

Gachagua unveils 17-million-vote arithmetic to unseat Ruto

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday declared that a combined opposition vote of more than seventeen million would defeat President William Ruto in the August 2027 General Election

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Waiguru tells Mt Kenya voters: Judge the person, not the party

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru yesterday cautioned residents of the Mt Kenya region against allowing political party popularity to drive their voting decisions in the 2027 General Election

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Countdown 2027 **"No, thank you. We meet at the ballot," Kalonzo Musyoka

Kalonzo: 'No' to predators

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday drew the sharpest line yet between himself and President William Ruto's Kenya Kwanza administration, rejecting approaches to join the ruling coalition and vowing to contest the August 2027 presidential election on the opposition ticket — a declaration that lays bare both the resolve and the fragility of Kenya's divided opposition with less than a year to polling day.

Speaking during a church service in Machakos, Musyoka dismissed the overtures with characteristic directness, framing his refusal in moral as much as political terms. "No, thank you. I cannot join hands with predators. You have done so much damage to millions of Kenyans. Many Kenyans are suffering under this administration — what am I joining you to do? Thank you, but no," he said, drawing applause from the congregation. He went further, invoking the ballot as the only arena in which he would engage Ruto. "Ruto himself has said I'm his biggest challenger in a democratic election. How then does he expect me to join hands with him? No, thank you. We meet at the ballot."

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Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka



Gachagua counts down: 280 days to Kenya's political reckoning

BY Jacob Kamau
@themtkenyatimes

Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua yesterday told residents of Kikuyu Constituency in Kiambu County that Kenya is 280 days away from a change of government, using back-to-back public engagements in Kamangu, Kerwa, and Zambezi to rally support for what he described as the journey to form the sixth administration.

Gachagua, the former deputy president impeached in October 2024, addressed crowds across the constituency with a message that was equal parts political mobilisation and moral challenge to the current Kenya Kwanza administration. "Using young people to incite violence and satisfy the ego of an administration on its way out has no place in modern Kenya," he said, drawing sustained applause. "In 280 days to come, we shall be free."

Speaking at Kerwa, he acknowledged the community's support directly. "We have heard you loud and clear. Thank you for affirming that you are part and parcel of the journey toward forming the sixth administration," he said.

Kikuyu Constituency, he argued, sits at the forefront of a national movement committed to restoring the rule of law and the dignity of ordinary Kenyans.

Some of the moments as captured in pictures













Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Anglican churches across East Africa are quietly waging a cultural rescue mission, using music competitions to safeguard the original tunes and melodies of traditional hymns at risk of being lost to contemporary worship trends. Choirs from across the region are gathering for an annual choral festival that doubles as both a celebration of Anglican musical heritage and a deliberate act of preservation — ensuring that the centuries-old harmonies that once defined Sunday worship do not fade into silence. The festival brings together voices from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and beyond, competing not merely for trophies but for the continuity of a shared liturgical tradition. Organisers say the competitions create an incentive for choirs to study, master, and faithfully reproduce hymn arrangements as they were originally composed, rather than adapting them to modern tastes.



Narok Senator Ledama Olekina yesterday reaffirmed the Orange Democratic Movement's continued participation in Kenya's broad-based government while drawing a firm line on the terms of that participation, insisting the party would negotiate as an equal partner and demanding a strict 50-50 power-sharing arrangement with the Kenya Kwanza administration. Olekina, one of ODM's most vocal figures, made clear that the party's support for the broad-based framework did not translate into subordination. "We are not junior partners," he said, signalling that ODM intended to press its case for equal representation in cabinet appointments, state corporations, and other instruments of executive power. The remarks reflect growing tension within the broad-based government over the distribution of political rewards, with ODM legislators increasingly vocal about what they describe as an imbalance between their electoral contribution and their share of government positions.



Comedian and content creator Kufai exchanged vows with his longtime partner, Lucy Muthoni, on Saturday in a colourful wedding ceremony held in Naivasha, closing a chapter of courtship and opening one that his many fans across Kenya's digital entertainment space have been anticipating for some time. The celebration, held on 31 October 2026, drew family, friends, and fellow creatives in what those present described as a warm and joyful occasion befitting a personality known for bringing laughter and lightness to his audience. Muthoni, who has featured occasionally in Kufai's content, stepped into the spotlight on her own terms on the day, with guests describing the ceremony as intimate yet festive. The union marks a significant personal milestone for one of Kenya's more recognisable faces in online comedy and entertainment.



Veteran lawyer and former politician Gitobu Imanyara has lost a significant legal battle after the High Court upheld the auction of his Karen property and ordered him to pay Ecobank Kenya KSh91.7 million in a defaulted loan dispute, delivering one of the most consequential personal financial judgments against a prominent public figure in recent memory. Justice Dorah Chepkwony dismissed Imanyara's challenge to the bank's decision to exercise its statutory power of sale over the property, ruling that Ecobank had acted within its legal rights in recovering the outstanding debt. The court found no merit in the arguments advanced by Imanyara, who had sought to halt the auction and contest the bank's recovery process. The ruling closes what had been a protracted legal dispute between the veteran advocate and the lender, leaving Imanyara with a substantial financial liability to settle.



Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga has issued a pointed warning to Kenya's fragmented opposition, cautioning that continued delay in settling on a unified presidential candidate ahead of the 2027 General Election risks handing President William Ruto a decisive political advantage before a single ballot is cast. Wanga, one of the opposition's more strategically minded voices, argued that the window for building a credible, nationally recognisable campaign was narrowing rapidly, and that the luxury of prolonged internal negotiation was one the opposition could no longer afford. With less than nine months to polling day, she said, every week spent without a flag bearer was a week surrendered to an incumbent who was already campaigning. Her remarks sharpen the pressure on opposition co-principals — including Kalonzo Musyoka, Rigathi Gachagua, Fred Matiang'i, and Edwin Sifuna — to resolve their competing ambitions before indecision itself becomes the opposition's greatest liability.



Kakamega sugarcane farmers have rejected the proposed Crops Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, warning that the legislation threatens to unravel hard-won reforms in Kenya's troubled sugar sector, create fresh opportunities for cartels to reassert their grip on the industry, and strip farmers of the limited control they have only recently begun to exercise over their own livelihoods. Speaking through their representatives, the farmers expressed frustration that the Sugar Bill, 2024, which was passed with considerable expectations of transformation, had yet to produce the meaningful changes promised to growers on the ground. Many said they were still navigating the same structural challenges — delayed payments, exploitative pricing, and opaque milling arrangements — that the earlier legislation was supposed to dismantle. The rejection signals deepening mistrust between sugarcane farming communities in western Kenya and the lawmakers and industry players shaping the legal framework that governs their sector.

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Politics As the opposition continues to make noise, the government remains focused - Gatheca

Gathecha defends Ruto's development record, cites projects in Tharaka-Nithi

BY Blaise Gitonga
@themtkenyatimes



Deputy Head of Public Service Amos Gathecha, Blue Economy and Fisheries PS Betsy Njagi and Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki attend a church service at PCEA St John Kimuchia

Deputy Head of Public Service Amos Gathecha has urged Kenyans to ignore political criticism by the opposition targeting the Kenya Kwanza administration, saying President William Ruto has visible development projects to show for his first term in office.

Speaking during a church service at PCEA St John Kimuchia Church in Maara Constituency, Tharaka-Nithi County, on Sunday, Mr Gathecha hit out at the opposition, adding that President Ruto's administration would go down in history as a government that prioritised inclusion and equality in the country's development agenda.

"As the opposition continues to make noise, the government remains focused on delivering its promises. Despite the constant criticism, there is visible development on the ground to demonstrate that President Ruto is working for Kenyans without bias or discrimination," he said.

Principal Secretary for the State Department for Blue Economy and Fisheries Betsy Njagi, in her remarks, drummed up support for the government's equality agenda under the "Usawa Ni Sawa" campaign. She said the redesign of the Nithi Bridge was a key project for the people of Tharaka-Nithi that previous governments had failed to undertake.

"There were many governments before William Ruto's administration, yet he is the first to consider the redesign of the killer Nithi Bridge. You have a president who is hardworking and is preaching 'Usawa Ni Sawa'. He also brings Kenyans together, so let us give him another term to complete his projects," Ms Njagi said.

The PS emphasised the need for the county to remain aligned with the government through Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, noting that Tharaka-Nithi had benefited from its proximity to the country's leadership through the DP's position.

She also announced plans to roll out Kazi Majuu and Boma Yangu sensitisation programmes across the county.

Joining other leaders in backing Kindiki, Head of Legal Services in the Office of the President Jasper Mbiuki said there was a need to support the Deputy President's aspirations of succeeding Ruto in 2032. He said the only way to achieve this was by supporting Ruto's re-election in the next general election.

Maara Constituency Member of Parliament Kareke Mbiuki urged residents to remain aligned with the government through Kindiki, saying it was a great honour for the President to appoint him as his deputy following the ouster of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua.

Mr Mbiuki said the development projects in the county were benefits of supporting the government of the day, adding that Kindiki's presence in government provided sufficient grounds for campaigning for Ruto's re-election for a second term.

"Let us re-elect William Ruto and his deputy Kithure Kindiki so that they can continue serving our country and delivering the Kenya Kwanza plan. I will fully support the government because of the love the President has for Tharaka-Nithi," Mr Mbiuki said.

Construction of the KSh 7.5 billion Nithi Bridge has already commenced, while 515 kilometres of roads are being tarmacked across Tharaka-Nithi County.

A total of KSh 1.5 billion has been allocated for the construction of 10 modern markets across the county, including those in Chogoria, Cheera, Kibugua, Kaanwa and Gatunga. Meanwhile, KSh 2.7 billion has been set aside for the construction of hostels at tertiary institutions across the county, with the facilities expected to accommodate more than 6,000 students.

In the affordable housing sector, the county has benefited from an allocation of KSh 1.7 billion, with construction works already underway.

In addition, 9,000 new households are expected to be connected to electricity across the county.

Karua holds firm: Brighter days are coming for Kenya

People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua rallies supporters with a message of hope and endurance as the 2027 election campaign intensifies



People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua yesterday delivered a message of resilience and political hope to her supporters, acknowledging the difficulties of the current moment while urging Kenyans not to abandon their faith in a better future ahead of the 2027 General Election.

"The days may still be difficult, but there is hope ahead," Karua said. "A better tomorrow is coming, and we must not lose faith that brighter days lie ahead." The statement, brief in its wording but pointed in its timing, reflects the tone that the veteran politician and lawyer has adopted as Kenya's opposition consolidates ahead of the August 2027 polls — one that speaks directly to the economic frustrations and political fatigue that many ordinary Kenyans are carrying into an election year.

Karua has remained one of the more consistent voices within the opposition, maintaining her position on accountability, constitutional governance, and the rule of law as the crowded field of presidential hopefuls continues to negotiate the shape of a unified anti-Ruto ticket. Her message yesterday was not a policy announcement or a coalition declaration — it was something quieter and, in its own way, more durable: a reminder that political endurance matters, and that the people most affected by poor governance are precisely those who must hold on the longest.

With less than nine months to polling day, that message is one Kenya needs to hear.

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Politics **The claims are bold, and they arrive at a moment when Kenya's presidential mathematics are being redrawn almost weekly.**

Gachagua unveils 17-million-vote arithmetic to unseat Ruto

The former deputy president's vote-count arithmetic on Inooro TV reframes the 2027 presidential race — but the numbers raise as many questions as they answer

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday declared that a combined opposition vote of more than seventeen million would defeat President William Ruto in the August 2027 General Election, publicly assigning vote tallies to his allies — ten million from the Mt Kenya bloc he leads, four million from Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, and three million from Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka — and presenting the arithmetic as proof that a united anti-Ruto front would prevail at the ballot.

Gachagua made the declarations during a live appearance on Inooro TV's Kiririmbi show, a platform he has used repeatedly to speak directly to his Agikuyu, Aembu, and Ameru base on matters of political strategy. The setting was deliberate. By choosing a vernacular television interview rather than a rally podium, he was not merely rallying a crowd — he was laying out a negotiating position, in plain figures, for the consumption of his coalition partners, his rivals, and, crucially, the millions of Mt Kenya voters who will decide whether his ambitions survive contact with the ballot box.

