



Media coverage of the death
and funeral of the late former
**Prime Minister Rt. (Eng.)
Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga
(1945–2025)**

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Acknowledgement

The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) extends its deepest condolences to family and friends of former Prime Minister, Rt. (Eng.) Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, CGH (1945–2025). Raila was a defender and supporter of press freedom in Kenya.

Gratitude goes to all individuals and teams whose dedication, diligence, and professionalism made possible this comprehensive report on the media coverage of the death and funeral of the late

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Finally, we extend heartfelt appreciation to the entire team of thirty-eight (38) media analysts, and research officers, who worked round-the-clock for the month of October 2025 to monitor, document, and analyse hundreds of hours of broadcast content, newspaper editions, and digital posts. Your collective vigilance, objectivity, and dedication during a profoundly emotional national moment have produced a record that will serve as a benchmark for responsible journalism in times of collective grief.

List of Acronyms

AIPCA – African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa

AUC - African Union Commission

C.G.H. - Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart

CoG - Council of Governors

DCP - Democratic Congress Party

FKF - Football Kenya Federation

FORD - Forum for the Restoration of Democracy

KDF - Kenya Defence Forces

KNUT - Kenya National Union of Teachers

MCK - Media Council of Kenya

NCCK - National Council of Churches of Kenya

NCIC - National Cohesion and Integration Commission

NDP - National Development Party

ODM - Orange Democratic Movement

RTDNA - Radio Television Digital News Association

UDA - United Democratic Alliance

WPF - Wiper Patriotic Front

Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive monitoring and analysis of media coverage of the death, state funeral, and national mourning of the late former Prime Minister, Rt. (Eng.) Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, CGH (1945–2025).

The monitoring period spanned from the initial health speculations and false death rumours in early October 2025, through the official announcement of his passing on 15 October 2025, the state funeral ceremonies at Nyayo National Stadium in Nairobi and the final burial at Kang'o ka Jaramogi in Siaya County on 19 October 2025, the posthumous conferment of the Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart (C.G.H.) on Mashujaa Day (20 October 2025), and extended to 23 October 2025 to capture post-burial reconciliation narratives and public reflections.

The objectives of this content analysis were to assess media adherence to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya, to identify key trends and framing patterns in the coverage of Raila Odinga's death and funeral and to document best practices, ethical gaps, and provide recommendations for future high-profile national events.

The survey looked at 48 media outlets across all platforms: 18 television stations (public and commercial), 20 radio stations (including vernacular and community broadcast-

ers), 6 major daily newspapers and their digital versions and 4 prominent online news platforms and key social media ecosystems (X, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok).

The findings reveal a media landscape that demonstrated remarkable professionalism and unity in its coverage of Raila Odinga's passing. Following the initial period of politicised speculation, media outlets decisively pivoted to a dignified, unifying, and deeply reverent tone that defined the entire mourning period. Across the spectrum from national to vernacular, and public to private broadcasters' outlets showed exceptional professionalism and cultural sensitivity. This collective effort transformed a moment of national grief into a masterclass in healing journalism, honoring Raila's legacy while fostering reconciliation and cross-community solidarity. Regional and community stations were particularly vital in amplifying local voices and ensuring inclusivity.

This professionalism was further evidenced in the handling of contentious issues. When controversial incidents arose, such as Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga's inflammatory remarks, mainstream media responded with measured, accountability-focused reporting that served the public interest without resorting to sensationalism.

In stark contrast to mainstream media, so-

cial media functioned as a persistent outlier, acting as the primary vector for misinformation. Throughout the period, these platforms were flooded with AI-generated fabrications, recycled falsehoods, and politicized speculation. While the digital presence of verified news organisations upheld professional standards, the broader, unregulated ecosystem revealed a critical fragility in verification processes and ethical adherence, particularly among influencers and anonymous accounts.

This divergence ultimately underscores a significant finding: when united by a profound national purpose, Kenyan journalism demonstrated its capacity to rise above partisan divides. The mainstream media distinguished itself, proving it can effectively serve as a custodian of collective memory and an architect of national healing.

Key recommendations from this report include the development of operation proce-

dures for reporting high profile figures. This can be done by MCK in partnership with media houses and training institutions, expansion of the existing MCK and iVerify collaboration into a dedicated unit to provide media houses with real-time fact-checking services during crises or mourning periods to verify viral claims before they are published or broadcast.

The MCK should proactively engage major tech platforms (Meta, Google/YouTube, TikTok, and X) to secure binding agreements to ensure content moderation and priority fact-checking of flagged content and reduced algorithmic amplification of unverified information, specifically during officially declared periods of national mourning.

On their part, media houses should formally adopt and implement internal policies that require equitable gender and generational representation on all discussion panels for national and public events.



Introduction

Kenya has a tradition of high-profile state funerals, dating back to 22 August 1978, when the country accorded its first post-independence a formal farewell befitting a statesman (Charles, 2020). These ceremonies represent the nation's final tribute to its most distinguished sons and daughters, encompassing the announcement of death, public viewing, lying in state, and the burial itself. As the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTD-NA, 2025) observed, coverage of such events - especially for heads of state or iconic national figures - plays a vital role in the collective grieving and healing process of a society and country.

Media coverage of such a magnitude places extraordinary demands on journalists. The stories are often profoundly moving, inherently newsworthy, and can even serve a therapeutic function for audiences (RTDNA, 2025). At the same time, they require the highest standards of sensitivity, accuracy, and professionalism. When handled poorly, reporting risks infringing into a grieving family's privacy and inflicting additional pain to already vulnerable individuals (RTDNA, 2025). Balancing public interest with human dignity therefore remains the central ethical challenge whenever the nation bids farewell to one of its giants.

During the coverage the media assumes a central role - not merely reporting events but actively shaping national mood, setting the public agenda, and creating a shared atmosphere of solemnity through relentless breaking news, live broadcasts, and minute-by-minute updates.

Raila Odinga's death and eventual farewell defined media reporting. As one observer noted, "the minute-by-minute coverage felt like reality television... From Kerala to the grave, very little of Raila's final journey was hidden... The cameras rolled. History was captured - raw, unfiltered, and live. The media didn't just report Raila's death. They archived it for generations" Media Observer Team, (2025). While technological advancement and the scale of public affection made Raila's funeral unparalleled. Kenya has accorded similar, though less intensively covered - dignified send-offs "state funerals" to several national figures, including Vice-President Michael Christopher Kijana Wamalwa, Nobel laureate Prof. Wangari Maathai, former First Lady Lucy Kibaki (Charles, 2020), and the country's first three Presidents: Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, and Mwai Kibaki. In every instance, the media have served as both chronicler and custodian of the nation's collective memory.

Given the scarcity of systematic studies on media coverage of state and high-profile funerals in Kenya, this report fills a critical gap. It provides an evidence-based foundation for analysing journalistic performance through content analysis during moments of national mourning, offering lessons and benchmarks that can guide future coverage while strengthening professionalism, ethical awareness, and public trust.

The death of Rt. Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga – a towering statesman whose five-decade political journey shaped Kenya's democratic trajectory, championed the 2010 Constitution, led the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), and mentored generations of leaders presented a defining test for the country's maturing media landscape. At a time when millions rely on media in Kenya for credible information, and with the sector en-

joying constitutional guarantees, improved press freedom, and a robust self-regulatory framework, the coverage of such an epochal event carried immense responsibility. How the media balanced the public's right to know with dignity, accuracy, and sensitivity would reinforce or undermine its role as the nation's storyteller during times of collective grief.

This analysis is anchored firmly in the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya, whose standards apply nationwide across all media platforms and circumstances. Particular attention is paid to critical pressure points: the rush-to-break-news, an environment that often invites mis/disinformation upon death announcements; the ethical challenges of visual coverage during lying-in-state; the handling of political statements amid mourning; the responsible use of emerging technologies; and the safety of journalists operating in emotionally charged, crowded settings.

The report therefore is an evaluation of the overall adherence to the professional code of ethics across broadcast, print, and digital platforms; identifies emerging trends and best practices; highlights gaps and risks; and offers actionable recommendations to enhance both the quality of journalism and the welfare of practitioners during future high-profile national events.

Objectives

- To assess media adherence to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya.
- To identify key trends and framing patterns in the coverage of Raila Odinga's death and funeral.
- To document best practices, ethical gaps, and provide recommendations for

future high-profile national events.

