — a move that has significantly raised the temperature of Kenya's pre-election political realignment.

The declaration came at the burial of Mama Eunice Nyangari Gachagua, elder sister of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, held in Kieni Constituency, Nyeri County. The occasion drew a notable gathering of opposition figures, including Gachagua himself, ODM's Edwin Sifuna, Eugene Wamalwa, Siaya Governor James Orengo and former Chief Justice David Maraga. Rather than confining themselves to condolences, the leaders used the platform to reaffirm their commitment to building a united political front capable of mounting a credible challenge to President William Ruto's Kenya Kwanza administration in 2027.

Kalonzo's position carries particular weight because his political record shows he has made this sacrifice before. He pointed to his earlier decisions to stand behind the late Raila Odinga in successive presidential contests as evidence of his willingness to put collective opposition strength above personal ambition. His statement was also a direct rebuttal of speculation that he might abandon the opposition and cross to Ruto's side if the presidential ticket proves elusive. For Kalonzo, the message is clear — unity first, personal ambition second. Whether the other presidential hopefuls in the room share that discipline is a question the coming months will answer.

Gachagua remains a central figure in the emerging arrangement. His influence across the Mount Kenya region could prove decisive in determining whether any opposition coalition can achieve the national breadth required to seriously contest the presidency. His presence alongside Kalonzo and the other leaders signals an attempt to stitch together a broader alliance that cuts across traditional party boundaries — one that draws on regional networks, grassroots mobilisation and the political capital accumulated during his time as Deputy President.

The fundamental challenge, however, remains unchanged. Kenya's opposition has a well-documented history of arriving at unity in principle and fracturing when it matters most. The coalition must demonstrate that its declared solidarity is grounded in shared national purpose rather than the temporary convenience of a shared political enemy.

Political commentator Nuru Okanga hospitalised after roadside attack by unknown assailants



Nuru Okanga after going to the hospital | *Photo:* Hon Nuru Maloba Okanga /Facebook.

BY John Kamau
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Political commentator Nuru Okanga was yesterday attacked by unknown assailants on his way home and hospitalised with visible facial injuries, sharing photographs of his condition on Facebook and vowing that those behind the assault would not succeed in silencing him.

Okanga disclosed the attack in a Sunday post accompanied by photographs showing him bleeding, with a large bandage covering one side of his face near the eye and significant swelling across his features. He did not disclose the location of the attack, the number of assailants involved or what may have prompted it, and it was not immediately clear whether he had reported the matter to police.

"I have been attacked by unknown people on my way home. I am currently in hospital," he wrote. He suggested the assault was intended to silence him, but said his resolve remained firm. "They may have wanted to silence me, but God is my protector. I thank Him for the gift of life. My faith remains unshaken, my spirit is strong, and my journey continues," he added, invoking Isaiah 54:17 — "No weapon formed against me shall prosper."

He closed his post with a declaration that carried clear political undertones. "We shall not be intimidated, we shall not surrender. God is not finished with me yet! ALUTA CONTINUA! WANTAM!"

The attack on a prominent political voice, with no suspects identified and no police statement issued, raises urgent questions that cannot go unanswered.

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Politics **ODM's total allocation comprises a primary disbursement of KSh 421.22 million, a supplementary allocation of KSh 380 million**

ODM tops KSh 2.26B political parties fund as UDA and Jubilee trail behind

The Orange Democratic Movement has received the single largest share of Kenya's political parties funding, edging out the ruling UDA in the latest allocation covering 47 parties.



By: Yvonne Wambui
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Oburu Odinga, ODM Party Leader

The Orange Democratic Movement has received the single largest share of Kenya's political parties funding, edging out the ruling UDA in the latest allocation covering 47 parties.

By Yvonne Wambui

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) has emerged as the biggest beneficiary of Kenya's KSh 2.26 billion Political Parties Fund, receiving KSh 801.85 million — the largest single allocation among 47 political parties that participated in the 2022 General Election, according to a report by the Registrar of Political Parties tabled before Parliament yesterday.

The figure positions ODM, now led by Oburu Odinga following the death of his younger brother, the late Raila Odinga, ahead of President William Ruto's ruling United Democratic Alliance (UDA) and the Jubilee Party in what is one of the most consequential annual distributions of public money to Kenya's political landscape. The fund exists to support parties in running their operations, maintaining structures and promoting democratic participation — and the scale of the allocations this cycle underscores just how unevenly that support is distributed across the political spectrum.

ODM's total allocation comprises a primary disbursement of KSh 421.22 million, a supplementary allocation of KSh 380 million and a carried-forward balance of KSh 634,896 from the previous financial period. The combination of a primary grant and a supplementary top-up pushed ODM's total marginally above UDA's, a gap that is likely to sharpen debate about how the formula rewards electoral performance and parliamentary representation.

UDA, which controls the presidency and commands a significant parliamentary bloc, received KSh 788.74 million — placing it second, albeit by a relatively narrow margin. Jubilee Party, now associated with former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i following its dramatic political realignment in recent years, secured KSh 184.89 million, making it the third-largest recipient. Together, the three parties absorbed approximately 79 per cent of the total funds distributed, leaving the remaining 44 parties to share the balance — a concentration of resources that critics argue entrenches the dominance of established political outfits at the expense of newer and smaller formations.

Among the mid-tier beneficiaries, Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya, led by former Vice-President Kalonzo Musyoka, received KSh 98.81 million, reflecting its sustained organisational base in lower Eastern Kenya. The Democratic Action Party-Kenya (DAP-K), associated with Eugene Wamalwa, was allocated KSh 43.20 million. The United Democratic Movement received KSh 36.83 million, Ford-Kenya was allocated KSh 35.33 million, and the Kenya African National Union (KANU) — once the country's sole legal party and now a shadow of its former self — received KSh 32.89 million.

The allocations are determined under the Political Parties Act using a formula that weighs the number of votes a party obtained at the previous general election alongside the number of elected representatives it fields across all levels of government. That formula inherently favours parties with broad national reach and strong parliamentary representation, which explains why ODM and UDA dominate the distribution despite their very different positions — one in government, one navigating a post-Raila future with considerable uncertainty about its long-term political direction.

What makes this cycle's figures particularly noteworthy is the context in which they land. Political parties across the country are actively preparing for future electoral contests, and financial resources at this stage carry outsized strategic importance. Access to party funding determines whether grassroots structures can be maintained, whether local offices remain operational and whether parties can sustain the kind of continuous engagement with voters that translates into electoral strength. For smaller parties scraping by on allocations in the tens of millions, the gap between their resources and those of the top three is not merely financial — it shapes their entire capacity to compete.

ODM's position at the top of the table is also significant given the party's current moment. The death of Raila Odinga — the towering figure who built ODM into a national force over two decades — has left the party at a crossroads. Oburu Odinga inherits both the leadership and the challenge of holding together a coalition that was, in many respects, built on his brother's singular political personality. The KSh 801.85 million allocation provides a substantial financial platform from which to attempt that consolidation, but money alone will not resolve the deeper questions of identity and direction that now confront the party.

For UDA, the second-place finish in funding despite holding the presidency and a parliamentary majority reflects the technicality of how the formula operates — ODM's stronger performance in the 2022 vote in certain categories, combined with the supplementary disbursement, nudged it ahead. It is a distinction the ruling party's strategists will note, though UDA's proximity to state resources through its position in government gives it advantages that do not appear in the Registrar's report.

The tabling of this report before Parliament also reopens broader questions about accountability. Kenya's Political Parties Act requires that parties submit audited accounts detailing how public funds are spent, but enforcement of that requirement has historically been inconsistent. With KSh 2.26 billion of taxpayer money now distributed, the scrutiny on how each party accounts for its allocation will inevitably intensify — as it should. Kenyans have a right to know whether these funds are strengthening genuine democratic structures or simply sustaining party bureaucracies with little accountability to ordinary members and voters.

The report now sits before Parliament, and the conversation it triggers about equitable distribution, formula reform and financial accountability is one that Kenya's political class can no longer afford to have only on paper.

Chaos Governor Ole Ntutu and Narok Senator Ledama Ole Kina appealed for calm from the podium, persuading the rival groups to return to their seats and allowing the festival to resume

Maa festival chaos exposes the fault lines tearing Narok apart ahead of 2027

Violence at a cultural celebration attended by President Ruto has laid bare the bitter rivalries and political tensions fracturing the Maasai heartland with elections less than a year away.

BY David Kimani
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The Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival in Narok County descended into violence on Saturday when clashes between rival political factions erupted at Sekenani Gate, injuring at least ten people, scattering chairs across the dais and forcing security forces to form a protective cordon around President William Ruto as chaos swept through what was meant to be a celebration of Maasai heritage and cultural pride.

The incident lasted only minutes before order was restored, but its significance will outlast the broken chairs and scattered tents by a considerable margin. What unfolded at Sekenani was not a random eruption of crowd disorder. It was a glimpse into the state of Narok County's politics — fractured, increasingly personal and dangerously volatile — at a moment when Kenya's broader electoral competition is beginning to reach its most combustible temperature ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The immediate trigger was a confrontation between supporters allied to Narok West MP Gabriel Tongoyo and those of Governor Patrick Ole Ntutu, two figures whose rivalry has been building for months and whose competing ambitions for dominance in one of Kenya's most politically and economically significant counties have created precisely the kind of pressure that explodes in crowded public spaces. Videos reviewed by The Mt Kenya Times showed groups of people running through the venue, chairs hurled near the main dais, tents damaged and journalists scrambling to protect their equipment as light showers swept across the vast Mara landscape and the atmosphere shifted from celebration to confrontation in a matter of moments.

The Presidential Escort Unit and General Service Unit responded swiftly, forming an all-round cordon around Ruto with officers fixing their gaze on the crowd, hands on rifles, expressions locked in professional seriousness. It was a scene that would have been difficult to imagine at a cultural festival a decade ago — and one that recalled an uncomfortably similar moment in May 2026, when a man breached the President's security during a public address in Ganze, Kilifi County, reaching the presidential dais before officers intervened. That incident prompted an immediate restructuring of the Presidential Escort Unit: commandant Noah Kirwa Maiyo was transferred and replaced by William Sawe from the Recce Sub-Unit, with further changes made to the unit's deputy commandant and officers serving in specialised formations. The National Police Service had not issued a statement on the Sekenani incident by the time of publishing.

Governor Ole Ntutu and Narok Senator Ledama Ole Kina appealed for calm from the podium, persuading the rival groups to return to their seats and allowing the festival to resume. But the resumption of a cultural programme cannot paper over what the violence revealed about the depth of Narok's political tensions or the degree to which electoral ambition has begun to corrode institutions and occasions that once stood apart from partisan rivalry.

Inside the venue, a separate confrontation had already ignited before the chairs began flying. Nominated Senator Hezena Lemaletian had spoken about divisions within the Orange Democratic Movement, prompting Ole Kina to challenge her aggressively from the floor — an exchange that set portions of the crowd chanting "Wantam," a pointed expression of discontent directed at the Ruto administration. The chant, which has become something of a shorthand for anti-government sentiment in parts of the country, landing at a cultural festival attended by the President himself, carried an unmistakable political charge. Ole Kina later placed blame for the broader tensions on former Cabinet Secretary Joseph Ole Lenku, adding a further layer of complexity to a feud that is as much about personal history and accumulated grievance as it is about ideological difference or electoral strategy.