"Our optimal target is about eight million votes, with a turnout of at least seven million. This includes the Agikuyu, Aembu and Ameru communities wherever they are in the world," Gachagua said during the interview, adding that he expected the region to deliver the decisive margin that would end Ruto's presidency. The ten million figure he has repeatedly projected is built on a foundation of the 3.5 million votes Mt Kenya cast for Ruto in 2022 — votes that represented nearly half of the President's total tally of 7.1 million — with the remainder to come from increased voter registration and higher turnout across the region.

The claims are bold, and they arrive at a moment when Kenya's presidential mathematics are being redrawn almost weekly. In an earlier Inooro TV interview, Gachagua had made the framework even more explicit: "My plan is to go with a headstart of seven million votes, which I have already mobilised. With all that, I am targeting a minimum of ten million votes. I will present my ten million votes and request my counterparts to endorse and add me their votes." Yesterday's interview on the same station followed the same logic, with Sifuna and Musyoka now assigned specific numerical contributions — four million and three million respectively — that together with the Mt Kenya bloc would comfortably exceed the 50 per cent plus one threshold required for a first-round victory.

Whether those numbers reflect reality, political aspiration, or a calculated negotiating gambit is the question that will define the coming months. Speaking during a tour of Western Kenya in June, Gachagua had already been publicly assembling his arithmetic: "Back home, I have consolidated seven million votes. In Nairobi, we have consolidated three million votes. We want the Mulembe nation to consolidate five million votes, and then join them with Kalonzo's three and a half million votes," he said — a statement that signals his vote-counting exercise has been ongoing for some time, and that Western Kenya is now as central to his electoral strategy as the Mt Kenya heartland.

The challenge for Gachagua is that his conditions for coalition have been explicit, at times almost transactional. He has told Musyoka directly: "We've done the math. For you to win the presidency, you must secure fifty plus one. The people of Ukambani must increase their votes to between 3.5 and 4 million. Once you get to that number, look for me." He has also urged Ukambani leaders to focus on voter registration, saying: "We, in our region, want to have ten million votes. You must get to four million, and if you want us to form the government together, you must ensure that young people register as voters." By publicly crediting Musyoka with three million in yesterday's broadcast, Gachagua appears to signal some movement in that negotiation, even if the figure still falls below the threshold he originally set.

Sifuna's assigned four million is perhaps the most politically significant number in the equation. Gachagua has elsewhere stated that the opposition must put aside personal ambitions and agree on a single candidate based on electoral arithmetic rather than seniority, political history, or individual expectations, and has even said he would be willing to serve as Sifuna's running mate if the political numbers pointed to the Nairobi senator as the strongest opponent of Ruto. By treating Sifuna as a four-million-vote bloc rather than a junior figure, Gachagua effectively elevates him to a co-equal in coalition negotiations — a move that simultaneously flatters Sifuna, complicates Musyoka's claim to the top of the ticket, and gives Gachagua maximum flexibility over who he ultimately throws his weight behind.



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

The opposition is also targeting Gen Z voters, expected to number eight million by 2027, with Musyoka calling for 100,000 young volunteers to guard the vote: "This time, they won't steal the vote. We need 100,000 incorruptible youths to guard the vote at polling centres." The IEBC has announced plans to register 5.6 million new voters before the election, and whichever side converts that registration into turnout will gain a decisive advantage.

The electoral terrain against which all of this is being mapped remains demanding. Ruto denied the President more than 3.5 million votes in 2022 when those votes came from Mt Kenya — meaning that Gachagua switching sides does not merely subtract from Ruto's column, it potentially adds to the opposition's, a double swing that fundamentally alters the calculus. Polling bears this out: a recent survey shows that while Ruto remains ahead in the individual presidential field, Musyoka, Sifuna, Matiang'i, and Gachagua together command a combined share of the electorate that exceeds his total — the question being whether that combined support can be directed behind a single candidate before polling day.

That question is one Gachagua has not yet answered, and yesterday's broadcast, for all its numerical confidence, did not resolve it. He has maintained that the opposition must be guided by arithmetic, not sentiment: "If we do our arithmetic and find that Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna will send President William Ruto home early, so be it," a line that tells both allies and rivals everything about how he approaches the final negotiation — pragmatically, with votes as the currency and victory as the only principle.

The numbers Gachagua has put on the board are large, his ambition unmistakable, and the political season ahead brutal in its demands. Whether ten million, four million, and three million can be made to sit at the same table — and vote the same way — is the central drama of Kenya's road to August 2027. The arithmetic is seductive; the politics, considerably less so.

Politics **The remarks were a direct response to overtures that had gathered pace in recent days, led by figures close to Ruto, including presidential aide Kibet, who urged Musyoka to abandon the opposition**

‘No’ to predators: Kalonzo draws battle lines for Kenya’s 2027 election

Kalonzo Musyoka publicly rejects Kenya Kwanza overtures, signalling an opposition still crowded with ambition but dangerously short of consensus

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes



Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday drew the sharpest line yet between himself and President William Ruto’s Kenya Kwanza administration, rejecting approaches to join the ruling coalition and vowing to contest the August 2027 presidential election on the opposition ticket — a declaration that lays bare both the resolve and the fragility of Kenya’s divided opposition with less than a year to polling day.

Speaking during a church service in Machakos, Musyoka dismissed the overtures with characteristic directness, framing his refusal in moral as much as political terms. “No, thank you. I cannot join hands with predators. You have done so much damage to millions of Kenyans. Many Kenyans are suffering under this administration — what am I joining you to do? Thank you, but no,” he said, drawing applause from the congregation. He went further, invoking the ballot as the only arena in which he would engage Ruto. “Ruto himself has said I’m his biggest challenger in a democratic election. How then does he expect me to join hands with him? No, thank you. We meet at the ballot.”

The remarks were a direct response to overtures that had gathered pace in recent days, led by figures close to Ruto, including presidential aide Farouk Kibet, who urged Musyoka to abandon the opposition and work with the government — a push that forms part of a broader Kenya Kwanza strategy to consolidate support in Ukambani, a region traditionally aligned with Musyoka. The lure was given an opening, in part, by the friction Musyoka encountered within the opposition itself: he had faced visible hostility from supporters of Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna during the rebranding of Sifuna’s Linda Mwananchi Movement, an episode that Ruto allies exploited to suggest the veteran politician was being marginalised in his own camp.

Musyoka, who has served as vice-president under two presidents and contested the presidency on multiple occasions, has consistently declined such overtures. He has ruled out any pre-election talks with Ruto, insisting he will only engage the President after the conclusion of the 2027 General Election, and maintained that the opposition remains focused on unseating the Kenya Kwanza administration. Yesterday’s remarks were, in tone and substance, his most emphatic statement yet.

Yet for all the conviction in his voice, Musyoka’s declaration arrives in the context of an opposition whose presidential field is crowded, competitive, and still unresolved. Kenya’s fractured opposition finds itself trapped in a paradox of its own making: rich in ambition, yet dangerously poor in consensus, with a crowded field of presidential hopefuls, each with compelling credentials and debilitating liabilities, testing whether the coalition can subordinate personal ambition to the singular goal of unseating Ruto.

A poll conducted with just a year to the 2027 election shows Musyoka as the leading choice among voters opposed to Ruto, but with Sifuna at 13 per cent, former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang’i at 11 per cent, and Gachagua trailing, the opposition vote remains split across several potential candidates. More troubling still, Ruto, whose support has fallen from 36 per cent to 31 per cent, continues to lead the individual presidential field — meaning the opposition collectively commands a larger pool of support, but only if it can consolidate.

That consolidation remains the defining challenge. Rigathi Gachagua, the former deputy president impeached in late 2024 and now leading the Democracy for the Citizens Party, has claimed the support of nearly 12 million Kenyans and positioned himself as a strong negotiator over who should lead the opposition into 2027, at various points naming Musyoka, Matiang’i, Martha Karua of the People’s Liberation Party, and himself as serious contenders for the ticket. Matiang’i, the former Interior Cabinet Secretary who has since declared a presidential bid and secured endorsement as Jubilee Party’s flagbearer, is argued by his defenders to offer the credibility of a technocrat in a field dominated by career politicians. Sifuna, meanwhile, having been pushed out of the Orange Democratic Movement, is plotting a presidential campaign anchored in western Kenya, with allies indicating he will formalise his bid. Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro, after nearly a year of consultations with Gachagua, Musyoka, Karua, and Matiang’i, has joined the People’s Party of Kenya, presenting the formation as a platform that could accommodate a wider opposition movement without immediately committing to a specific presidential candidate.

The arithmetic of the challenge facing whoever emerges as opposition flag bearer is unforgiving. As the incumbent, Ruto enters the 2027 race with advantages none of his rivals possess: the power of office, a nationwide political network, and the ability to campaign on the record of his first term. The opposition’s best — indeed, its only — realistic path to victory runs through unity, and that unity has so far eluded it. An online public vote organised by the WANTAM movement to identify a unified opposition ticket saw Sifuna and Matiang’i take an early lead in the presidential category, with Musyoka trailing behind and Gachagua registering a modest showing, underscoring the fragmented nature of the anti-Ruto coalition.

Musyoka’s political longevity is itself both his greatest asset and his most persistent liability. Viewed by allies as a steady hand capable of holding together a fragile opposition alliance, a quality that could prove decisive if negotiations eventually narrow the race to a single candidate, he nonetheless enters each election cycle carrying the weight of repeated near-misses and the perception, fair or otherwise, that the presidency has always been one coalition short. His declaration yesterday — defiant, clear-eyed, and calibrated to his Ukambani base — is designed to dispel any notion that age or circumstance has diminished his appetite for the fight.

As recently as July, Musyoka joined Matiang’i, Gachagua, and other opposition figures at a church service in Machakos County to dismiss claims of internal divisions as propaganda, insisting their coalition remained focused on a united front against Ruto. Whether that unity holds as August 2027 approaches — with egos, regional calculations, and polling numbers all pulling in different directions — is the question that will ultimately determine whether Kenya wakes up to a new president or a second Ruto term.

For now, Musyoka has given his answer on one matter at least: he will not be joining the other side. Kenya’s political season is only beginning, and the ballot box, as he says, remains the only predator he intends to face.

Education **Some institutions have moved quickly. The Technical University of Kenya announced that normal academic activities would resume on today at 7 a.m**

Kenya's universities reopen: The long road to academic recovery after the lecturers' strike

Thousands of students return to campus on Monday after a four-week shutdown — but resuming lectures is only the first step in a recovery that will test institutions, government, and families alike

BY Collins Kibet
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's public universities yesterday began preparing to reopen on Monday after a nationwide lecturers' strike lasting nearly four weeks was suspended following a KSh20 billion government settlement with university staff unions, leaving thousands of students facing the immediate challenge of recovering lost academic time without sacrificing the quality of their education.

The strike, which began on 2 October 2026, paralysed learning across 35 public universities after negotiations between the government and three unions — the Universities Academic Staff Union (UASU), the Kenya Universities Staff Union (KUSU), and the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) — collapsed over the implementation of the 2025–2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement. The core dispute centred on salary adjustments and financial commitments the unions argued the government had failed to honour. An initial government offer of approximately KSh12 billion was rejected outright. It took another three weeks of difficult negotiations before a breakthrough came on 28 October, when UASU Secretary-General Constantine Wasonga confirmed that an agreement on the financial component had been reached. "We have reached an understanding," Wasonga announced, paving the way for a return to classes.



The suspension of the strike was welcome news, but it resolved only one layer of a deeper problem. Universities must now do what no administrative announcement can accomplish overnight: restore academic normality to a calendar that lost nearly a month of structured learning. Lectures, practical sessions, industrial attachments, coursework submissions, and examination timetables have all been disrupted. The question facing every vice-chancellor and academic registrar in Kenya is not merely when to reopen, but how to reopen responsibly.

Some institutions have moved quickly. The Technical University of Kenya announced that normal academic activities would resume on today at 7 a.m., while the University of Eldoret similarly instructed students to return on the same date and confirmed that timetables would be revised to recover lost ground. These are encouraging first steps, but reopening a gate is not the same as restoring a semester. Students need time — time to absorb course content, complete assignments, prepare for examinations, and engage meaningfully with their lecturers. An excessively compressed calendar risks creating a pressure cooker environment that serves neither learners nor teaching staff well, and universities must resist the temptation to rush through course material simply to meet administrative deadlines.