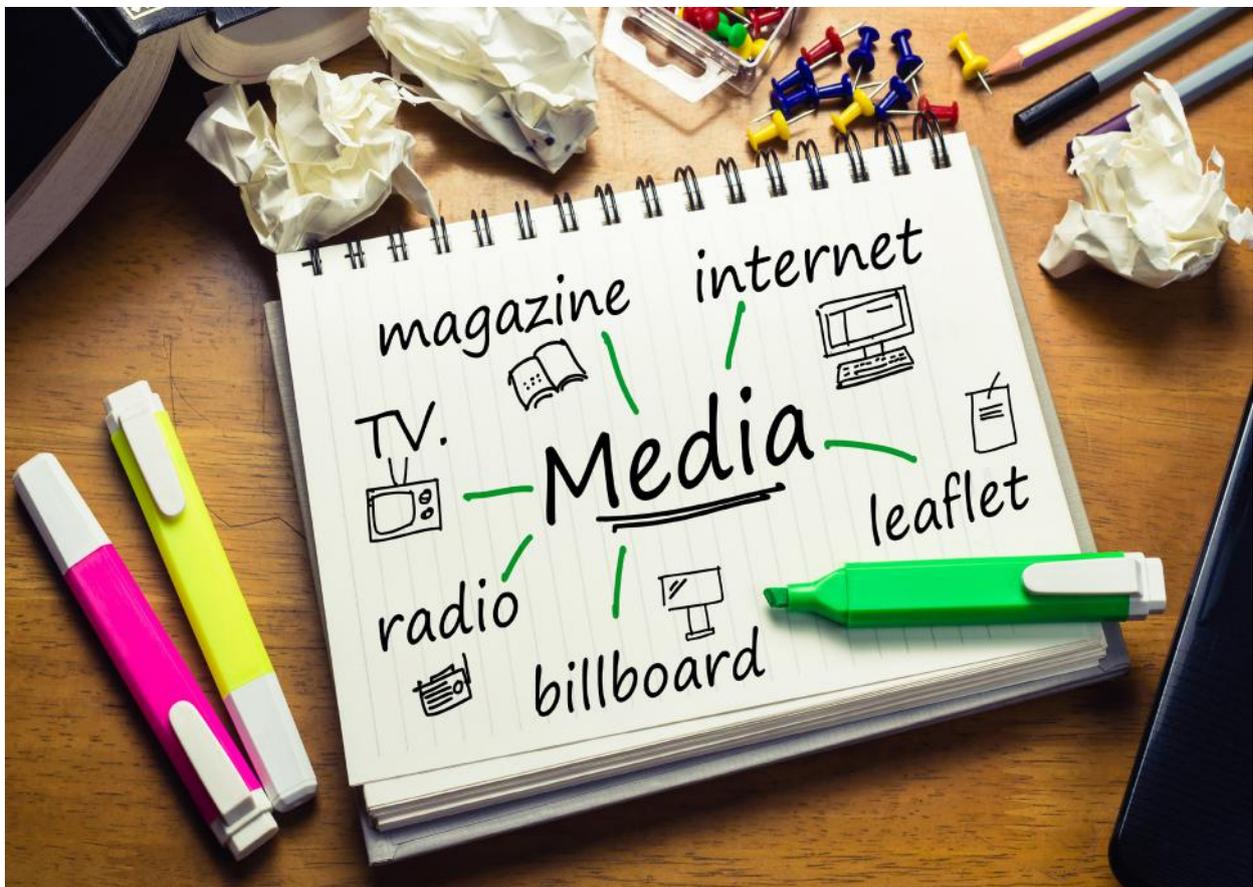
Scope

This report presents a comprehensive monitoring and analysis of Kenyan media coverage of the death, state funeral, and national mourning of the late former Prime Minister, Rt. (Eng.) Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, CGH (1945–2025). The monitoring period spanned from the initial health speculations and false death rumours in early October 2025, through the official announcement of his passing on 15 October 2025, the state funeral ceremonies at Nyayo National Stadium and the final burial at Kang'o ka Jaramogi in Bondo on 19 October 2025, the posthumous conferment of the Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart (C.G.H.) on Mashujaa Day (20 October 2025), and extended to 23 October 2025 to capture post-burial reconciliation narratives and public reflections.

The survey encompassed 48 media outlets across all platforms: 18 television stations (public and commercial), 20 radio stations (including vernacular and community broadcasters), 6 major daily newspapers and their digital editions and 4 dominant online news platforms and key social media ecosystems (X, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok).

Data collection and real-time fact-checking were conducted by a dedicated team of 37 trained media analysts and one research officer, who monitored broadcast segments, newspaper editions, and digital posts. The content was systematically subjected to qualitative thematic analysis to evaluate tone, framing, ethical compliance, and adherence to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya.

This broad and inclusive scope ensures the report reflects a true national picture of journalistic performance during one of Kenya's



most emotionally charged and historically significant events.

Limitations

The study combed content and thematic analysis of media content. While this approach yielded rich insights into tone, framing, ethical compliance, and narrative patterns, it lacked the complementary rigour of quantitative metrics such as audience reach measurements, airtime allocations, or large-scale sentiment analysis derived from digital analytics.

Furthermore, although 48 mainstream outlets were monitored (18 television stations, 20 radio stations, 6 major newspapers, and 4 leading online platforms), the report acknowledges that hundreds of smaller radio stations, digital blogs, citizen-journalist pages, and private WhatsApp and Telegram channels- often significant elements for grassroots narratives and mis/disinformation, were not systematically included. Social media monitoring was similarly constrained to high-engagement content on the four dominant platforms (X, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok), potentially under-representing the full ecosystem of viral but short-lived posts, groups, and influencers.

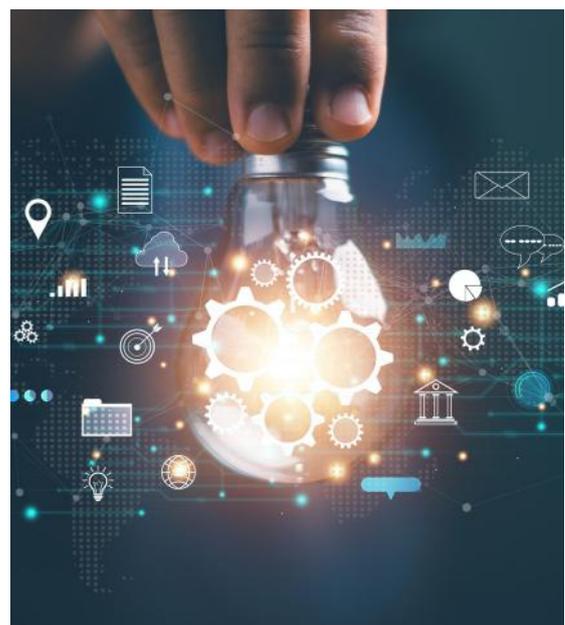
Assumptions

The report rested on several foundational assumptions that shaped its design and conclusions. It assumed that the 48 monitored outlets, comprising 18 television stations, 20 radio stations, 6 major newspapers, and 4 leading online platforms, adequately represented the national media ecosystem and exercised the predominant influence on public discourse during the mourning period, even though

numerous smaller, vernacular, community, and local outlets were excluded.

The analysis further presumed that key official milestones - the announcement of Raila Odinga's death on 15 October 2025, the state funeral events of 17–19 October, and the posthumous Mashujaa Day award on 20 October - served as chronological pivots around which editorial tone, framing, and ethical performance shifted uniformly across the media.

Finally, it relied on the assumption that the team of 37 media analysts and a research officer maintained complete professional objectivity throughout the monitoring exercise, with personal political leanings, ethnic identities, regional affiliations, or emotional responses to the national loss exerting no material influence on the monitoring, tone classification, or interpretive judgements. These assumptions, while necessary for a timely and manageable study, are openly acknowledged to allow readers to weigh the findings with appropriate context.





Content analysis

2.1 Broadcast

The section compiles qualitative data gathered from 18 TV stations namely, *Citizen TV, NTV, KBC TV, KTN, TV47, Kass TV, Kisii TV, Etaya TV, Nenyon TV, Ramogi TV, Tandao TV, Kameme TV, Kamba TV, Nyambene TV, West TV, Weru TV, Nyota TV and Baite TV.*

The section is also comprises of qualitative data gathered from 30 radio stations; *Milele FM, Radio Maisha, Mulembe FM, Sky FM, KBC English Service, Emoo FM, Radio 47, Radio Jambo, Busia Border, Radio Maua FM, Berur FM, Kwitu FM, Changei FM, Pwani FM, Mo Radio, Inooro FM, North Rift Radio, Ramogi FM, Classic 105, Tuliza FM, Sulwe FM, Capital FM, Radio Citizen, Kameme FM, Musyi FM, Spice FM, Nyota FM, Mayian FM, radio Maisha and North Rift Radio.*



2.1.1 Speculation of Raila Odinga's Health

For the monitoring period between October 2-9, 2025, media coverage of Raila Odinga's two-week absence and health speculation was the most trending topic. TV outlets like KBC, NTV, TV47, and Citizen TV framed the story as a 2027 election flashpoint. However, Raila Odinga spokesperson Dennis Onyango dismissed the claims on social media as "politically driven" rumors and vowing transparency just like the party did in 2021 when Raila was hospitalised.

