

Kalonzo storms Raila's heartland under stones and teargas — and dares Ruto to stop him

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New Maara law courts to ease access to justice in Tharaka Nithi

Chief Justice Martha Koome yesterday presided over the inauguration of the newly constructed Maara Law Courts in Tharaka-Nithi County, marking a significant step in the Judiciary's drive to bring justice closer to Kenyans

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Countdown 2027 **"They will chair the Ukombozi Alliance Council together," Kalonzo said.**

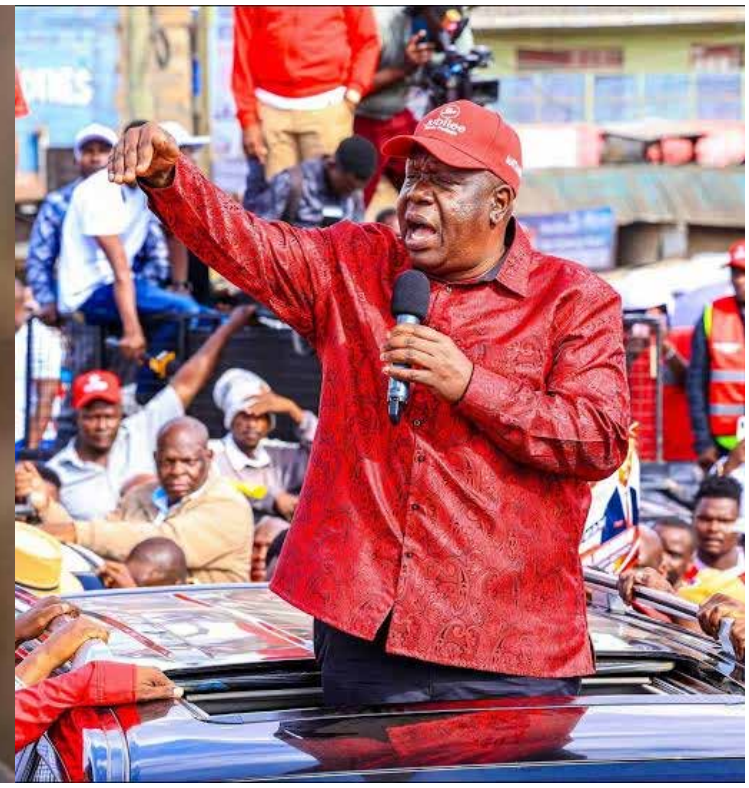
Matiang'i and Orengo step in as Ukombozi chiefs

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday named Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i and Siaya Governor James Orengo as co-chairs of the Ukombozi Alliance Council, completing a sweeping leadership overhaul of Kenya's main opposition coalition and drawing the clearest battle lines yet ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The announcement, made in Kisumu as Kalonzo arrived for a two-day rally in Migori and Homa Bay counties, is the most consequential structural move the opposition has made since the Azimio la Umoja coalition was rebranded as The Ukombozi Alliance — meaning liberation — on 21 September. It is also a declaration of intent: that Kenya's fractured opposition, long derided as a collection of competing presidential ambitions masquerading as a coalition, is now serious about building a machine capable of unseating President William Ruto.

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R-L: Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i and Siaya Governor James Orengo named as co-chairs of the Ukombozi Alliance Council

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Kalonzo marches through Raila country, stones and all

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka pressed ahead with his two-day Ukombozi Alliance tour of Nyanza yesterday, addressing crowds in Sori, Migori County, hours after his convoy was attacked by stone-throwing youths and police deployed teargas in Migori town.

The assault occurred as Kalonzo, Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi and DAP-K leader Eugene Wamalwa held a public meeting in Migori town, with unidentified assailants shattering vehicle windows before police intervened. Rather than withdraw, Kalonzo proceeded to Sori, where he was received with what his team described as an overwhelming welcome.

"Your energy and determination to see a better Kenya give us even greater strength to continue this journey of liberating our nation and restoring hope," he told residents. "Stones and teargas could not stop us. That is the predator regime's answer to peaceful assembly — violence and intimidation. No amount of intimidation will keep us from our people."

In Sori, Kalonzo also invoked the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga, crediting him as the father of devolution and urging residents to continue the struggle for his ideals. He confirmed the Homa Bay rally would proceed today as scheduled.

A movement that stones cannot silence is one worth watching.

Some of the moments as captured in pictures











Editor's Desk

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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/

Our Contacts
P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web**: www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Former Broadcasting and Telecommunications Principal Secretary Esther Koimett has been appointed chairperson of Lake Turkana Wind Power, taking over the leadership of Kenya's largest wind energy facility. Koimett, who served as Principal Secretary in the State Department for Broadcasting and Telecommunications, brings extensive public sector experience to the role at a company that has become central to Kenya's renewable energy ambitions. Lake Turkana Wind Power operates a 310-turbine facility in Marsabit County, which feeds approximately 310 megawatts into the national grid and accounts for a significant share of the country's installed wind energy capacity. Her appointment signals a renewed focus on governance and strategic direction at the company, which has navigated complex financing and transmission challenges since beginning commercial operations. No further details on the transition were immediately available.



The Nubian Community in Kibra yesterday petitioned Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja over what residents described as an alarming surge in crystal methamphetamine and other illicit drugs tearing through the area, demanding an immediate and comprehensive security overhaul. Community leaders said the proliferation of hard drugs had devastated families, fuelled violent crime and left young people particularly vulnerable, arguing that existing policing in the constituency was inadequate to contain the crisis. The petition calls on Kanja to deploy additional officers, dismantle known drug distribution networks and hold accountable anyone found facilitating the trade within Kibra. Residents warned that without urgent intervention, the situation risked spiralling beyond the community's capacity to absorb, threatening the social fabric of one of Nairobi's most densely populated areas.



Four people are confirmed dead after an 18-storey building collapsed in Eastleigh, Nairobi, yesterday, with rescue teams continuing to comb through the rubble for survivors. The structure came down on Thursday morning, triggering an immediate emergency response from the Kenya Red Cross, the National Disaster Operations Centre and police units drawn from across the city. Rescue workers deployed heavy equipment alongside manual search teams as crowds gathered at the scene. Authorities have not yet confirmed the cause of the collapse, though questions over construction standards and regulatory oversight of high-rise developments in Nairobi are already being raised. Building collapses in the capital have repeatedly been linked to substandard materials, corrupt approval processes and inadequate inspections by county government officials responsible for enforcing building codes.



The Education ministry yesterday restructured the 2027 school calendar, extending mid-term breaks across all three terms in a move expected to benefit both learners and teachers nationwide. Term One will run from 6 January to 18 April, with a mid-term break from 14 to 23 February. Term Two opens on 5 May and closes on 9 August, with a mid-term break from 14 to 22 June. Term Three begins on 1 September and ends on 5 November, with a mid-term break from 4 to 12 October. The revised calendar retains the existing structure of three terms but redistributes resting periods more evenly, addressing longstanding concerns from teachers' unions and parents' associations about learner fatigue and inadequate recovery time between intensive study periods. Officials said the changes were designed to improve academic performance and teacher wellbeing without altering the total number of instructional days prescribed under the national curriculum framework.



A tribunal has ordered the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority to pay KSh73 million in compensation to two cooking gas companies whose premises were shut down following a deadly explosion in Nairobi in 2024. The ruling found that Epra had acted unlawfully in closing the firms' operations in the aftermath of the blast, which claimed several lives and triggered a sweeping crackdown on liquefied petroleum gas dealers across the city. The two companies argued that the regulator had shuttered their premises without following due process, causing significant financial losses during the period of closure. The tribunal sided with the firms, determining that the economic damage suffered warranted full compensation. Epra has not yet indicated whether it will appeal the decision.



Human rights activist Okiya Omtatah and a group of civil society organisations yesterday filed a court petition challenging the legality of President William Ruto's Cabinet, arguing that its composition violates the Constitution. The petitioners contend that the Cabinet was assembled without adherence to the two-thirds gender rule and other constitutional provisions governing the appointment of principal government officers. They are asking the court to declare the Cabinet unlawful and compel the President to reconstitute it in line with the law. The case adds to a growing body of legal challenges targeting the Ruto administration's adherence to constitutional requirements in key appointments. Omtatah, who has previously mounted successful constitutional challenges against government action, is leading the petition alongside advocacy groups that have long pushed for stricter enforcement of gender and inclusivity provisions in public office.

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Business DTB's strategic focus on agricultural, education, and personal banking has expanded its branch network

DTB tightens Northern Kenya footprint with Isiolo branch opening, targets 100th branch by year-end

BY James Murimi
@themtkenyatimes



Isiolo County Deputy Governor James Lowasa (left) with DTB Director, Commercial, Ken Nyakomita (second right) and DTB Director, Retail Banking, George Otiende (right) celebrate the official opening of DTB's 94th branch in Isiolo town | *Photo:* Courtesy

Listed banking solutions provider Diamond Trust Bank Kenya Limited has accelerated plans to expand its Northern Kenya branch network by opening a full-service branch in Isiolo town.

To meet growing demand for physical banking solutions in vast Northern Kenya, DTB's new Isiolo county branch follows a similar opening in Garissa town late last year as part of the bank's customer portfolio diversification plan.

DTB's strategic focus on agricultural, education, and personal banking has expanded its branch network to 94 branches in Kenya.

Speaking following the opening of the new Isiolo branch, DTB Kenya Managing Director Murali Natarajan said the bank is accelerating efforts to deliver services to its growing base of retail, Small and micro enterprise merchants, agri-business, and corporate clients.

"We are taking financial inclusion seriously, and by establishing a presence in Isiolo, we are bringing our banking services closer to individuals and businesses contributing to the region's economy and creating opportunities for its future. We recognise the potential of Northern Kenya and want to be a partner to the people, enterprises and communities building the future," Natarajan said.

Speaking at the launch, on behalf of Isiolo County Governor Abdi Ibrahim Guyo, the County's Deputy Governor Dr James Lowasa said: "For a County like Isiolo with its strategic location and growing economic opportunities, having more banking services within reach can make a meaningful difference to our traders, pastoralist communities, entrepreneurs and young people. We welcome DTB's investment in Isiolo and look forward to partnerships that will help our people access financial solutions, grow their businesses and participate fully in the country's economic development."

For DTB, the opening represents not only an increase in its physical footprint but the Bank's commitment to extending financial services to communities with diverse needs and supporting economic activity across Kenya's regions.

DTB is in the process of setting up branches in Homa Bay, Kawangware, Ruiru, Redhill-Runda, and Parklands. The expansion reflects DTB's broader strategy of combining physical banking infrastructure with digital solutions to make financial services more accessible, convenient and responsive to customer needs.

The Bank's expansion also reinforces support for a wider range of economic activities, from pastoralist enterprises and small traders to established businesses and emerging industries, supporting Kenya's economic development.

KRA hits KSh1 trillion early as tax growth surges



KRA celebration illustration

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

The Kenya Revenue Authority collected KSh260.63B in October, posting 15.5 per cent growth year-on-year and crossing the KSh1 trillion cumulative mark a full month ahead of previous financial years.

Total cumulative collections by end of October reached KSh1.010 trillion, with the monthly figure surpassing the KSh258.304B target by 0.9 per cent — a surplus of KSh2.327B. The October growth rate nearly doubled the 8 per cent recorded in the same month last year and more than doubled the 6.5 per cent posted in October 2024, signalling a meaningful shift in the economy's revenue-generating capacity.

KRA's Customs department recorded its highest-ever monthly revenue haul, raising KSh94.793B — eclipsing the previous record of KSh92.527B set in July this year. Domestic VAT collections reached KSh33.367B, registering 22.1 per cent growth, while the manufacturing, wholesale, transportation and electricity sectors together drove roughly 80 per cent of corporation tax revenue during the month.

Excise duty on alcoholic beverages proved a significant engine, with wine growing 110.8 per cent and spirits 94.1 per cent month-on-month. The numbers suggest that Kenya's businesses are spending again — and that the taxman, for now, is keeping pace.

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Politics **"Stones and teargas could not stop us from addressing the great people of Migori," Kalonzo wrote on X afterwards.**

Kalonzo storms Raila's heartland under stones and teargas — and dares Ruto to stop him

The Migori attack on the Ukombozi Alliance convoy is not simply a law-and-order failure — it is a measure of how dangerous Kenya's road to August 2027 is becoming

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes



Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka's convoy was attacked by stone-throwing youths in Migori yesterday, as police deployed teargas to disperse crowds during a political tour of Nyanza — a region the opposition is fighting hard to consolidate ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The assault, which occurred in Suna West during the first day of Kalonzo's two-day Ukombozi Alliance tour of Migori and Homa Bay counties, damaged several vehicles and briefly disrupted the rally. Former Attorney-General Justin Muturi's car had its windscreen smashed. Kalonzo described a group of about ten people pelting his convoy with stones, calling it a serious threat to his life and a deliberate attempt to intimidate the opposition. Despite the violence, he proceeded to address residents who had turned out in numbers to hear him.

"Stones and teargas could not stop us from addressing the great people of Migori," Kalonzo wrote on X afterwards. "That is the predator regime's answer to peaceful assembly: violence and intimidation. We will not let it rot our democracy or take away a right the Constitution guarantees every Kenyan. No amount of intimidation will keep us from our people. Ukombozi cannot be stopped."