The human cost of the strike runs deeper than missed lectures. For many students — particularly those from low-income households — the four-week closure meant an unplanned return home, additional transport costs, and continued dependence on parents, guardians, and relatives who had already paid accommodation fees and university-related expenses before the shutdown began. Students who supplement their education through casual work or small businesses found their routines and incomes further disrupted. Returning to campus this week means another round of expenditure on accommodation, food, transport, and learning materials, at a moment when many families have already stretched their budgets thin. Like most Kenyans, many of these students come from households where farming and informal income sources provide the financial cushion — a cushion that a prolonged, unexpected absence can rapidly deplete.

The government must reckon honestly with this reality. Industrial disputes in universities are never merely a matter between employers and employees. Students are the central stakeholders in the education system, yet they consistently absorb the heaviest burden when negotiations collapse. Their academic progress, financial stability, and psychological well-being cannot be treated as secondary considerations in labour disputes that are fundamentally about their future.

The KSh20 billion agreement also forces a broader conversation about the financial sustainability of public universities. Institutions that cannot predictably fund staff salaries, maintain infrastructure, or purchase learning materials will inevitably cycle through the same crises. The government must establish a transparent mechanism for implementing collective bargaining agreements before disagreements reach breaking point — one that brings together the Ministry of Education, university management, staff unions, and student representatives in regular structured dialogue, rather than crisis-driven negotiation.

Equally important is clear communication from university administrations. Every institution should publish an updated academic calendar outlining revised lecture schedules, examination dates, practical session arrangements, and semester completion timelines. Clarity reduces anxiety. Students who know what to expect can plan effectively; those left in the dark spend energy managing uncertainty rather than studying.

Lecturers themselves will need to be supported, not stretched. Make-up sessions and additional teaching hours are reasonable recovery tools, but they must be implemented thoughtfully. Quality education depends on adequate preparation and meaningful assessment, not the mechanical completion of a syllabus under duress. Exhausted lecturers do not produce engaged students.

Students, for their part, carry a responsibility too. Consistent attendance, proactive engagement with revised timetables, and constructive communication through student leadership will all be essential in navigating the weeks ahead. The recovery is a shared undertaking.

The conclusion of the strike should be understood as a starting line, not a finishing tape. Kenya cannot sustain a higher education system that lurches from industrial action to temporary settlement and back again, with students paying the price each time. The KSh20B agreement offers a genuine opportunity to rebuild confidence in public universities — but its true measure will not be found in the return of lecturers to classrooms on Monday morning. It will be found in the months that follow: in improved working conditions, predictable academic calendars, adequate institutional funding, and uninterrupted learning for the young Kenyans who have already waited long enough.



Politics **"Do not vote for a candidate simply because they belong to a popular political party," Waiguru told the gathering. "Ask what they have done. Ask what they plan to do**

Waiguru tells Mt Kenya voters: Judge the person, not the party

Kirinyaga governor urges the region's voters to prioritise development records over political affiliation ahead of the 2027 General Election — and signals her own ambition for the deputy presidency

BY Yvonne Wambui
@themtkenyatimes

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru yesterday cautioned residents of the Mt Kenya region against allowing political party popularity to drive their voting decisions in the 2027 General Election, urging them instead to examine the individual performance, development records, and accountability of every candidate seeking their vote.

Waiguru made the remarks on Thursday while addressing residents of Kianyaga in Gichugu Constituency, Kirinyaga County, after inspecting the ongoing Kianyaga Level Four Hospital project — a visit that combined a tangible display of county delivery with an unmistakable political message aimed squarely at the region's millions of registered voters.

"Do not vote for a candidate simply because they belong to a popular political party," Waiguru told the gathering. "Ask what they have done. Ask what they plan to do. Ask whether they can be held accountable." Her warning was direct: the wave of enthusiasm that surrounds a political party at any given moment can carry candidates into office without development agendas, without delivery records, and without the competence to address the real challenges facing ordinary Kenyans. The region, she argued, was too important — and its needs too pressing — to be decided by party affiliation alone.

The caution carries particular weight in the Mt Kenya context. The region has long been the most scrutinised voting bloc in Kenyan national politics, its millions of ballots capable of tilting a presidential race and defining coalition arithmetic for years. Ahead of August 2027, competing political formations are already investing heavily in winning its loyalty, with some pushing for continued alignment with President William Ruto's Kenya Kwanza administration and others — including former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's Democracy for the Citizens Party — making an aggressive case for a full break. Against that noise, Waiguru's call for voters to tune out party signals and tune into individual performance is both a substantive argument and a timely political intervention.

It is also, unmistakably, a self-serving one — and there is nothing wrong with that. Waiguru used the Kianyaga gathering to make clear she is not planning to step back from public life when her gubernatorial term ends. She is planning to step up. The governor indicated she is ready for greater national leadership responsibilities and appealed to residents to back her ambition for the deputy presidency in the 2027 General Election. "My experience in county leadership has prepared me for a bigger role in national governance," she said, pointing to the development projects her administration has undertaken in Kirinyaga. The Kianyaga Level Four Hospital, whose construction she inspected on Thursday, is precisely the kind of tangible evidence she wants voters to weigh — infrastructure that exists, not promises that have yet to be tested.

Waiguru was accompanied during the hospital inspection by Nyeri Women Representative Rahab Mukami and other local leaders. Mukami voiced support for the governor's national ambitions, citing her administrative experience and track record in county development as qualifications for a senior role in the next government. Mukami also raised a concern that is never far from conversations about Mt Kenya's future: the proliferating problem of illicit alcohol and second-generation brews, which she described as a deepening threat to families and the region's youth. "We need leaders who can prioritise the welfare of citizens," Mukami said, framing the issue not merely as a public health crisis but as a test of the kind of leadership the region elects.

That framing resonates. Kenya is a country where most people carry more than one identity — professional, farmer, parent, community member — and the leaders they choose shape the conditions across all of them. In Mt Kenya, as in every region, the cost of electing a poor leader is paid not just at the ballot box but in every clinic that lacks medicine, every road that remains unbuilt, every young person whose future narrows because the person sent to represent them had a party card but no plan.



Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru

Waiguru's argument is essentially that voters should insist on more. She is asking her audience to apply to every candidate the same scrutiny she is implicitly inviting them to apply to herself: look at what was built, what was delivered, what can be verified. It is a high standard to set in the middle of a campaign season that will grow louder and more tribal in its appeals as August 2027 approaches. But it is the right one.

The broader political picture across Mt Kenya remains fluid. The region is navigating a complicated recalibration following Gachagua's impeachment, with various leaders jostling to fill the political space he once occupied and new alliances forming and dissolving in rapid succession. Waiguru, by positioning herself as a voice of development-focused pragmatism rather than partisan loyalty, is carving out a distinct identity in that landscape — one that could prove attractive to voters exhausted by the intensity of factional politics and simply wanting to see their hospitals built and their roads tarmacked.

Whether her message cuts through will depend, in large part, on whether the Kianyaga Level Four Hospital and the other projects she points to are completed, functional, and visible to voters when they walk into polling stations next August. In Kenyan politics, nothing makes the argument for a candidate better than a finished building that works.

For now, Waiguru has drawn her line clearly: judge leaders by what they do, not by who they stand with. It is advice that the Mt Kenya electorate — and perhaps the broader Kenyan public — would do well to take seriously, wherever the political winds blow between today and election day.

Politics **"We are nine months away from the General Election, yet we are still moving from one political party to another," Omari said.**

Omari tells Matiang'i: Come back to Ruto or the Gusii community pays the price

Lawyer Danstan Omari warns that the Gusii community risks political marginalisation if its leaders fail to unite behind a clear national strategy ahead of August 2027

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes



Lawyer Danstan Omari during press briefing in Kisii Town. | *Photo:* Elizabeth Angira

Lawyer Danstan Omari yesterday urged former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i to abandon his opposition positioning and return to President William Ruto's political camp, warning that the Gusii community stood to lose its influence in national politics if its leaders continued moving between formations with less than nine months to the 2027 General Election.

Speaking at a press briefing in Kisii town, Omari delivered a blunt assessment of where he believes the community's interests lie — and where they do not. His message was directed as much at the broader Gusii political establishment as at Matiang'i personally: the time for political drift is over, and the cost of getting this wrong will be paid not by the politicians who miscalculate, but by the communities they represent.

"We are nine months away from the General Election, yet we are still moving from one political party to another," Omari said. "As a community, we must decide where we want to go and what interests we want to protect." The sentiment, stripped of its partisan framing, is one that resonates across Kenya's political landscape at this particular moment — a country entering the final stretch before a consequential election, with coalitions still forming, allegiances still shifting, and ordinary voters watching to see which of their leaders will deliver them a seat at the table and which will leave them outside looking in.

Omari's immediate trigger was the political positioning of Kisii Senator Richard Onyonka, who has publicly committed to advancing the Linda Mwananchi agenda — the political platform associated with Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna. For Omari, Onyonka's move raises an uncomfortable question about where the broader Gusii community ends up if its prominent figures scatter across competing opposition formations rather than consolidating around a single strategic position. He did not accuse Onyonka of bad faith, but he made clear that the optics concern him: a community divided across multiple opposition camps is a community with diminished leverage in post-election negotiations, regardless of which side wins.

His criticism of Matiang'i's trajectory was sharper. Omari questioned whether the former Cabinet Secretary's position within Jubilee Party was as secure as his supporters suggest, pointing to internal disagreements involving the party's leadership and noting that the required party processes for confirming a presidential candidacy had not been completed. It is worth noting, for accuracy, that Jeremiah Kioni serves as Jubilee's Deputy Party Leader, not Secretary-General — a distinction that matters in understanding the internal dynamics Omari referenced. The broader point, however, stands: Jubilee's internal cohesion is far from guaranteed, and a presidential bid built on an unstable party foundation carries real risk.

"My appeal to Matiang'i is that he should reconsider his position and move back to William Ruto," Omari said plainly. "Let us discuss our fate when we know where we are going." It is the kind of appeal that is easy to dismiss as political opportunism — and it may well be — but it also reflects a calculation that many communities across Kenya are quietly making as the election approaches. Being in government, however imperfect that government may be, generally delivers more tangible benefits than being in opposition, and the Gusii community, spread across Kisii and Nyamira counties, has enough political weight to negotiate meaningfully if it moves as a coherent bloc.

Omari invoked the legacy of the late Simon Nyachae — a politician whose shrewdness in navigating national political currents made him one of the most effective advocates for his community — as a reference point for what strategic political engagement can achieve. His implicit argument was that the community has the capacity for that kind of disciplined positioning, but that it requires leaders willing to subordinate individual ambitions to collective interests. Whether Matiang'i, whose presidential aspirations are genuine and whose support base is real, would accept that framing is another matter entirely.

Omari also ventured into more speculative territory, suggesting that Kalonzo Musyoka could emerge as Ruto's running mate in 2027 — a prospect he presented as political assessment rather than confirmed intelligence. The suggestion is notable because it runs directly counter to Kalonzo's own repeated and emphatic rejections of any alliance with the current administration. Kalonzo has publicly described Ruto's camp as predators and vowed to meet the President only at the ballot box. Omari's reading of that situation may reflect a calculation that political positions stated loudly in November can look very different by May, but it is a reading that the available evidence does not currently support.

What Omari's broader argument does capture accurately is the structural reality facing communities that sit outside the government in Kenya. Resource allocation, infrastructure decisions, appointments, and development priorities all flow more readily toward regions whose political leaders maintain access to power. It is a system that rewards proximity and punishes distance, regardless of the merit of any community's underlying needs. His warning that the Gusii community could find itself excluded from national decision-making is not scaremongering — it is an honest description of how Kenyan politics has historically worked.

"Omogusii's interest is not to be in the opposition," Omari said, closing with a line that distilled his entire argument into a single sentence. "Our interest is to be part of government and to participate in decisions that affect our people." Whether Matiang'i listens, whether the community consolidates, and whether Omari's preferred political pathway actually delivers what he promises are questions that only the months ahead will answer.

For now, the Gusii political conversation is loud, contested, and unresolved — exactly as it is in every other corner of Kenya with less than a year to go before the country votes again.

Food security **Agriculture sits at the centre of that challenge, particularly in Kenya, where millions of households depend on farming for their livelihoods**

Food security in Kenya: How farming, climate and policy shape the nation's future

Food security and agricultural resilience in Kenya are under threat — and what happens in Trans Nzoia today will be felt on every dinner table tomorrow



BY Fridah and Daniel Kipchumba (Correspondent)
@themtkenyatimes

Food security remains one of the most critical pillars of national development in Kenya, with farmers, educators, and policymakers urging coordinated action to strengthen agricultural production, improve food distribution, and ensure that every household has reliable access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and affordable food.