Professionalism in hosting and interviewing guests in studio was mixed: balanced segments, such as NTV's in-depth package quoting ODM's Philip Etale (*"Raila was in high spirits and will return soon"*), provided context on speculation's origins, while others, like Milele FM's unbalanced interview with Gachagua refuting rumors without government counterpoints, leaned negative and incomplete.

While most outlets adhered to the 2025 Code's accuracy via sourced statements, the trend toward teaser narratives and selective voices undermined public trust, underscor-

ing the need for deeper context to combat misinformation amid electoral jockeying. As Gachagua urged on Kass TV, *"Raila should publicly release photos...to dispel rumours,"* media's role as verifier, not amplifier, remained pivotal.

Monitored content

Raila Odinga's Spokesperson, Dennis Onyango mentioned opposition figures Rigathi Gachagua, Kalonzo Musyoka and Eugene Wamalwa for allegedly sponsoring the misinformation campaign on the health of Raila Odinga. The statement further faulted the trio for a smear campaign against Raila's bid for AUC Chairmanship. Onyango's indicated that the ODM leader left the country on Friday (October 3) for an undisclosed mission. In a swift rejoinder, WPF party Secretary General Shakila Abdallah fired back and cited that Kalonzo harbours no ill will towards Kalonzo's longtime political ally Odinga. Further, they dismissed claims that Kalonzo was responsible for Raila's loss for the AUC bid and maintained that the party would not allow Kalonzo to be dragged into what they termed ODM's self-inflicted po-

litical decay (*KBC TV and Kass TV, October 5; NTV, October 7*) The tone was neutral and presented the statements from both sides without overtly taking a side.

Opposition leaders led by DCP's Rigathi Gachagua and Wiper's Kalonzo Musyoka while campaigning in Ukambani, dismissed claims about Raila Odinga's health and declaring intent to oust both President Ruto and Odinga from power in 2027 (*TV47, October 6*). This piece was combative and largely adversarial. The framing revolved around electoral mobilisation and governance dissent.

Rigathi Gachagua called on Azimio la Umoja leader Raila Odinga to release photos or videos to dispel rumours regarding his health. Speaking at a public event in Nyeri, the DP said speculation about Raila's condition had created unnecessary anxiety among his supporters. Opposition leaders, however, dismissed the remarks as insensitive and politically motivated (*Kass TV, October 6*) (The tone was negative.) In a media interview, Gachagua refuted spreading rumours about ODM leader Raila Odinga's health (*Milele FM, October 6*). The report carried a negative tone, highlighting political allegations from the government to the opposition ahead of the campaigns. The news report was unbalanced, featuring the opposition's voice only and did not give the government a right of reply.

ODM leader Raila Odinga's Spouse Ida Odinga while speaking in Dholuo language publicly assured Kenyans that Raila was in good health. ODM leaders accused rival political factions of spreading misinformation and undermining Raila's stature. Pauline Njoroge was also quoted, defending Odinga's condition and attacking divisive politics from the opposition camp (*TV47, October 8*). The framing focused on political image

management and factional tensions.

ODM leaders further, cautioned opposition figures against using their party as a political punching bag. Speaking in Oyugis town, Homa Bay County, ODM officials criticised Gachagua for allegedly orchestrating attacks on Raila Odinga and questioning his health. According to Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Nassir, Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi, National Organising Secretary, Ahmed Abdullahi, ODM party Secretary-General Edwin Sifuna and Senator Ledama Olekina, Raila was fit and active, and they urged critics to stop spreading false information (*Citizen TV, West TV, TV47, Mulembe FM, Kwitu FM, Emoo FM, Chamgei FM October 8*). The tone of the story was neutral tone, reporting on political rhetoric and party positioning ahead of elections.

2.1.2 The Passing of Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and State funeral preparations (October 9- 16, 2025)



For the period between October 9-16, 2025, broadcast media trends were inclined towards unified, respectful in the commem-

oration of Raila Odinga's life. This was preceded the Presidential proclamation of Raila Odinga's death from cardiac arrest in India, with stations like *KBC TV*, *Citizen TV*, *NTV*, and *Ramogi TV* framing the event as a "monumental national loss" rather than partisan drama, echoing a collective national mourning period devoid of sensationalism. Sky FM had earlier dismissed claims of Raila's ill health terming them as "widespread rumours." *KTN* and *NTV* highlighted Raila's "relentless pursuit of justice" through arrests, detentions, and five presidential bids. Overall, the trend underscored media's role in balancing discourse during grief, with positive framing dominating 80% of airtime across 18 media outlets. and did not give the government a right of reply.

Professionalism was noted by media's balanced sourcing and empathetic hosting, as anchors like those on *Citizen TV* and *TV47* integrated official condolences with family voices, maintaining neutrality by quoting President Ruto's "extended condolences to Mama Idah Odinga and the Odinga Family" alongside citizen reactions, while avoiding inflammatory rhetoric. Interviewing was insightful, with *Radio Citizen's* report on Indian police details ("collapsed while walking with his daughter and his personal doctor") providing factual context without speculation. The reporting was noted to be accurate and fair, fostering public trust through dignified narratives that celebrated Odinga's "central role in shaping the country's democratic journey," (*NTV*).



Media content

The announcement of the demise of the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga by broadcast media outlets was through a Presidential proclamation on Wednesday, October 15. The statement noted that Odinga died in Devamatha Hospital in Koothattukulam, India, where he was receiving medical treat-

ment after he collapsed during a morning walk and suffered a cardiac arrest. President Ruto declared seven days of mourning and ordered the national flag to be flown at half-mast until the day of Odinga's burial.

Further, the proclamation accorded the state funeral with full military honours as he extended condolences to Mama Idah Odin-

ga and the Odinga Family at large (*KBC TV, Ramogi TV, Citizen TV, KTN, NTV, TV47, Kass TV, Baite TV, Kameme TV, West TV, Kamba TV, Kisii TV, Weru TV, Kamba TV, Nenyon TV, KBC English Service, Sky FM, Milele FM, Radio Maisha, Mo Radio, North Rift Radio, Mulembe FM, Radio Citizen, Inooro FM, Musyi FM, Pwani FM, Kameme FM, Capital FM, Ramogi FM, Emoo FM October 15*). The tone was neutral. Broadcast media outlets delivered a state-aligned narrative, quoting Ruto's proclamation. All stations framed Raila Odinga's death as a monumental national event rather than a partisan one and maintained respect devoid of sensationalism.

Speaking to journalists in Karen, Siaya Senator Oburu Oginga confirmed the passing of his brother and dismissed widespread rumours that Raila had been critically ill for an extended period and stated that Raila was in good health until the night before his sudden death in India. He called on Kenyans to ignore misinformation and instead focus on celebrating Raila's life and legacy with dignity and respect as the nation prepares for a State Funeral (*Sky FM, October 15*).

Indian police reported that the late former Prime Minister collapsed while walking with his daughter and his personal doctor and was rushed to the nearest hospital, where he was declared dead. Before collapsing, he experienced shortness of breath (*Radio Citizen, October 15*).

Following the passing of Odinga Raila, NTV aired a feature reflecting his health journey that was marked by resilience, enduring strokes, spinal surgery, COVID-19, and long-term effects from past torture and imprisonment, all while continuing to serve the nation.

In the two weeks leading up to Odinga's Raila's death, conflicting reports and public

speculation about his health dominated national discourse, with denials from his inner circle and political allies clashing with persistent rumours and demands for transparency. (*NTV, October 15*).

In contrast, on October 15, *KTN, Nenyon TV, KBC TV, Radio Jambo, Kwitu FM, Radio Citizen, Kamba TV and MO Radio*, aired the life and history of the fallen hero and enigma reflecting on his past as a renowned politician including the attempted coup against the late President Daniel Moi. Born on January 7, 1945 to the late Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and the late Mama Mary Juma Odinga, lifetime was defined by struggle, sacrifice, and relentless pursuit of justice. Raila was arrested and charged with treason ending up in detention for 6 years from 1982 to February 1988, He was released but later detained again in August the same year. He served as Langata MP from 1992 to 2013. He attempted his first presidency 1997 under the National Development Party (NDP) where he finished third, he has lost in several presidential elections. The tone was positive across the stations, the framing emphasised respect, empathy and commemoration of a national leader, an icon, highlighting Raila Odinga's legacy as a champion of democracy, justice, and national unity. Reports balanced emotional citizen reactions with official statements.