By Friday morning, the Ukombozi Alliance had confirmed it would proceed with its planned rally in Homa Bay as scheduled — a pointed signal that the opposition does not intend to be driven from the campaign trail by force.

The Migori incident is not an isolated event. In August, a Linda Mwananchi rally in Homa Bay was disrupted by teargas, and opposition leaders faced an attack in Garissa in September. A pattern is forming, and it is a troubling one. Each incident raises fresh questions about whether Kenya's security apparatus is operating as a neutral referee in the country's increasingly heated pre-election politics — or as something else entirely.

Siaya Governor James Orengo, who was unveiled alongside Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i as co-chair of the Ukombozi Alliance Council on the same day as the attack, condemned the violence, warning that such incidents raised serious concerns about the country's democratic space ahead of the election. Raila Odinga Junior also weighed in, calling for political competition to be driven by ideas rather than intimidation, and warning that no political ambition justified attacks on those seeking elective office.

The government has not claimed responsibility. No credible authority has claimed the attack was state-directed. But Kalonzo's framing — "the predator regime's answer to peaceful assembly" — was deliberate. He is building a political narrative, and the stones thrown in Migori have handed him the imagery to advance it.

That narrative matters enormously in this region. Nyanza — the heartland of the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga's political legacy — remains contested territory. Kalonzo acknowledged that critics had cautioned him against campaigning in the area, citing the August incident in which a Linda Mwananchi convoy encountered blockades and stone-throwing in Homa Bay. He came anyway. And a local woman at the Ndhiwa rally captured the mood with a raw directness that no polished political speech could match: "Kalonzo, okiwacha sisi otakufa, vijana ya apiko anaendesha apiko na akuna pesa" — "Kalonzo, if you abandon us we will die, the youth are riding motorbikes and there is no money." The economic desperation behind that cry is exactly the constituency the Ukombozi Alliance is gambling it can mobilise.

It is a high-stakes calculation. Nyanza gave Raila Odinga its most loyal and overwhelming support across five presidential campaigns. With Raila gone since October 2025, the region is politically unmoored — and every major opposition formation is competing to inherit its votes. Kalonzo's team travelled without incident from Kisumu International Airport to Migori on arrival, suggesting that parts of the region remain accessible and receptive. The violence, when it came, was localised and organised — not a spontaneous expression of public rejection.

That distinction matters. Kalonzo is not unwanted in Nyanza. What he faces is targeted disruption designed to make it appear that he is. The political choreography of the attack — a small group, swift intervention, vehicles damaged but leaders unharmed — has the hallmarks of a message rather than an assassination attempt. The message: this region is not yours.

Kalonzo's response has been to double down. At Sori in Migori County, he received what his team described as an overwhelming welcome. "Your energy and determination to see a better Kenya give us even greater strength to continue this journey of liberating our nation and restoring hope," he told supporters. "Ni Ukombozi Time."

Whether Ukombozi time translates into electoral time is the central question hanging over Kenyan politics. The opposition field remains fractured, with Gachagua, Matiang'i, Kalonzo, Karua and others all circling the presidential question without yet resolving it. The Migori attack has, paradoxically, served the opposition's interests in one respect: it has given its disparate principals a common cause to rally around and a common adversary to point at.

President Ruto has been making his own moves in opposition territory, appealing directly to Kalonzo's constituency in Kitui County and directing that the road to the Wiper leader's home be tarmacked — a gesture of political courtship that Kalonzo has publicly and emphatically rejected. Ruto is not standing still. But the images from Migori — a smashed windscreen, a defiant opposition leader addressing a crowd through the residue of teargas — are not the images an incumbent government wants circulating nine months before a general election.

Kenya's August 2027 ballot will be decided by millions of ordinary voters who want jobs, lower prices and a government they can trust. The woman at Ndhiwa who called out to Kalonzo from the roadside was not speaking the language of coalitions and co-chairs. She was speaking the language of survival.

Whether the Ukombozi Alliance can answer that call — or whether it will dissolve, as so many before it have, into competing presidential ambitions — is the question Kenya is watching. The stones in Migori did not stop it. What could still stop it is itself.

Politics **"We have chosen two people who have given this country years of service, and they will chair the Council of the Ukombozi Alliance together," Kalonzo said.**

Matiang'i and Orengo step in as Ukombozi chiefs

With nine months to the August 2027 election, the appointment of Matiang'i and Orengo as Ukombozi Alliance co-chairs signals a maturing opposition strategy — and a gathering storm for President Ruto

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes



Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i and Siaya Governor James Orengo named as co-chairs of the Ukombozi Alliance Council

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka yesterday named Jubilee Party leader Fred Matiang'i and Siaya Governor James Orengo as co-chairs of the Ukombozi Alliance Council, completing a sweeping leadership overhaul of Kenya's main opposition coalition and drawing the clearest battle lines yet ahead of the August 2027 General Election.

The announcement, made in Kisumu as Kalonzo arrived for a two-day rally in Migori and Homa Bay counties, is the most consequential structural move the opposition has made since the Azimio la Umoja coalition was rebranded as The Ukombozi Alliance — meaning liberation — on 21 September. It is also a declaration of intent: that Kenya's fractured opposition, long derided as a collection of competing presidential ambitions masquerading as a coalition, is now serious about building a machine capable of unseating President William Ruto.

"We have chosen two people who have given this country years of service, and they will chair the Council of the Ukombozi Alliance together," Kalonzo said. "Matiang'i knows how government works and how to get it to deliver. Orengo has stood for the Constitution when it was dangerous to do so. Kenyans will see that in the Alliance."

The appointment of Matiang'i and Orengo is not merely a reshuffling of chairs. It is a carefully calibrated political statement. Matiang'i, who served as Cabinet Secretary for Interior under retired President Uhuru Kenyatta, brings administrative credibility and a growing Mt Kenya following at a time when the region's estrangement from Ruto's administration remains the most consequential variable in the 2027 contest. Orengo, a senior counsel who has spent decades defending Kenya's constitutional architecture from both government benches and the opposition trenches, adds legal gravitas and a Nyanza footprint that the alliance has struggled to consolidate since former Prime Minister Raila Odinga's death in October 2025.

The two men replace Uhuru, who resigned as council chair in a letter dated 5 October, ending a brief but symbolically loaded tenure. Uhuru's earlier exit from Jubilee Party leadership — forced by a High Court order barring retired presidents from holding party office beyond six months post-presidency — had already signalled that his role in the opposition's formal structures would need to evolve. His departure from the chairmanship, though quiet, removed the most recognisable name in opposition politics and left a vacuum that Kalonzo has now moved decisively to fill.

The alliance's deed of agreement has been revised to allow more than one council chairperson, a structural change designed to manage the competing interests of a coalition that spans parties, regions and personalities. It is a pragmatic concession to political reality. Kenya's opposition does not lack talent or ambition. What it has historically lacked is the discipline to subordinate individual presidential dreams to a shared electoral strategy — a failure that cost it the 2022 election despite fielding a combined vote share that, on paper, should have been decisive.

The challenge is openly acknowledged within the coalition's own ranks. Gachagua has consistently insisted that opposition leaders cannot afford to enter the 2027 race divided, describing a united ticket as the only viable strategy to unseat the Kenya Kwanza administration. Jubilee Party has backed him as its preferred presidential candidate, while Martha Karua, who co-convenes the coalition with Kalonzo, has said the alliance remains focused on building strong institutions before settling on a 2027 candidate.

That careful hedging tells its own story. For Kalonzo, the question of Matiang'i's candidacy is a political calculation: associating too closely with Matiang'i risks undermining his rapport with Gachagua, whose backing in Mt Kenya remains a crucial bargaining chip in the opposition's power matrix. Kalonzo himself has said the priority is "unity and a workable formula" — language that sounds reassuring until one considers how many Kenyan opposition coalitions have dissolved over precisely that workable formula.

The opposition's battle against Ruto is increasingly turning into a contest within the opposition itself. While Kalonzo is building the Ukombozi Alliance, the Linda Mwananchi camp led by Edwin Sifuna is preparing a political vehicle of its own, and the Democratic Coalition Party has indicated it will not join the Ukombozi Alliance at this stage. The fragmentation is not incidental. It reflects genuine ideological and regional differences that no amount of coalition branding can fully paper over.

For Ruto, the Ukombozi Alliance's latest moves present both a threat and an opportunity. The coalition could become a political nightmare for the President, as it brings together leaders from Mt Kenya — crucially the region that was instrumental in Kenya Kwanza's 2022 victory — alongside a Nyanza dimension that the opposition has been working to consolidate. At the same time, a divided opposition remains Ruto's most reliable asset. He has already moved to peel off Kalonzo's constituency, directly appealing to voters in Kitui County during an October address in Tseikuru, and directing that the road leading to Kalonzo's home be tarmacked. Kalonzo has publicly dismissed the overture, ruling out joining Kenya Kwanza and insisting he will face Ruto directly at the ballot.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission voter register stands at 24.45 million and is projected to reach 28.4 million by 2027 — a larger electorate that makes regional vote arithmetic increasingly unpredictable and raises the stakes for every coalition calculation. No single region will decide this election. That reality cuts both ways.

What Kenya is watching, with nine months to the vote, is whether Matiang'i, Orengo and Kalonzo can do what their predecessors in the One Kenya Alliance of 2022 could not: hold together long enough to present a credible, unified ticket. The structural changes are real. The political will is visible. But in Kenyan politics, declarations of unity have a habit of unravelling precisely when the question of who stands at the top of the ballot can no longer be deferred.

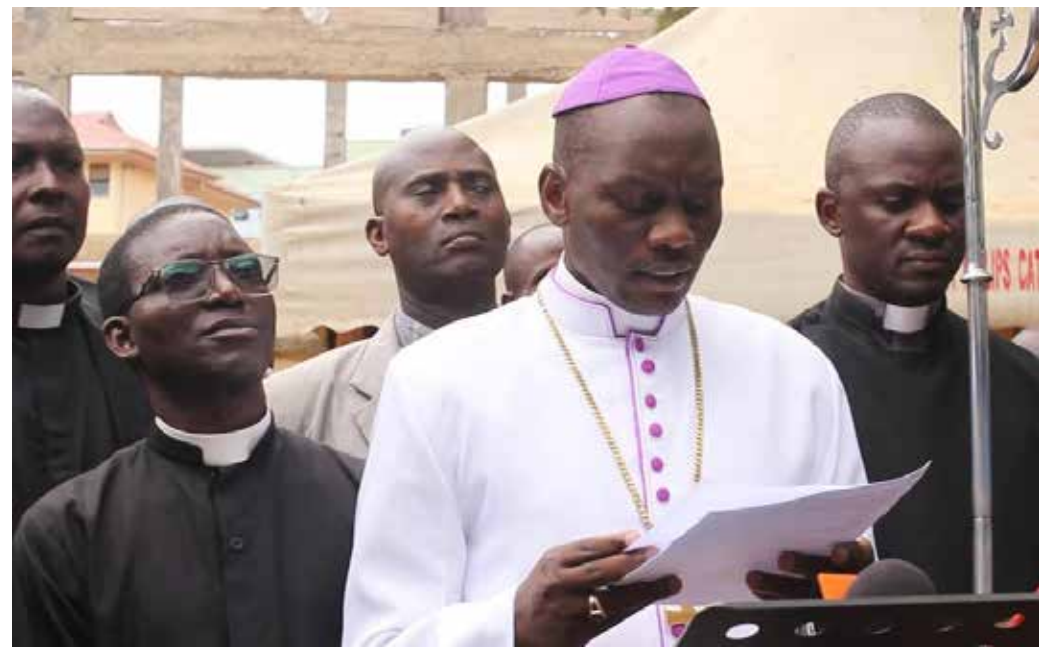
The opposition has played its boldest card. Whether the hand wins depends on whether its principals can agree who deals next.



Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Politics They noted that civic participation goes beyond voting, encouraging citizens to engage in public affairs, support their neighbours and promote peaceful participation in democratic processes

ACK Clergy in Kisii call for peaceful 2027 elections, reject political violence



Clergy from the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), Diocese of Upper Southern Nyanza during a press briefing have urged political leaders and Kenyans to reject violence, intimidation and divisive rhetoric ahead of the 2027 General Election | *Photo:* Elizabeth Angira

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes

Clergy from the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), Diocese of Upper Southern Nyanza, have called on political leaders and Kenyans to reject violence, intimidation and divisive rhetoric ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Led by Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr John Orina Omangi, the clergy urged political leaders, candidates and their supporters to embrace peaceful political competition and respect the democratic rights of every Kenyan.

Following a clergy chapter meeting at ACK St Philip's Cathedral in Kisii, the church leaders said the country must approach the election period with courage, compassion and a commitment to the common good.

They emphasised that political disagreements should not undermine peaceful coexistence, noting that Kenyans remain neighbours and members of the same communities regardless of their political affiliations.

"We call upon candidates, campaigns, public officials, civic organisations, news media and community leaders to reject threats, harassment, intimidation, dehumanising rhetoric and violence, regardless of their source, target or stated purpose," the statement reads.

The clergy also urged eligible voters to participate in the electoral process by making informed decisions guided by their conscience and concern for vulnerable and marginalised members of society.

They noted that civic participation goes beyond voting, encouraging citizens to engage in public affairs, support their neighbours and promote peaceful participation in democratic processes.

The church leaders further called for free, accessible and peaceful elections, insisting that every eligible voter should be able to participate without fear, discrimination or intimidation.