The stakes could not be higher. Access to adequate food is a fundamental human necessity that directly shapes public health, education, economic productivity, and the overall well-being of society. A country that fails to guarantee food security exposes its population to the compounding crises of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and economic instability — outcomes that no government, community, or household can afford to ignore.

Agriculture sits at the centre of that challenge, particularly in Kenya, where millions of households depend on farming for their livelihoods. Increased investment in modern farming technologies, irrigation infrastructure, quality seeds, and affordable agricultural inputs can meaningfully boost food production and reduce the country's dependence on imports. The returns extend well beyond the farm gate. Children who receive adequate, nutritious meals are better positioned to concentrate in the classroom, attend school regularly, and achieve stronger academic outcomes. Strengthening school feeding programmes is therefore not merely a welfare intervention — it is an investment in Kenya's future workforce.

That connection between food and economic productivity runs deep. Farmers, traders, manufacturers, and every other player along the agricultural value chain benefit from a stable food system. A well-fed workforce is a productive one, and a productive workforce generates the household incomes and employment opportunities on which national growth depends. The government and its partners have a clear responsibility to develop sustainable strategies that protect the most vulnerable — children, pregnant women, elderly persons, and low-income households — from the worst effects of food insecurity.

Nowhere is that responsibility more immediately visible than in Trans Nzoia County, which this year experienced prolonged absence of rainfall, severely reducing output and leaving farmers counting losses where they had expected harvests. The challenge is not unique to Trans Nzoia; adverse climatic conditions have disrupted food production across multiple parts of Kenya, underlining how deeply the nation's food supply depends on weather patterns that are becoming increasingly unpredictable. Farmers in the county are being urged to shift toward short-season crops that can mature within constrained rainfall windows, and to store their produce carefully through the coming months rather than selling immediately — a discipline that will prove vital between January and July, when food availability is expected to tighten.

Ronald Francis Toili Wamalwa, an educator and farmer from Trans Nzoia County, argues that the long-term answer to these climatic pressures lies, in part, in the soil beneath our feet. "Plant more trees," Wamalwa urged residents. "Trees curb soil erosion, serve as water catchments, and ultimately attract rainfall — and that rainfall improves agricultural production not just in Trans Nzoia, but across the entire nation. A greener country is a productive nation." Addressing these structural challenges requires not just individual action but coordinated effort among agricultural experts, farmers, development partners, and the private sector.

Equally important is reducing waste once food has been produced. Modern food preservation technologies and proper storage facilities must be prioritised to ensure that harvested produce reaches consumers in good condition. Sustainable farming practices, investment in rural infrastructure, and effective food policies will be essential in building a food system resilient enough to withstand the pressures of climate change, rising production costs, and post-harvest losses. Kenya's food security is not a seasonal concern — it is a permanent national priority, and every citizen's well-being depends on getting it right.





No matter how good you are, people will judge you according to their mood and needs!



Being good is fair
Expecting from others is unfair

Rain is good for the farmer
But not for the salt vendor

Rain doesn't expect appreciation,
Never bother about your criticism

Need not to prove yourself to all
Right people already know you

Or else carry on your way
Right path is there to stay

Judgement varies from man to man
Accept the reality, but don't take into heart

Be good and do good for God's sake
Not for the people's recognition or judgement sake

S Sivasankari,
Headmistress,
Aided Primary school (Hindu) Nalmukkal,
Marakkanam block, Viluppuram district.
Tamilnadu,
India

November, my unwritten chapter



By Orzigul Sherova

November is a new beginning for my dreams,
It melts into my soul like warm, sweet cream.
Golden leaves carry forgotten wishes,
While autumn whispers its tender kisses.

A new beginning unfolds in my mind,
Sometimes mysterious, sometimes kind.
The clouds drift slowly, concealing the sun,
Each passing day brings a story undone.

November opens a chapter of its own,
A different path, a world unknown.
The winds grow gentle, the skies turn gold,
As time walks softly through the fading cold.

The trees stand bare beneath the sky,
Their silent branches reaching high.
Yet this is not where stories end,
For every loss, new dreams ascend.

And when the winter takes its place,
I'll keep November's gentle grace.
For in its pages, I have found
New dreams waiting to bloom from the ground.

My lost doll,



I missed my loving doll,
With glittering eyes of blue,
She sticks to me like a glue,
I don't know where she flew,
She's my beauty queen,
My love for her gone invain,
Her lips are very cute,
She is an angel, no doubt,
My barbie misses me too,
Crying in the corner of a strange venue,
Showers wet my eyes too,
Her little eyes search for me through,
Without me she wouldn't sleep,
With great scare, she would weep,
I've dressed her with white,
She always seems very bright,
My dolly's little red shoes,
Would tumble nd go loose,
Her clapping hands so pretty,
Would go so bad nd pity,
I'm in need of my silent darling,
Who does nothing but smiling,
Whispering me great stories for my sleep,
We embrace together in deep slumber,
But my hands search her with blabber,
My hearts sweats with blood,
Like a noisy flood,
For my lost angel I am longing for,
Oh, great God, I beg thee
To show my barbie unto me,
Proceeding my bondage with her you see,
O' dear girl, I miss you heartily,
Please return to me, so swiftly,
Fore you see me in
Your's everloving,

V. R. Vijayalakshmi,
Graduate for English, CW Writer's, Kanchipuram,
Tamil Nadu, India

A day without electricity



Power, power, where are you?
Power, power, we miss you!

Lights are not shining bright,
Fans are not running tonight!

I didn't charge my phone today,
My battery is fading away.

No Wi-Fi, no videos to see,
No internet for you and me.

No TV shows to watch today,
Oh, what shall I do all day?

I sit and wonder what to do,
I wish the power would come through!

When the power comes, we jump and shout,
"Hurray, hurray!"

Name : DHANUSREE. G
Class : IX
School : GGHS SCHOOL Big Kanchipuram

Mother nature



Look at the hospitality of mother nature.
It gives everything to all creatures.

Mountains and rivers, and streams and trees.
Everyone enjoys the shade and fruits for free.

There is a home for every bird.
And a refreshing place for the herd.

Sharing, is the virtue of our culture.
Follow this virtue always, and nurture.

Welcome everyone with a smiling face,
To win the hearts in life's race.

Fortune knocks at your door step.
Those who care for their guests.

By, S.S Jaipriyan
V Std
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram
Gummidipoondi
Tiruvallur Dt
Tamilnadu.

Longing



Golden autumn... once again, falling leaves have covered nature. It has already been four years since I finished school and started university. Time is flying by. I have grown up so fast. I still remember it, even now: when I had just started school, how I cried all the way home from school over a single grade of 4; how every time I stepped through the gate I ran to her calling, "Mom, dear Mom!"; my teacher's praise, and how I rejoiced beyond measure over the excellent grades I received... and if my homework in some subject did not turn out well, how I took my notebook to her, saying "Mommy"; and how today I miss so much my kind mother, who woke me with a kiss on my cheek every morning so that I would not be late for school...

One day, on my way back from school, I suddenly twisted my ankle, and it throbbed with terrible pain. I thought of telling Mom, but I was sure to be scolded, and no matter how hard I tried to hide it, the moment I came into the house, Mom said, "What happened to your foot?"

"Doesn't it hurt badly?" and she fussed over me in alarm. Because of the pain in my body, she herself stayed awake all night and passed the hours until dawn without closing her eyes. She did not even scold me.

When a mother sees her child's bodily suffering, her heart, it seems, groans in anguish. Even the tears flowing from her eyes like pearls turn out to be the tears of a heart that beats for this very child...

And me? Because of my worries about my studies, I did not ask after her even once a month. Suddenly the phone rang. When I looked at the screen, it read "My Fragrant Paradise."

"Hello. Assalamu alaykum! Mom, how are you?"

"Wa alaykum assalam! My daughter, are you well? How are things with you? The cold has set in, too. Have you dressed warmly enough? Make sure you eat well. Don't get sick... The thing is, my daughter, I miss you so much. When you have time, couldn't you come for a day or two?"

All at once, something began to stir in my heart. Tears of longing filled my eyes like raindrops; it was as if my body were here, while all my thoughts and dreams, like a dove in flight, soared far away, hastening home to my mother's embrace.

In the village that has fallen silent and empty without me, my mother is waiting, longing for my return!...

Jayrona Erqulova is a 4th-year student at the Faculty of Psychology and Social-Political Sciences of Samarkand State University named after Sharof Rashidov.

KCSE The Kenya National Examinations Council's message — "Don't Gamble with Your KCSE Future" — deserves more than casual attention

Let every KCSE candidate earn their grade

As the 2026 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations continue, the integrity of every result depends on the honesty of every candidate, school and official involved.

BY Ashford Kimani
@themtkenyatimes



There is something fundamentally wrong with a society that invests years educating its children, only for some of them to approach the most important national examination as an opportunity to cheat. Even more disturbing is the possibility that adults entrusted with protecting the integrity of education may become part of the very problem they are supposed to eliminate.

As the 2026 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations continue, candidates must confront an uncomfortable truth: nobody owes you an examination certificate. You must earn it. Your future cannot be built on leaked papers, examination-room whispers, unauthorised assistance or the dangerous illusion that someone can manufacture academic success on your behalf.

The Kenya National Examinations Council's message — "Don't Gamble with Your KCSE Future" — deserves more than casual attention. It should provoke a serious national conversation about examination integrity, institutional responsibility and the value we attach to genuine education. Let us stop pretending that examination malpractice is a harmless response to academic pressure. It is dishonesty, plain and simple, and it undermines the very purpose of schooling.

A candidate who cheats is not simply breaking examination regulations. They are compromising the credibility of their own achievement. What is the value of a grade that cannot be defended through personal knowledge and ability? A certificate should represent competence, effort and hard-won achievement. It should not be a reward for connections, purchased assistance or the ability to manipulate a system that millions of honest Kenyans have trusted with their futures.

Candidates must also understand that the consequences of examination irregularities extend far beyond the examination period itself. Cancelled results, disciplinary proceedings and permanently damaged academic prospects are prices no learner should be willing to pay. The tragedy is that some candidates who have spent years preparing for KCSE throw away that investment in a few moments of desperation. No whispered answer, no smuggled note and no promised paper is worth that.

While candidates must take personal responsibility, schools cannot escape scrutiny either. It is entirely unacceptable for a registered candidate to be denied the opportunity to sit an examination because of avoidable administrative failures, unresolved school-fee disputes or institutional negligence. A candidate's examination opportunity should never become a bargaining chip in disputes between school management and parents. School administrators must remember that their primary responsibility is to protect learners' educational interests. Financial difficulties are real and institutional challenges are understandable, but neither can be an excuse for compromising a child's future. Where a school has failed to prepare properly, communicate effectively or organise its examination arrangements, accountability must follow without exception.

We cannot celebrate academic excellence while ignoring the institutional failures that shut learners out of the examination room before they have written a single word.

The Kenya National Examinations Council carries an enormous national responsibility, and its credibility is inseparable from the credibility of every certificate it awards. But examination integrity cannot be achieved through threats and dramatic enforcement announcements alone. It requires consistent supervision, professional administration, transparent investigations and equal application of the rules. There must be no sacred cows. Candidates, invigilators, centre managers and any other individuals found complicit in irregularities must be treated in full accordance with established procedures. Nobody should be shielded because of position, influence or institutional connections. Equally, innocent candidates must never become casualties of collective punishment or administrative incompetence.

There is also a question that parents must honestly answer: what exactly are we teaching our children when we demand excellent grades at all costs? Many learners sit examinations under enormous pressure to produce impressive results regardless of their actual preparation. They fear disappointing their parents more than they fear compromising their integrity, and that is a damning indictment of the values some households project. A parent who celebrates an artificially obtained grade while condemning honest academic struggle is sending a deeply dangerous message to the next generation. We must teach our children that integrity is more valuable than any transcript obtained through dishonesty.

The transition from the 8-4-4 system to the Competency-Based Education framework makes this particular KCSE cycle especially significant. For the 2026 cohort, this is not the time for panic, rumours or desperate shortcuts. Attend every paper. Follow every instruction. Respect examination regulations. Carry no unauthorised materials. Entertain no individual promising leaked papers or guaranteed grades. And above all, do not allow fear to drive decisions that could define your life in ways you are not prepared for.