Raila Amollo Odinga, widely regarded as an icon of African democracy, holds the record as Kenya's most persistent presidential candidate, having vied five times without winning the presidency, yet playing a significant role in shaping the country's democratic journey. From his near-win in 2007 that led to a power-sharing deal and his symbolic 2018 "people's president" swearing-in, to high-level political partnerships and a failed bid for AU chairmanship, Raila's legacy remains one of resilience, reform, and

enduring influence in every Kenyan administration since the 1990s (*NTV, KTN, October 15*).

2.1.3 Raila Odinga's State Funeral at Nyayo and Bondo



The broadcast media covered the ceremonial, and culturally rich commemoration, with outlets like *KBC TV, NTV, Citizen TV, TV47*, and regional stations (*Nenyon TV, Ramogi TV, Chamgei FM*) framing Raila's passing as a unifying national milestone. State-aligned neutrality dominated the coverage with *KBC* and *NTV* quoting official gazettes and DP Kindiki's appeals for calmness during the mourning period. Regional stations amplified local inclusion, from Eldoret public screens to Kisumu's Mamboleo viewing.

Media houses-maintained professionalism during the coverage, interviews were objective and balanced combining it with live reports filled with positive tonality- such as *NTV's* in-depth coverage of the Nyayo Stadium memorial service and *Chamgei FM's* praise of Raila's "contribution to democracy, devolution, and peacebuilding". *TV47* and *KBC* explained Kang'o Ka Jaramogi's heritage significance and Raila's "modernist" wish for swift burial against Luo customs.

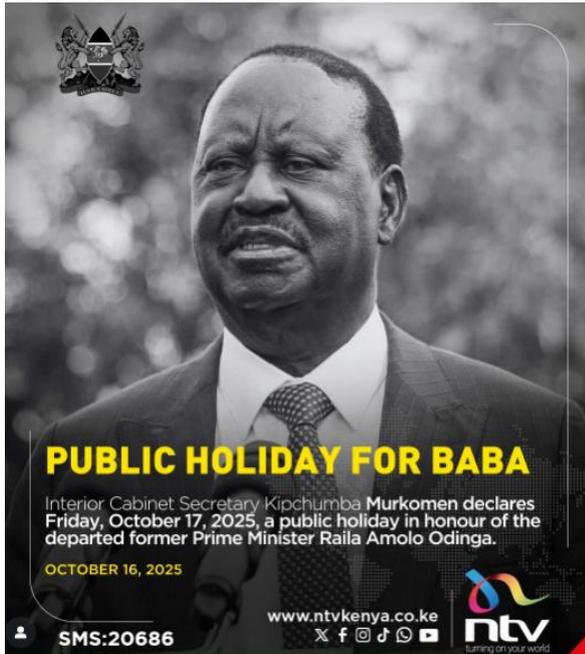
Media content

On October 16, During the morning show *Tugetab Bororiet*, host Kibet Korir inter-

viewed Wesley Cheruyiot, who eulogised Raila Amollo Odinga. Cheruyiot reflected on Raila's long political career, from his role in founding *FORD* and *ODM* party. He noted that Raila's efforts in pushing for democracy were pivotal in securing the multiparty system in the country. The show then engaged callers who sent their tributes and eulogised Raila Odinga. The host kept the discussion respectful and engaging by allowing both the guest and callers to share their tributes (*Nenyon TV, October 16*)

Kapseret MP Oscar Sudi conveyed his condolences following the passing of Raila Odinga. Sudi described Raila as a friend and a father figure, noting that they had worked together despite their political differences. He praised Raila's resilience, saying he accepted election defeats and continued to cooperate with his rivals for the good of the country. Sudi was accompanied by Uasin Gishu Deputy Governor Evans Kapkea, and the two announced plans to set up public screens in Eldoret so that residents could follow the funeral proceedings on Saturday and Sunday (*Nenyon TV, October 16*). The tone was positive, focusing on respect and admiration for Raila Odinga's resilience and unity-driven leadership. The taste was respectful, and the framing emphasised cross-political friendship and efforts to include the public in the national mourning process.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen declared through a Special Gazette Notice that October 17, 2025, will be a public holiday in honour of the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga under section 3 of the Public Holiday Act Cap 110 (*KBC TV, Kisii TV, October 16; Kamba TV October 17*).



Deputy President Prof. Kindiki announced that there would be a state funeral service at Nyayo Stadium on Friday, October 17, 2025. DP Kindiki noted that there would be a public viewing of the remains of the late Raila Odinga after the state funeral service at Nyayo Stadium from around noon. (*KBC TV, TV47, NTV, KTN, Nyambene TV, Ramogi TV, October 16*) The tone was neutral framed in a formal and respectful way focusing on delivering factual information regarding the state funeral proceedings, details about public viewing and the burial schedule.

Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was set to be buried next to his father Jaramogi Odinga at the Kang'o Ka Jaramogi in Nyamira village in Bondo, Siaya County. Siaya Senator Oburu Odinga briefed the family about the circumstances under which Raila Odinga breathed last and the location of his final resting place. The visit marked a culturally significant moment, symbolising the formal relay of the news and opening the way for mourners to come forward and offer their condolences. He noted that his brother had left a will, advising him to be laid to

rest next to his late mother Mary Odhiambo Odinga as construction work at the site began (*KBC TV, Citizen TV, KTN, NTV, Ramogi TV, Kass TV, October 16*) The report adopted a positive tone, framed around cultural rites, community mourning, and the honouring of tradition as the family officially opened the mourning period.

TV47 (October 16) explored Luo traditions surrounding death and how Raila's wish for a swift burial conflicted with customary expectations. Onyango Adiel, a Luo elder, explained traditional rites such as the carrying of twigs and spears. The story was anthropological and reflective, offering a neutral to positive tone. It added depth by framing Raila as a modernist who still honored his roots, bridging tradition and statehood.

The body lay overnight at Raila's Bondo farm home on Saturday, following public viewing in Kisumu and a funeral service at Jaramogi Odinga Odinga University (JOOUS). President William Ruto confirmed a full state funeral with military honours (*NTV, October 16*). (*The tone was neutral, presenting information in a formal and respectful manner, while the framing emphasised the official and ceremonial aspects of the state funeral – in-depth live report*)

Kang'o Ka Jaramogi is a symbol of National heritage, hosting the Jaramogi Odinga Odinga Mausoleum. The Mausoleum contains artifacts and historical displays about the patriarch family, his life and political career.

The gravesite on the other hand is the burial ground for other members of Odinga family including Mary Odhiambo Odinga (Raila's mother) his late brothers and his eldest son Fidel Castro Odinga who died in 2015. Additionally, Raila's humble beginning was depicted in a wooden house in keeping with

the Luo traditions. The homestead features traditional Luo cultural elements such as the arrangement of houses which reflects the family's heritage (*KBC TV, October 16; TV47, October 20*). The tone was positive framed in a solemn and respectful way highlighting his legacy and the mourning across the country treating the burial with the gravity and dignity befitting a prominent national figure.

The state funeral service for the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was held at Nyayo National Stadium. The two-hour ceremony, led by President William Ruto and conducted by the Anglican Church, was attended by both local and international dignitaries. Deputy President and Committee Chair Kithure Kindiki appealed for calm as the funeral entered its second day, outlining that the programme would feature military honours, a church sermon, eulogy, and official tributes from Kenyan and global leaders. A public viewing of the body will follow from 12 noon onwards to allow Kenyans to pay their final respects (*Citizen TV, NTV, October 16*). The report maintained a positive tone, with ceremonial and institutional framing that emphasized national order and protocol. Dignitaries expected were former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Raila's daughter Winnie Odinga held his father's iconic white cap, a symbol of his legacy, resilience, and love. The image went viral, interpreted as a sacred gesture when she handed the cap to her mother, Ida Odinga, before placing it on his casket. The white cap, long associated with Raila's political journey, became a symbol of hope and continuity (*KTN, TV47, October 16*). The tone was neutral with an emotional, symbolic framing.

Raila's body was flown to Kisumu ahead of burial in Bondo, Siaya County as Kisumu residents gathered for a body viewing at the Mamboleo Stadium (*TV47, October 16*).