They also cautioned against the spread of misinformation and unverified claims, warning that false information could create fear, discourage voter participation and undermine public trust in the electoral process.

The clergy encouraged Kenyans to rely on credible sources of information, verify claims before sharing them and correct misinformation whenever it occurs.

They further urged the public to remain patient during vote counting, tallying and verification, noting that election-night projections should not be mistaken for final results.

According to the statement, legitimate concerns and legal challenges should be addressed through established electoral and judicial procedures rather than threats, coercion or interference.

The clergy also warned against the misuse of religion to advance political interests or justify violence, saying faith should unite communities rather than create divisions.

They rejected attempts to use religious authority to endorse particular candidates or political parties, or portray political opponents as enemies who no longer deserve dignity and respect.

"Faith communities have a responsibility to lower the temperature without lowering our commitment to truth, justice and the protection of our neighbours," the statement added.

The church leaders pledged to promote informed, peaceful and nonpartisan political participation, share accurate information, resist rumours and support people who experience intimidation, discrimination or threats.

They also committed to providing spaces for prayer, dialogue, listening and healing while standing with vulnerable members of society.

The clergy stressed that the responsibility of Kenyans to one another should not end after elections, urging communities to continue working together regardless of the outcome.

They observed that even after political campaigns and voting are over, Kenyans will still share neighbourhoods, raise families, worship together and support one another.

"Whatever results emerge from lawful electoral processes, we will continue to live alongside one another. We will worship, work, learn, serve, raise our families and care for those in need," the statement said.

The ACK leaders called on Kenyans to put love for their neighbours above political divisions and ensure that communities remain places where people can participate freely, disagree respectfully and work together for the common good.

They concluded by urging the country to embrace truth, justice and peace before, during and after the elections, noting that national unity must remain a shared responsibility.

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Loans Kenya's manufacturing sector has historically been constrained by expensive credit

Ruto unveils industrialisation fund to offer Kenyans single-digit interest loans

President pledges affordable financing for manufacturers as Kenya targets 20% GDP contribution from industry by 2030

BY Yvonne Wambui
@themtkenyatimes



President William Ruto

President William Ruto has announced plans to establish an Industrialisation Fund that will offer Kenyan manufacturers loans at single-digit interest rates, in a move designed to lower borrowing costs, stimulate local production and create jobs across the country.

Ruto made the announcement at the Industrialisation Summit and Changamka Kenya Shopping Festival held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi. He said the government was in the final stages of setting up the fund and that details would be communicated soon.

"Improving access to affordable financing is central to our industrialisation agenda," Ruto said, adding that high borrowing costs had for too long prevented businesses from growing and competing with cheaper imported goods.

The fund is intended to serve both new entrants into manufacturing and established producers looking to expand operations, acquire modern equipment and increase output. For many small and medium-sized enterprises that have long been shut out of formal financing, the announcement offers a rare glimmer of hope.

Kenya's manufacturing sector has historically been constrained by expensive credit. Commercial bank lending rates have hovered well above 15 per cent in recent years, making it nearly impossible for smaller manufacturers to plan long-term investments or compete on price against imported goods flooding local markets.

Ruto reaffirmed his administration's target of growing the manufacturing sector's contribution to gross domestic product from 7.1 per cent, recorded last year, to 20 per cent by 2030. He also said the government was aiming to create one million jobs through industrial expansion and greater investment in domestic production.

Beyond financing, Ruto challenged Kenyans to consciously choose locally made products, arguing that buying Kenyan was not simply an act of patriotism but an economic decision that would sustain livelihoods and build a stronger industrial base.

The summit, which drew more than 400 exhibitors, gave manufacturers a platform to display locally produced goods, engage potential buyers and forge new business relationships. The Changamka Festival component was designed to connect producers directly with consumers, reinforcing the government's broader push to shift purchasing habits away from imported products.

Ruto also proposed a Green Investment Fund targeting approximately KSh26B to support environmentally sustainable investments, signalling that the administration intends to align its industrial ambitions with climate considerations.

However, critical details around the Industrialisation Fund remain unclear. The application process, eligibility criteria, loan limits and repayment terms have yet to be formally announced, leaving businesses and entrepreneurs waiting for the specifics before they can plan accordingly.

The proposal has nonetheless generated genuine interest in business circles, with many manufacturers cautiously optimistic that the fund could mark a turning point for an industry that has long been overlooked in national economic planning.

For the fund to deliver on its promise, implementation will matter as much as intent. Kenya has seen similar pledges before. What businesses are watching for now is not the announcement, but the action that follows.

PSK The consequences of this particular trend extend beyond individual health

PSK warns Kenyans against dangerous cetirizine misuse driven by social media trend

A viral online claim that a common allergy tablet can tighten the vagina has prompted Kenya's pharmaceutical body to issue an urgent public health warning — and urge women who have already tried it to seek immediate medical attention.

BY Yvonne Wambui
@themtkenyatimes



PSK President Wairimu Njuki

A widely available allergy medication is at the centre of a dangerous social media health trend in Kenya, prompting the Pharmaceutical Society of Kenya to issue an urgent public warning yesterday against the misuse of cetirizine tablets.

The trend, which has circulated rapidly on social media platforms, encourages women to insert cetirizine tablets vaginally, with claims that the drug reduces natural moisture and creates a tightening effect during sexual activity. Health professionals have dismissed those claims outright — and warned that the practice carries serious risks.

PSK President Wairimu Njuki clarified that cetirizine is an antihistamine formulated to treat allergic reactions including sneezing, itchy eyes, running noses and skin conditions such as hives. It is designed to be swallowed. It has never been approved, tested or recommended for vaginal use, and no credible medical evidence supports the claims being shared online.

The society was equally direct in addressing a fundamental misconception driving the trend. Vaginal dryness and vaginal tightening are not the same thing. Reducing natural lubrication does not strengthen vaginal muscles or alter the anatomy of the reproductive system. What it does do is increase friction during sexual activity, raising the likelihood of discomfort, irritation and injury to sensitive vaginal tissue — consequences that are as predictable as they are preventable.

Women who have already used cetirizine in this manner have been urged to stop immediately and seek medical attention if they experience any pain, burning sensations, itching, unusual discharge, bleeding or fever. Early professional intervention matters.

The warning arrives against a broader backdrop of concern about social media's growing influence over health decisions in Kenya, particularly among younger women who increasingly turn to online platforms for medical guidance. The speed at which unverified health claims travel — and the confidence with which they are shared — has created a genuine public health challenge that professional bodies are struggling to keep pace with.

The consequences of this particular trend extend beyond individual health. PSK has flagged reports of surging demand for cetirizine across pharmacy outlets, with rising prices and shortages already emerging in some areas. Patients who legitimately depend on the medication to manage allergic conditions risk being unable to access it — a harm that ripples outward from a trend that was never medically sound to begin with. Pharmacies have been urged to maintain ethical pricing and ensure genuine patients are not disadvantaged.

The public has been advised to purchase medicines only from premises licensed by the Pharmacy and Poisons Board, where registered pharmacists can provide qualified, evidence-based guidance. Healthcare professionals, content creators and social media users have been called upon to exercise responsibility before amplifying health-related claims to large audiences.

The availability of a medicine, PSK stressed, does not make it suitable for every purpose. That principle sounds obvious. Yesterday's warning is a reminder of how urgently it still needs to be said.

Courts **The new facility was constructed through the Maara Constituency National Government Constituencies Development Fund and comprises two courtrooms**

New Maara law courts to ease access to justice in Tharaka-Nithi

Chief Justice Koome inaugurates constituency-funded facility as Kenya pushes to expand judicial infrastructure to 200 courts nationwide

BY Blaise Gitonga
@themtkenyatimes

Chief Justice Martha Koome yesterday presided over the inauguration of the newly constructed Maara Law Courts in Tharaka-Nithi County, marking a significant step in the Judiciary's drive to bring justice closer to Kenyans living far from established court centres.

The ceremony, held on Thursday at Maara Constituency, was attended by senior judicial officers, county leaders and members of the public who had long waited for a court station in the area. The new facility is among 10 courts lined up for inauguration across the country as part of a broader push to expand judicial infrastructure at the grassroots level.

Tharaka-Nithi County covers more than 2,609 square kilometres and had previously been served by only two court stations, in Marimanti and Chuka towns. For many residents of Maara and its surroundings, accessing justice meant long, costly journeys to either of those towns — an obstacle that, in practice, denied many the very rights the Constitution guarantees.

The new facility was constructed through the Maara Constituency National Government Constituencies Development Fund and comprises two courtrooms, each supported by a chamber, as well as separate holding cells. It is scheduled to begin operations on 4 January 2027. With its opening, the number of magistrates' courts in Kenya rises to 151. Koome has set a target of 200 courts before the end of her tenure.

Speaking at the inauguration, Koome said the facility represented more than bricks and mortar. It was, she argued, a physical expression of the constitutional promise that every Kenyan, regardless of where they live, is entitled to the protection of the law.

"Each new court represents a step towards ensuring justice is accessible to all Kenyans, irrespective of their geographical location," she said. "Justice must be people-centred, accessible and affordable."

Koome pointed to the Maara courts as a model for what could be achieved when government agencies worked together with a shared purpose. The facility is also notable for being the first prototype court developed by the Judiciary, meaning it will serve as a benchmark design for future court stations across the country.

"Maara Constituency is an excellent testament to what collaboration can achieve. Development is not limited to roads, schools and other social infrastructure. A court is as important as all other amenities. Investment in judicial infrastructure is investment in the rule of law and social empowerment," she said.

The Chief Justice also used the occasion to advance the case for Alternative Justice Systems, known as AJS — a framework that seeks to incorporate community-based and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms into the formal justice system. She announced that the Judiciary was ready to formalise the involvement of Njuri Ncheke, the traditional council of elders in the Meru community, within the court structure.

"AJS has not been launched in the larger Meru community, but I am pleased to learn that we are ready to reform and have a section of Njuri Ncheke that is compliant with the Constitution and ready for AJS," Koome said. "We propose that a panel of Njuri Ncheke be constitutionally attached to the court and have AJS incorporated into our courts to increase pathways to justice."

She further announced that the Judiciary had now established High Court stations in all 47 counties and that there were plans to extend the Court of Appeal's presence to all constituencies in the country — an ambitious expansion that would, if realised, fundamentally reshape access to appellate justice for millions of Kenyans.

Tharaka-Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki, who addressed the gathering, threw his weight behind the AJS initiative, calling on Njuri Ncheke to find ways of incorporating women and other vulnerable groups into decision-making and dispute resolution processes. Njuki said genuine access to justice could only be achieved if traditionally marginalised voices were brought into the conversation.

The governor also backed the Chief Justice in the government's campaign against organised crime and hooliganism, calling not only for the arrest of those directly involved in criminal acts but also for action against individuals funding such activities from the shadows.

Njuki praised Maara MP Kareke Mbiuki for championing the court project, describing it as a legacy investment that would benefit residents for generations.

"The opening of the court today is not only bringing services closer to the people but also saving residents a lot of money they spend while seeking judicial services," Njuki said. "When Kareke was taking over the constituency, such services were not available. He has worked and delivered for the people of Maara."

He also called on the Judiciary to consider establishing a court station at the county headquarters in Kathwana, arguing that a county seat without its own court station remained an unfinished piece of judicial infrastructure.

Mbiuki confirmed that the new courts had been officially handed over to the Judiciary for staffing and management. He noted that 279 civil cases and 81 criminal cases had already been transferred from Chuka Law Courts to Maara in preparation for the station's opening.

Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Winfridah Boyani Mokaya described the court as a recognition that justice was a foundational ingredient for the socio-economic growth of any society. She urged the Maara NG-CDF Board to join the Court Users Committee once the station became operational, reinforcing the principle that sustained community involvement was essential to the court's long-term success.

Lucy Kaaria, chairperson of the Law Society of Kenya's Tharaka-Nithi chapter, welcomed the development as a demonstration of real commitment to judicial transformation. She urged the Chief Justice to consider deploying two additional judicial officers to Chuka Law Courts to help address a growing backlog of cases there.

Tharaka-Nithi County Commissioner David Gitonga called on residents to resolve land succession disputes and other disagreements early, noting that the government was working to train professional mediators to support community-level dispute resolution. More than 50 Court Users Committee members have already been trained in AJS modules.

Others present at the event included Deputy Governor Wilson Nyaga Muisrael, County Assembly Speaker John Mbabu, Head of Station at Chuka Law Courts Joanne Wambilyanga, Presiding Judge of the Chuka High Court Lady Justice Roselyne Korir and Principal Judge of the Chuka Environment and Land Court Justice Oscar Angote.



Chief Justice Martha Koome presided over the inauguration of the newly constructed Maara Law Courts on Thursday, November 5, 2026.



Chief Justice Martha Koome presided over the inauguration of the newly constructed Maara Law Courts on Thursday, November 5, 2026.

Economy Diesel prices tell the story plainly. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics recorded average pump prices at KSh228.77 per litre in October, up from KSh219.04 in September

Kenya's diesel price rise threatens to cancel out gains from cheaper loans

A 4.4% jump in diesel costs between September and October is squeezing Kenyan businesses at precisely the moment lower borrowing rates were meant to give them room to grow.



BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Kenyan businesses hoping that falling interest rates would free up capital for expansion may find that a sharp rise in diesel prices has quietly absorbed those gains before they could be put to work. That is the assessment of EBC Financial Group, which yesterday warned that the 4.4% increase in diesel costs between September and October risks leaving factories and shops using interest savings to pay fuel bills rather than buying equipment or hiring workers.

The tension sits at the heart of Kenya's current economic moment. The Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) began cutting its benchmark interest rate in August 2024, and commercial banks' average lending rate has since fallen from 16.84% in July 2024 to 14.4% in September 2026 — a reduction of 2.44 percentage points. On paper, borrowing is meaningfully cheaper. In practice, the relief is being eroded by rising input costs.

Diesel prices tell the story plainly. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics recorded average pump prices at KSh228.77 per litre in October, up from KSh219.04 in September. The CBK attributes the increase to higher international oil prices. For businesses whose operations depend on fuel — manufacturers running production lines, distributors moving goods across the country, retailers managing cold chains — that increase lands directly on the cost side of the ledger.

David Precious, Senior Market Analyst at EBC Financial Group, framed the problem precisely. "A lower loan rate makes a new machine cheaper to finance," he said, "but a factory has to pay for materials and fuel before it can put that machine to work. Those costs come out of sales income first, so when diesel and supplies become more expensive, the interest saved may go on paying for them instead of equipment." He added that the pressure is amplified for businesses unable to raise selling prices, either because customers are already buying less or because competitors are holding their prices down.

The CBK's own surveys confirm that the interest rate cuts have not reached all businesses equally. In its September survey, 35.8% of businesses reported no change in their loan interest rates since August 2024. For this significant segment, the diesel increase arrives with no offsetting reduction in borrowing costs. Unless sales volumes rise or other costs fall, less cash remains for investment or payroll.

The manufacturing sector is under particular strain. In the same CBK survey, 70.6% of manufacturers reported higher purchase prices in the July-to-September quarter compared to the previous quarter, while only 23.5% reported higher selling prices. The gap between what producers are paying for inputs and what they are able to charge customers is widening. Weak demand is a large part of the reason: 30.4% of surveyed businesses reported lower demand in the period, and the survey identified competition and subdued consumer spending as the primary constraints on price increases. Where customers are already pulling back, raising prices risks cutting orders further — leaving businesses to absorb higher costs through thinner margins.

The financing patterns of Kenyan businesses reveal an additional layer of vulnerability. The CBK survey found that 53% of businesses rely primarily on their own earnings — retained cash — as their main source of financing. That internal capital carries no repayment obligation, but once it has covered supply costs it is no longer available for growth. When input prices rise, that pool of internal funds shrinks before it can be deployed.

Borrowing data points in the same direction. Banks attributed increased demand for trade-sector loans in the April-to-June quarter mainly to everyday operational needs rather than expansion. A shop needing a larger loan simply to stock the same quantity it already sells is not growing — it is treading water at a higher cost. The lower interest rate reduces the burden of that loan, but it does not generate new revenue.

There is some reason for measured optimism. Some 55.2% of businesses surveyed expect sales to increase in the October-to-December quarter, with the year-end period typically supporting higher consumer activity. However, 62% expect to hold selling prices steady, meaning any improvement in profit will depend on volume rather than margin. For a factory that must buy materials upfront to fulfil additional orders, the cash pressure can actually intensify before the sales income arrives — requiring a larger loan even at the lower rate, with repayments due before customers have settled their bills.

The CBK anticipated exactly this dynamic, noting that seasonal stock purchases and operational needs were expected to sustain business borrowing through October and November.

Kenya's businesses are navigating a narrow channel: interest rates are falling, but fuel and input costs are rising, demand remains uneven, and the businesses most exposed are often those with the least room to manoeuvre. For many, the question is not whether cheaper credit is welcome — it plainly is — but whether the savings reach the bottom line before rising costs claim them.

For now, the numbers suggest many businesses are running faster simply to stay still.



Success is not for lazy people



Success is purely for active, sincere,
hardworking and dedicated people.
Success is for those who burn the midnight oil.

Active people are like ever-working ants,
They get success after success.

Success comes to those who dream of success,
The fire should keep them burning,

It will not allow them to sleep at all,
Their spirit is awake forever.
Lazy people also dream, but in their sleep,
It is like building castles in the air,

It is purely fake and vanishes into thin air.
Laziness will take you nowhere,
But those who work with sweat will win for sure.
Success is only for hardworking people and not
for lazy people.

Brinda. D
Creative writers
Ghs Melpattampakkam
Cuddalore dist
Tamilnadu India

I ceased inscription



I ceased inscription
Not because I ran out of vellum
Not because the ink ventured into the night
Not because the voice in my head went mute
Not because I had finally gripped my sensations
Not because the chamber got warmer
Not because the art became hallow

I stopped writing
Because I could not feel anything anymore
The pen felt heavier than the sting in my heart

The paper drenched before I could carve a single
note
My emotions bolted before I could make sense of
everything
My thoughts crumbled before I could peep
through

I ceased writing
Not because the writer within ceased to whisper
parables and metaphors
Not because my hand was no longer formidable
enough to hold a pen
Not because my emotions went ballistic

I ceased writing
Because somewhere along the way
I ceased being myself

Nyasha Celeste Makombe Thee Poetic Raindrop

Big problems don't need more force. They need better strategy.



Herculean problems may seem very hurting,
But it's all the strategy that takes out the
weeping.

A colossal rock may seem giant at first,
Humans, build tractors, and with energy its
bursts!

The tractor did all the heavy lifting,
That planning is what we call strategizing.

The Egyptians build the great pyramid,
How? remains a mystery, our knowledge's limit.

Without a compass, ne'er could we achieve that
distant shore.
For the greatest things, are built through
greatest toil.

A tough problem, should be first decoded,
'Should be able to understand the logic to act
upon.

That is what they do in computer programming,
Or anything at all.

No heavy blow can crack a knotty plight;
'Tis subtle wit that breaks it into light.

K.A.Santhoshi
9 TH STD
GMGHSS KOMARAPALAYAM ,NAMAKKAL
DISTRICT ,638183, TAMILNADU.

My pet puppy



Puppy ,puppy ,come near me
Puppy, puppy go away from me
Welcome welcome ,my puppy
Welcome ,welcome ,my sweetie
Sleep well ,Sleep well ,my bestie
Sleep well ,Sleep well ,my naughty
Where are you going
Where are you going

Why are you rushing
Why are you rushing
You feel hungry
You feel hungry
I will give you your favorite food
I will give you your favorite food
Please wait some time
please wait some time
Please eat it happily
Please eat it happily
We are friends
We are friends
Now let us rest
Now let us rest

__ G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

The power of a better strategy



Every person encounters peculiar problems,
A wise man can transform them into blossoms;
Regardless much challenges may be umpteen in
number,
Calm mind coupled with determined vision make
wonder.

Loaded with an optimistic mind,
Shelley says, "if Winter comes can Spring be far
behind;
One need not unnecessarily squeeze his/her
thought,
A better strategy will unravel a pleasant path.

- Dr.V.Anuradha
Assistant Professor,
PG & Research Department of English, Vellalar
College for Women,
Erode-12

A life of fortune



Life is a long travel,
Made of thousands of souls,
I am the pure proprietor of my life,
Choosing the people for my positive side,
Neglecting people off in my negative aspects,
Keeping aside my motivators,
Awarding front seats for my friends,
philosophers nd guides,
Welcoming my well wishers forward with me on
the podium,
Navigating with my kith nd kin for ever,
Loving my lovable ones to their highest extent,
Overcoming with upliftment,
Sailing smoothly with my colleagues,
Swimming fast with my competitors,,
Cracking the schedules to its best,
Hitting success at every sportive activities,
Consoling my followers when decreasing down,
Increasing my expertise with experienced ones,
Shedding tears for the painful,
Sharing hands for the downtrodden,
Being humane to the hospitalised,
Feeding food for the needed,
Creating oppurtunities for the educated,
Joining hands with helping hearts,
Transcanding spiritual powers
Into the land,
Prostrating on the lord's feet,
To be blessed for ever,
For having a life of fortune!!!
V.r.vijayalakshmi, graduate teacher, cw writers
group, kanchipuram district ,tamilnadu, india .

Business KWAL Managing Director Lina Githuka used the occasion to make the case for both investment in local manufacturing and deliberate inclusion of women at every level of industrial leadership.

KWAL opens Tatu City doors to women industrialists as Kenya eyes manufacturing leap

More than 50 female business leaders tour one of Kenya's most advanced beverage plants as the sector targets a jump from 7.6% to 20% of GDP by 2030.

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes



The Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) Women in Manufacturing Chapter delegation and KWAL staff during a courtesy visit to KWAL's Tatu City manufacturing facility on Friday, 31 October. The event brought together over 50 women industry leaders for a plant tour and an interactive leadership session.

Kenya Wine Agencies Limited yesterday hosted more than 50 female executives and industrialists at its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Tatu City, in an engagement that placed women's industrial leadership at the centre of Kenya's broader economic ambitions.

The visit, organised under the Kenya Association of Manufacturers' Women in Manufacturing Programme, marked the 10th edition of KAM's WiM Industry Visit Series — a milestone that reflects growing momentum behind efforts to bring more women into the core of Kenya's manufacturing sector. Delegates received a guided tour of KWAL's advanced beverage production and packaging lines before sitting down for an executive fireside chat focused on resilient leadership, local value addition and brand scaling.

The timing was deliberate. Manufacturing currently contributes approximately 7.6% to Kenya's gross domestic product, well short of the 20% target the government and private sector have set for 2030 under the Kenya Industrialisation Agenda. The sector already supports more than 330,000 formal jobs and millions more across agricultural and supply chain linkages — making its expansion one of the most consequential economic questions facing the country.

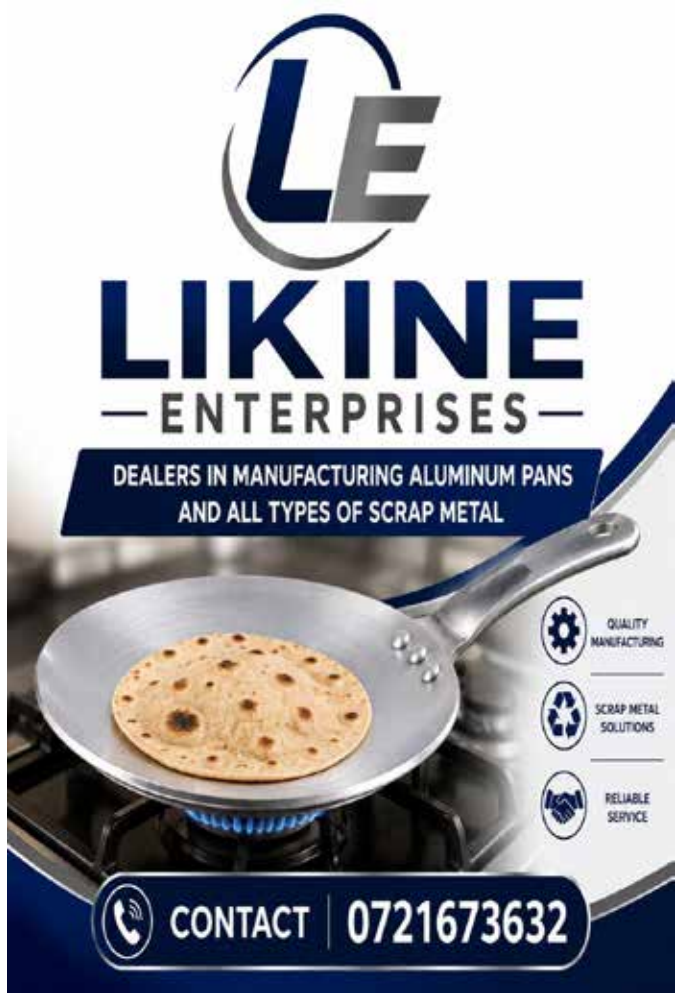
KWAL Managing Director Lina Githuka used the occasion to make the case for both investment in local manufacturing and deliberate inclusion of women at every level of industrial leadership. "Local manufacturing is not just about output — it is the cornerstone of sustainable economic transformation, job creation and foreign exchange preservation," she said. "Achieving Kenya's industrialisation goals requires heavy investment in world-class standards and deliberate spaces for women to lead from the factory floor to the boardroom. When women drive industrial leadership, the entire manufacturing value chain prospers."

Discussions led by KWAL's leadership alongside KAM Regulatory and Policy Manager Lynda Oluoch examined how manufacturers can navigate regulatory shifts, adopt sustainable practices and leverage automation without eroding local employment. Oluoch drew attention to a persistent structural gap: women-led enterprises account for roughly a third of Kenya's micro, small and medium-sized industries, yet women remain significantly underrepresented in core industrial leadership roles.

KWAL's Tatu City plant, commissioned as part of a multi-billion-shilling investment, stands as one of Kenya's premier manufacturing facilities, operating under advanced environmental, quality control and automated supply chain standards. It is currently the only manufacturer in Kenya certified to the EDGE Advanced standard — a global benchmark for resource efficiency and sustainable construction.

If Kenya's manufacturing ambitions are to be realised, yesterday's gathering suggested the blueprint is already being built — one factory visit, one woman leader at a time.