You may not obtain the grade you have always dreamed of, but an honestly earned result gives you something no shortcut can ever guarantee: the confidence that you stood by your principles when it mattered most.

The KCSE debate ultimately extends beyond candidates and examination officials. It concerns the kind of society Kenya is building. If we tolerate cheating in examinations, what moral authority do we retain to condemn dishonesty in universities, workplaces, public institutions and national leadership? A country cannot build a credible workforce on fraudulent academic credentials. Employers need competent people. Universities need prepared students. Society needs citizens who understand that responsibility cannot be outsourced and that character cannot be faked indefinitely.

The 2026 KCSE examinations should be a national test of integrity, not merely an academic contest. Candidates must be honest. Parents must be responsible. Schools must be accountable. KNEC must be impartial and professional. The message is simple, uncompromising and urgent.

Kenya does not need examination champions manufactured through shortcuts. It needs competent, honest and principled graduates — young men and women who can look their employers, their communities and themselves in the eye and say, with complete conviction, that they earned everything they have.

Your future is too valuable to gamble. Your integrity is too important to sell. And your education is far too precious to waste.

Ashford Kimani is a teacher of English and Literature who writes on education and social affairs.

Business Rubiri noted that Car & General, which this year marks 90 years since its founding, has maintained its distribution partnership with TVS Motor Company for more than 25 years

TVS and Car & General open Nyeri motorcycle training hub in KSh4M skills push

A new 225-square-metre facility at Nyeri National Polytechnic aims to professionalise Kenya's boda boda economy and build a certified technical workforce for a sector that supports 2.5 million livelihoods.



BY Jane Njeri
@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's motorcycle industry took a significant step towards professionalisation Friday when Car & General (Trading) Limited, TVS Motor Company and Nyeri National Polytechnic jointly inaugurated a dedicated TVS Motorcycles Training Centre at the polytechnic's campus in Nyeri — a facility valued at over USD 30,000 and designed to close a skills gap that has long constrained one of the country's most economically vital sectors.

The 225-square-metre centre was opened by George Rubiri, General Manager of Car & General; Pradeep Chaurasiya, Business Head for Africa at TVS Motor Company's International Business division; and Rachel Kimani, Chief Principal of Nyeri National Polytechnic. The inauguration marks the most concrete expression yet of a partnership between private industry and public technical education that its architects say is built for the long term.

The facility is equipped to handle the full breadth of modern motorcycle training. A 30-seater classroom with a digital projector sits alongside TVS motorcycle training engines, specialised workshop tools, two operational TVS motorcycles, an air compressor, a tyre-changing machine, a wheel alignment machine and two motorcycle service ramps. Students completing programmes here are expected to leave certified and work-ready — capable of entering employment as qualified technicians, establishing their own repair workshops or building spare-parts enterprises.

The timing is deliberate. Kenya's two-wheeler economy has grown into one of the country's most consequential industries, generating an estimated KSh660B annually and supporting more than 2.5 million Kenyans either directly or indirectly. The sector spans boda boda transport, last-mile delivery and logistics, spare-parts retail, repair and maintenance, vehicle financing, insurance and an expanding electric mobility segment. Beyond urban mobility, motorcycles have become infrastructure in their own right — connecting rural communities to markets, schools, health facilities and financial services in areas where roads and public transport remain inadequate.

Against that backdrop, the shortage of formally trained motorcycle technicians is not simply a skills problem. It is an economic constraint. Rubiri, who was speaking at the launch, made the point directly. "The motorcycle industry has evolved into one of Kenya's most important economic sectors, creating employment, enabling entrepreneurship and supporting millions of livelihoods," he said. "As the industry grows, the need for professionally trained technicians becomes even more critical. This Training Centre is our contribution toward building the technical capabilities required to support a safer, more productive and increasingly locally manufactured mobility industry."

Rubiri noted that Car & General, which this year marks 90 years since its founding, has maintained its distribution partnership with TVS Motor Company for more than 25 years, supplying Kenyan customers with motorcycles, genuine spare parts and after-sales support while assembling TVS machines locally in Nakuru.

Chaurasiya echoed the industry case for investment in technical education. "TVS Motor Company believes that skills development is fundamental to strengthening the mobility sector," he said. "This Training Centre will provide learners with access to modern motorcycle technologies and industry-relevant knowledge while supporting the development of a skilled workforce that can meet the changing needs of the market."

TVS Motor Company, one of India's largest manufacturers of two and three-wheelers, has built its Kenyan presence over decades through the Car & General partnership and now sees technical training as the logical extension of that commercial commitment.

For Kimani and her institution, the centre represents something that vocational education in Kenya has long argued for but rarely secured in this form: direct industry investment in the learning environment. "Technical and vocational education must remain closely connected to industry if we are to produce graduates who are ready for employment and entrepreneurship," she said. "This partnership reflects our shared commitment to quality skills development and national economic growth."

Nyeri National Polytechnic, established in 1977, is among Kenya's leading public TVET institutions, offering programmes across engineering, computing, agriculture, automotive and electrical engineering disciplines. The new centre adds a sector-specific layer to that portfolio at a moment when demand for certified motorcycle technicians is rising faster than the system has been producing them.

The three partners described Friday's launch not as an endpoint but as the opening of a broader collaboration — one aimed at strengthening technical education, supporting local manufacturing and improving the competitiveness of Kenya's mobility economy from the ground up.



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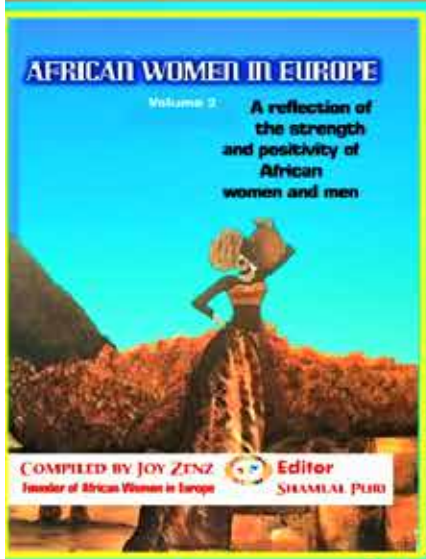
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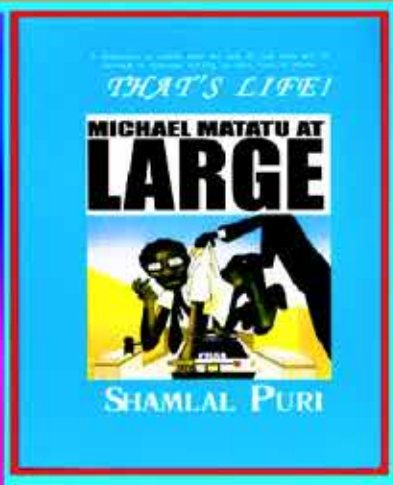
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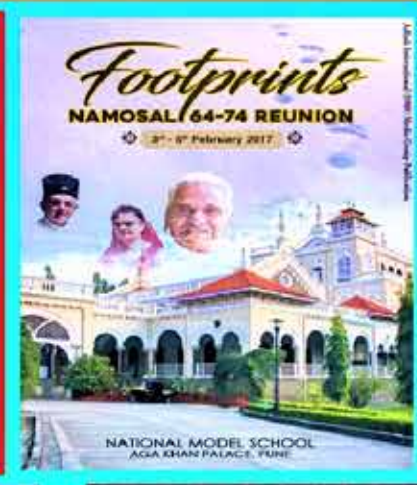
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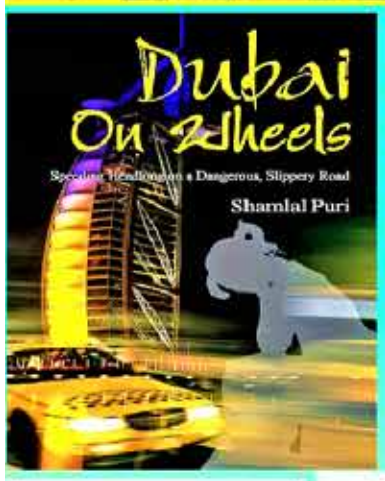


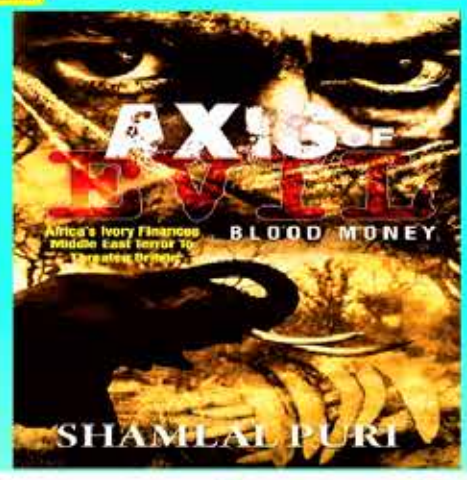


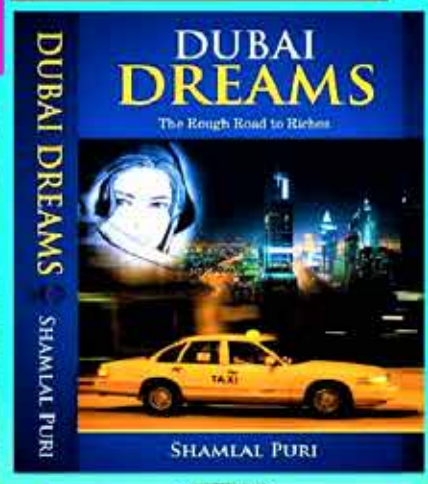


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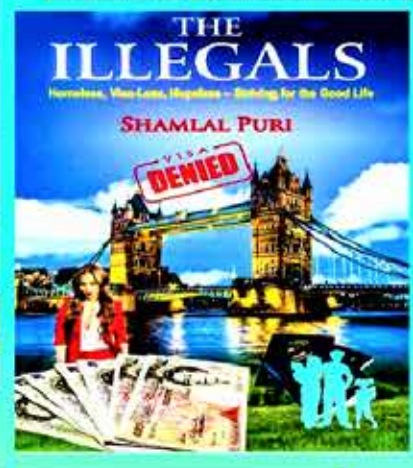


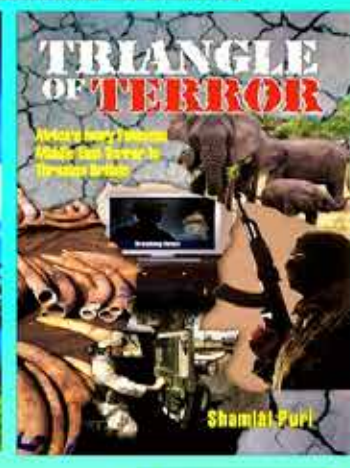


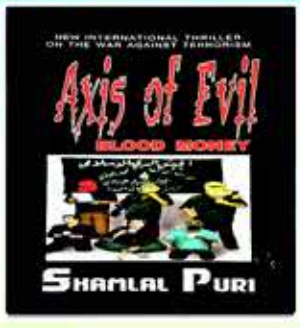




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Taxation **Yet citizens are frequently presented with explanations centred on inadequate revenue, competing priorities and the need to expand taxation.**

Kenya's public finance crisis: Taxpayers are paying more, but who is accounting for the money?

"Taxation is a constitutional obligation imposed on citizens in trust that the resources collected will finance public services, advance national development and improve the quality of life. When the Government demands more from its citizens but cannot satisfactorily explain what happens to the money collected, the problem ceases to be merely financial; it becomes a crisis of public trust, institutional responsibility and constitutional accountability."



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

@themtkenyatimes



There is a growing contradiction in Kenya's public finance management that deserves serious national reflection. Citizens are confronted with taxation, statutory deductions, service charges, borrowing costs and rising living expenses, yet the institutions entrusted with collecting, appropriating and spending public resources repeatedly appear unable to establish precisely where substantial amounts of money have gone. More disturbing is the spectacle of senior government officials and parliamentary committees expressing surprise when audit findings expose unexplained balances, irregular transfers, unsupported expenditure and financial discrepancies. The question is no longer whether Kenya has sufficient resources to finance its development ambitions, but whether those resources are being managed with the discipline, transparency and responsibility demanded by the Constitution.