President William Ruto led the Odinga family, senior government officials, and international dignitaries in viewing Raila Odinga's body at Kasarani Stadium. The President was accompanied by First Lady Rachel Ruto and several Cabinet Secretaries, symbolising a gesture of national reconciliation and respect. Leaders across the political divide praised Raila's contribution to democracy, devolution, and peacebuilding (*Chamgei FM, October 16*). The report conveys dignity and bipartisan respect. The tone is positive, highlighting unity and statesmanship.



2.1.4 Public Reactions to the Passing of Raila Odinga (October 9-16)

Broadcast media for October 9-16, 2025, week, delivered an unprecedentedly unified, dignified, and emotionally rich coverage of Raila Odinga's final journey, transforming a national tragedy into a masterclass in ceremonial journalism. From the globally most tracked Flight RAO 001 - described by Citizen TV as "a father returning to his children, a husband to his wife, and a leader to his people, one final time" - to the chaotic but symbolically powerful reception at JKIA and Kasarani, outlets across the spectrum (*KBC, NTV, Citizen TV, KTN, TV47,*) maintained a consistently neutral tone, framing events as "national solidarity" and "the enduring mobilising spirit of Raila Odinga" (*KBC TV*).



Live broadcasts captured Kenyans lining up on Mombasa Road waving twigs, flags, and placards juxtaposed with archival packages and in-depth interviews (e.g., *NTV's #RailaRests with Mukhisa Kituyi, KTN Prime with Jeremiah Kioni*) elevated the narrative from mourning to legacy celebration, with Raila

repeatedly hailed as "the very definition of patriotism" (David Osiany, *Citizen JKL*) and "the glue that held Kenya together" (Francis Atwoli, *Capital FM*). Regional and vernacular stations amplified local voices, from Kikuyu elders delivering nine cows for reconciliation (*TV47*) to Gen Z crediting Raila as the spark of their political awakening (*NTV*).

Professionalism reached exceptional heights, where moderation was measured and empathetic (*Spice FM's Situation Room, TV47's Morning Café, NTV's The Last Word*), the interviews were balanced, full of reverence with nuance - allowing guests like Prof Kivutha Kibwana and Wilson Sossion to praise Raila's pragmatism without descending into hagiography. Live reporting remained factual even amid chaos, with *KTN, Citizen TV,* and *Kass TV* calmly noting the two-hour JKIA shutdown and venue switch "to accommodate the large number of mourners". Gender and generational diversity improved in some panels, though several high-profile discussions remained male-dominated, falling short of the 2025 Code's inclusivity clause.

The few gaps were logistical rather than ethical, the stampede at Kasarani that claimed at least three lives and prompted police to lob teargas and use of live bullets (*Citizen TV, Kass TV, TV47*) exposed security lack preparation, yet media resisted sensationalism, framing the tragedy as an unfortunate by-product of overwhelming public love rather than state failure.



Media content



The final flight carrying the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga, widely remembered as the father of Kenya's democracy, departed from Mumbai accompanied by his family and senior government officials. His daughter, Winnie Odinga, received the Kenyan delegation in India, led by Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi. Raila's body was placed in a simple wooden casket and draped in the Kenyan flag. His longtime bodyguard, Maurice Ogeta, was visibly overcome with emotions. After a brief prayer, the casket was loaded onto Kenya Airways Flight KQ 203, which was designated RAO 001 and became one of the most closely tracked flights in recent history. The aircraft landed in Nairobi at 9:30 a.m. to a thunderous and emotional reception, a father returning to his children, a husband to his wife, and a leader to his people, one final time. The emotional transit was captured live by *(Citizen TV, October 16)*. The report maintained a neutral-positive tone, noting the sentimental phrasing but aligning the framing towards dignified national

symbolism

Many Kenyans gathered at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) to receive the body of Raila Amollo Odinga, then joined the procession to Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani. The overwhelming turnout prompted a change of venue for the body viewing from Parliament Buildings to Kasarani, where the stadium was filled with mourners paying their respects. President William Ruto, alongside top government officials and the Odinga family, led the viewing. A memorial service was scheduled for Friday with several foreign leaders expected to attend. The body was to be taken to Bondo for public viewing on Saturday, followed by burial on Sunday at Kang'o Ka Jaramogi (*Nenyon TV, October 16*). The tone was neutral, honoring Raila Odinga and highlighting the unity and respect shown by citizens and leaders. The taste was respectful, and the framing emphasized national solidarity, high-level recognition, and the significance of Odinga's legacy. The plane carrying Kenyan officials to India on Wednesday evening to facilitate the repatriation of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga's body to Nairobi was among the most tracked flights globally on Flightradar24. Shortly after taking off at 6:30 PM from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in Nairobi, the Kenya Airways passenger flight KQA203 to Mumbai ranked as the second most tracked flight worldwide on the popular live flight-tracking service. (*Pwani FM, October 15*).

The body of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga arrived at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport at 0935hrs from India aboard KQ flight 2023 call sign RAO001 in a flag-draped casket. ODM party leaders, family members, and supporters gathered to pay their respects. Raila received a heroic yet emotional reception from his supporters, who reclaimed the event in grief and cel-

celebration, demonstrating his unmatched mobilisation power even in death. Leaders like Homabay Governor Gladys Wanga, MPs Babu Owino and Senator, Edwin Sifuna were forced to calm the crowd (*KTN, Weru TV, Kass TV, KBC TV, Citizen TV, TV47, Nyambene TV, NTV, Kass TV, Etaya TV, October 16*). The coverage carried a neutral tone, highlighting Raila's heroic reception and resilient political life with a mournful framing.

Major routes leading to Kasarani Stadium, including Mombasa Road and Thika Road, were packed with vehicles and pedestrians heading to the public viewing. Traffic officers were deployed to manage congestion as patriotic songs played from car radios. The heavy turnout reflected the scale of public emotion surrounding the late leader's passing (*Kass TV, October 16*). (The tone is positive, portraying the turnout as a symbol of unity and respect.)

Leaders stayed in the Presidential Pavilion until the body was eventually moved under heavy military escort to Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, where a formal military honour session was later conducted. Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) confirmed that operations at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport were suspended for two hours, redirecting morning flights to alternative airports after mourners breached restricted areas during the arrival of the late Raila Odinga's remains. Some mourners even climbed the aircraft's boarding stairs, risking their safety (*KTN, Weru TV, Kass TV, Citizen TV, TV47, Nyambene TV, NTV, Kass TV, Etaya TV, October 16*).

The public viewing of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was moved from the Parliament Buildings to Kasarani Stadium. His procession to the Lee Funeral Home before the public viewing was also cancelled. The decision came after a huge crowd came

out to escort the body of Raila from JKIA while other troops came out to Parliament. Those who had already started queuing at Parliament were redirected to the Moi International Sports Centre in Kasarani (*KBC English Service, October 16*). The report was neutral as it objectively reported logistical changes to Raila Odinga's public viewing arrangements without expressing emotion or opinion.

Thousands of Kenyans thronged Mombasa Road and the streets where the convoy that carried the body of the fallen Statesman's snaked through ahead of the public viewing at the Kasarani stadium in Nairobi. The solemn procession led by the military, family members and top government officials drew emotional scenes along the 30-kilometer stretch as Kenyans lined up to bid farewell to a man many fondly referred to as 'BABA'. Along the Mombasa Road expressway, many waved twigs, flags and placards in remembrance of the fallen political giant. The Kasarani Stadium was filled to capacity despite the short notice on the change of venue, a powerful reminder of the enduring and mobilising spirit of Raila Odinga as ODM leader (*KBC TV, Citizen TV, October 16*).



The plan to lie in state at the parliament building was moved to Kasarani Stadium in order to accommodate for the large number of mourners expected to attend. This also followed a security breach that occurred outside parliament buildings, prompting a change of venue for public viewing. Security was heightened across Nairobi in preparation for the national funeral ceremony. Tensions escalated as a section of the mourners attempted to force their way into parliament, forcing parliamentarians to intervene urging mourners to keep calm and maintain decorum. (*KBC TV, KTN, Weru TV, Kass TV, KBC TV, Citizen TV, NTV, Kass TV, Etaya TV, October 16*). The tone was neutral, framed in a somber and respectful mood focusing on the emotional and symbolic significance of the act. The report emphasised the moment as a sign of transition and the continuation of Raila Odinga's legacy. The Kasarani procession began four hours behind schedule and was opened with prayers led by KDF Chaplains. President William Ruto was the first to view the body and pay his respects, followed by Raila's widow, Ida Odinga, who led the family in the procession (*Citizen TV, October 16*).