Energy **Kenya's proposed nuclear programme should therefore be judged by more than its ability to generate electricity. Electricity matters, but it is not the whole purpose**

Kenya's nuclear choice: Building capability, not only buying power

As Kenya moves closer to a nuclear energy decision, the real test is not whether it can purchase a reactor — but whether it can build the institutions, people and industrial culture to own one.

BY James Kilonzo Bwire
@themtkenyatimes



NuPEA Chief Executive Justus Wabuyabo. *Photo:* courtesy

Kenya stands at a consequential moment in its national development. The country is considering nuclear energy not simply as another source of electricity, but as a foundation for industrial growth, technological independence and long-term economic transformation. The argument advanced by Nuclear Power and Energy Agency Chief Executive Justus Wabuyabo — drawing on South Korea's experience — deserves serious public attention. South Korea began its nuclear journey in the 1970s with limited natural resources and less capital than Kenya has today, yet it used nuclear power as a deliberate instrument of national capability-building. Kenya should learn from that example, but it must do so with clear thinking, strong institutions, genuine public trust and a commitment to ownership rather than dependence.

The central lesson from South Korea is not that every country should build nuclear plants. It is that a country can use complex technology as a means to develop its people, institutions and industries. South Korea did not treat nuclear energy as a finished product to be purchased and forgotten. It treated it as a national learning project. It imported initial technology but insisted on local capacity-building, engineering adaptation and progressive domestic innovation. Over time, it moved from consumer of foreign technology to creator and exporter of it. That transformation was not accidental — it was the result of patient planning, disciplined implementation and a national decision to invest in knowledge.

Kenya's proposed nuclear programme should therefore be judged by more than its ability to generate electricity. Electricity matters, but it is not the whole purpose. A nuclear programme can help Kenya develop engineers, scientists, regulators, project managers, technicians and industrial suppliers. It can strengthen universities, research institutions, technical colleges and professional bodies. It can create a culture of precision, safety, accountability and long-term planning — assets of lasting national value well beyond the energy sector. If Kenya approaches nuclear power purely as a procurement exercise, it may obtain a plant but miss the larger opportunity to build a durable technological base.

The distinction between buying power and building capability is essential. Buying power means contracting a foreign company to design, construct, operate and maintain a facility while Kenyans remain largely spectators. Building capability means ensuring Kenyans participate meaningfully at every stage — planning, regulation, construction, operation, safety management, research and eventual expansion. It means requiring genuine technology transfer, not merely on paper. Kenyan engineers must understand the systems they operate. Kenyan regulators must assess risks independently. Kenyan institutions must train the next generation without permanent reliance on foreign expertise. This is the deeper meaning of sovereignty in a technological age.

Kenya already has compelling reasons to take this path. The country has a growing population, expanding urban centres, rising industrial ambitions and an urgent need for dependable electricity to support manufacturing and services. Renewable energy has served Kenya well, but a modern economy also requires stable baseload supply capable of sustaining heavy industry, data infrastructure, health services and large-scale production. Nuclear energy is attractive precisely because it can deliver continuous output and reduce vulnerability to climate-related disruptions, including the droughts that periodically cripple hydropower. The proposed plant in Siaya County is therefore not merely an energy project — it is part of a wider national conversation about how Kenya will power its future economy.

Nuclear energy, however, is not a simple solution. It is a demanding undertaking that requires exceptional governance. Strong laws, independent regulation, qualified personnel, emergency preparedness, transparent procurement and sustained public participation are not optional extras — they are prerequisites. A modern reactor is only as trustworthy as the regulatory culture and operating institutions surrounding it. Kenya must invest as much in governance as it does in concrete and steel.

Public trust must be treated as central to the programme. Nuclear energy generates anxiety because people associate it with risk and secrecy. Those concerns are understandable and must not be dismissed. Communities near proposed sites, particularly in Siaya, must receive clear, honest information about safety, land, water, employment, compensation, emergency planning and waste management. Public participation should begin early, continue throughout and genuinely shape implementation. A nuclear programme that lacks public confidence will face resistance, delay and political instability — and will deserve all three.

Kenya must also be honest about cost and financing. Nuclear power requires substantial upfront investment, long construction periods and careful financial management. Contracts must be competitive, transparent and structured to protect taxpayers. The country must avoid excessive debt, inflated costs and dependency on a single foreign supplier. Open procurement, independent scrutiny and parliamentary oversight are the best available protections. A project of this scale must be accountable to citizens, not only to government agencies.

Education must become the backbone of the entire programme. Kenya cannot build a credible nuclear sector while depending permanently on foreign universities and foreign technicians. Universities must expand offerings in nuclear engineering, physics, materials science and radiation protection. Technical institutions must train welders, instrument technicians, safety officers and maintenance specialists to international standards. Scholarships, internships and structured apprenticeships must connect students directly to the nuclear programme. A country that educates its people for a major technological undertaking is not spending money — it is investing in its future.

The South Korean example also teaches the importance of continuity. Nuclear programmes take decades to mature and cannot depend on the enthusiasm of one government or one minister. Kenya needs a long-term national framework that survives changes in political leadership. Parliament, the energy ministry, regulators, universities, industry and county governments must share a common understanding of the programme's goals and responsibilities. Political consensus matters especially here, because nuclear decisions affect generations yet to vote.

The broader lesson is straightforward. Kenya should pursue nuclear power with ambition but without impatience. Ambition without preparation creates risk. Preparation without ambition produces stagnation. South Korea's achievement was not simply that it built reactors — it built a system: educated people, capable firms, strong institutions, reliable regulation and a long-term national purpose.

That is the model Kenya should study — and the standard to which it must hold itself.

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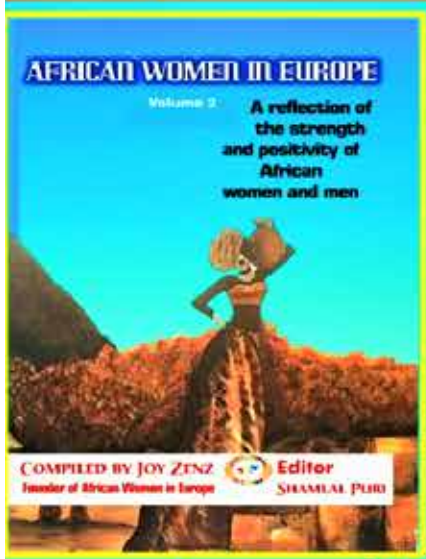
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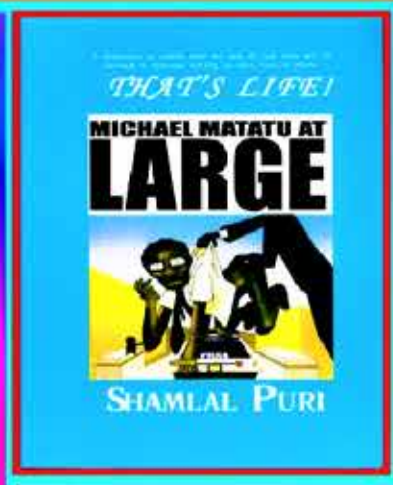
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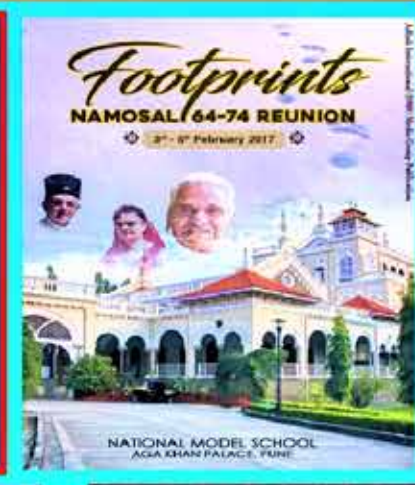
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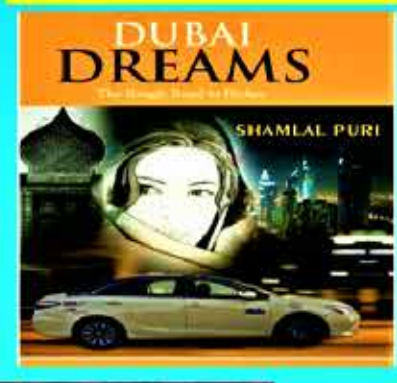


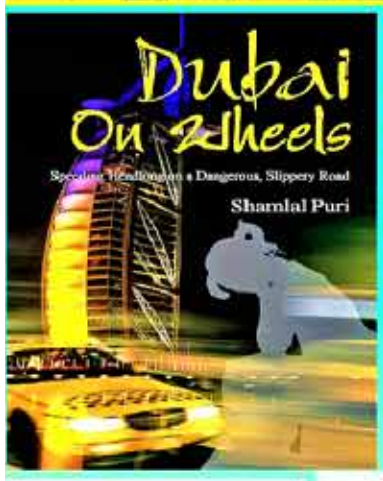


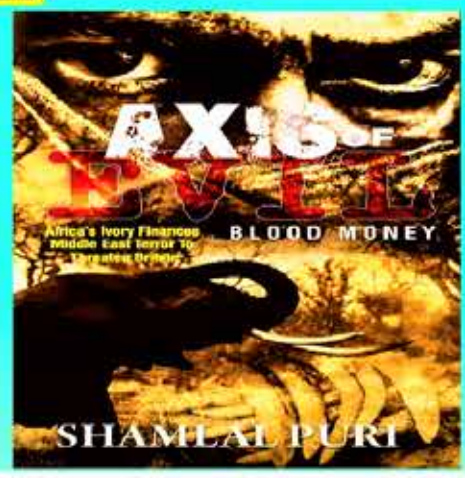


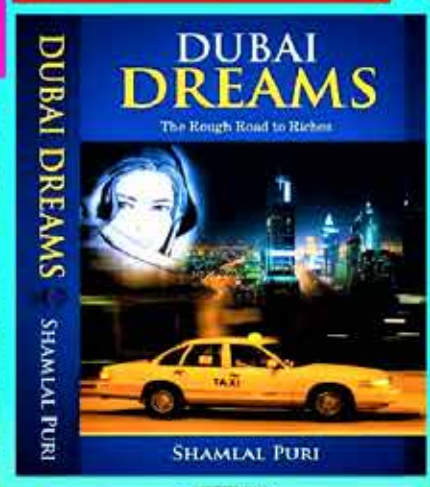


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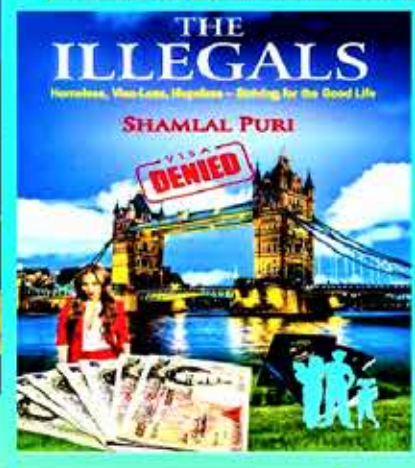




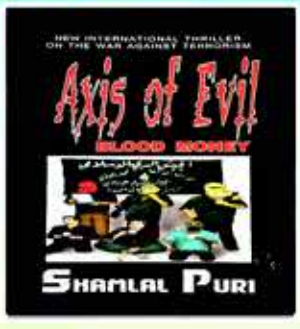




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Ballots **History supplies the long shadow. Colonial administration perfected the art of rule through division and limited literacy**

The enlightened republic of closed minds: Where ballots bloom and reason withers



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
@themtkenyatimes



Seventy-nine percent of Kenyan children at late primary age cannot read proficiently. That single, brutal number from recent learning assessments stands as the opening indictment. It is not a statistic about schools alone. It is the measurable face of a deeper national condition: the death of rational thought among the majority of Kenyans, a profound poverty of conscience when matters of genuine governance arise, and an intellectual barrenness that borders on the surreal. We celebrate independence anniversaries and constitutional milestones while the capacity to interrogate power, weigh evidence, and demand accountability atrophies in plain sight.

This intellectual poverty is not abstract. It walks the streets in the form of citizens who cheer tribal arithmetic over policy coherence, who treat public office as ethnic inheritance rather than public trust, and who confuse noise with argument. Corruption Perceptions Index scores hover around thirty out of one hundred, among the lower ranks globally. The World Bank estimates that graft drains roughly two percent of GDP every year through distorted procurement, bribery, and fiscal leakage. Motorcycle riders surrender five to twenty percent of daily earnings to roadblock demands. Police, land offices, and licensing agencies top the bribery tables. These are not distant scandals. They are the daily tax levied on a population that too often shrugs, shrugs again, and then votes the same patterns into another cycle.

History supplies the long shadow. Colonial administration perfected the art of rule through division and limited literacy. Independence in 1963 promised rupture. Instead, the early years recycled patronage networks under new flags. The single-party era rewarded loyalty over competence. Multiparty politics in the 1990s expanded the franchise without expanding the franchise of critical thought. The 2010 Constitution, born of blood and reformist energy after the post-election violence of 2007–08, remains one of the most progressive documents on the continent. It enshrines devolution, rights, and checks. Implementation, however, collides with a citizenry whose analytical muscles have wasted. We inherited institutions and then starved the minds required to operate them.