The e-Citizen revelations provide a particularly instructive illustration. The National Treasury's FY2023/2024 consolidated financial statements reported approximately KSh100.84 billion in platform receipts. However, subsequent audit examinations identified weaknesses in reconciliation, transaction reporting, government access to records and the movement of collections. The Auditor-General's report for FY2024/2025 subsequently questioned the reliability of approximately KSh206.13 billion in reported transfers to government entities, identifying discrepancies that required explanation and reconciliation. These figures cover different reporting periods and must not be added together or automatically characterised as losses. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the scale of the financial control problem.

The concern is that citizens make payments believing they are dealing directly with the Government of Kenya, yet the Government itself has experienced difficulties independently establishing the complete movement of those payments. The reported KSh6.3 billion associated with a private Pesaflow account, the unresolved questions surrounding settlement arrangements and the dependence on private technical service providers raise fundamental questions about the custody and administration of public revenue. Digitalisation was intended to eliminate financial opacity, not introduce another layer of institutional uncertainty.

However, e-Citizen is only one manifestation of a much wider public finance challenge. The Office of the Controller of Budget, in its FY2024/2025 National Government Budget Implementation Review, highlighted revenue shortfalls, pending bills, expenditure pressures, delayed releases and the misuse of Article 223 to finance foreseeable expenditure. The Controller also warned that accumulated pending bills could become increasingly difficult to manage as Government transitions towards accrual accounting. These are not merely accounting inconveniences. They reflect weaknesses in planning, commitment control, procurement and expenditure management.

The National Treasury's own fiscal reporting equally illustrates the pressure. The Government's Public Debt Management Office reported total debt service of approximately KSh1.72 trillion in FY2024/2025. This includes principal repayments and interest, demonstrating how much of the national financial capacity is committed to servicing existing obligations. The World Bank's Kenya Public Finance Review also observed that public debt stood at approximately 68 per cent of GDP in 2024, while interest costs absorbed more than one-third of public revenues. The consequences are felt through constrained development spending, reduced fiscal flexibility and competing demands on essential services.

Yet citizens are frequently presented with explanations centred on inadequate revenue, competing priorities and the need to expand taxation. What receives insufficient attention is whether existing resources are being efficiently protected and utilised. It is difficult to persuade a struggling household or business to accept additional taxation when the Government cannot consistently demonstrate value for money, settle legitimate suppliers' bills, complete funded projects or account for substantial financial discrepancies.

The greatest institutional responsibility rests with the Executive, particularly the National Treasury and the accounting officers responsible for public revenue and expenditure. Under the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, and Articles 201, 206 and 226 of the Constitution, public money must be properly managed, accounted for and applied through lawful financial structures. Treasury cannot distance itself from weaknesses in national revenue architecture, cash management and financial reporting. Equally, accounting officers cannot escape responsibility by attributing discrepancies to technology providers, payment intermediaries or administrative systems. Outsourcing a service does not outsource constitutional accountability.

The responsibility extends to ministries, departments, agencies and procurement authorities. Every accounting officer must establish that revenue received is correctly recorded, expenditure is authorised, procurement delivers value and contractual obligations are properly managed. Persistent audit queries, unsupported payments, irregular commitments and unaccounted balances should attract consequences where individual responsibility is established. The Auditor-General has previously warned that audit recommendations frequently recur because implementation and enforcement remain inadequate.

Parliament must also shoulder responsibility, although its constitutional role is oversight rather than executive financial management. Appropriation is not simply the approval of expenditure estimates; it is an undertaking to scrutinise how public resources are ultimately applied. The National Assembly cannot repeatedly receive audit reports, convene hearings, express indignation and then allow unresolved findings to disappear into subsequent financial years. Its Public Accounts Committee and Budget and Appropriations Committee must insist on implementation schedules, recoveries where justified, referrals where necessary and public disclosure of outstanding recommendations. Oversight without enforceable follow-through risks becoming an annual institutional ritual.

Nevertheless, the Auditor-General and Controller of Budget should not be blamed for identifying failures within institutions they are constitutionally mandated to scrutinise. Their independence must be protected and their recommendations acted upon. The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, investigative agencies and Director of Public Prosecutions must pursue evidence of wrongdoing within their respective mandates, while distinguishing administrative shortcomings from criminal conduct.

Ultimately, Kenya needs a fundamental shift from revenue mobilisation as the principal measure of fiscal performance to accountable resource management as an equally important national obligation. Every shilling collected must be traceable from the citizen's payment through the receiving account, appropriation, expenditure and final financial reporting. IFMIS integration, Treasury Single Account principles, daily reconciliation, transparent procurement, independent audits and enforceable sanctions must become operational realities rather than policy promises.

The taxpayer is not an adversary of the Government. Citizens contribute through taxation because the Constitution establishes a social and financial compact between the State and its people. That compact cannot survive indefinitely on demands for sacrifice without corresponding evidence of responsible stewardship.

Kenya does not merely need explanations whenever billions become questionable. It needs institutions that prevent such situations, officers who accept responsibility, Parliament that enforces accountability and a Treasury capable of demonstrating where public money goes.

"The greatest injustice to a taxpayer is not merely being asked to contribute more, but being compelled to finance a government that cannot satisfactorily account for what it has already collected. Public resources belong to the people; their management is a constitutional trust, not an administrative privilege."

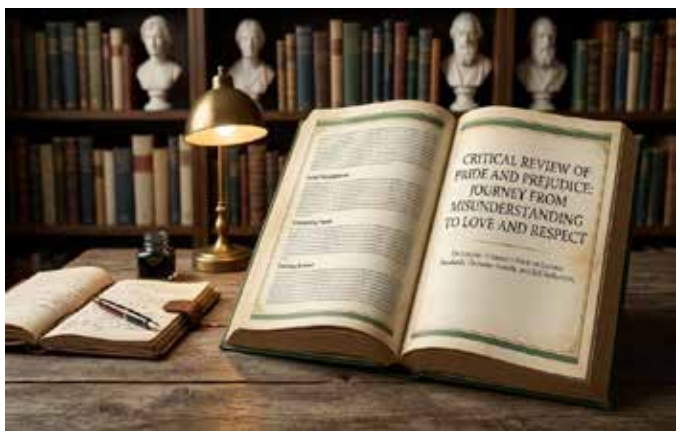
Book review **The novel opens with the famous statement: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."**

Critical Review of Pride and Prejudice: Journey from Misunderstanding to Love and Respect

UNIVERSITY OF CHENAB, GUJRAT
A PROJECT OF VICTORIAN NOVEL
CRITICAL REVIEW OF PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
Journey from Misunderstanding to Love and Respect
Submitted to
Muhammad Adnan Gujjar

Submitted and Reviewed by
Maham

Programme
BS English – 4th Semester



Pride and Prejudice is a timeless novel written by Jane Austen. It was composed during the Regency period in Britain, a time when society was strongly divided by social class and women had considerably less power and independence than men. Austen began writing the novel in 1796, and it was published in 1813. Marriage plays a central role in the story, which is why the novel is often discussed in terms of the marriage market. Through the lives of her characters, Austen presents the customs, relationships, and social values of her time. She explores important themes such as pride, prejudice, love, marriage, and the class system.

The story mainly focuses on the changing relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy. It also revolves around the Bennet family, which consists of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their five daughters: Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Catherine (Kitty), and Lydia. Mrs. Bennet is particularly concerned about her daughters' futures and hopes that they will marry wealthy and socially respectable men.

The novel opens with the famous statement: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." This sentence introduces the importance of marriage and wealth in the society depicted in the novel. Austen uses it ironically to draw attention to the social expectations surrounding marriage.

Jane Austen introduces the Bennet family through a conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Mrs. Bennet is excited to learn that a wealthy young man, Mr. Bingley, has rented Netherfield Park. She immediately begins thinking about the possibility of one of her daughters marrying him. Mr. Bennet responds calmly and teasingly, showing that he does not share his wife's excitement. This opening conversation reveals their contrasting personalities and establishes marriage as a major concern in their society.

At a gathering and dance in Meryton, Elizabeth first encounters Mr. Darcy. Darcy appears proud and distant from the other guests. When he refuses to dance with Elizabeth, she overhears his dismissive remark that she is not attractive enough to tempt him. His comment hurts her feelings and creates a negative first impression. Elizabeth's early judgement of Darcy becomes the beginning of the misunderstandings that shape their relationship.

As the novel progresses, Darcy begins to recognise the faults in his proud behaviour and gradually becomes more considerate and humble. Elizabeth, too, reconsiders her opinion of him after learning more about his character and actions. Both characters develop through self-reflection and a better understanding of one another. When Lydia elopes with Wickham, Darcy quietly intervenes to help resolve the crisis and protect the Bennet family's reputation. His actions reveal his generosity and genuine concern for Elizabeth.

Major Themes
1. Love and Marriage

Love and marriage are central themes in the novel. Austen presents different kinds of relationships and marriages. Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley represent sincere affection and mutual attraction. Charlotte Lucas and Mr. Collins enter a practical marriage based largely on financial security rather than romantic love. Lydia and Wickham's relationship reflects immaturity and irresponsibility. In contrast, Elizabeth and Darcy develop a relationship based on respect, understanding, and personal growth. Their marriage represents the ideal relationship in the novel. Austen suggests that marriage should involve affection, compatibility, and mutual respect rather than being based solely on wealth or social advantage.

2. Pride and Prejudice

The title reflects the personal weaknesses that initially prevent Elizabeth and Darcy from understanding one another. Darcy's pride is evident in his early behaviour, while Elizabeth forms a prejudice against him based on his first impression and incomplete information. Both characters must recognise and overcome these faults. Austen shows that pride and prejudice can damage relationships, while self-awareness and open-mindedness can help people develop mutual respect.

3. Social Class and Status

The novel also highlights the influence of social class on relationships and marriage. Darcy initially considers the Bennet family's social connections and behaviour inferior to his own upper-class position. Austen criticises a society that judges people according to wealth, family background, and status. Through Elizabeth and Darcy's relationship, she suggests that personal character, integrity, and kindness are more important than social rank.

Jane Austen's Writing Style

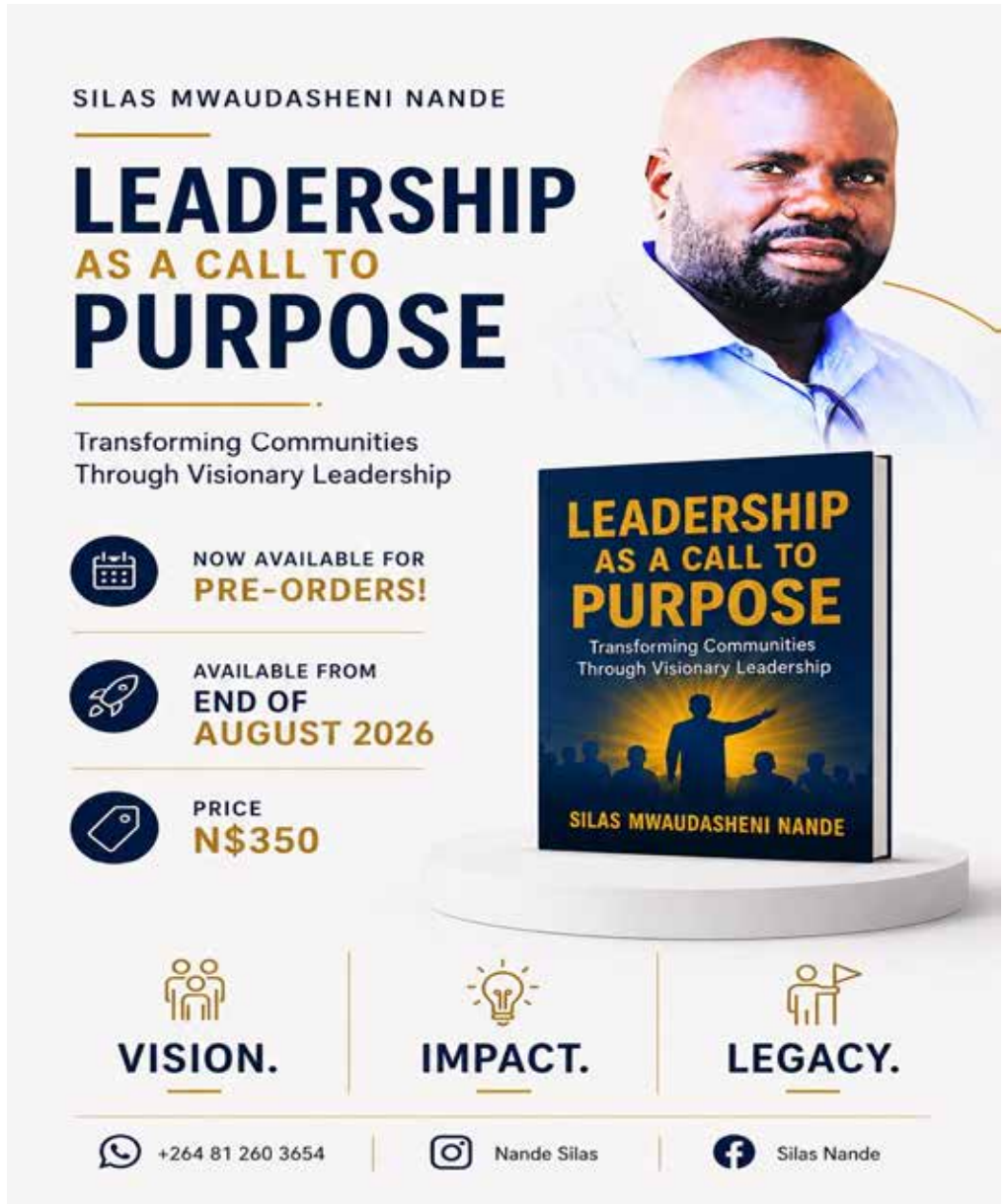
Jane Austen's writing style is clear, engaging, and rich in irony. She carefully observes human behaviour and uses realistic dialogue to reveal the personalities and motivations of her characters. Her irony allows her to criticise social conventions, class prejudice, and the pressure placed on women to marry advantageously. Through humour, conversation, and detailed characterisation, Austen presents society in a natural and convincing way.