Ruto condemned the violence the following day at a church service, calling on communities to embrace issue-based politics and move away from personal rivalries that, in his words, served neither the people nor the county's development. It was the correct message to deliver, and the setting — a Sunday church service, the morning after the chaos — gave it a degree of moral weight. Whether it lands with any durability in Narok's political environment is a genuinely open question.



A collage of the chaos that erupted at the Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival in Narok County where President William Ruto was attending on November 14, 2026. | *Photo:* Courtesy

The deeper story here is about what Narok represents in the architecture of Kenyan electoral politics as the country moves towards its next defining democratic moment. The county sits at the intersection of Maasai cultural identity, significant tourism revenue from the Maasai Mara — one of Africa's most visited wildlife destinations — land politics of extraordinary complexity and a 2027 electoral contest that is shaping up to be fiercely fought at every level, from the governor's seat to Parliament to the presidential race itself. When a cultural festival becomes a battleground, it is a signal that the boundary between community life and electoral competition has effectively collapsed — and that the consequences of that collapse are being felt not by politicians, who leave in motorcades, but by ordinary Kenyans who came to celebrate their heritage and found themselves running from thrown chairs.

This pattern is not unique to Narok. Across Kenya, the political class is already operating in full campaign mode with elections less than a year away, using every available platform — church services, funerals, harambees, cultural gatherings — as proxies for electoral positioning and mobilisation. The result is an accelerating colonisation of community life by political rivalry, in which the occasions that once provided neutral ground for people to come together are increasingly weaponised. The burden of that dynamic falls on communities, not on the politicians whose ambitions drive it.

For the Maasai community specifically, the Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival carries a significance that extends well beyond any electoral cycle. It is an annual affirmation of identity, tradition and the enduring vitality of a culture that has attracted global attention and whose pastoral land remains at the centre of some of Kenya's most consequential conservation, land rights and community benefit debates. The festival draws visitors, generates economic activity, showcases traditional music, dance, beadwork and livestock culture, and provides a platform for the community to present itself to the world on its own terms. To have that occasion disrupted — and to have it disrupted in front of cameras, with the President present — is an injury to the community's dignity that no post-incident statement from a podium can fully repair.

It also hands critics of the government a ready-made narrative: that Kenya under Ruto cannot guarantee order even at a presidential function, that security arrangements around the Head of State remain insufficiently robust despite the Kilifi lessons, and that political rivalries are being allowed to fester to the point of physical violence at public events. Whether that narrative is fair is a matter of debate. That it will be deployed in the months ahead is not.

The festival resumed. The speeches were delivered. The President departed. But the questions Saturday raised — about the safety of public gatherings, the security of the Head of State, the depth of Narok's political fractures and the willingness of Kenya's political class to subordinate community occasions to personal ambition — are not questions that resolve themselves with the end of a cultural programme.

Narok has delivered an early, vivid and uncomfortable warning about the kind of election season Kenya is heading into. August 2027 is closer than it looks, and the temperature is already rising.

Politics His remarks came against the backdrop of renewed and urgent public concern about building safety in Nairobi and its surrounding areas

Kalonzo links Ruto to cement firms as building collapses mount, demands KSh 204B Safaricom return

The Wiper leader used a church pulpit in Mwingi to launch his sharpest attack yet on the Ruto administration, connecting political corruption to deadly construction failures and an unconstitutional share sale.

BY Daniel Karanja
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Wiper Patriotic Front Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Wiper Patriotic Front Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday accused President William Ruto's administration of allowing politically connected individuals to profit from Kenya's cement industry, linking what he described as systemic corruption to a string of deadly building collapses that have claimed lives across the country in recent weeks.

Kalonzo made the allegations during a worship service at Word of Faith Church in Mwingi Central on Sunday, delivering remarks that combined religious conviction with some of the most direct political accusations he has levelled against Ruto since the two emerged as adversaries ahead of the 2027 General Election. The choice of a church setting — before a congregation he described as "the salt of the earth" — was deliberate, casting his political challenge in moral as well as institutional terms.

"For every single bag of cement, there is a percentage going to Mr Ruto," Kalonzo alleged, making a claim he did not substantiate with documentary evidence but that he framed as the logical explanation for the proliferation of substandard construction materials in the market. He argued that politically connected interests had penetrated the supply chains for essential building materials, compromising quality standards and leaving ordinary Kenyans to bear the lethal consequences.

His remarks came against the backdrop of renewed and urgent public concern about building safety in Nairobi and its surrounding areas, following multiple structural collapses that have drawn attention to the quality of construction materials, the enforcement of building codes and the capacity of regulatory authorities to hold contractors and developers to account. "Imagine how many people have died this month because one building collapses, then another collapses. Syokimau," Kalonzo said, invoking a specific location as shorthand for a pattern of disaster that he argued was neither accidental nor inevitable.

"It is impunity and the presence of cement companies producing poor quality. When a building is constructed with this, it collapses," he added, calling for the government to act decisively against manufacturers whose products he claimed were failing to meet basic safety standards. The government has not publicly responded to Kalonzo's specific allegations about cement industry interests.

The building safety crisis, if it can be called that, is real regardless of its political framing. Construction-related fatalities in Kenya have been a recurring and tragic feature of urban growth, driven by a combination of rapidly expanding demand for affordable housing, inconsistent enforcement of building regulations, the widespread use of unverified construction materials and a culture of impunity among developers who cut corners on specifications. When a prominent political leader stands before a congregation and connects those deaths to corruption at the highest level of government, the accusation lands with emotional force that official denials struggle to match.

Kalonzo used the same platform to describe the Ruto administration as a "predator regime" — language that marked a significant escalation in his public characterisation of the government and signalled his intent to run a campaign built as much on moral condemnation as on policy contrast. "This is why I'm saying heavy lifting. Heavy lifting to get rid of this predator regime," he declared, casting the 2027 election not as a routine democratic contest but as a civic emergency requiring extraordinary collective effort.

He positioned himself explicitly as a constitutional lawyer committed to the rule of law, pointing to his personal participation in court proceedings as evidence of that commitment. "I am a constitutional lawyer. And that is who I am. You can even see that I go to court myself to defend it," he said, drawing a contrast with what he portrayed as an administration willing to override legal and institutional constraints for political and financial advantage.

That contrast found its sharpest expression in Kalonzo's remarks about the KSh 204B Safaricom transaction, which he raised directly with the congregation. He was referring to the government's sale of a 15 per cent stake in Safaricom to Vodacom, a transaction that generated approximately KSh 204.3B in proceeds, with a further KSh 40.2B paid upfront in exchange for future dividends on the government's remaining stake — combined proceeds of KSh 244.5B that were channelled into the National Infrastructure Fund.

The High Court has since declared the divestiture unconstitutional, null and void, ruling that it was undertaken without adequate public participation and ordering the shares transferred to Vodacom to be restored to the government on behalf of Kenyans. The ruling has raised complex and unresolved questions about the fate of money already received, the mechanics of share restoration and the accountability of those who authorised the transaction. "He is supposed to have returned 204 billion shillings. That is a lot of money," Kalonzo told the congregation, framing the sum not as an abstract financial figure but as a measure of what ordinary Kenyans had been denied.

The cumulative effect of Kalonzo's Mwingi address was a portrait of an administration he characterises as predatory, corrupt and constitutionally reckless — one that profits from cement bags, presides over collapsing buildings and sells national assets without public consent. Whether those characterisations are legally sustainable or politically persuasive to a broad electorate is a question the coming months will test. What is beyond doubt is that Kalonzo is running, that he is running hard and that he has chosen to frame his campaign around accountability, constitutionalism and the daily economic suffering of ordinary Kenyans.

With August 2027 less than a year away, the congregation in Mwingi was not merely a church service. It was a campaign opening, delivered from a pulpit, aimed at a nation the Wiper leader believes is ready for what he called the heavy lifting of change.



President William Ruto

Politics The most consequential development is the TIFA Research survey released on November 12, which placed President William Ruto and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna at 31 per cent each

The poll shock, opposition realignment and the gathering storm ahead of 2027

A statistical tie between Ruto and Sifuna, a fractured opposition seeking unity and mounting institutional questions are reshaping Kenya's electoral landscape with 2027 drawing steadily closer.



BY Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo
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President William Ruto and Senator Edwin Sifuna

"The political fortunes of a nation are rarely determined by the loudest voices in its political arena, but by the silent conversations taking place in the homes, workplaces and communities of ordinary citizens. When those conversations begin to change, even the most established political arrangements must reconsider their foundations."

Kenya's political landscape is displaying unmistakable signs of a competitive and complicated electoral season as the country moves through the week of November 16–22, 2026. The latest presidential opinion poll, renewed debate over opposition unity, emerging political movements, regional rivalries and growing scrutiny of public institutions have combined to create an atmosphere in which almost every political engagement carries an electoral undertone. The events of the past week are significant precisely because they reveal a shifting relationship between political leadership, public perception and the traditional methods through which electoral support has been built and negotiated.

The most consequential development is the TIFA Research survey released on November 12, which placed President William Ruto and Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna at 31 per cent each in preferred presidential choice for 2027. Kalonzo Musyoka registered nine per cent, Fred Matiang'i five per cent and Rigathi Gachagua four per cent, while 15 per cent of respondents remained undecided. Conducted between October 26 and November 5 among 2,036 adults across all 47 counties, the survey has generated considerable political debate. These figures measure stated preference at the time of interviews — they are neither an election result nor a definitive prediction of voting behaviour, and they should be read as such.

The reaction from Kenya Kwanza leaders has itself been revealing. Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot and other government-aligned politicians have challenged the suggestion that Ruto and Sifuna are operating at comparable levels of public support. Yet opinion polling should not be treated as a political endorsement, nor dismissed simply because its findings are inconvenient. Its real value lies in identifying changing public attitudes, stimulating debate and encouraging political institutions to examine honestly the reasons behind those shifts. Equally, the opposition should resist the temptation to interpret a statistical tie as an electoral victory. The 15 per cent undecided electorate, the constitutional presidential threshold and the practical challenges of coalition-building remain critical variables.

What makes the findings particularly interesting is Sifuna's emergence as a national political personality beyond his traditional parliamentary and ODM constituency. His Linda Mwananchi platform appears to be attracting citizens seeking a different kind of political conversation — one centred on accountability, economic opportunity and generational renewal. However, translating personal popularity into a sustainable political organisation requires considerably more than public enthusiasm. The November 13 delegates' conference, which proceeded after the Political Parties Disputes Tribunal declined to stop it, focused on organisational restructuring, nomination rules and coalition negotiations. Crucially, delegates deferred key leadership appointments, leaving Sifuna's formal elevation unresolved. The distinction between a popular political personality and an established political institution will define the movement's next phase.

Opposition unity has simultaneously gained renewed momentum following former President Uhuru Kenyatta's appeal to opposition principals to subordinate individual ambitions to a common political purpose. Kalonzo Musyoka's November 14 declaration that he is prepared to sacrifice his presidential ambition in support of a single opposition candidate is a significant development. His insistence that he will remain in the opposition regardless of the outcome of negotiations provides a clearer indication of his publicly stated position — though the gap between public declarations and durable political agreements remains wide and historically familiar in Kenyan politics.

The intervention of Opiyo Wandayi, who urged Kenyatta to step back from active political engagement, has introduced another dimension to the debate, raising an important constitutional and democratic question about the continuing role of retired presidents in national political discourse. Retirement from public office does not extinguish citizenship or the freedom to express political opinions, and that distinction matters.