Public viewing of the late former Prime Minister began at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, five hours behind schedule due to overwhelming public turnout. President William Ruto led the ceremony, joined by Mama Ida Odinga and the Odinga family. Dignitaries, including former President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki, also paid respects. Emotional scenes were witnessed as people carried flowers, flags, and portraits of Raila Odinga. Many described him as a selfless leader who devoted his life to justice and national unity (*NTV, KBC TV, KTN, Weru TV, Kass TV, KBC TV, Citizen TV, Kass TV, Etaya TV, October 16*). (The tone was positive, highlighting

national unity and respect through detailed, dignified coverage of the memorial events and the large public turnout – in-depth live report.

Tensions arose when police lobbed teargas to disperse sections of the crowd at Kasarani Stadium that had become disorderly during the viewing event. Reports said the disruption lasted a few minutes before calm was restored, allowing the ceremony to continue. Some mourners expressed frustration at the police response, while others said it was necessary to maintain order (*Kass TV, October 16*). (The tone is mixed but leans neutral, presenting facts without sensationalism while acknowledging tension.)



At least three people died, and several others were injured in chaos that erupted at the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, where thousands of Kenyans had gathered to view the body of the late former Prime Minister following a stampede that occurred after crowds surged toward the presidential pavilion entrance forcing security personnel to fire in the air to control the swelling number of mourners eager to pay their last respects. Security officers shot, leaving at least three

people dead from gunshot wounds (*Citizen TV, Kass TV, TV47, October 16*). The report carried a negative tone, framed around human tragedy and security failure.

On October 17, *Kamba TV* aired special documentaries, archival footage of his political journey, and live coverage of national vigils and memorial services. The channel's tone was respectful, reflective, and patriotic, emphasising the values of peace, unity, and continuity that Odinga championed throughout his career. The day's coverage also captured emotional scenes from across the country, with viewers sharing heartfelt messages and stories of how the late leader had influenced their lives.



National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula and several MPs temporarily left an ongoing parliamentary session to plead with mourners outside Parliament to maintain calm and order. The leaders appealed for patience as security officials worked to control the swelling crowd (*Kass TV, October 16*). (The tone is neutral, focusing on public order and leadership response.) Siaya County suspended all official government business to allow residents and staff to mourn the death of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. Governor James Orengo issued a directive closing county offices and urging citizens to honour Raila's legacy through peace and unity. Public gatherings and interdenominational prayers were held in several towns

across the county (*Kass TV, KBC TV, October 15*). (The report focuses on national mourning and respect for a fallen leader. The tone is solemn, reverent, and positive, emphasising unity and tribute.)

Organisers of the Kisumu public viewing event urged supporters to mourn peacefully and avoid rowdy behaviour. The committee emphasised the need to honour Raila's memory with dignity, reflecting his lifelong advocacy for peace and democracy. Preparations for the Kisumu viewing were said to be ongoing, with security and logistics teams coordinating to handle large crowds (*Kass TV, October 16*). (The tone is positive, encouraging peace, unity, and respectful commemoration.)

President Ruto stated that Odinga's life and legacy would continue to shape Kenya's destiny for generations to come, describing him as a once-in-a-generation leader and a fearless reformer. He further postponed all his public engagements for the coming days and asked all public servants to do the same to join the nation in the period of mourning and deep reflection (*KBC TV, Ramogi TV, Citizen TV, KTN, NTV, TV47, Kass TV, Baite TV, Kameme TV, West TV, Kamba TV, Kisii TV, Weru TV, Kamba TV, Nenyon TV, October 15*).

Parliament was abruptly adjourned following the shocking news of the death of former Prime Minister. The National Assembly was forced to suspend the morning sitting prompting an outpouring of grief from MPs across the political divide (*TV47, NTV October 15; KBC English Service, Kass TV, October 16*). The report was negative as it conveyed shock, grief, and sadness following the unexpected death of Rt. Hon Raila Amollo Odinga. Further, The Senate of Kenya convened a special sitting on October 16, 2025, to eulogise Odinga in the Senate Chamber at parliament buildings. Speaker Moses Wetang'ula urged

all MPs to wear black attire and ribbons as a mark of respect and mourning for the departed statesman (*Sky FM, Milele FM, Radio Citizen, Kass TV October 15*).



In Kang'o Ka Jaramogi, Bondo, Siaya County residents mourned Odinga as local traders vacated the town to his Opoda farm, wjile others went to his father's home and the Odinga family graveside (*KBC TV, TV47, NTV, Chamgei FM, Milele FM October 15*).

Public figures across the political spectrum including President William Ruto, former President Uhuru Kenyatta, and Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka sent heartfelt messages of condolence. Across the country, thousands of Kenyans held prayer vigils and candlelight ceremonies, expressing admiration for a man widely regarded as a father of modern Kenyan democracy (*Kameme TV, West TV, Ramogi TV, Citizen TV, Radio Citizen, Capital FM October 15*). Several leaders, including Governors, Member of Parliament, political leaders drawn from various parties, the media fraternity and the clergy joined Kenyans to mourn Odinga, acknowledging his contribution to the country and the African continent (*KBC TV, NTV, Kisii TV, TV47, Radio Citizen, Milele FM, Weru TV October 15; Emoo*

FM, Ramogi FM October 16). The reporting remained factual and respectful, acknowledging Odinga's death with reverence while celebrating his lifelong service to the nation and his impact on Kenya's democratic transformation.

African Union leadership, President of Somalia Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Germany Ambassador to Kenya Sebastian Groth, the President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema, Zimbabwean Opposition leader Nelson Chamisa, former AUC Chair Moussa Faki, India Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan, Rwanda President Paul Kagame, Luis Franceschi, Assistant Secretary General-The Commonwealth, President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, condoled with Kenyan government, family, and the people of Kenya following the death Raila with most of them describing him as a true statesman whose legacy of democracy, justice, and public service defined his decades long political journey (*KTN, Milele FM, KBC English Service, October 15*). The tone was positive with a celebratory framing as leaders focused on the impact of Raila as a democratic and a statesman.

Business came to a near standstill in Nairobi Central Business District (CBD) as hundreds of mourners poured onto the streets following the news of the death of the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. Among those on the streets were residents from Kibera informal settlement, where Odinga served as a member of parliament in his earlier political days. They marched from Kibera into down, causing traffic disruptions, eulogising him as a defender of human and social rights and a leader who was a unifying figure (*KBC TV, NTV, Kisii TV October 15*). (The coverage stood in a positive tone framed in a sombre and respectful tone, treating the

event as a significant national loss with official and commemorative. However, it was noted that majority engaged were male as compared to female)

Nairobi residents held peaceful demonstrations gathering at Jevanjee Gardens to honour a man remembered as a reformist, freedom fighter, and champion of freedom of expression. Emotions ran high, with some breaking down in tears, while isolated criminal elements briefly disrupted the peace by attempting theft and looting (*NTV, October 15*). The tone was neutral, framed with emotional depth and public solidarity, emphasising national mourning, reverence for Odinga's legacy, and the public's resolve to honour him despite brief disruptions – in-depth sound on tape report. In Karen, hundreds of mourners also thronged the late leader's residence (*KBC TV, TV47, Kisii TV, October 15*).

Live reactions from citizens in Kisii, Kisumu, Mombasa, Siaya, Migori, Kakamega, Busia, and Kwale, Rift Valley, Eldoret, Elgeyo Marakwet, and Nakuru where Odinga once enjoyed strong support, residents many of whom expressed sorrow, called for peace in Raila's honor whom they stated was a reformist and pan-Africanist. Crowds praised his role in securing the 2010 Constitution

and championing devolution, free speech, and inclusion, particularly for people with disability. Notably, Luo Council chair Odungi Randa urged peaceful remembrance (*NTV, (KBC TV, TV47, Tandao TV, NTV, October 15; Pwani FM, October 16)*).

On October 15, *KBC TV's* e engaged Dr Alphonse Kanga, National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) Regional Chair and discussed the reflections on the kind of man Raila Odinga was with a focus on his significant role in Kenyan politics. Dr. Kanga, on behalf of religious organisations, sent condolences to the family of Raila Odinga, highlighting him as a change champion for justice throughout his career, advocating for democratic reforms and social justice. The discussion provided a broad synopsis of Odinga's impactful, though at times controversial, political career and his legacy within Kenyan society. The tone was positive, emphasising the church's role in speaking out on behalf of those who cannot, while maintaining neutrality towards individuals, the head of state or ministers. Good moderation skills were observed in the entire conversation.