Personal Response and Lessons Learnt

In my opinion, Pride and Prejudice is an interesting and meaningful novel. It teaches readers that first impressions can be misleading and that people should not be judged without understanding their character. The novel also shows that a successful marriage should be based on love, maturity, trust, and mutual respect rather than wealth or social position. Elizabeth and Darcy's journey demonstrates the importance of recognising one's mistakes and learning from them.

Conclusion

Pride and Prejudice remains one of Jane Austen's most admired novels because of its memorable characters, balanced plot, humour, and universal themes. It combines romance with a thoughtful criticism of social class, marriage customs, and human weaknesses. The novel does more than entertain its readers: it encourages them to question prejudice, value personal character, and build relationships on understanding and respect. Through Elizabeth and Darcy's journey, Austen suggests that true happiness becomes possible when people overcome their misunderstandings and learn to appreciate one another.



Ebola **The restrictions, announced by Saudi health authorities through the Saudi Press Agency and confirmed by the Kingdom's Public Health Authority**

Saudi Arabia's Ebola travel ban on Kenya: A health crisis with global consequences

Saudi Arabia has suspended travel to Kenya and halted all visa issuance over Ebola fears — compounding pressure on a country already racing to contain its deadliest outbreak in years

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Saudi Arabia on Friday suspended all travel by its citizens to Kenya, halted visa issuance, and imposed a blanket entry ban on travellers arriving from the country, citing concerns over Kenya's ongoing Bundibugyo Ebola virus disease outbreak, which has claimed two lives and infected nine people since the country confirmed its first imported case on 6 October 2026.

The restrictions, announced by Saudi health authorities through the Saudi Press Agency and confirmed by the Kingdom's Public Health Authority, Weqaya, apply not only to travellers departing Kenya directly, but also to anyone transiting through third countries who has spent time in Kenya or another Ebola-affected nation within 21 days before arriving in Saudi Arabia. In effect, the ban casts a wide net — one with significant implications for the tens of thousands of Kenyans who work in the Gulf and for the broader relationship between the two countries.

Saudi Arabia has previously introduced similar measures against countries facing Ebola outbreaks, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and South Sudan, suspending travel to those nations in June 2026 when the DRC outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Kenya's inclusion in that list marks a significant escalation in the international response to what began as an outbreak in central Africa and has since crossed borders with troubling ease.

Kenya's government responded swiftly, with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs dispatching a diplomatic note on 30 October 2026 expressing concern about the Saudi decision and demanding an immediate review of the travel restrictions. The protest reflects both the practical consequences of the ban and the reputational stakes involved. Saudi Arabia is one of the largest destinations for Kenyan migrant workers, and a sustained travel restriction could disrupt livelihoods, remittance flows, and bilateral relations.



An illustration of screening at airport

The diplomatic friction, however, cannot obscure the reality of what prompted it. Kenya confirmed its first case of the Bundibugyo virus on 6 October 2026 after a Kenyan man who had been living in the Democratic Republic of Congo travelled to Kenya through Uganda. He died on 5 October — the day before the case was formally confirmed — and what followed was a rapid chain of transmission that drew in family members and healthcare workers alike. Three Kenyan health workers subsequently tested positive for Ebola after caring for the index case, a development that alarmed public health officials and underscored both the virus's lethality and the risks faced by frontline medical staff.

The outbreak involves the rare Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, for which there is no approved vaccine or treatment — a fact that concentrates the mind considerably. Unlike better-studied Ebola strains where vaccine candidates exist, the Bundibugyo variant forces health systems to rely entirely on containment: isolation, contact tracing, quarantine, and the painstaking discipline of breaking every chain of transmission before the virus finds new hosts.

Kenya's response has, by most measurable indicators, been robust. By 22 October 2026, all 135 contacts linked to the outbreak had been traced — both within Kenya and internationally — with the relevant health authorities formally notified in line with International Health Regulations. The Ministry of Health reported that 709,093 travellers had been screened at points of entry since the response began, with 3,107 screened in a single 24-hour period. The country had also gone several consecutive days without a new confirmed case, and health officials stated there was no evidence of community transmission.

On 26 October 2026, the first 20 contacts of Kenya's index case were released from quarantine and reunited with their families after completing the mandatory 21-day monitoring period without developing symptoms. It was a moment of quiet but significant relief — proof that the quarantine system was functioning and that containment was possible. "The remaining 98 contacts are expected to be released in four waves beginning 3 November, based on their individual health assessments," Director-General for Health Patrick Amoth said, though he was careful to add that the outbreak was not yet over.

The appeal not to stigmatise those completing quarantine is not incidental to the response — it is central to it. Communities that fear returning contacts are communities that conceal symptoms, avoid testing, and undermine the very contact tracing systems that contain outbreaks. Health officials have been explicit: people who complete quarantine without symptoms pose no risk to their communities and should be welcomed home. "People who complete quarantine have helped protect their families, their communities and the whole country," said Dr Neema Rusibamayila Kimambo, WHO Representative to Kenya.

The international dimension of this outbreak was always inevitable. The DRC outbreak, which has been ongoing since May 2026, has killed over 5,000 people, with cases subsequently reported in Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria — a trajectory that illustrates how quickly a viral outbreak can travel along the same routes that connect economies, families, and communities across borders. The global response, including Saudi Arabia's travel ban, reflects that reality, however disruptive the restrictions may be for Kenya.

What the Saudi measure also reflects is the asymmetry of global public health: wealthy countries protect themselves first and ask questions later, while outbreak-affected nations bear both the disease burden and the economic penalty of the international response. Kenya has done everything that public health protocols require — transparent case reporting, rapid contact tracing, coordinated quarantine, and consistent communication. It has met the WHO's 7-1-7 benchmark — detection within seven days, notification within one, and response within seven — and it has achieved quarantine rates above the 85 per cent threshold considered necessary to break transmission chains.

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Health, the Kenya National Public Health Institute, county authorities, and international partners on the response, and has appealed for US$9.4 million over six months to support rapid containment. The funding appeal is a reminder that good public health requires not just will, but resources — and that the international community's travel bans should be matched by international support for the countries doing the hardest work.

Kenya's Ebola response is, by the evidence, a story of a health system that held. Whether Saudi Arabia's doors reopen as quickly as the data warrants is the question that will define what this outbreak costs the country beyond the hospital wards.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Surveyors must guard Kenya's land, not sell it

By **Noel Isoyi**



Kenya's land surveyors must choose: serve the public or enable the cartels that are systematically stripping communities of their land. That is the blunt message the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission delivered yesterday at a forum bringing together surveyors and land sector stakeholders.

The EACC was unequivocal. Land corruption remains among the most destructive forms of graft in Kenya — and surveyors sit at its very centre. A single fraudulent survey can trigger disputes lasting decades, displace families and deny entire communities access to schools, hospitals and public utilities. The damage, once done, is rarely undone.

Surveyors determine boundaries, prepare survey plans and provide the technical foundation on which title deeds and ownership records rest. That position of trust makes them either the first line of defence against land grabbing — or its most useful accomplice. Altered beacons, false maps and legitimised irregular allocations do not happen without professional complicity.

The Commission urged surveyors to resist pressure and inducements from grabbers, brokers and corrupt officials, reminding them that professional integrity is not a personal virtue alone but a national responsibility. It confirmed that EACC will work with professional bodies, the Ministry of Lands and relevant agencies to digitise land records, strengthen oversight and prosecute those found culpable.

Public land belongs to all Kenyans. When surveyors betray that trust, they do not just break a rule — they steal a future.

Nyahururu cannot afford to remain in the dark

By **Wanene Zipporah Nyawira**



Nyahururu is being left behind, and the reason is embarrassingly basic: the lights keep going out.

As a student at Laikipia University, I experience the consequences directly. Research stalls, online learning materials become inaccessible, assignments go unfinished and examination preparation is repeatedly disrupted. Frequent, prolonged power outages do not merely inconvenience students — they actively undermine academic performance at a time when young people can least afford setbacks.

The damage extends well beyond campus. Nyahururu's small businesses — cybercafés, salons, hotels, retail shops — absorb financial losses with every outage. Owners cannot plan, cannot serve customers reliably and cannot grow when their most basic operational requirement disappears without warning. Ordinary residents fare no better, enduring daily disruption in their homes with no reliable indication of when supply will be restored.

The question is straightforward: how are students expected to excel and businesses to thrive when electricity — the foundation of both — remains this unreliable?

Kenya Power and the relevant authorities must urgently investigate the root causes of these recurring blackouts, implement lasting technical solutions and, at the very minimum, communicate scheduled interruptions in advance. Residents deserve more than reactive apologies and temporary fixes. They deserve a power supply that works.

Electricity is not a luxury. It is infrastructure, and infrastructure is a right. Nyahururu is a growing town with real potential — but that potential cannot be realised in the dark.

Kenya Power must act. The town is waiting.

Staying steady in a first-world rush

By **Phabian Ochieng Otieno**



Life accelerates without warning. Every morning arrives loaded with tasks, obligations and problems demanding immediate attention, and before long the day is gone and you are left wondering what, exactly, you accomplished. Moving fast feels productive. It rarely is.

The smartest move available to any person navigating a relentless pace is, counterintuitively, to stop. Rushing breeds errors, and errors cost time — often far more than the pause you were too busy to take. A moment of stillness sharpens your thinking, restores your sense of priority and separates what genuinely needs doing today from what can safely wait until tomorrow.

Not everything deserves your immediate reaction, either. People will manufacture urgency around you, situations will press for panic, and the noise will be constant. Calm is not passivity — it is control. When you choose not to be rushed into a response, you protect the quality of your decisions and the people who depend on them.

The architecture of a good life is rarely dramatic. It is built from ordinary things done consistently and with care — honest work, maintained health, genuine presence with family and friends. These accumulate quietly into something substantial, long after the frantic ones have burned themselves out chasing momentum for its own sake.

Life is not a race to be won. It is a distance to be managed. Steady, deliberate and unhurried will take you further than fast ever could.

University students want class, not another countdown to crisis

By **Samuel Milimoh**



Let us be clear: students never refused to return to class. They wanted to learn, complete assignments, sit examinations and progress. What they did not want — and still do not want — is to spend their university years hostage to a cycle of industrial disputes that nobody in authority appears serious about permanently breaking.

The KSh20B agreement between the government and the Universities Academic Staff Union is significant. The settlement, spread across three financial years — KSh6.7B in 2026/2027, KSh6.7B in 2027/2028 and KSh6.6B in 2028/2029 — is intended to implement the 2025–2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Students welcome it. But they are entitled to ask the harder question: is this a solution or simply a postponement?

Lecturers deserve fair pay, better conditions and respect. That is not in dispute. What is in dispute is whether UASU Secretary-General Constantine Wasonga and his leadership have secured an agreement with enforceable timelines, clear accountability and genuine safeguards against the same grievances resurfacing in two years. Students have heard the promises before.