At the regional level, the confrontation during the Maa Cultural and Tourism Festival at Sekenani in Narok on November 14 deserves serious reflection. The clash involving rival supporters associated with Governor Patrick Ntutu and Nairobi West MP Gabriel Tongoyo briefly disrupted an occasion intended to celebrate cultural heritage and promote tourism. President Ruto's presence did not prevent the confrontation, and security officers were forced to intervene. The incident illustrates the growing difficulty of separating cultural institutions from competitive electoral politics — a difficulty that will only intensify as 2027 approaches.

The controversy surrounding the Kenya Pipeline Company share transaction adds another layer of institutional concern. Ndindi Nyoro's questions about the transaction and Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi's defence of the sale of a 25 per cent stake to private investors have opened a wider debate about public asset management, transparency and national economic interests. The government maintains the transaction was commercial and above board, but the public deserves access to relevant valuation, ownership and governance arrangements. Trust in public institutions is built through transparency, not assertion.

The distribution of KSh 2.26 billion in political party funding offers yet another perspective on the changing environment. ODM received approximately KSh 801.85 million, UDA KSh 788.74 million and Jubilee KSh 184.89 million — the three parties together accounting for approximately 79 per cent of total disbursements. Audit concerns about inadequate records and party offices that existed only on paper raise legitimate questions about whether public resources are genuinely strengthening democratic participation or merely sustaining political bureaucracies.

Looking ahead, the IEBC's announcement on November 11 that 105 fully registered political parties had submitted certified nomination rules for the 2027 General Election marks a significant institutional step, shifting attention towards the integrity of party primaries, candidate selection and compliance with electoral law. The quality of these internal processes will carry considerable implications for the credibility of the eventual national contest.

Ultimately, Kenya's political weather must be assessed not merely through rallies, declarations and shifting alliances, but through the substance of the questions confronting the country. Citizens are demanding answers about the cost of living, unemployment, healthcare, public debt, corruption and the management of national resources. Women, young people and persons with disabilities cannot continue to be treated as convenient electoral constituencies while being excluded from meaningful decision-making.

"An election is ultimately a conversation between a nation and those who seek to govern it. Its most important question is not who can command the largest political following today, but who can offer a credible account of tomorrow — grounded in public trust, institutional integrity and the promise of a dignified, inclusive and equitable life for every Kenyan citizen."

Politics The poll, conducted nationally, offers the clearest public snapshot yet of how Kenyans are thinking about the question of who should stand beside Ruto on the 2027 ticket

Waiguru leads Kindiki in running mate poll as Ruto's 2027 ticket takes shape

A Swiss Poll International survey has placed Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru ahead of Deputy President Kithure Kindiki as the preferred running mate for President William Ruto in the 2027 General Election, in findings that are already reshaping the conversation about Kenya's next electoral contest.



New poll showed the preferred running mate for William Ruto. Photo: Anne Waiguru/Gladys Wanga/Kithure Kindiki. Source: Facebook

BY Daniel Karanja
@themtkenyatimes

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru has emerged as the leading preferred running mate for President William Ruto in the 2027 General Election, commanding 42 per cent support in a Swiss Poll International survey that places her ahead of Deputy President Kithure Kindiki at 31 per cent and Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga at 13 per cent — findings that land at a moment when Kenya's pre-election political calculations are intensifying by the week.

The poll, conducted nationally, offers the clearest public snapshot yet of how Kenyans are thinking about the question of who should stand beside Ruto on the 2027 ticket — and its results carry implications that extend well beyond a simple popularity ranking. They touch on regional arithmetic, gender politics, the future of the Deputy President's position, and the broader strategic question of what kind of coalition Ruto needs to build if he is to retain the presidency in what is shaping up to be the most competitive Kenyan election in a generation.

Waiguru's 42 per cent showing is striking for several reasons. She is a two-term governor of Kirinyaga County, a former Cabinet Secretary for Devolution and Planning under President Uhuru Kenyatta, and one of the most recognisable political figures in the Mount Kenya region — a vote-rich bloc whose support will be fiercely contested in 2027. Her profile combines executive experience at both national and county level with a political resilience that has seen her survive an impeachment attempt, a series of legal battles and the shifting loyalties of a region whose political direction has rarely been more uncertain. For Ruto, whose relationship with the Mount Kenya establishment has been complicated by the fallout with Kenyatta and the subsequent realignment of figures such as former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, the idea of a running mate who can anchor the region carries obvious strategic appeal.

Kindiki, at 31 per cent, occupies a fundamentally different position in this calculation. As the sitting Deputy President, he is not merely a potential running mate — he is already on the ticket, elevated to the position following Gachagua's controversial impeachment in late 2024. His poll numbers reflect a figure who has had relatively little time to establish an independent public profile in the role, having spent much of his tenure navigating the institutional aftermath of his predecessor's removal while managing a demanding security portfolio. His academic background — he is a distinguished constitutional law scholar and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi — commands respect, but respect and electoral warmth are different currencies, and the poll suggests Waiguru currently holds more of the latter.

Wanga's 13 per cent is the most politically nuanced figure in the survey. As governor of Homa Bay County, she represents a constituency that sits at the heart of ODM's traditional support base in Luo Nyanza. Her appearance in a poll about Ruto's preferred running mate reflects two possibilities that are not mutually exclusive: genuine cross-community admiration for her governance record, and the complex negotiations between Kenya Kwanza and ODM that have characterised the broad-based government arrangement. Whether Wanga's figure represents a serious political pathway or simply a measure of her personal popularity is a question the coming months will begin to answer.

The deeper significance of this poll lies in what it reveals about the structural pressures bearing down on Ruto's 2027 campaign. The President faces a fundamentally different electoral environment from the one he navigated in 2022. Then, he ran as an insurgent — the hustler candidate challenging the establishment, drawing energy from economic frustration and a generational desire for change. That narrative delivered him the presidency by a margin that was ultimately confirmed by the Supreme Court after a legal challenge. In 2027, he runs as an incumbent with a record to defend, in an economy that has tested ordinary Kenyans severely through the cost-of-living pressures that dominated the 2024 protest movement, and against an opposition that is — however imperfectly — moving towards the kind of unity that eluded it last time.

In that context, the choice of running mate is not a ceremonial decision. It is a strategic one that will signal to specific communities, regions and demographic groups whether Ruto's coalition is broadening or contracting. Waiguru's strength in the poll suggests that a significant portion of Kenyans see value in a ticket that doubles down on Mount Kenya representation — a reading that prioritises consolidating a base over reaching for new constituencies. Kindiki's position, by contrast, represents continuity and institutional stability, virtues that carry weight in uncertain times but that may not generate the electoral excitement a competitive race demands.

What the poll cannot capture is the internal negotiation that will ultimately determine the ticket. Kenyan running mate selections are rarely decided by public preference surveys alone. They are the product of backroom conversations between regional barons, party structures, financial interests and the kind of political debts that accumulate over years of alliance-building. Waiguru's public numbers are strong, but public numbers and private commitments are different things.

What is clear is that the 2027 ticket question is now firmly open and firmly contested. Gachagua's departure from the Deputy President's office removed what many assumed was a settled arrangement and introduced a fluidity into Ruto's re-election planning that his campaign strategists will be working hard to manage. Every poll that places Waiguru ahead of Kindiki adds pressure to that management exercise and raises questions — however premature — about whether the sitting Deputy President's position on the ticket is as secure as the institution of his office might suggest.

Kenya's election season has, in effect, already begun. The campaigns are not yet official, the nominations are months away and the ballot is a year distant. But the choices being made now — about alliances, about running mates, about the narratives that will define the contest — will determine what August 2027 looks like long before the voting booths open.

Waiguru leads the poll. The race, in every meaningful sense, has already started.



Politics **Matiang'i insisted that the people of Kisii and Nyamira counties remained firmly aligned with the opposition and would not be swayed by political handouts**

Matiang'i and opposition leaders vow unity to unseat Ruto in 2027

Fred Matiang'i led a cross-party opposition rally through Kisii and Nyamira counties on Saturday, with leaders pledging a single presidential candidate and warning against election manipulation.



Fred Matiang'i

BY James Murimi
@themtkenyatimes

Jubilee Party leader and presidential candidate Fred Matiang'i on Saturday led a united bloc of opposition leaders in reaffirming their commitment to field a single presidential candidate against President William Ruto in the 2027 General Election, declaring that no amount of money or political inducement would alter Kenyans' determination to vote the current administration out of office.

Speaking during a wide-ranging political tour of Kisii and Nyamira counties that included rallies at Capital Roundabout and Keroka Market in Kisii County — following a church service at ACK St Philip's Cathedral in Kisii town — Matiang'i trained his fire on the government's development record, accusing Ruto of repeatedly launching and relaunching projects without completing them. He told residents they were being presented with foundation stones and commemorative plaques in place of actual, tangible results.

Matiang'i insisted that the people of Kisii and Nyamira counties remained firmly aligned with the opposition and would not be swayed by political handouts, arguing that voters across the region were resolute in their desire for change.

He was joined by a formidable opposition gathering that included People's Party of Kenya (PPK) leader and Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro, People's Liberation Party (PLP) leader Martha Karua and Siaya Governor James Orengo. Together, the leaders pledged to continue consultations, set aside individual presidential ambitions and settle on one candidate capable of mounting a credible challenge to Ruto.

Nyoro was direct in his message: the President must leave office after the 2027 elections. He said the opposition was committed to delivering political change through a disciplined and united front, and that the groundwork being laid through these consultations was serious rather than ceremonial.

The leaders collectively criticised the government over rising insecurity, alleged misuse of public funds and what they described as a trail of unfulfilled development promises. They challenged Ruto to demonstrate measurable progress on projects rather than relying on public launch events as a substitute for delivery, and questioned the administration's capacity to guarantee the basic safety of its citizens.

They also issued a sharp warning against what they described as alleged plans to manipulate the 2027 electoral process, calling on Kenyans to remain vigilant and to actively protect their votes. The leaders were emphatic that the outcome of the next election must reflect the genuine will of the electorate, and that any attempt to subvert that outcome would be resisted.

On the question of democratic freedoms, the opposition bloc defended the constitutional right of political leaders to address Kenyans and conduct political activities without intimidation, arguing that any restriction on legitimate political engagement would amount to an assault on the foundations of democracy itself.

The leaders also took pointed aim at what they characterised as Ruto's use of disrespectful language towards his political opponents, singling out his treatment of retired President Uhuru Kenyatta. They urged Ruto to respect the dignity of the presidency as an institution and to accord his predecessor the courtesy befitting a former Head of State. The respect Ruto would expect upon leaving office, they argued, should be the same respect he extends to Kenyatta today.

Matiang'i and his allies closed by reiterating that their consultations would continue in the weeks ahead, maintaining that a genuinely united opposition offered Kenya its clearest opportunity for democratic renewal and improved governance.

Others accompanying the delegation included former Education Cabinet Secretary Ezekiel Machogu, Nyamira Senator Erick Okong'o Omogeni, Kitutu Chache South MP Anthony Kibagendi, Bomachoge Borabu MP Obadiah Barongo, Kitutu Masaba MP Clive Gisairo and Bobasi MP Innocent Obiri.



A thousand new beginnings



By Orzigul Sherova

Every sunrise brings a chance to start anew,
A thousand dreams are waiting to come true.
Sometimes new paths may fill our hearts with fear,
But we never give up when the unknown is near.