Consider the classroom as both cause and symptom. Foundational literacy and numeracy assessments reveal that large shares of learners in Grade 4 and Grade 9 still struggle with texts and calculations expected years earlier. International assessments place Kenyan fifteen-year-olds far below global averages in reading, mathematics, and science; more than eighty percent fall below minimum proficiency in key domains. Private schools pull further ahead while public one's lag, widening the very inequality that rational governance ought to narrow. When children leave school unable to parse a budget statement or a procurement report, they enter adulthood equipped mainly for slogans. The correlation is stark: weak foundational skills feed weak civic reasoning, which in turn feeds the tolerance of mediocrity in high office.

Poverty of conscience compounds the intellectual deficit. Conscience here means the internal demand that public resources serve public ends. Too many Kenyans treat governance as a distant soap opera rather than a shared responsibility. When leaders loot, the response is often ethnic defense rather than moral outrage. When county governments fail to deliver water or drugs, the complaint stays local and tribal rather than systemic. Voter registration data and turnout patterns show youth, who form the demographic majority, lagging in both registration and consistent participation relative to their numbers. Education levels correlate with political engagement, yet the quality of that education leaves vast numbers without the tools to convert schooling into scrutiny.

The ironies multiply. We host vibrant media, universities, and civil society organisations, and still the public square fills with rumor, conspiracy, and personality cults. Social media amplifies volume over verification. Political rallies reward the loudest grievance rather than the clearest diagnosis. Leaders exploit the vacuum: they promise miracles while delivering inflated contracts; they invoke history while repeating its worst chapters. Citizens, starved of rigorous public education and honest discourse, become accomplices through indifference or selective blindness. The result is a polity that can mobilise for football or ethnic solidarity far more readily than for transparent budgeting or independent institutions.

This is not a blanket condemnation of every Kenyan. Islands of excellence exist—teachers who still teach against the odds, journalists who dig, judges who rule against power, young professionals who organise around data rather than tribe. Yet the dominant current runs the other way. The majority condition is one of suspended disbelief: we know the system is broken and still participate in its rituals as if repetition will somehow produce different outcomes. That suspension is the true poverty. It is the refusal to connect the dots between a stolen public hospital budget and the empty pharmacy shelf, between an unaccountable police service and the daily humiliation of ordinary citizens, between unexamined voting and the perpetual postponement of dignity.

The historical parallel cuts deep. Societies that emerge from colonial or authoritarian pasts either cultivate the habits of self-rule or recreate new forms of dependency. Kenya chose the language of democracy while retaining many of the mental habits of subjects. We demand rights while neglecting the reciprocal duties of informed citizenship. We celebrate the vote while treating the period between elections as a spectator sport. The cost is generational. Children raised in an atmosphere where reason is optional grow into adults for whom reason is alien. The cycle tightens.

What then must be done? The call is categorical and directed at every actor who still possesses residual agency.

Citizens must reclaim the primary duty: to think before they cheer, to verify before they share, to measure leaders by delivery rather than by blood or rhetoric. This requires deliberate cultivation of critical habits reading budgets, attending county assemblies, demanding evidence. Intellectual poverty ends only when individuals refuse to outsource their judgment.

Educators and the Ministry of Education must treat foundational literacy and numeracy as non-negotiable national security issues. Curriculum must prioritise reasoning, evidence evaluation, and civic competence alongside technical skills. Teacher training, instructional materials, and accountability for learning outcomes cannot remain secondary to enrollment numbers. The seventy-nine percent figure is an emergency, not a footnote.

Political leaders and parties must stop treating the electorate as a permanent underclass of emotion. Those who seek office should be forced by organised public pressure to present coherent programmes, publish asset declarations that withstand scrutiny, and accept independent oversight. The culture of impunity thrives only where citizens grant it oxygen.

Media and civil society must abandon the comfort of reactive outrage and invest in sustained public education. Fact-checking is necessary but insufficient; the deeper task is to model and demand sequential reasoning in public debate. Universities should produce not only degree-holders but citizens capable of interrogating power.

The youth, who will inherit the accumulated deficits, carry a particular burden and opportunity. Their demographic weight is real. Their under-participation in structured politics is a choice that can be reversed through organised, issue-based mobilisation rather than personality fandom. Digital tools can serve analysis as readily as they serve distraction.

Religious and cultural leaders must confront the convenient theology that spiritualizes suffering while ignoring the structural theft that produces it. Moral authority unused against systemic wrong is authority squandered.

None of these demands is new. The novelty lies only in the urgency of finally treating intellectual and moral poverty as the binding constraint on every other reform. Roads, hospitals, and factories matter. They cannot be sustained by a population that cannot or will not think clearly about the systems that build and maintain them. Data on learning poverty, corruption costs, and persistent economic exclusion form a single story: a nation rich in potential that systematically under-invests in the minds required to realize it.

The desert of rational thought will not green itself. Rain falls when people decide that the alternative continued intellectual drought, continued moral shallowing, continued recycling of failure is no longer tolerable. The facts are already written in the assessments, the indices, and the daily experience of ordinary Kenyans. The remaining question is whether enough of us still possess the residual capacity to read them, to feel their weight, and to act as if our collective future depends on the answer. It does.

The writer is a social commentator

Court Lady Justice Wamae T.W. Cherere found that although the prosecution had established that the couple was unlawfully killed

Nyamira High Court acquits four accused in murder of couple

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes



The High Court in Nyamira has acquitted four people charged with the murder of Edward Morema Nyagechi and his wife, Grace Mongina Morema, ruling that the prosecution failed to prove their involvement beyond reasonable doubt.

Delivering judgment on Thursday, November 5, 2026, Lady Justice Wamae T.W. Cherere found that although the prosecution had established that the couple was unlawfully killed, the evidence did not sufficiently connect any of the accused to the murders.

The accused were Ezekiel Mogeni Migiro, Peris Ondara, Dennis Ondara Clement and Peter Njoroge Kirika. They faced two counts of murder contrary to Section 203 as read with Section 204 of the Penal Code over the deaths of Edward and Grace, who were killed at their home in Egetugi Village, Gesima Location, Masaba North Sub-County, Nyamira County, on the night of March 20 and 21, 2023.

The prosecution alleged that the four took part in a planned attack, with each playing a different role. The first accused, Migiro, was linked to an alleged revenge motive stemming from an earlier conviction for stealing USD 2,000 from the couple's daughter.

The second accused, Peris Ondara, was linked to family and succession disputes over the estate of her late husband, Professor Zachary Mosoti.

The third accused, Dennis Ondara Clement, was linked to telephone-location records that investigators said placed a phone associated with him near the crime scene. The fourth accused, Kirika, was linked to mobile-money transactions involving the couple's accounts and to CCTV footage showing a masked person withdrawing money from a Co-operative Bank ATM in Limuru.

However, Justice Cherere found significant gaps in the evidence against each of them.

On the first accused, the judge questioned the reliability of the prosecution's key eyewitness, Sylvia Barongo Nyamai, who had identified him at a police identification parade. The court noted inconsistencies in the identification process and in the circumstances under which the witness saw the visitor at the couple's home. The judge also found that the alleged revenge motive was not supported by reliable evidence connecting him to the killings.

On the second accused, the court observed that although witnesses testified about family disagreements and alleged threats over the late professor's estate, the prosecution failed to link those disputes to the murders. There was also no evidence placing Peris at the scene or showing that she communicated with the other accused on the material night.

Regarding Dennis Ondara Clement, the court found that the telephone-location records established the movement of a particular number between Nairobi, Keroka and the Esani area. However, the prosecution did not prove that Dennis was the actual user of the number or that the device was at the exact location of the murders. The judge further found that the firearm, ammunition, pliers and other items recovered from him had not been sufficiently connected to the killings.

In the case of Peter Njoroge Kirika, the court acknowledged that KSh62,000 had been transferred from the couple's mobile-money accounts to a number registered in the name of Douglas Mungai, and that KSh35,500 was withdrawn from a Co-operative Bank ATM in Limuru on the night of the killings. However, the prosecution failed to establish conclusively that Kirika controlled the number, received the money or made the withdrawal. The court also noted that the person in the ATM footage wore a face mask, making positive identification difficult.

Justice Cherere further faulted the prosecution for failing to call crucial witnesses, including the registered owners of the phone numbers used in the investigation and Stanley Kuria, who allegedly received the handset said to have been borrowed by the fourth accused. Their absence, she noted, left important questions about the ownership, possession and use of the phones unanswered.

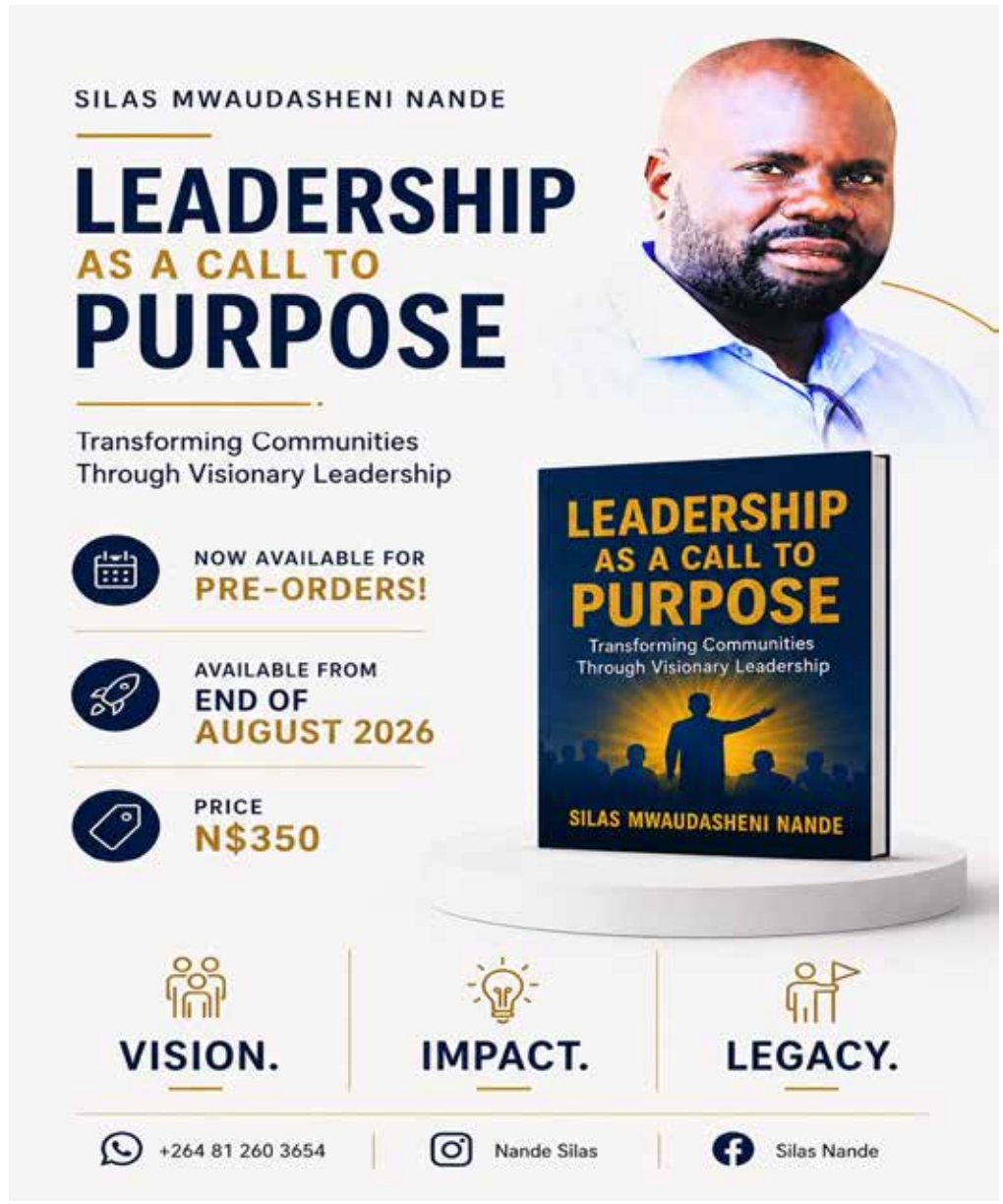
On forensic evidence, the court found that DNA analysis established that blood recovered from several items at the scene belonged to the deceased. However, the analysis did not connect any of the four accused to the murders.

The court also rejected the prosecution's argument that the accused acted with common intention under Section 21 of the Penal Code, finding no evidence that they shared an unlawful purpose or took part in a coordinated plan to kill the couple.

Emphasising that suspicion, however strong, cannot replace the legal requirement of proof beyond reasonable doubt, the judge ruled: "The cumulative circumstantial evidence raised suspicion but did not form a complete chain pointing to the guilt of any accused person."

She nonetheless expressed deep concern over the brutal killings, noting the immense pain and suffering they caused the family and the wider community, and voiced hope that the actual perpetrators would eventually be identified and brought to justice.

The court accordingly found all four accused not guilty on both counts and ordered their acquittal, directing that they be set at liberty unless otherwise lawfully held. All four were present in court when the judgment was delivered.



Trauma **In Kenyan homes, this lesson often begins with language. A child hears: if you are obedient, you are a good child; if you pass the exam, we will be proud of you**

The trauma of wanting approval: Why so many of us are tired of performing

Across Kenya, millions of people spend their lives seeking validation they were never taught they already had.



By: Wanjohi. P. Mugambi
@themtkenyatimes



For years, development in Kenya has been measured in roads, buildings and GDP. Rarely has it been measured in the quiet exhaustion of people who perform every single day simply to be accepted. A student waits for a teacher's nod before trusting her own answer. A graduate refreshes his phone for a job application reply. A mother says she is fine when she is breaking inside. These are not isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a pattern that begins in childhood and follows people into adulthood: the need to earn love through approval.