Every strike disrupts more than lectures. It derails graduation timelines, strains finances, fractures confidence and quietly erodes the credibility of public university education. Students pay that price while negotiators shake hands for the cameras.

The government must honour this commitment in full and on time. The unions must remember that the students they inconvenience are the very people their members exist to teach. And university administrators must recover lost academic time without punishing the students who were never the problem.

The end of a strike should mean the beginning of stability — not the start of a new countdown.



Sports >> ***The Africa Cup of Nations is set to revert to its traditional biennial schedule from 2027, a decision that will reshape the rhythm of African football and reignite debate over the tournament's place in the modern game.**

AFCON returns to two-year cycle from 2027 in CAF's boldest football shake-up

By **Pascal Okoth**

The Africa Cup of Nations will return to a two-year cycle from 2027, the Confederation of African Football confirmed yesterday, restoring the tournament's traditional biennial format after years of debate over its scheduling, competitiveness and place in an increasingly congested international football calendar. The decision marks one of the most significant structural changes to African football's flagship competition in recent memory and is certain to generate fierce discussion among players, coaches, national associations and supporters across the continent.

AFCON ranks among the most prestigious football competitions in the world. It brings together Africa's finest national teams to contest continental supremacy, and it carries a weight that extends far beyond the results on the pitch. For millions of fans across 54 nations, the tournament is an expression of identity, cultural pride and collective belonging — a moment every two years when the continent unites around a shared passion.

The restoration of the biennial schedule means supporters will no longer face extended waits between editions of the competition. National teams will have more frequent opportunities to compete for silverware, and younger players will find a regular platform on which to audition for the world's top clubs. For the continent's smaller footballing nations, too, the format offers more chances to spring surprises against established powerhouses — the kind of upsets that have long defined AFCON's unique and unpredictable character.

Yet the decision is not without its complications, and the football world will be watching how CAF manages them. The most pressing concern involves the African players who form the backbone of Europe's leading club sides. Many already navigate punishing schedules across domestic leagues, continental competitions and international duty. A return to two-yearly AFCON cycles will increase those demands further, raising legitimate questions about player fatigue, injury risk and the perennial tension between club and country.

European clubs have never been entirely comfortable releasing key players for AFCON, particularly when the tournament falls mid-season and at decisive moments in domestic title races. Those reservations are unlikely to diminish with a more frequent schedule, and CAF will need to engage club football's governing bodies constructively if the arrangement is to work smoothly for all parties.

The financial and logistical burden on host nations is equally significant. Staging AFCON demands substantial investment — in stadiums, transport networks, accommodation, security and supporting infrastructure. Organising a successful tournament requires years of preparation, tight coordination between CAF, governments, football associations and commercial partners, and a level of institutional discipline that has not always been consistently delivered. A two-year cycle compresses that preparation window and leaves less room for error.

On the other side of the ledger, regular hosting opportunities carry real economic benefits. Nations that stage AFCON typically see surges in tourism, employment and international visibility. Infrastructure built or upgraded for major tournaments tends to leave lasting legacies, and the continent's growing appetite for sporting investment makes AFCON an attractive platform for sponsors and broadcasters alike.



The broader picture for African football is equally important. AFCON has become the continent's most powerful showcase for emerging talent — a stage where unknown players have repeatedly announced themselves to the world and where the gap between African football and the global elite has been progressively, if unevenly, narrowed. CAF must ensure that a more frequent schedule does not dilute the tournament's quality or undermine its hard-won commercial and reputational value.

That will require more than a calendar decision. Refereeing standards, prize money, player welfare provisions, broadcasting agreements and the overall administrative quality of African football all need sustained attention if AFCON is to grow rather than merely endure.

The return to a two-year cycle is, at its core, a statement of ambition — a declaration that African football intends to occupy more space in the global sporting conversation, not less. Whether that ambition translates into a stronger, better-organised tournament will depend on the decisions CAF makes in the months and years ahead.

For now, 2027 is the date circled on the calendar. The continent's most celebrated football competition is coming around sooner than expected, and Africa is watching.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> ***Chelsea beat Manchester United 2-0 at Stamford Bridge yesterday, extending the visitors' winless run to nine games as goals from Morgan Rogers and Cole Palmer secured a dominant Premier League victory.**

Chelsea down ten-man United to climb into Premier League top four

By **Andalo Christine Ingutia**



Chelsea climbed into the Premier League's top four yesterday with a commanding 2-0 victory over a Manchester United side reduced to ten men at Stamford Bridge, further deepening the crisis engulfing a club that has now gone nine matches without a win across all competitions. The result, settled by goals from Morgan Rogers and Cole Palmer, was a statement of intent from Enzo Maresca's side and a damning reflection of where United currently find themselves.

United arrived in west London with attacking ambitions and, initially, the conviction to match them. Captain Bruno Fernandes returned to the starting lineup after being dropped for the previous fixture against Bournemouth, and the visitors created several promising openings through Fernandes, Matheus Cunha and Amad Diallo in the early exchanges. There was energy about United in those opening passages, a sense that they had come to Stamford Bridge not merely to defend but to impose themselves on a Chelsea side that had their own points to prove.

The promise, however, came to nothing. United were increasingly wasteful in front of goal, squandering opportunities that a side with genuine top-flight ambitions simply cannot afford to miss. They thought they had broken the deadlock when Cunha found the back of the net after cutting through Chelsea's defence, only for VAR to rule the goal out for offside. It was a moment that typified United's season — close enough to believe, but ultimately denied.

The first half ended goalless, with Chelsea content to absorb the visitors' pressure, probe for weaknesses and bide their time. United left the tunnel at half-time knowing they had not done enough, and the second half would confirm their worst fears.

Chelsea broke the deadlock five minutes after the restart when Rogers produced an impressive individual effort to score and give the hosts the lead they had been building towards. The goal shifted the momentum decisively. United, chasing the match, pushed men forward and left themselves exposed at the back — precisely the kind of scenario their beleaguered defence could least afford.

The visitors' afternoon fell apart entirely in the 63rd minute when Lisandro Martínez was dismissed. The Argentine defender, already on a yellow card following a first-half foul on Rogers, raised his arm into the face of Chelsea's Wesley Fofana inside the penalty area. Referee Peter Bankes paused, consulted VAR, and delivered the inevitable verdict — a penalty to Chelsea and a second yellow card for Martínez, who trudged off to leave United with ten men and the match effectively beyond them.

Cole Palmer, Chelsea's cool and composed talisman, stepped up to take the resulting penalty in the 64th minute and dispatched it with his customary authority to make it 2-0. The stadium lifted, United wilted, and what had been a competitive Premier League fixture became a procession.

Chelsea continued to press for a third. Estêvão Willian had a goal ruled out for offside late in the match, a decision that spared United further embarrassment but did nothing to alter the story of the afternoon. The hosts were in full control, the visitors reduced to damage limitation on a day when the gulf between the two clubs was laid painfully bare.

The result lifted Chelsea to fourth in the provisional Premier League standings on 16 points, with their pursuit of Champions League qualification looking increasingly credible. For Maresca, it was confirmation that his side are developing the consistency and resolve that serious title challengers demand.

For Manchester United, the numbers make grim reading. Sixteen minutes into the relegation zone, one point clear of the drop zone, nine games without a win — these are not the statistics of a club that considers itself among England's elite. The defensive frailties that have haunted them all season were once again exposed, and their chronic wastefulness in front of goal remains unresolved.

The road back will be long. Yesterday at Stamford Bridge, it looked longer than ever.





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Attracting a tourist to heritage sites or bringing them back? Amir Timur's legacy from a tourism geography perspective



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Geography suggests that the answer depends on where the tourist comes from. Attracting a visitor means overcoming space, in the form of distance, cost, and unfamiliarity, while bringing a visitor back means keeping a place worth returning to. For nearby markets, return visits are the easier task. For distant markets, the first visit is often the only one a destination can realistically expect.

The Tourism System: Where Attraction and Return Take Place

Travel as a Spatial System. Tourism geographers describe travel as a system rather than a single event. Leiper (1979) divided it into a generating region where tourists live, a transit route, and a destination region. Attraction is a task of the first two parts: a destination must be known and reachable from the place the tourist leaves. Return depends mostly on the third: what the tourist found on arrival. Push and pull factors work together in this system (Dann, 1977). Push factors, such as the wish to escape routine, arise in the generating region. Pull factors are the qualities of the destination—in Uzbekistan, the imposing Timurid architecture, historical monuments, and grand urban ensembles of Samarkand, Buxoro, and Shahrisabz. Lew (1987) showed that attractions are not just sites but a combination of the place itself, how it is presented, and how it is perceived by the visitor. Because perception is shaped before travel, attraction is largely a battle for image across space.

Why Attraction is Harder with Distance: The Timurid Heritage Context

Distance Decay and Visitor Typologies. The best-documented spatial pattern in tourism is distance decay: the number of visitors falls as the distance from the origin rises. McKercher and Lew (2003) found that most travel flows are concentrated near their origin, and that the effect varies with the cost, time, and accessibility of travel. For distant international markets (such as Western Europe, the Americas, or East Asia), every additional kilometre increases the cost of attracting a tourist to Timurid heritage sites, making remote markets the most expensive to win. The tourist's own character matters as well. Plog (1974) proposed that travellers range from psychocentric, who prefer the familiar, to allocentric, who seek the unfamiliar. Early heritage visitors to Central Asia were predominantly allocentric explorers. Cohen (1972) likewise described tourists as balancing novelty against familiarity. Distant, unfamiliar places showcasing medieval Silk Road history must therefore persuade visitors who accept greater uncertainty.

Why Returning to Historical Destinations is a Different Geographical Problem

Repeat Decision Dynamics. A return visit is not a repeat of the first decision. Gitelson and Crompton (1984) found that many travellers return to a place they know because it lowers risk and carries emotional meaning. Later studies link satisfaction to loyalty (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Chi and Qu, 2008), while Oppermann (2000) showed that loyalty differs strongly between tourist groups. Space again plays a role. A short regional trip costs less and fits more easily into a calendar, so people living in neighbouring regional markets can visit sites like Gur-e Amir or Shah-i Zinda repeatedly. A long-haul international traveller faces high travel costs each time, and the motive of discovering new world wonders often pushes them toward a new country altogether. Repeat visitors also use space differently. Lau and McKercher (2004) compared first-time and repeat visitors and found that first-timers explored more widely across iconic sites, while repeaters concentrated on a narrower set of familiar places or deeper cultural experiences. For planners in Uzbekistan, loyal visitors support specialized niche cultural sites, whereas new visitors spread benefits across major tourist hubs.

The Destination Life Cycle of Central Asian Heritage Tourism

Evolutionary Cycle. Butler (1980) described a destination's evolution in stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and then decline or rejuvenation. The balance between new and returning visitors shifts along this curve. Early on, heritage tourism focused on Amir Timur's architectural centers depended on adventurous newcomers. As infrastructure expands, a larger portion of demand may come from loyal repeaters. Rejuvenation of Silk Road heritage destinations requires both new cultural experiences/events for returning visitors and improved global access for first-time ones.

What This Means for Timurid Heritage Tourism Planning

- Match the marketing strategy to the geographic market zone. Focus on visitor retention and event-based travel in near and regional markets, and on brand awareness and accessibility in distant long-haul markets.
- Direct transport links, high-speed rail networks (such as the Afrosiyob), and visa simplification reduce the friction that distance imposes on first-time visits.
- Introduce dynamic cultural festivals, specialized Timurid history routes, and temporary exhibitions to give returning visitors a strong motive to return.
- First-time visitors need comprehensive visitor information that leads them smoothly through major landmarks, while repeaters need depth, local immersion, and thematic cultural routes.
- Track the share of first-time vs. repeat visitors by country of origin, not merely total arrival numbers, to guide sustainable destination policy.

Conclusion

From the standpoint of tourism geography, attracting visitors to Amir Timur's grand heritage and bringing them back are two stages of one spatial process. The first is limited by distance, global perception, and access; the second is governed by on-site experience, depth, and continual product renewal. Nearby regional tourists are easier to bring back, while distant long-haul tourists are harder to attract initially and harder to retain for repeat visits. A durable tourism strategy for Uzbekistan's historical centers therefore applies distinct approaches to each market zone, treating a highly satisfying initial visit as the indispensable foundation of both.

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