Each step we take makes our hearts grow strong,
Even when the roads are hard and long.
We must keep trying and stay strong,
For life is short, but dreams live on.

It's never too late to start something new,
We can dream and begin again at any age.
In this life, you decide what you will do,
You are the book, and you write every page.

So, my dear, let your worries fade away,
There will be brighter skies another day.
Just believe in yourself, everything's alright,
Every new beginning brings a little light.

So many dreams are still waiting to shine,
A thousand new beginnings can still be mine.
I'll welcome each day and follow my way,
And give myself a chance to begin every day.

God is never blind to your tears, never deaf to your prayers, and never silent about your pain



He sees, He hears, and He will deliver you.
God is great.
Love is God.
I always have hope in my God.
He is always with me.
Whatever you need, ask and pray only to God.

God will give you whatever you need.
You just put your efforts into achieving it.
If you feel pain, you will pray to God, and He will cure your pain. Whatever is meant for you will come to you.
God gives you what is yours.
You should live honestly and confidently.
You should have hope in God.
God is always with you.
Your trust and hope will keep you safe.
So, live with hope and trust in God.
It will lead you to success.

__ G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Where a flicker of faith awakens a universe of possibilities



A little lamp, a tender flame,
Yet countless dreams whisper its name.
We light its wick with hope in our eyes,
And send a thousand wishes to the skies.

Before a journey, a venture, a start,
We kindle its glow with a prayer in our heart.
For in that flicker, something takes flight,
A thousand dreams awaken in its light.

The flame may be little, but its message is vast,
It gives us the courage to rise steadfast.
It chases away the shadows of fear,
And whispers, "Your dreams are closer than they appear."

Each dancing flame, a promise untold,
A prayer for tomorrow, a hope to behold.
We ask not merely for fortunes to shine,
But strength to make every dream divine.

A lamp cannot fulfil what our hands must pursue,
But it lights the path for the dreams we renew.
With faith as our wings and effort as our guide,
We turn our silent prayers into steps of pride.

So let the little lamp forever glow,
Nurturing dreams wherever we go.
For sometimes, a single flame we ignite
Can awaken a thousand dreams to life!

A little lamp may illuminate a room,
But a thousand dreams can illuminate a lifetime.

Nandini
Educator,Writer,Motivator

Children's day wishes



HAPPY CHILDREN'S DAY

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHILDREN'S DAY ON BEHALF OF creative writers
Our dear and sweet children, happy children's day

Each day week month was wonderful
each minute and second was enjyable.
as such I don't find words to express my thoughts
I really love you from the depth of my heart
Unbound happiness I feel on this blessed day:
To greet you all on this auspicious day

Many many happy returns of the children's day
Seeds of responsibility and freedom were sown
A special and holy day for children
To recognize you are a bit higher

We are very proud to have Such gems of children in our institution
You are all the asset of the nation
Mould yourself a bit to be seated in a higher position

Keep up the name of our institution
Even after reaching your prestigious distinction
Today a red letter day and a memorable one for all

Distinguish between right and wrong with your seventh sense
Whenever you committed mistake you were rectified
It is all out of love and concern

We advised and guided you for your benefit
To shape you all to be wonderful citizens of India

We were born in different places
But we meet together in one classroom

Children with different types of nature and character
We rejoiced like members of one family.

It is really a blessing to get children like you
We enjoyed very well as one among you
Doing activities and programmes together

Cooperating and coordinating to make it successful
You all made the classes lively and interesting
Expressing your ideas and interrogating

Sharing our happiness as brothers and sisters
Till we breathe last we pray and we owe a lot for your affection

You all fly higher and higher
Come up adding feathers of various colours in the sky
If a tear drop comes out of your eyes It must be of a happy one not a sorrow one.

Discover and utilize your hidden talents
Without wasting the precious time
Love every one equally and gather as many friends
Be wise enough to recognize wolf in sheep's clothing

Be not like a wood in running water
Be an agile fish to swim against the waves
Always be a winner and achiever
Do something different from others

Our whole hearted wishes for your bright future
To reach the desired destination
Lift your heel a bit higher than the others
Automatically your head will be raised

Always be brave, accept any challenges
Be wise and behave well to be loved by all
Always be happy with an ever smiling face
You shall definitely achieve everything in your life

Love your parents, teachers, elders, brothers and sisters
Love our Mother Bharath Matha India
Do something for India in your future
Giving a helping hand,
light the lamps of many lives

Do not listen or act upon others advice
Listen to your self conscience,
be your supreme judge
Walk with your shoulders raised,
Talk with your eyes in others

You will be men and women. My dear children
Prove your worth and rise to the occasion
Be wise and gentle in your ways and be independent

Place a land mark where ever you go
And let your name be immortal
May God bless you and shield you beneath his warm feathers

May success shower upon your life and be blessed abundantly
Enjoy your life thoroughly in your future
Get wishes and blessings remember all your teachers

Remember God never shuts one door without opening another
A Loving God is always there to lift you on his tender shoulder

May your name and fame spread throughout the world
All our wishes, from the depth of our heart for your bright future

D. BRINDA
Creative writers
Cuddalore
India

Education **The attack, which occurred on Wednesday evening, began after Ndurya discovered that a teacher had smuggled unauthorised materials into the examination room**

KNEC supervisor abducted and assaulted after rejecting KSh 50,000 KCSE cheating bribe

A Kenya National Examinations Council supervisor in Kwale County was abducted, beaten and left for dead after refusing a bribe to allow cheating in the ongoing 2026 KCSE examinations.



By: Yvonne Wambui
@themtkenyatimes



Julius Ndurya, a Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) supervisor attached to Vibugurugani Secondary School in Kinango Sub-County

Julius Ndurya, a Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) supervisor attached to Vibugurugani Secondary School in Kinango Sub-County, Kwale County, was yesterday abducted and brutally assaulted after allegedly refusing a KSh 50,000 bribe to facilitate cheating in the ongoing 2026 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations, leaving him with serious head injuries and a fractured hand.

The attack, which occurred on Wednesday evening, began after Ndurya discovered that a teacher had smuggled unauthorised materials into the examination room. He confiscated the materials and secured them in his locker as evidence of the suspected malpractice — only to find they had been stolen before he could take further action, raising immediate questions about how many people may have been involved and whether the security of examination materials had been compromised from within.

Ndurya said his refusal to cooperate with those behind the cheating scheme made him a marked man. He was subsequently confronted by suspected Form Four candidates who threatened him before carrying out the assault, warning him against returning to the examination centre and accusing him of refusing to help members of his own community despite having been offered money. During the attack, Ndurya said he feigned death, a decision he believes saved his life — his assailants eventually left, apparently convinced he had succumbed to the beating.

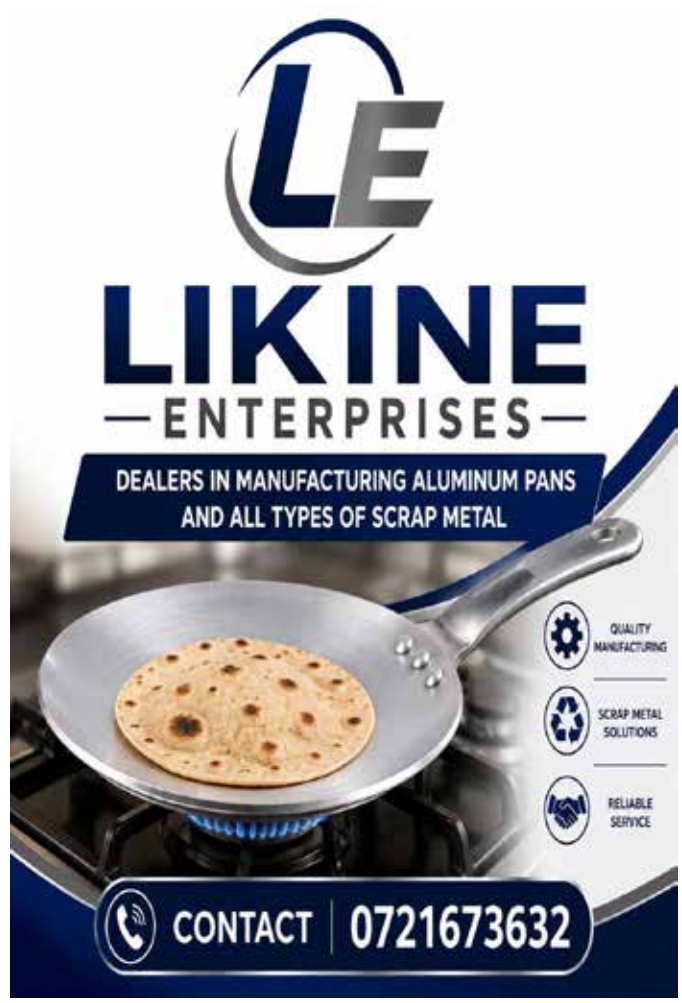
The ordeal did not end there. Ndurya alleged that a quality assurance official summoned him to the Kinango education offices and cautioned him about the consequences of failing to cooperate with other teachers — a claim that, if substantiated, would point to pressure being applied from within the education establishment itself. He said he feared for his life and suspected that the malpractice network extended beyond the individuals who attacked him.

He has since reported the matter to Kinango Police Station, where investigations are under way to establish the full circumstances of the attack and identify those responsible.

The incident lands at a moment when the government and KNEC have significantly intensified their crackdown on examination malpractice, targeting leaks, impersonation and the possession of unauthorised materials. Education officials have repeatedly warned candidates, teachers and examination personnel that any attempt to compromise national examinations carries serious consequences.

Ndurya's case has reignited concern about the physical safety of supervisors and invigilators who are on the front line of protecting examination integrity — individuals who, as this incident illustrates, can find themselves dangerously exposed when they choose to do the right thing. The question now being asked is not simply who attacked Julius Ndurya, but what systemic failures allowed a cheating network to operate with enough confidence to assault a government official and walk away.







Leadership **Silence, in this context, is not absence or weakness. It is an active and deliberate choice. It creates space for others to process, to contribute and to take ownership of outcomes**

Leadership is the art of knowing when to speak and when not to

The most powerful thing a leader can do is sometimes say nothing at all.

BY Ashford Kimani
@themtkenyatimes



By **Ashford Kimani**

Leadership is frequently mistaken for visibility, volume and verbal dominance — yet the most effective leaders understand that influence is not measured by how much one speaks, but by the precision of that speech. The ability to discern when to speak and when to remain silent is a defining marker of leadership maturity, a discipline that separates reactive managers from reflective leaders who understand that communication is not merely expression but a strategic tool for shaping thought, culture and action.

At the heart of this lies intentionality. Every time a leader opens their mouth, it should be driven by purpose rather than impulse. Many leaders fall into the trap of speaking to assert authority, to demonstrate knowledge or to maintain control. These instincts are entirely human, but they produce diminishing returns. When leaders speak too frequently or without clear reason, their words lose weight. Teams become conditioned to listen passively rather than think actively. The leader who speaks with restraint, by contrast, commands genuine attention — because when they do speak, people know it matters.

Silence, in this context, is not absence or weakness. It is an active and deliberate choice. It creates space for others to process, to contribute and to take ownership of outcomes. In a meeting, a leader who resists the urge to fill every pause allows team members to step forward with insights that might otherwise have remained suppressed. That enriches decision-making and builds a culture of genuine inclusion. Silence becomes a catalyst for participation rather than a void to be feared.