On October 15, *TV47's* 'The Morning Café' show co-hosted by Fred Indimuli and Abubakar Abdullahi engaged former KNUT Sec-



retary General Wilson Sossion and Political Commentator Meshack Odede. Both guests described Raila's passing as a monumental national loss. Sossion compared it to the death of Jomo Kenyatta, noting Raila's unmatched influence despite never winning the presidency. Odede characterised Raila as more than a politician, a movement whose impact extended across Africa. The mood of coverage across platforms remained sombre and respectful, with a strong emphasis on unity, peace, and national reflection.

On October 15, *TV47's* 'The daily report' hosted by Derbal Ainea, featuring panelists Senator Okong'o Omogeni (Nyamira), Senator Richard Onyonka (Kisii), and Jennifer Shamalla, an advocate of the High Court acknowledged Odinga's role in Kenya's democratic evolution. The interview leaned heavily on legacy and historical reflection, with no adversarial framing.

On October 15, *Citizen TV*, during JKL Live, Ayub Abdikadir hosted Ahmed Hashi, one of the architects of the ODM party, and David Osiany, former Chief Administrative Secretary in the Kenyatta administration (2018–2022) Hashi noted that Kenyans must honour the struggles Raila endured and Osiany described Odinga as "the very definition of patriotism." On October 15, KTN Prime presenter Jesse Rogers engaged Jeremiah Ki-oni, the Secretary General of Jubilee Party, Michael Agwanda, seasoned political analyst, Gitile Naituli and Javas Migambo both governance experts who explored his colossal impact, legacy and described Raila as a national icon, a political figure no one could overlook when speaking of the opposition in this country.

On October 15, *Weru TV* morning show Kuguukea, presenters Martin Gichunge and Stella Karimi hosted *Mutugi Karee*, *Weru TV* Reporter for an in-depth discussion on the

late Raila Odinga. The conversation centered on his demise, tributes, and the historical impact of his political career. The discussion highlighted Odinga's extensive contributions to Kenya's political landscape, reflecting on the history. The tone of the report was positive, framing his life as one of service and leadership, and emphasising how many Kenyans and political actors depended on his guidance and mentorship throughout his career.

The sports fraternity paid tribute to his enduring support for local sports. FKF president Hussein Mohammed paid his tribute to the late former premier as a towering political figure but also a devoted patron of Kenyan football. Gor Mahia FC, Club chair Ambrose Rachier praised a lifelong patron of Odinga, for stabilising the team and championing transparency in sports governance. Sporting events were suspended nationwide in his honour (*NTV, KBC TV, Radio Maitsha, Mulembe FM October 15*). The tone was positive, framed to highlight Raila Odinga's deep commitment to sports, portraying him as a unifying and inspirational figure whose contributions extended well beyond politics into national pride and youth development – in-depth package report).

On October 15, *NTV Tonight primetime bulletin*, aired under the slug #Raila Rests, featuring former Cabinet Minister Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi provided a deeply personal and political reflection on the legacy of the late Raila Odinga. (The tone of the discussion was neutral and analytical, with the guest expressing respectful admiration for Raila Odinga while also providing critical political analysis. The host's moderation was highly effective, using direct and challenging yet fair questions to expertly draw out the guest's nuanced insights without interjecting personal bias – in-depth monologue centric interview.

Siaya County suspended all official government business to allow residents and staff to mourn the death of former Prime Minister. Governor James Orengo issued a directive closing county offices and urging citizens to honour Raila's legacy through peace and unity. Public gatherings and interdenominational prayers were held in several towns across the county (*Kass TV, KBC TV, Ramogi FM, Sky FM October 15*). (The report focuses on national mourning and respect for a fallen leader. The tone is solemn, reverent, and positive, emphasising unity and tribute.)

On October 15-16, *Sulwe FM, Emoo FM, Classic 105*, the discussion focused on Raila's life and legacy, allowing listeners to share their views. Most listeners agreed that he was a politician who championed democracy, contributing significantly to the enactment of the new constitution. They noted that he groomed many leaders across the country, advocated for media freedom, and had a great passion for sports, particularly football. Listeners also described him as a defender of the people who valued peace during and after elections, even in moments of defeat. The station gathered views from various parts of the western region of Kenya. The tone was positive, honouring Rt. Hon Raila Odinga legacy.

In Bondo, Siaya County, Raila Odinga's hometown, mourners took to the streets, calling him a visionary and iconic leader who will be remembered forever (*Chamgei FM, Milele FM October 15*). Chamgei FM noted that the report focused on national mourning and respect for a fallen leader. The tone was solemn, reverent, and positive, emphasising unity and tribute.

On the second day of mourning, residents and leaders of Mombasa County continued to pay tribute to the late ODM leader Raila Odinga by lighting candles and singing

songs in his honor, describing him as a hero. Leaders, including incoming ODM Member of Parliament Pamela Ojala, along with residents, highlighted that Odinga was at the forefront of defending the 2010 Constitution, promoting democracy, and advocating devolution. (*Pwani FM, October 16*).

On October 16, *KBC English Service Breakfast* show presenter Nick Ndeda hosted Odoyo Owidi Policy and Political commentator and Milly Lwanga Advocate of the High court of Kenya who hailed Odinga as true face of opposition. The framing portrayed his passing as a national tragedy that transcended politics, emphasising official mourning. The coverage was professional and sensitive, avoiding sensationalism while focusing on Raila's legacy and the country's collective honour for a respected statesperson.

On October 16, *Spice FM, The Situation Room* presenters hosted Richard Onyonka Senator, Kisii County to explore the life, legacy, and impact of the late Raila Odinga. Onyonka shared his initial concerns about Odinga's health, his reflections on Odinga's controversial decisions, and the difficult conversations he had with friends and opponents about Odinga's legacy. The interview was framed around the life, legacy, and impact of Raila Odinga, a prominent Kenyan political figure. The host maintained a good balance between allowing the interviewee to share his perspectives. The host's interventions were appropriate and did not overshadow the interviewee's voice.

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Board of Directors, Management, and Staff joined the nation in mourning the death of the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga. In a statement, the Chair of the Board, Tom Mshindi, eulogised Raila as a steadfast pillar of democracy, justice, and unity. He said, Rai-

la's firm commitment to the ideals of good governance, inclusivity and national cohesion, inspired generations and transformed Kenya's political landscape. He further eulogised him as a man whose voice became a symbol of hope for countless Kenyans, and lifelong service would forever be remembered with deep respect and gratitude (*KBC TV, October 9*). The coverage was neutral, reflecting a national mood of mourning for a significant political figure and emphasising his legacy.

Kenyan leaders led by former President Uhuru Kenyatta mourned the loss of Raila Odinga, terming him a brother, close friend, and advisor. Wiper Leader Kalonzo Musyoka mourned the late PM as a patriot whose vision was to unite the country. The former DP, Rigathi Gachagua, celebrated the Late's milestones in promulgating the 2010 constitution. PLP leader Martha Karua termed the late Odinga a human rights activist who fought for Kenya's liberation. (*Radio Citizen, October 15*).

Royal Media Services Chairman, SK Macharia, mourned the death of the former PM,

Raila Odinga, terming him a visionary leader who shaped Kenya's political landscape, and more than a brother, but a friend. (*Radio Citizen, October 15*). Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leaders Martha Karua and Kalonzo Musyoka, praised Raila's fight for democracy and mourned his loss (Milele FM, October 15). National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetangula said that a special sitting starting 10 AM to Midnight on 16th October would be held to allow all MPs to pay their tributes to the late former PM Raila Odinga (*Radio Citizen, October 16*).

AIC retired Bishop Silas Yego said the death of Raila Odinga was a great loss to the country and urged Kenyans to pray for his family during this difficult time. He noted that people should learn the value of forgiveness from Raila, describing him as a leader with a forgiving heart who sought to unite even his political rivals (*Emoo FM, October 16*). The tone of the report was positive, emphasising compassion and unity through Bishop Yego's reflections. Farming was inspirational, portraying Raila Odinga as a moral example whose legacy of forgiveness and reconciliation should guide the nation.



Kenyan Football Club Gor Mahia was saddened by the death of its patron, the Late former Prime Minister Raila Amollo Odinga, a Stauch football fan and supporter of European club Arsenal. They recounted his donation of Ksh 10 million for the team during the season and another KShs 500,000 for each national team player during their African Nations Championship (CHAN) tournament (*Radio Maisha, October 15*). Former Chief Justice David Maraga stated that he was a leader who made significant contributions to democracy in Kenya and in Africa. Former Attorney General Githu Muigai pointed out Odinga's love, his profound and abiding faith in the future of Kenya and its people. Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) Secretary General Francis Atwoli described Raila as the glue that held Kenya together during moments of political misunderstanding (*Capital FM, October 15*).