Research in developmental psychology shows that the first five years of life shape how a person regulates emotion, forms relationships and views themselves. Studies by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF consistently find that children raised on conditional affection — love given for good behaviour and withheld for mistakes — are significantly more likely to develop anxiety, low self-esteem and chronic people-pleasing in adulthood. The brain learns early that safety depends on pleasing others.

In Kenyan homes, this lesson often begins with language. A child hears: if you are obedient, you are a good child; if you pass the exam, we will be proud of you. The intention is discipline. The effect, in many cases, is something else entirely. The child absorbs a quiet verdict: I am not loved for who I am, but for what I do. That verdict does not dissolve when childhood ends. It travels with the person into the classroom, the staffroom, the church, the office and the marriage.

In a primary school in Nyeri, a Class 6 pupil — call her Wanjiru — knows the answer in Mathematics but will not raise her hand. She is not lacking knowledge. She is afraid of being wrong in front of her peers, because she has learned that a wrong answer brings laughter rather than learning. By Class 8, Wanjiru has stopped trying altogether — not because she is dull, but because she is protecting herself from disapproval.

In Kirinyaga, a Form 3 boy — call him Kamau — laughs at jokes made at his expense because he cannot afford to be called sensitive. He carries other students' bags and does their homework because saying no feels more dangerous than being used. Teachers describe him as well-behaved. In reality, he is exhausted from performing obedience. The same dynamic appears among adults: a young teacher in Murang'a works until 10pm every day and never declines extra duties — not purely from passion, but from a deep fear that rest will be read as failure.

Psychologists call this response fawning — one of four stress responses alongside fight, flight and freeze. When a child cannot fight a parent, cannot flee school and cannot leave a church, the child learns to appease. It works in childhood. In adulthood, it becomes destructive, because the grown person continues applying a child's survival strategy to adult problems.

Social media has intensified the pattern considerably. Where previous generations sought approval from family and neighbours, today's young people seek it from thousands of strangers. Approval has become measurable — in likes, followers and views. A study by the American Psychological Association links heavy social media use to increased anxiety, greater social comparison and lower self-esteem, particularly among adolescents. A young woman in Embu posts a photo, then deletes it after ten minutes because it attracted only twelve likes. A young man in Meru scrolls through classmates' job announcements and concludes he has failed at life. What people rarely post is their lowest moment. What they always post is their best. And the rest of us compare our worst to their finest.

> **Research in developmental psychology shows that the first five years of life shape how a person regulates emotion, forms relationships and views themselves. Studies by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF consistently find that children raised on conditional affection — love given for good behaviour and withheld for mistakes — are significantly more likely to develop anxiety, low self-esteem and chronic people-pleasing in adulthood. The brain learns early that safety depends on pleasing others.**

Language compounds the wound. Words spoken in childhood — you are useless, no one will marry you, you have disappointed us — can echo for three decades. Research on adverse childhood experiences shows that repeated verbal shaming does not build resilience; it builds hypervigilance. The child becomes an expert in reading other people's moods — knowing a parent is angry by the sound of footsteps — but no one has taught her to read her own.

The reason approval-seeking never satisfies is structural. If ten people's validation feels sufficient today, twenty will be needed tomorrow. It is like drinking salt water when thirsty: the more one drinks, the worse the craving becomes. External approval cannot fill an internal absence of self-worth.

Healing must therefore be practical, not merely theoretical. It must begin with awareness — in classrooms, when a teacher pauses to ask a child who agrees with everything whether they actually want to, or are simply afraid to refuse. It must continue at home, when a parent notices a child who apologises for everything and gently asks what they actually feel.

Small boundaries must be practised. Healing does not begin with dramatic confrontation, but with modest refusals. No, I cannot talk right now — I need to rest. No, I do not want to go today. In school, a teacher who says she will mark these books tomorrow because she needs rest, and that this does not make her a bad teacher, models more than any lesson plan can.

Opinion must be separated from identity. When a teacher returns a failed test and says you failed this test, but you are not a failure, that single distinction can alter a child's entire relationship with learning. The same applies in the workplace: this report needs correction is not the same as you are incompetent.

Research by psychologist Kristin Neff shows that people who treat themselves with kindness during failure are more resilient, more motivated and less anxious than those who practise harsh self-criticism. In practical terms, this means replacing the internal sentence I am not good enough with I am doing my best, and I am worthy even when I fail. This is not softness. It is a learnable skill.

At a systemic level, schools must broaden what they celebrate. When only top scorers are recognised, children learn that worth equals performance. A school in Nyeri that began weekly recognition for the most improved learner and the most helpful learner — not the highest mark — reported a visible rise in participation within a single term. Children who had stopped raising their hands began trying again, because the cost of disapproval had been lowered.

Parents, too, must be supported to change their language. Instead of why did you get 60 and not 90, a parent might ask: I see you tried — what was difficult? Instead of stop crying, you are a man, a parent might say: it is okay to cry — tell me what hurts. These are not foreign ideas. They are human ones, available in any home in Mt Kenya.

The trauma of wanting approval tells a persistent lie: that if you can just be perfect enough, quiet enough, successful enough, then you will finally be loved. The truth is simpler and more stubborn. You were worthy before you began performing. You are worthy now, with every flaw and failure intact. You do not need to earn the right to exist.

So do one thing today not because it will impress anyone, but because it is honest. Rest without guilt. Speak without apologising. Say no without explaining. Be yourself without permission. Healing is not about becoming someone else. It is about returning to the person you were before the world told you who to be.

You are enough. You always were.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Social media: A powerful tool for youth empowerment in Kenya

By **Johnson Mutie**



Social media has fundamentally shifted from entertainment to economic infrastructure for young Kenyans. Platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube are today powering businesses, careers and education for a generation that refuses to wait for traditional opportunity.

Across Kenya, young people are using digital platforms to promote businesses, showcase talents and reach audiences far beyond their local communities. For aspiring entrepreneurs, social media offers a low-cost alternative to expensive traditional advertising — a leveller in a market where capital remains scarce.

The case of Mwangi Muthoni, proprietor of Dreadlocks Nairobi Kenya, illustrates the point sharply. According to a Business Daily Africa report published in June 2024, Muthoni began posting dreadlocks and hair care content on TikTok in 2021 and built a following of more than 50,000, with customers finding him directly through the platform. His experience is not universal — success depends on the product, the audience and consistent engagement — but it signals what is possible.

Social media has also created openings for content creators, photographers, journalists and digital marketers to build professional identities. Yet the same platforms carry real risks: misinformation, cyberbullying and online harassment demand responsible use, not passive scrolling.

Young people must learn to create meaningful content, verify information before sharing it and guard their digital identities. Educational institutions and policymakers must match that effort with serious investment in digital literacy.

Kenya's digital moment is here. The question is whether its youth will consume it or build with it.

Parents, talk to your children this holiday — before someone else does

By **Lydia Onserio**



The school bell has rung, the holidays have begun, and millions of Kenyan children are suddenly home with time, curiosity and unrestricted access to screens. What happens next depends largely on whether parents are willing to engage — or whether they leave that space to the internet.

The holiday period is not simply a break from learning. It is a window for the conversations that formal education rarely makes room for. Chief among them is the talk about sex. Children are naturally curious, and in the absence of honest guidance from parents, they will seek answers elsewhere — from peers, from social media, from whatever the village offers. Parents who address these topics calmly and age-appropriately are not overstepping — they are being responsible.

Academic work also needs attention. A pile of holiday assignments can overwhelm a child who does not know where to begin. Parents can help by breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps rather than issuing blanket instructions to finish everything at once.

Screen time is the third front. Families that agree on clear, reasonable boundaries around devices — phones away during study time, screens off before bed — give children a structure they can respect, particularly when parents model the same behaviour themselves.

Children need room to grow, but they also need adults who show up. When parents disengage, children do not simply cope — they drift. The holiday is long enough to lose a child to bad influences, and short enough to bring one closer.

Was bullying a factor? A Bronx teenager shot dead on his way to school

By **Synthia Achieng**



Every morning, millions of families send their children to school with the quiet expectation they will return. For Thomas Frimpong, that expectation died on a Bronx pavement on 29 October 2026.

Javits Frimpong, a 15-year-old student at Dreamyard Preparatory School, was chased down and shot near East 171st Street and Crotona Park at approximately 9:30am. He had moved from Ghana to the United States just a year earlier, carrying dreams of becoming a physician. Those dreams ended before the school day began.

The circumstances surrounding his death are as troubling as the killing itself. Javits had reportedly endured sustained bullying at school. His father, Thomas, had been contacted by the principal days earlier to confirm that two students had been suspended for harassing his son. Yet when Thomas checked in on him, Javits reassured him: "Dad, I'm okay." He carried the weight quietly, the way too many children do.

Police are hunting three teenage suspects, believed to be aged between 16 and 18, seen on surveillance footage fleeing in dark clothing and blue surgical masks. The investigation continues. The grief does not wait.

Friends describe Javits as shy, gentle and quick to make others smile — a boy who stayed out of trouble and stayed indoors playing games on his phone. His school record was clean. His future was planned.

Suspension protects a child inside a school building. It offers nothing on the walk home. If a society cannot guarantee that a 15-year-old reaches his classroom safely, it has failed him long before the bullets did.

Alcohol abuse: A silent threat tearing through Kenyan society

By **Okoyo Valary**



Across Kenya, alcohol abuse is quietly dismantling lives, families and futures — and the younger generation is bearing the heaviest cost. The popular belief that drinking relieves stress has given cover to a crisis that is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore and harder still to reverse.

The damage runs deep. Families are fracturing under the weight of addiction, with domestic violence rising and children growing up in homes scarred by trauma. Relationships collapse. Promises go unfulfilled. Young people who begin drinking socially find themselves trapped in dependency before they recognise the danger, spending money they do not have on a habit they cannot break.

The human cost is not only emotional. Road accidents caused by drunk driving claim lives that need not have been lost. Chronic health conditions linked to heavy drinking leave sufferers with deteriorating bodies and empty pockets, unable to afford the medical care their choices have made necessary. The financial spiral — spend on alcohol, neglect essentials, sink deeper — is one of the most common and least discussed patterns of poverty in Kenya today.

Some argue that peer pressure is the driving force behind youth drinking. That may be partly true, but it does not remove personal responsibility. Peer pressure is a reason, not an excuse — and it is one that education and community awareness can directly address.

Kenya does not need more funerals, more broken homes or more young lives written off too early. It needs honest conversations, sustained public education and the collective will to treat alcohol abuse as the public health emergency it already is.



Sports >> *After 23 years, 234 caps and 146 goals, Cristiano Ronaldo has retired from international football — leaving behind records that may never be broken and a nation that may never stop debating what comes next.

The final whistle for number 7: Ronaldo's Portugal story ends

By **Andalo Christine Ingutia**



The number 7 shirt has carried Portugal through unforgettable nights, historic victories and heartbreaking defeats. For more than two decades, it belonged to one man. Yesterday, Cristiano Ronaldo gave it back.

The 41-year-old announced his retirement from international football through a five-minute video message shared across his social media platforms, bringing to a close one of the most remarkable careers the game has ever produced. "To the Portuguese people," he said, "the day has come for me to hand back the number 7 shirt of our national team." It was a sentence 23 years in the making.

Ronaldo made his international debut in August 2003 as a teenager with electric feet and outsized ambition. What followed was a journey that defied almost every expectation. He experienced the agony of losing the Euro 2004 final on home soil, endured multiple World Cup exits that left Portugal wondering whether the ultimate prizes would ever come, and carried the burden of a nation's footballing hopes with a consistency that was, in hindsight, almost unreasonable to expect from any single human being.

The breakthrough came in 2016. Portugal defeated France 1-0 in the European Championship final in Paris in one of the tournament's most dramatic conclusions. Ronaldo himself was forced off in the first half with an injury, yet he spent the remainder of the match on the touchline, gesturing, imploring and willing his teammates forward. When the final whistle confirmed Portugal's first major international trophy, he wept openly. It was one of football's genuinely human moments — a superstar reduced, beautifully, to just another supporter.

Three years later, he helped Portugal claim the UEFA Nations League title. The country repeated that achievement in 2025, adding further lustre to a legacy that had long since transcended individual statistics.

Yet his international farewell has not been without turbulence. His relationship with head coach Jorge Jesus reportedly broke down during the September international break after Ronaldo was left on the bench for the match against Norway. The situation worsened when he departed the team's training camp early, prompting disciplinary action from the Portuguese Football Federation. Despite intervention from federation president Pedro Proença, the rift proved irreparable. Ronaldo chose to end his international career on his own terms rather than allow the dispute to define his final chapter.

The numbers he leaves behind are staggering. In 234 appearances, he scored 146 international goals — making him the all-time leading men's goalscorer and the most capped outfield player in international football history. He represented Portugal at six World Cups and six European Championships, a span of participation that encompasses entire footballing generations. No active player is remotely close to those figures. Few in future generations are likely to threaten them.

The retirement applies to international football only. Ronaldo is expected to continue his club career with Saudi Arabian side Al-Nassr, where he is pursuing one of sport's more extraordinary personal milestones — 1,000 career goals. He has scored 985 so far, and few who have watched his career would bet against him reaching the target.