Equally important is the leader's ability to interrogate their own motives before speaking. A simple internal question — "Am I adding value, or merely reacting?" — can transform communication dynamics entirely. Reactionary speech is driven by emotion, urgency or ego and tends to cloud clarity rather than provide it. Value-driven speech is measured, thoughtful and aligned with broader objectives. Leaders who cultivate this kind of self-awareness are far better positioned to guide conversations constructively rather than disrupt them.

The strategic use of questions amplifies this approach further. Instead of issuing directives or supplying immediate answers, effective leaders ask clear, focused questions that stimulate independent thinking. A well-placed question can unlock perspectives, encourage problem-solving and empower individuals to take initiative. This shift from telling to asking is fundamental in modern leadership, where the goal is not to centralise knowledge but to distribute it. When people are trusted to think for themselves, they become more invested in outcomes and more confident in their own capabilities.

There is also an important distinction between speaking to inform and speaking to influence. Informational communication is essential for clarity and coordination. Influential communication carries a deeper responsibility — it shapes perceptions, signals priorities and defines the culture of an organisation. Leaders must therefore be mindful not only of what they say, but of how and when they say it. A poorly timed comment, even if accurate, can create confusion or quietly undermine morale. A well-timed word, by contrast, can inspire confidence, align effort and reinforce shared purpose in ways that no memo or directive ever could.

The consequences of over-speaking are more serious than they might initially appear. When leaders dominate conversations, they inadvertently create dependency. Team members begin waiting for direction rather than taking initiative, creativity slows and decision-making becomes centralised in ways that ultimately weaken the organisation. Over time, this erodes the adaptive capacity that institutions need to thrive in complex and rapidly changing environments. Silence, used purposefully, reverses this trend. It signals trust. It communicates clearly that others are capable of contributing meaningfully — and that they are expected to.

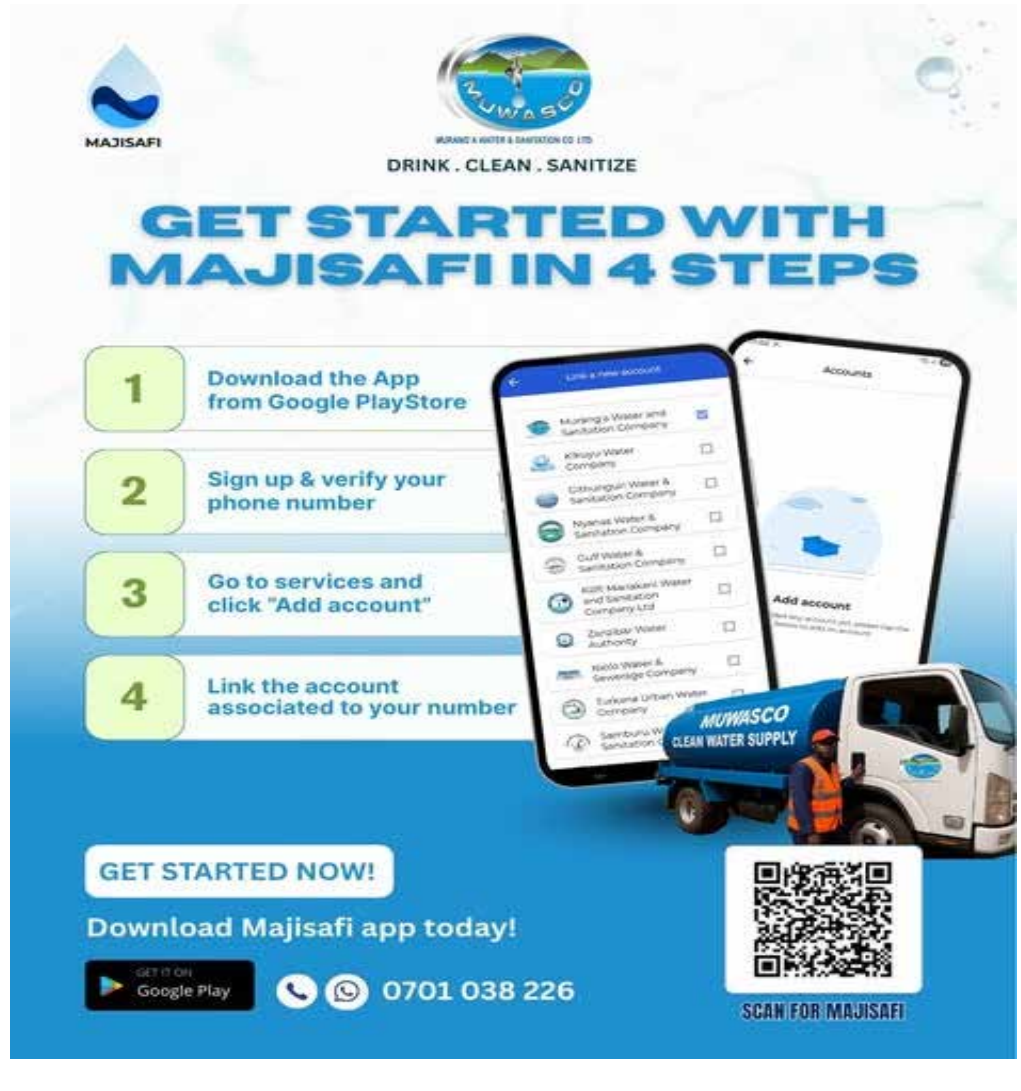
This balance is deeply rooted in emotional intelligence. Leaders must develop the capacity to read situations, understand group dynamics and regulate their own impulses with honesty and discipline. There are moments that demand clear and decisive communication — particularly in times of crisis or uncertainty, when people need direction and reassurance. There are equally moments that require restraint, where listening is more powerful than any words available. Navigating these moments with sensitivity and sound judgment is what distinguishes effective leadership from the mere exercise of authority.

In educational settings, the implications of this principle are especially profound. A school leader who constantly dictates solutions may achieve compliance, but rarely cultivates growth. Teachers, like students, thrive in environments where they are trusted to think, reflect and contribute freely. By speaking less and listening more, a leader creates genuine space for innovation and professional ownership. Similarly, a teacher who allows pauses, asks probing questions and resists the temptation to over-explain cultivates deeper and more durable learning. Students become active participants rather than passive recipients, and the classroom transforms accordingly.

Ultimately, leadership communication is a matter of precision, not volume. Every word a leader speaks carries weight, and silence — used with intention — can be just as powerful as the most carefully crafted speech. The most effective leaders are not those who dominate conversations, but those who elevate them: creating environments where ideas can surface, where individuals feel genuinely heard and where collective intelligence is given room to flourish.

The true art of leadership lies in mastering this balance. It demands discipline, self-awareness and deep respect for the contributions of others. In knowing when to speak, a leader provides direction. In knowing when to remain silent, a leader creates possibility.

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



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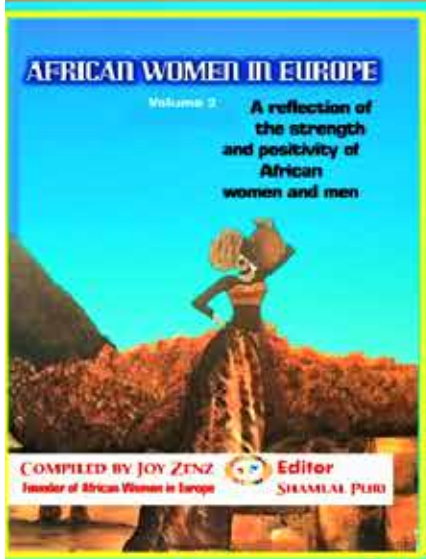
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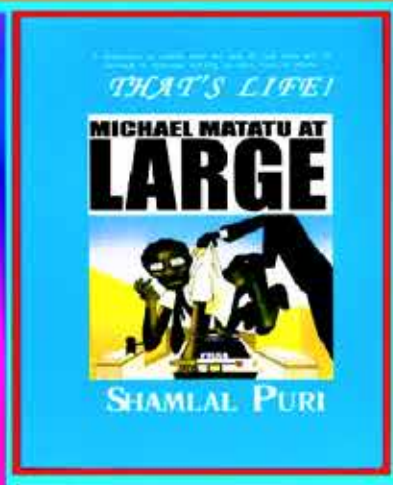
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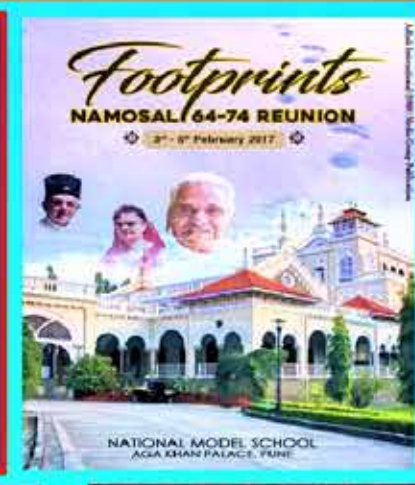
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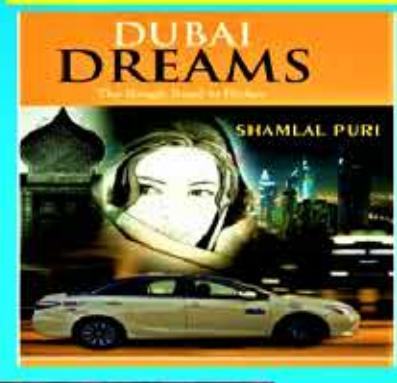


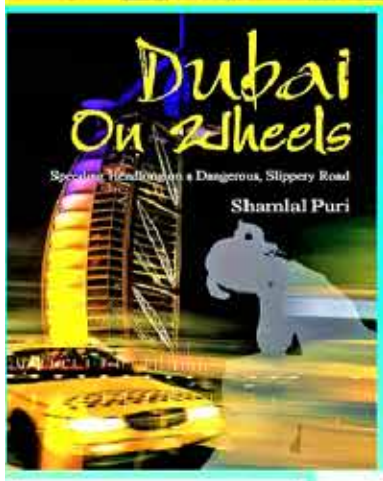


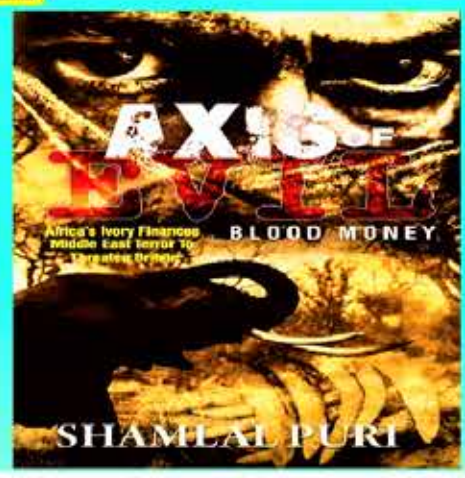


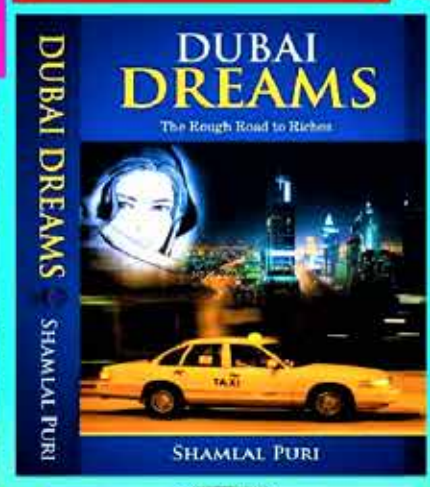


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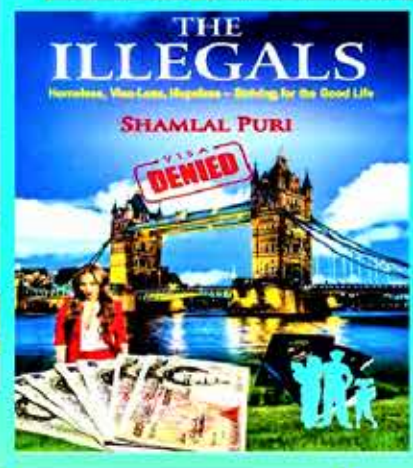




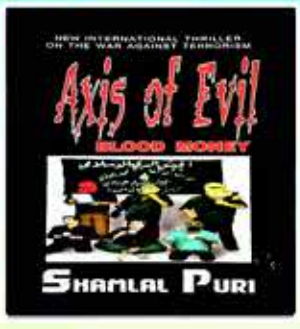




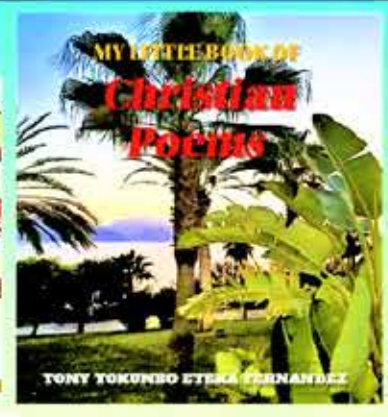
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Politics **His target was specific. Ruto had used a tour of Kisii County to describe Gachagua as a "master of hate," a "hate man from Texas," a "chronic liar," a "conman" and a "fraud"**

Gachagua breaks silence on Ruto's attacks: 'I was mourning — now I have buried my sister'

The DCP leader has warned President Ruto that his period of restraint is over, challenging Kenya's Catholic bishops to confront the President directly over language he says is beneath the dignity of the office.

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes



Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday broke his silence over President William Ruto's recent personal attacks, revealing that he had held back only because he was mourning the death of his sister — and warning that now she has been buried, any further insults from the President will be met with an immediate and full response.

Gachagua made the remarks during a church service on Sunday, one day after burying his sister, in what turned out to be one of his most carefully framed public addresses since his impeachment from the Deputy Presidency. The timing and setting were deliberate. By speaking from a church, fresh from grief, he positioned himself not as a combative politician spoiling for a fight but as a man who had shown restraint under provocation and was now simply and reasonably serving notice that the restraint had run its course.

His target was specific. Ruto had used a tour of Kisii County to describe Gachagua as a "master of hate," a "hate man from Texas," a "chronic liar," a "conman" and a "fraud" — a sequence of personal attacks delivered from public platforms during official county engagements that drew criticism from several quarters, including the Catholic Church. Gachagua's response on Sunday was measured in tone but unambiguous in substance. "This week you have been in Kisii, insulting Rigathi Gachagua and Uhuru Kenyatta. You were lucky I was mourning and did not get an opportunity to respond to you," he said. "But now that I have buried my sister, if you insult us this week, we will respond."

The statement carried a weight that went beyond political point-scoring. Gachagua was making two arguments simultaneously — one personal, one institutional. The personal argument was that he had shown the kind of human dignity in a moment of family grief that he believes his former principal has failed to demonstrate in public office. The institutional argument was more pointed: that the President of Kenya has a responsibility to protect the dignity of the office he holds, not merely for his own sake but for the sake of everyone who aspires to hold it in the future.

"He is undermining the dignity and the respect of the institution of the presidency," Gachagua said. "We want to become presidents of Kenya, and we do not want the respect of the office of the President to go down." It was a line that served double duty — a criticism of Ruto's conduct and a quiet declaration of his own ambitions, framed as concern for the institution rather than personal grievance.

The Catholic Church had entered the fray days earlier. The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, led by chairman Archbishop Maurice Muhatia, issued a statement on Thursday calling on presidential aspirants to avoid tribal, hateful and demeaning language as political exchanges intensified ahead of August 2027. The bishops' appeal was directed broadly, but its timing — following Ruto's Kisii remarks — left little doubt about the context in which it was issued.

Gachagua welcomed the intervention but redirected it with considerable precision. "I have seen Catholic bishops saying leaders should not use abusive language against each other. And that is right. But let me help them a little. It is not the other leaders who are using abusive language. The person using insults everywhere is the President of the Republic of Kenya," he said. He then went further, issuing a direct challenge to the bishops to request a formal meeting with Ruto and address his conduct face to face. "We want to tell our Catholic fathers that they are right, but they should get an appointment with William Ruto, with our church leaders, go and sit him down and tell him what he is doing is not presidential," he stated.

He extended the appeal beyond the Catholic Church, calling on bishops of the African Inland Church, the Anglican Church of Kenya and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa to intervene. His appeal to the AIC was particularly pointed, given that Ruto is a worshipping member of that church. "First, AIC, you are the bishops who should go and sit down with him. Tell him that he has embarrassed the church because of the insults coming from his mouth while he is the President of the Republic of Kenya," Gachagua said.

The broader political context in which these exchanges are taking place matters enormously. Kenya is now less than a year from a General Election that is shaping up to be fiercely contested across every level of government. The opposition, however imperfectly, is consolidating — with Gachagua, Kalonzo Musyoka, Martha Karua, Ndindi Nyoro and others moving, however gradually, towards a common platform. Ruto, as the incumbent, faces the challenge of defending a record on the economy and governance that has drawn sustained criticism, while simultaneously managing the internal dynamics of a ruling coalition that has itself been tested by the Gachagua impeachment and its aftermath.

In that environment, the register of political speech matters. When a sitting president calls a former deputy president a conman and a fraud from public platforms in a county that he is visiting on what are ostensibly official duties, it sets a tone for political discourse that filters down through every level of public life. When that former deputy president responds from a church, a day after burying his sister, by challenging religious leaders to hold the President to account, the exchange has moved well beyond a personal quarrel.

Gachagua left one door open. "If he stops, we will return to policies," he said. "If he gets into insults, we will meet him there. He is the one to set the agenda because he is the President."

The agenda, for now, appears firmly set.

Politics Within the 48-hour window, Omari demands that the offending video and Facebook post — along with any other versions circulated — be permanently deleted

Omari demands KSh 30M and public apology from former MP over alleged defamatory video

City lawyer Danstan Omari has given Vincent Kemosi Mogaka 48 hours to retract statements he says falsely portrayed him as incompetent, dishonest and professionally worthless.

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes



Former West Mugirango MP Vincent Kemosi Mogaka



City Lawyer Danstan Omari demands KSh 30 million and public apology from former MP over alleged defamatory video

Danstan Omari, a prominent city lawyer and managing partner of Danstan Omari & Associates Advocates, has issued a demand letter to former MP Vincent Kemosi Mogaka seeking KSh 30 million in compensation, a full public apology and the immediate deletion of a video he says contained malicious and defamatory statements about his character and professional career.

The letter, dated November 13 and signed by Advocate Martina Swiga, centres on a public address delivered by Mogaka in Ekegusii and later posted on his Facebook page, "Hon. Kemosi Mogaka," on September 15. According to the letter, Mogaka urged the public not to listen to Omari, alleged he had engaged in deceitful conduct in 1993, claimed he was dismissed from employment and ridiculed him for pursuing legal education at an advanced age. Mogaka also allegedly claimed Omari had never won a single case in court.

Omari's firm has rejected every allegation as false, malicious and reckless. The letter sets out his professional record in unambiguous terms: a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Nairobi in 2008, admission to the Kenya School of Law in 2009 and admission to the Roll of Advocates on November 4, 2011. He subsequently obtained a Master of Laws degree and between 2012 and 2022 served as a law lecturer at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. He has practised at the Bar for more than 15 years, representing individuals, corporations, constitutional offices, public institutions and religious organisations in courts and tribunals across the country.

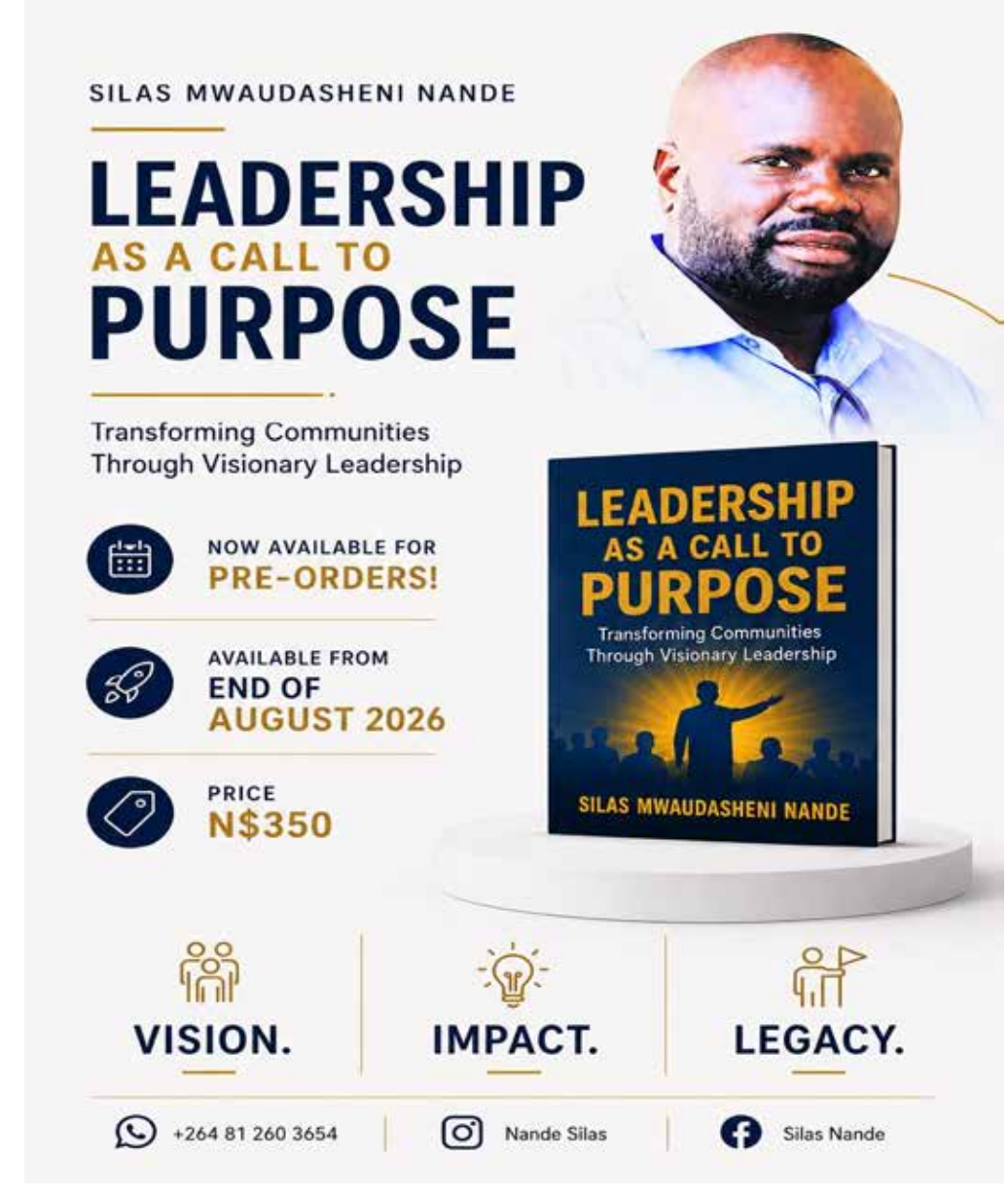
The letter argues that the seriousness of Mogaka's statements is compounded by the public platform on which they were made — reaching not only people who know Omari personally, but his existing clients and prospective ones. The firm maintains that while Mogaka is entitled to hold political opinions and support any leader he chooses, that right stops well short of making false allegations of professional failure and personal dishonesty. "Political differences cannot justify defamatory attacks upon another person's character and professional standing," the letter states.