The Portuguese Football Federation has promised a national tribute to mark his contribution — a fitting gesture for a player who gave the country its most celebrated footballing moment and rewrote the record books in the process.

Portugal will move forward. A new generation will compete for the number 7 shirt, and eventually someone will wear it and make it their own. The tactical and psychological challenge of replacing Ronaldo's presence — his leadership in the dressing room, his ability to conjure goals from improbable positions, his sheer refusal to accept defeat — will occupy Portuguese football for years.

For 23 years, he gave Portugal his goals, his passion and some of its greatest memories. The shirt is available. The legacy is not.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Equatorial Guinea goalkeeper Jesús Owono has spoken publicly for the first time since the death of CD Tenerife striker Jesús de Miguel, delivering a raw and deeply personal tribute to a fellow professionals

Owono breaks silence after De Miguel tragedy: 'The most difficult days of my life'

By **Pascal Okoth**

There are moments in sport when results, standings and rivalries become entirely irrelevant. The death of Jesús de Miguel, the 30-year-old CD Tenerife striker who suffered life-threatening injuries during a Segunda División match against FC Andorra, is one of them. Yesterday, the man most closely associated with that tragic incident finally found the words — or as close to them as grief allows.

Equatorial Guinea goalkeeper Jesús Owono broke his silence with an emotional public statement that laid bare the anguish of a footballer trying to process the unprocessable. His message was not polished or strategic. It was honest, raw and human — which made it all the more affecting.

"These are being the most difficult days of my life," Owono wrote. "It's hard for me to find the words, and I find it very difficult to assimilate anything that has happened."

That admission — from a professional athlete trained to perform under intense pressure — speaks to the weight of what occurred on that pitch. Football demands composure. Grief does not.

Owono directed his thoughts not only towards de Miguel, but towards the people left behind — the family, the friends, the teammates, the supporters who loved him. It is in those quiet acknowledgements that the full human cost of such tragedies becomes visible.

"I feel enormous pain for the loss of Jesús," he wrote. "I think of him, his family and all the people who loved him."

He also signalled an awareness that the circumstances surrounding de Miguel's death would likely require further examination in the days and weeks ahead. Rather than deflecting or staying silent on the matter, Owono addressed it directly, pledging to face whatever comes with dignity and respect.

"I know that there will be many issues to address," he said. "I will face whatever comes with all due respect."

It was a measured statement that acknowledged the complexity of the situation without minimising the grief at its centre. For now, he made clear, questions of accountability and process would have to wait. Something more pressing demanded his attention.

"But right now, honestly, I can't think of anything other than Jesús and the pain we are experiencing."

He closed his tribute with six words that needed no elaboration: "Rest in peace, Jesús."

De Miguel was 30 years old — a professional in the middle of his career, with years of football and life still ahead of him. His death has reverberated far beyond Tenerife and the Segunda División, prompting an outpouring of tributes from players, clubs and supporters across Spain and beyond. In a sport that moves relentlessly — next fixture, next result, next season — his passing has forced a rare and necessary pause.

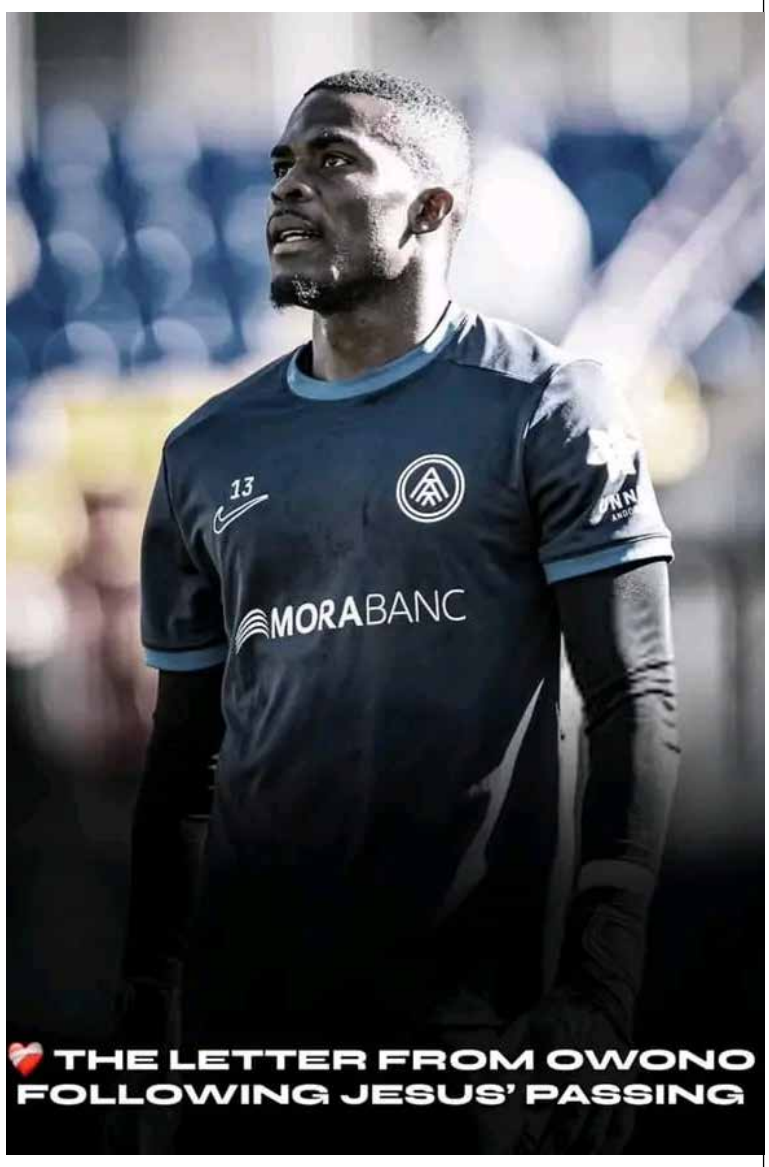
Owono's statement matters not only because of his connection to the incident, but because of what it represents: a reminder that the men who play professional football are, beneath the contracts and the television coverage and the transfer fees, human beings navigating the same fragility as everyone else. The pitch does not shield them from loss. It simply makes that loss more public.

Spanish football will be required to address the specific circumstances of de Miguel's death through the appropriate channels, with the care and sensitivity the situation demands. That process will unfold in time. Investigations will be conducted, questions will be asked and answers will eventually be sought.

But Owono's message was not about process. It was about a man he watched lose his life, and the grief that does not resolve itself because a statement has been issued or a press conference held.

For the de Miguel family, no tribute will be sufficient. For Spanish football, no lesson will feel adequate. And for Jesús Owono, standing at the centre of one of the sport's most heartbreaking recent moments, the most difficult days of his life are not yet behind him.

Rest in peace, Jesús de Miguel.



Jesús Owono





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Secrets behind the runway: The invisible dimensions of the fashion industry



By: Xalilova Dilafruz
@themtkenyatimes



This paper explores the intricate, backstage mechanisms of the fashion industry that remain invisible to the general audience yet constitute its operational and creative backbone. While public perception often limits fashion to aesthetic garments and runway models, the industry functions as a multifaceted system driven by historical development, creative and predictive design, rigorous backstage logistics, strategic branding, psychological demands, and cutting-edge digital integration. This study examines the evolutionary trajectory of runway spectacles, the integration of trend forecasting methodologies and artificial intelligence, the backstage dynamics of high-stakes productions, and the imperative shift toward sustainable practices and technological innovation.

Keywords: Runway dynamics, fashion forecasting, sustainable fashion, artificial intelligence in design, fashion marketing, backstage logistics.

Introduction

The contemporary fashion show is widely perceived as an effortless convergence of glamour, artistic expression, and supermodels. However, beneath the polished exterior presented under the runway spotlights lies a deeply layered, highly demanding global ecosystem. The runway is not merely a platform for displaying seasonal garments; it serves as a live theatrical stage where months of market research, industrial engineering, creative craftsmanship, and strategic marketing materialize in a matter of minutes. Understanding the true mechanics of the fashion industry requires examining the unseen processes—from sociological trend analysis to the intense psychological and operational pressures of backstage management.

The Evolution and Historical Context of the Runway

Historically, contemporary fashion weeks are synonymous with Paris, Milan, and New York. However, the genesis of structured runway presentations traces back to early 20th-century London, where intimate mannequin parades first introduced commercial structure to haute couture presentations. Over decades, these exclusive, invite-only salon showcases—originally tailored strictly for high-society aristocrats—democratized into globally broadcast multi-million-dollar spectacles.

The transformation of the catwalk into narrative theater gained profound momentum through visionary couturiers such as Christian Dior, whose post-war presentations elevated the runway from functional garment display to immersive emotional storytelling. Modern runways synthesize dramaturgy, acoustic design, spatial architecture, and visual aesthetics, turning the presentation into a holistic sensory experience that shapes cultural dialogue well beyond the immediate audience.

Design Conceptualization, Predictive Analytics, and Inspiration

Garment design extends far beyond sketchpad illustrations. Modern fashion production relies heavily on extensive market analytics, sociological surveys, and macroeconomic forecasting to predict consumer sentiment years in advance. Leading trend forecasting agencies, such as WGSN, utilize data science, color psychology, and textile research to map global cultural shifts, while color or standardization authorities such as Pantone determine annual palettes that guide global manufacturing.

Concurrently, systemic environmental concerns have made sustainability an indispensable facet of modern design. The industry faces structural pressure to pivot from hyper-accelerated production cycles toward the circular economy and 'slow fashion.' Designers increasingly integrate certified organic cotton, recycled synthetic fibers, and biodegradable textiles, aligning creative vision with ecological responsibility and resource stewardship.

Backstage Operations, Logistical Demands, and AI Integration

The seamless minutes observed by audiences on the catwalk mask hundreds of hours of backstage operational rigor. Each presentation demands exhaustive coordination across multidisciplinary teams: casting directors aligning specific model personas to individual garments, master tailors conducting emergency adjustments, and technical crews orchestrating acoustic, lighting, and environmental effects. A single collection frequently involves the labor of hundreds of skilled professionals operating under strict time constraints.

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped these preparatory phases. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools increasingly optimize casting assessments, pattern layout, and photoshoot logistics. Advanced algorithms analyze textile texture, silhouette proportions, and lighting contrast, recommending optimal staging configurations and reducing human error during rapid turnaround cycles.

Strategic Branding and Digital Marketing Ecosystems

A fashion brand represents an intangible universe of identity and lifestyle aspiration rather than physical fabric alone. Legacy houses build differentiated brand equity: Dior projects classical luxury and refined heritage, while Gucci fosters bold experimentation and avant-garde subversion.

The migration of marketing expenditure from conventional print editorial to digital channels—predominantly Instagram, TikTok, and emerging social platforms—has decentralized fashion authority. Influencer marketing and real-time runway livestreams allow brands to bypass traditional press gatekeepers, driving immediate consumer engagement and facilitating instant purchasing decisions through digital point-of-sale integration.

Backstage Psychological Pressure and Crisis Management

The pursuit of perfection on the runway generates intense psychological stress across all participants. From model styling and fit alterations to precise cues for scenic lighting, every detail must execute flawlessly. Because live footage is instantly distributed and scrutinized across social media networks, the margin for error is essentially zero.

Live productions routinely encounter technical anomalies, including wardrobe failures, audio interruptions, and stage mechanism stalls. To mitigate these risks, fashion houses increasingly implement 3D computer-aided design (CAD) and digital prototyping software (such as CLO 3D and Browzwear) to test garment physics and simulate movement prior to physical fabrication. These pre-visualization technologies allow design teams to anticipate fit complications and resolve potential errors before the garment ever reaches the physical runway.

Trend Generation and Socio-Cultural Resonance

Trend forecasting operates at the intersection of commercial data, street-level culture, and digital engagement. Recent decades have demonstrated that trends no longer flow strictly downward from elite couture salons; instead, bottom-up movements such as streetwear, vintage upcycling, and digital aesthetic subcultures exert massive influence on global luxury conglomerates. Fashion acts as a sensitive barometer for sociopolitical sentiment, identity politics, and generational values.

Future Trajectories: Scientific and Technological Integration

The forthcoming era of the fashion industry will be defined by the convergence of aesthetics, computing, and material science. Predictive AI models will further refine demand planning, directly addressing the systemic crisis of overproduction. Virtual garment prototyping and 3D modeling significantly reduce material waste during sampling stages, lowering overhead while enhancing environmental compliance.

Furthermore, virtual showrooms and augmented reality (AR) fitting solutions are redefining consumer engagement, enabling clients to evaluate garments within digital environments before physical production commences. Future fashion systems will require an integrated approach where aesthetic mastery, empirical scientific analysis, and ecological integrity are interdependent.

Conclusion

The allure of the runway represents only the final layer of a sophisticated, highly structured global ecosystem. Beneath the transient spectacle of fashion shows lies an intensive matrix of creative labor, market research, logistical precision, and digital innovation.

Far from being a superficial enterprise, fashion is an intricate, multi-disciplinary science combining artistic heritage with technological evolution—a dynamic sector poised to redefine sustainable manufacturing, digital expression, and cultural dialogue in the years ahead.

Xalilova Dilafruz
Master's Student, Namangan Branch of Kimyo International University in Tashkent
Scientific Advisor: Dilshodbek Yusupov, PhD, Associate Professor

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