Within the 48-hour window, Omari demands that the offending video and Facebook post — along with any other versions circulated — be permanently deleted. He also requires a full, unequivocal and unreserved public apology and retraction, published in both Ekegusii and English, withdrawing each of the specific allegations made. The apology must appear on the same platforms used to disseminate the original statements, with comparable prominence and visibility. A written undertaking that Mogaka will not repeat or circulate further defamatory statements is also required.

The KSh 30 million demand is framed as compensation for what Omari describes as grave injury to his personal reputation, professional integrity, dignity, goodwill and legal practice — harm he says was inflicted publicly and without justification.

The letter closes with a clear warning: failure to comply within the stipulated period will result in legal proceedings being filed without further notice.

By the time of publishing, Mogaka had not publicly responded to the demands.



Politics White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales announced the meeting to reporters, framing it as a centrepiece of Trump's broader Indo-Pacific tour.

Trump, Putin and Xi to hold historic nuclear talks at China summit

The leaders of the world's three biggest nuclear powers will meet in Shenzhen next week in a trilateral encounter that could reshape the global arms control landscape for a generation.

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes



United States President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin

United States President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping will hold a historic trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Shenzhen, China, this week, the White House confirmed yesterday — the first time the leaders of the world's three largest nuclear powers have met simultaneously since the Cold War redrew the boundaries of global politics.

White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales announced the meeting to reporters, framing it as a centrepiece of Trump's broader Indo-Pacific tour. "The president has made it clear that, among other topics, he will discuss the reduction of nuclear weapons in the world, whose proliferation President Trump believes is very dangerous," Wales said. The language was careful and the ambitions deliberately measured — a senior American official, speaking anonymously to news agencies AP and Reuters, confirmed that no formal agreement was expected to emerge from the talks. But in diplomacy, the significance of a meeting is not always measured by what is signed at its conclusion. Sometimes it is measured simply by the fact that it happens at all.

Trump arrives in Shenzhen late on Wednesday for the two-day Apec summit, which brings together the 21 member economies of the Asia-Pacific grouping. On Thursday, he will hold bilateral talks with Xi — their fourth meeting since Trump returned to the White House in January 2025 — before the three-way encounter that Wales described with unusual formality: "President Trump will conclude his visit to China with a trilateral meeting between the president of the United States, the president of the People's Republic of China, and the president of the Russian Federation." The phrasing, with its deliberate use of full titles, signalled that Washington intends this moment to carry symbolic weight even if its immediate practical outcomes remain limited.

The backdrop against which the three men will sit down together is one of the most precarious in the history of nuclear diplomacy. The last major arms control treaty between the United States and Russia — the New START agreement — expired in February, leaving the world's two largest nuclear arsenals without the verification mechanisms, inspection protocols and mutual guardrails that have underpinned strategic stability for decades. The collapse of that framework did not happen overnight. It was the culmination of years of deteriorating relations, suspended inspections during the Ukraine conflict and a broader unravelling of the arms control architecture that was painstakingly constructed to manage the existential risks of the Cold War.

The United Nations has repeatedly urged Washington and Moscow to negotiate a successor agreement without delay, warning that the absence of a framework creates dangerous ambiguity about intentions and capabilities on both sides. Trump has indicated he is open to a new deal — but only on his own terms, and crucially, only if it includes China. Beijing has traditionally resisted being drawn into bilateral US-Russia arms control discussions, arguing that its arsenal is too small to warrant inclusion in frameworks designed for the two superpowers. That position has become harder to sustain as China's military modernisation programme has accelerated, with the Pentagon estimating that Beijing's nuclear stockpile has grown significantly in recent years and is projected to continue expanding.

Whether the Shenzhen meeting will produce any movement on that fundamental disagreement remains to be seen. Iran is understood to be on the agenda — a point of genuine convergence of concern for all three leaders, albeit from very different directions — while Ukraine is notably absent from the confirmed discussion topics, a conspicuous omission that reflects the continuing sensitivity of the conflict and the difficulty of finding common ground between Washington and Moscow on a war that has defined European security for three years.

What is already clear is that the meeting itself represents a significant diplomatic achievement for Trump, who has staked much of his foreign policy identity on his claimed ability to deal directly and personally with authoritarian leaders whom his predecessors struggled to engage. His relationship with Putin has been a source of persistent controversy at home and deep unease among America's European allies, who have watched with anxiety as the administration has at times appeared to prioritise rapport with Moscow over solidarity with Kyiv. His engagement with Xi has been more transactional — defined largely by the trade war that dominated his first term and has continued to shape the economic relationship between the two superpowers in his second.

White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales announced the meeting to reporters, framing it as a centrepiece of Trump's broader Indo-Pacific tour. "The president has made it clear that, among other topics, he will discuss the reduction of nuclear weapons in the world, whose proliferation President Trump believes is very dangerous," Wales said. The language was careful and the ambitions deliberately measured — a senior American official, speaking anonymously to news agencies AP and Reuters, confirmed that no formal agreement was expected to emerge from the talks. But in diplomacy, the significance of a meeting is not always measured by what is signed at its conclusion. Sometimes it is measured simply by the fact that it happens at all.

The Shenzhen summit is also the latest in a sequence of events that illustrate the degree to which the geopolitical centre of gravity has shifted eastward. That the most consequential diplomatic encounter of the current moment is taking place in southern China, on Xi's home territory, is itself a statement about the changed architecture of global power. A generation ago, a meeting of this significance would almost certainly have taken place in a European capital or on neutral ground chosen to reflect a rough parity of influence. Today, Shenzhen — a city that barely existed forty years ago and now stands as one of the world's great technology and financial hubs — provides the stage.

Trump's tour will begin with an Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit in the Philippines on Tuesday before he travels to China, giving Washington an opportunity to reinforce relationships across a region where American influence has faced sustained challenge from Beijing's expanding economic and military footprint. Wales described the trip as one that would "secure historic wins for the American people and advance America's interests in the Indo-Pacific" — language that reflects both the ambition of the administration's aims and the domestic political imperative of framing any engagement with rivals as a victory.

Whether the trilateral meeting in Shenzhen proves to be a genuine turning point in the management of nuclear risk, or simply a carefully choreographed photograph that flatters all three leaders without binding any of them to anything, will only become clear in the months and years that follow. What is beyond question is that when Trump, Putin and Xi sit down together next week, the world will be watching a moment that few would have predicted and whose consequences — for arms control, for great power competition and for the fragile architecture of global security — nobody can yet fully calculate.

The stakes, in every sense, could hardly be higher.

STUDENTS CORNER

How Bahati fooled Kenya: The million-shilling 'wedding' that was really a campaign launch

By **Justus Sware**



Kenyans waited weeks for Bahati and Diana Marua's white wedding. Hand-delivered invitations, a black-tie dress code, cameras banned, admission pegged at KSh 1 million per guest. On November 6 at the Argyle Grand Hotel in Nairobi, guests arrived expecting vows. They got a podium reading "MP Mathare 2027."

The wedding was never a wedding. It was a campaign launch in a bridal veil.

The stunt worked because of its precision. Viral videos of celebrity invitations, deliberate media restrictions and a month-long buildup kept the true nature of the event carefully hidden. On NTV's Fixing the Nation, Bahati was unapologetic. "I did not say what was to happen," he said. "They guessed this is a wedding. I used Bahati's Big Day artistically to get the attention of the nation."

On the money, Bahati claimed total collections reached approximately KSh 10 million — far below the KSh 100 million rumoured — with proceeds directed to his Bahati Cares initiative. Critics were unconvinced. The million-shilling figure was actively promoted, not imagined. Nairobi official Geoffrey Mosiria announced his own free-entry wedding, challenging Bahati to refund the money to Mathare residents.

Bahati contested Mathare in 2022 and lost. His 2027 bid leans on a compelling origin story — orphan, gospel star, devoted husband. But he took public affection for that story and monetised it as a political prop.

Technically, he never lied. But if he misled the nation about a wedding to win attention, Mathare voters will ask: what else would he do to win a seat?

Perfectionism can become an expensive form of procrastination

By **Margaret Nekesa**



There is a difference between preparing carefully and preparing endlessly without ever acting. Research, planning and practice serve a purpose — but they become counterproductive the moment they permanently replace the action they were meant to support.

Consider two people starting an online business. The first spends months comparing platforms, studying branding and researching successful entrepreneurs. The second picks a simple product, builds a basic version and puts it in front of real customers. The second person makes mistakes, faces criticism and discovers the original idea needs rethinking. But they also begin learning what actually matters — customer behaviour, pricing, the unglamorous mechanics of running something real. The first person accumulates theory. The second accumulates experience.

This is not an argument against planning. Decisions involving significant financial, legal or personal risk genuinely require preparation, professional guidance and clear thinking. The point is that preparation must have a destination. It should lead somewhere, not circle endlessly back to itself.

Small beginnings reduce the pressure to produce something extraordinary immediately. Starting with what is available, then improving through real feedback, is a more honest education than any amount of advance research. Perfection, when used as a standard that must be met before anything begins, quietly becomes an excuse — a respectable-sounding reason to avoid the discomfort of actually starting.

Progress rarely comes from getting everything right the first time. More often, it comes from having the courage to begin before you feel ready, learning what only experience can teach and improving as you go.

The most expensive mistake is the one you never make because you never started.

Press freedom in Kenya: Free on paper, difficult in practice

By **Mathew Kipkemboi**



Kenya's 2010 Constitution is, on paper, a journalist's charter. Article 33 protects expression. Article 34 guarantees media independence. Article 35 grants access to information. Few countries write these protections more boldly into law. Yet Reporters Without Borders ranked Kenya 117th for press freedom in 2025, recovering only modestly to 106th in 2026, with conditions rated "difficult." The gap between constitutional promise and lived reality is wide.

The evidence is not abstract. During the 2024 anti-Finance Bill protests, journalists were tear-gassed, injured and had equipment destroyed. In June 2025, the Communication Authority ordered broadcasters to pull live protest coverage off-air until courts intervened. On October 20 this year, a Royal Media Services investigative journalist was arrested while reporting on fuel price protests. Each incident is not merely an attack on a reporter — it is a direct violation of the Constitution those same officials swore to uphold.

This is not a new fight. Since Gutenberg's press around 1440, the powerful have sought to control what the public knows. Today the tools are surveillance, internet shutdowns and cybercrime laws — but the impulse is identical.

The encouraging signs exist. Courts suspended the broadcast shutdown. Criminal defamation was struck down. The system still has teeth.

But a press free in law yet battered in practice is not truly free. A public that cannot see clearly cannot govern itself. Kenya wrote that principle beautifully into its Constitution. The task now is making practice match the promise.

University funding in Kenya: A system finally being rebuilt from the ground up

By **Comfort Meredith**



Kenya's university funding system has long been built on a promise the government never kept. Under the old Differentiated Unit Cost model, the state pledged to cover 80 per cent of tuition costs. In practice, disbursements fell to between 37 and 40 per cent, forcing students to shoulder 60 per cent — and pushing public universities into cumulative debt of nearly KSh 67B by 2022.

The Student-Centred Model introduced in 2023 attempted a fix by sorting students into five income bands, with government covering between 30 and 95 per cent depending on household need. The concept was sounder than its execution — thousands were placed in the wrong bands, compounding the injustice.

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba has declared both models failures. His proposed Tertiary Education Placement and Funding Bill 2026 merges HELB, the Universities Fund Board and the TVET Funding Board into a single authority. Under the new model, government will cover 100 per cent of tuition for all KUCCPS-placed students — including those at KMTC's 71-plus campuses. The full amount is a loan, repayable once graduates enter employment, with minimum monthly repayments of KSh 5,000 for formal employees and KSh 1,500 for low-income earners.

For 2026/2027, KSh 22.12B has been disbursed. Semester fees now range from KSh 5,814 to KSh 75,000. The bill is expected before Parliament by December 2026.

Kenya has rebuilt this system twice and failed both times. The third attempt must deliver.



Sports >> ***A night planned as a celebration of Cristiano Ronaldo's legacy turned into a sobering lesson as Denmark dismantled Portugal 4–1 in the UEFA Nations League at Braga.**

No Ronaldo, no party: Denmark deliver 4–1 reality check to Portugal



By **Andalo Christine Ingutia**

Portugal's carefully choreographed tribute to Cristiano Ronaldo was yesterday gate-crashed by a ruthless Denmark side who showed no interest in sentiment, handing the hosts a stunning 4–1 defeat in the UEFA Nations League at the Estádio Municipal de Braga — their heaviest home loss in the competition's history.

The evening had been designed as an emotional farewell to Ronaldo's international legacy, with Portugal's players and their mascots taking to the pitch in shirts bearing his iconic number 7, while supporters unveiled a breathtaking stadium display honouring the forward's extraordinary contribution to Portuguese football. It was a night built for warmth and celebration. Denmark, however, had not read the script.

Pierre-Emile Højbjerg broke the deadlock in the 43rd minute, stepping up to convert from the penalty spot after VAR confirmed a handball by Portugal defender Rúben Dias. It was a clinical, composed finish that set the tone for everything that followed — and Portugal never truly recovered.

Denmark returned from the break with greater intent and sharper teeth. Rasmus Højlund, one of Europe's most dangerous young strikers, took centre stage with a devastating seven-minute double that effectively killed the contest. He first volleyed home Mikkel Damsgaard's cross in the 50th minute, all timing and technique, before firing a low, precise effort past Diogo Costa in the 57th minute to put the visitors firmly in control. The Braga crowd, so electric before kick-off, had fallen into a stunned silence.

The evening's misery was completed in the 75th minute when Joachim Andersen rose highest from a corner to power a header into the net, making it four and emphatically ending any Portuguese hope of a comeback. Bernardo Silva provided a late consolation in the 94th minute, but it was exactly that — a consolation, with no bearing on a result that told an uncomfortable story about where this Portugal side currently stands without the man they had spent the evening honouring.

Portugal head coach Jorge Jesus was characteristically blunt when asked whether Ronaldo's absence had contributed to the defeat. "Missing what? He's no longer on the national team, so what's missing? The only thing missing is his presence here to keep me company," Jesus said. It was a deflection dressed as a quip, but it also contained a pointed challenge to his players — that the Ronaldo era is over and the responsibility of carrying Portugal forward rests entirely with those now in the squad.

There is an irony in all of this that is hard to ignore. The night was meant to draw a line under the Ronaldo chapter with grace and gratitude, to send him off with the full-throated affection of a nation he served for more than two decades. Instead, it exposed with unusual clarity the size of the vacuum his retirement has left — not because Portugal lack quality, but because replacing a player of Ronaldo's psychological force and goalscoring certainty is not something that happens in one match, or one season, or perhaps even one generation.

The result, painful as it is, does not alter Portugal's standing in Group A4. They remain top with 12 points and have already secured their place in the quarter-finals. Denmark move to nine points, keeping alive their own qualification hopes heading into the final round of group fixtures. Portugal travel to Cardiff to face Wales on Tuesday, while Denmark host Norway in Copenhagen.

For Denmark, it was a statement — a victory on Portuguese soil that announced their own ambitions loudly and without apology. For Portugal, it was a reality check delivered on the worst possible night. The tributes to Ronaldo were genuine and deserved. But football, as it always does, moved on before the applause had even faded.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> ***The Portuguese Football Federation has permanently altered the design of its iconic number 7 shirt in an emotional tribute to one of football's greatest ever players.**

Portugal honour Cristiano Ronaldo with special number 7 shirt redesign

By **Pascal Okoth**

Portugal have introduced a special redesign of their iconic number 7 shirt as a permanent tribute to Cristiano Ronaldo, celebrating the extraordinary legacy of a man who transcended football and became the defining symbol of Portuguese sporting greatness across more than two decades of international service.

The Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) announced the gesture yesterday, describing it as an effort to immortalise the significance of a number that has become utterly inseparable from Ronaldo's name, his achievements and his immeasurable contribution to the game in Portugal and beyond. It is a rare honour — the kind reserved not merely for great players, but for those who reshape what a nation believes is possible on a football pitch.

Ronaldo's relationship with the number 7 shirt stretches back to his earliest days representing Portugal, a bond that deepened with every goal, every tournament and every record broken along the way. He retired as Portugal's all-time leading scorer and the most capped player in the history of the national team, having appeared at multiple World Cups and European Championships and lifted the UEFA European Championship trophy in 2016 — Portugal's first major international title — in what many consider the crowning achievement of his international career.



Cristiano Ronaldo

The number 7 itself carries a mythical weight in football. From the great wingers of the British game to the continental maestros who wore it with flair and purpose, the shirt number has long been associated with brilliance, speed and the capacity to change a match in a moment. For Portugal, however, it means something specific and deeply personal. It means Ronaldo — the boy from Madeira who left home as a teenager, conquered club football at the highest level with Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus, and never stopped returning to pull on the red and green of his country with everything he had.

The FPF's decision to alter the shirt's design rather than simply retire the number reflects a thoughtful distinction. Retiring a number takes it off the pitch entirely; this tribute keeps the 7 alive in Portuguese football while marking it permanently with the weight of what Ronaldo achieved in wearing it. Future players who pull on that shirt will carry with them a visible reminder of the standard set by the man who wore it before them — a responsibility and an inspiration in equal measure.

The tribute has been warmly received across the football world, with supporters, former teammates and football administrators praising the federation for the sensitivity and creativity of the gesture. For Portuguese fans who watched Ronaldo grow from a gifted but raw teenager into the most prolific scorer in the history of international football, the redesign carries genuine emotional resonance. It is not simply a commercial or ceremonial act — it is an acknowledgement that some legacies are too large to be left only to memory and statistics.

Ronaldo himself has spoken often about what representing Portugal means to him, describing the national team as a source of immense pride that no club achievement could replicate. That attachment, sustained over a career of extraordinary length and consistency, is precisely what makes the FPF's tribute feel earned rather than sentimental.

The number 7 shirt will continue to be worn by Portugal players in the matches ahead. But it will now carry a design that tells anyone who sees it exactly what that number has meant — not just in the record books, but in the hearts of a nation that watched one of their own become, by any measure, the most remarkable footballer their country has ever produced.

For Portugal, the number 7 no longer belongs only to football. It belongs to Cristiano Ronaldo.





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Modern Uzbekistan, timeless traditions: Preserving national identity in a changing world

As Uzbekistan embraces modernisation and global connectivity, one university's weekly tradition asks a quietly profound question — what does development cost if it erases the culture it was meant to serve?



By: Odilov Muhammadamin
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

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- **Traditional Uzbek clothing represents one of the most immediate and beautiful expressions of that heritage. The richly coloured Atlas and Adras fabrics, the carefully embroidered do'ppi — the traditional skullcap — the elegant chopon robe and the many other elements of national dress have been passed down through generations not as museum pieces, but as living markers of identity, craftsmanship and cultural pride. These garments carry within their patterns and textures a record of who Uzbeks are and where they come from. They are not merely decorative. They are a language.**



Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan is developing at a pace and confidence that would have been difficult to imagine a generation ago — new infrastructure, deepening diplomatic ties, expanding international partnerships and a younger generation with opportunities their parents never had. Yet alongside these achievements, a question that refuses to be drowned out by the noise of progress keeps surfacing: how does a nation modernise without losing the very thing that makes it distinctly itself?

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That language has been heard well beyond Central Asia. The late Oscar de la Renta, one of the most celebrated fashion designers of the twentieth century, drew inspiration from Central Asian ikat patterns, incorporating their geometric complexity and colour richness into his international collections. It was a reminder that what is rooted in tradition need not be parochial — that the specific can speak to the universal. In 2017, UNESCO formally recognised the Margilan Crafts Development Centre's work in safeguarding the traditional production of Atlas and Adras fabrics, lending international weight to what Uzbek artisans have known for centuries.

None of this means that global fashion trends are unwelcome. Among young Uzbeks, international styles are popular and their enthusiasm for them is entirely natural. Cultures have always exchanged ideas about how people dress, and that exchange is part of what keeps traditions alive rather than frozen. The question is not whether to engage with the modern world, but how to do so without allowing the pressures of globalisation to quietly hollow out what is most distinctly one's own.

This is precisely the philosophy at the heart of Alfraganus University's guiding motto: "Zamonaviy ta'lim va sharqona tarbiya uyg'unligi" — the harmony of modern education and Eastern values. The phrase is not merely a slogan. It reflects a genuine institutional commitment to producing graduates who are professionally equipped for a competitive world while remaining grounded in the cultural and moral traditions that give that professional life its meaning. Real education, the university argues, is not limited to academic achievement. It also shapes the kind of person a student becomes — someone who carries their heritage forward with understanding and pride, not embarrassment.

That commitment finds a practical and joyful expression every Friday, when Alfraganus University observes Milliy kun — National Dress Day. For more than a year, students have been encouraged to wear elements of Uzbek national clothing to university: an Atlas or Adras outfit, an embroidered do'ppi, garments featuring traditional ornaments. The tradition has become more than a dress code. It is a weekly act of cultural affirmation, a reminder that heritage does not belong only in ceremonial contexts or behind exhibition glass. It can walk into a lecture hall, sit at a desk and open a textbook.

Preserving traditional clothing does not demand that every Uzbek wear national dress daily or turn their back on contemporary fashion. It asks something more sustainable and more meaningful — that people understand the significance of what they have inherited, support the artisans who keep those skills alive and ensure that future generations receive that inheritance with its value intact.

A nation that moves confidently into the future while remaining anchored in its past is not caught between two worlds. It has found the harder and more rewarding thing: a way to be both.

Uzbekistan's future is modern. Its roots are timeless. The two are not in conflict — not if the choice is made, every Friday and beyond, to carry both forward together.

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