FKF president Hussein Mohammed paid his tribute to the late former premier not only as a towering political figure but also a devoted patron of Kenyan football. The FKF boss reflected on his first encounter with Raila during the 2007 general elections campaigns (*Mulembe FM, October 15*). Archbishop Billy Owiti of the Voice of Salvation and Healing Church eulogised Raila as a visionary leader whose death has left a big gap to the Luo community and the nation at large. He called for calm as the country mourned Odinga. (16 October) James Obara a Luo Council member in Mombasa remembered Raila as a fighter of democracy stating that the Luo community has lost a community beacon adding that the former PM has left his supporters without a definite direction. Obara added that he will be remembered for his legacy (*Ramogi FM, October 16*). The tone of the item was neutral and showed respect for the deceased.

Thousands of Mombasa residents have con-

tinued to mourn the late Raila Odinga for a second day, lighting candles and holding peaceful processions in his honour. The Luo council of elders from the Coast also convened, announcing plans to send a special delegation to represent the community at his burial amid growing concerns of internal divisions following Odinga's demise (*Citizen TV, October 16*). Kenyans in Kampala also mourned and held vigils in Kampala, led by Bobi Wine and civil society groups in honour of the fallen pan-Africanist democratic legacy (*TV47, October 16*). The tone was positive, though the story had a deeper exploration of Raila's regional impact. It stood out for its cross-border perspective, showing the regional scope of Kenya's democratic struggle.

The Senate, National Assembly, Siaya County Assembly also held a special sitting in honor of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga with members hailing unwavering commitment to the country's democracy and his patriotism, and commitment to peace, and the stability of the nation (*KBC TV, Eta-ya TV, KTN, Citizen TV, October 16*). Tonality was neutral, with historic framing, while remembering what the deceased ODM party leaders had done for the country, creating a sombre and mournful mood in Parliament. At Council of Governors (CoGs) headquarters in Nairobi, governors paid tribute to former Prime Minister as a forthright leader, an astute politician, a defender of devolution and a gentle giant who stood for true justice (*KBC TV, Citizen TV, October 16*).

On October 20, *KBC TV* "The Cabinet" Segment featured the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga describing him as a man of immense charisma, courage and conviction. Hailed by many as "Baba" the father of modern democracy who dedicated his life to the struggle for freedom, justice and unity. *KBC* highlighted his key achievements and impact, particularly his long-standing struggle

for democracy, justice and unity in Kenya. On his political career, the report explored his political journey which included his significant contribution to the struggle for freedom and his various roles in Government. Odinga was known by his affectionate nicknames Baba “father”, Agwambo “the act of God” Nyundo “the hummer” Tinga “the tractor”- symbol of his former NDP party & *Mtu wa vitendawili* “the man of riddles.”

Religious leaders in Homabay described Odinga’s death as a major setback to the country and further urged Kenyans to honor his legacy by maintaining peace and unity across the country (*KBC TV, October 16*). The Maa Community eulogised the late Odinga as the firm protector of the Maa community and the defender of the Maasai’s Mau Forest. (*KBC TV, October 16*). Kenya Sports fraternity joined the nation in mourning the late Raila Odinga as a true sportsman who believed in the unifying power of sports in the country and across the region among them his favourite local football club Gor Mahia and English Premier league Arsenal. (*KBC TV, October 16*).

Some tributes from the sports fraternity were shared by NOC President Shadrack Maluki, Athletics Kenya, Pamoja CHAN 2024 Local Organising Committee of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, FKF President Hussein Mohammed, Gor Mahia FC Chairman Ambrose Rachier, Kenya Rugby and Arsenal Football club (*KBC TV, October 16*) The tone was positive, framed in a mournful, reverential and laudatory way reflecting the solemnity and respect typically accorded to Raila. Additionally, the coverage honoured Raila’s contributions to sports and recognises his enduring legacy beyond the political sphere.

On October 16, *TV47* featured Prof Thiong’o Maina and Prof Ngotho wa Kariuki, former political detainees and close allies of Raila,

in a discussion that reflected his sacrifices during the fight for multi-party democracy. They also featured a Kisii artist’s soapstone sculpture chronicled Raila’s life in stone (*TV47, October 16*) The discussion was respectful, historical, and analytical. Both guests portrayed Raila as a principled leader focused on the bigger picture, not vengeance. The interviewing skills were commendably measured, respectful, and balanced, allowing the guests to provide insight without overt editorial framing.

On October 16, *West TV* presenter Felix Kubasu hosted Job Bwonya, a political analyst in Bungoma and Kakamega counties and a resident analyst for the station. Mr. Bwonya offered insightful analysis throughout the broadcast, addressing topics such as Raila’s political supremacy, the reasons behind his widespread admiration, and the symbolic significance of the state burial accorded to him despite never having served as President. (The station provided live coverage of the arrival of Hon. Raila Odinga’s mortal remains from India at JKIA. The tone of the broadcast remained balanced, avoiding politicization or partisanship.

Nyamira Governor Amos Nyaribo led residents in mourning Raila Odinga. Governor Nyaribo lauded the hard work of Raila in ensuring that Kenyans get their rights and freedom of expression. Nyamira residents remembered Raila as a leader who fought for devolution, was a peace maker, a leader who always urged Kenyans to maintain peace, the recent one being calling out on Gen Zs to keep peace despite opposing the Financial Bill 2024. Other Nyamira leaders including Nyamira Senator, Okong’o Omogeni and West Mugirango MP Steve Mogaka also condoled the sudden death of Raila Odinga as a big loss to Kenya, and East African community (*Kisii TV, October 16*)

On October 17, TV47 'The Morning Café' segment hosted by Fred Indimuli, engaged Ishmael Nyaribo, an Advocate of the High Court and Mwenda Njoka, the Chief Executive Officer Cape Media and discussed Raila Odinga's final journey. Nyaribo praised the police for their calm and measured response to the large, emotional crowd at Kasarani Stadium following his immense influence, noting that his presence was felt strongly from the airport through to the stadium and parliament, reaffirming his status as the People's President. Nyaribo commended the police's restraint, contrasting it with typical riot responses, and stressed the importance of allowing political party succession to happen democratically, based on merit rather than personal loyalty.

Mwenda Njoka highlighted the need for the National Police Service, Intelligence, and Military agencies to collaborate on clear standard operating procedures to anticipate and manage potential security risks. He suggested that the security arrangements for the events had not been sufficiently planned. The segment also featured live updates from reporters at various locations. The coverage was respectful, solemn, and professionally moderated, with the host maintaining a calm and balanced discussion. The guests provided valuable legal and media perspectives, ensuring objectivity and constructive criticism, particularly regarding security arrangements. The tone was neutral to positive, avoiding sensationalism and partisan bias. However, the panel lacked gender diversity, featuring only male participants, which falls short of the Media Council Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya emphasis on inclusive representation.

On October 21, *Kamba TV* presenter Albanus Wambua hosted an engaging discussion focusing on the future of Kenya following the

passing of the Right Honorable Raila Amolo Odinga host's featured Peter Mutuku Mutua, the Head of the Nairobi County Service Delivery Unit. Mutua reflected on Raila's political journey, his contribution to Kenya's democratic transformation, and his legacy as a symbol of reform and opposition leadership. He highlighted how Raila's presence had shaped the nation's political direction for decades, inspiring both loyalty and debate among Kenyans. Listeners actively participated through call-ins and social media, expressing both admiration for Raila's steadfast pursuit of justice and uncertainty about who could carry forward his political vision. The presenter ensured a balanced and reflective tone, guiding the conversation toward unity, continuity, and the need for Kenya to uphold the values Raila stood for peace, inclusivity, and democratic governance.

On October 16, *KTN* engaged former Makueni Governor Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, who honoured Raila Odinga's lifelong dedication to justice and reform. Kibwana praised Raila as a visionary mobiliser who mentored leaders and credited him for transformative work in the Transport and Infrastructure docket. The tone was positive and reflective. Kenya's Gen Z reflected on the profound impact he had on their political awakening. Seen as a symbol of defiance and resilience, many young Kenyans credit Raila, fondly called "Baba", with teaching them to question power and fight for justice. Odinga bridged past struggles with modern activism, inspiring their protests both on the streets and online. Despite recent political shifts that drew criticism, Gen Z sees his passing as a torch moment, urging them to carry forward his spirit of liberation into Kenya's future (*NTV, October 16*). (The tone was positive, portraying Raila Odinga as an inspirational and transformative figure whose legacy continued to empower and unite Kenya's younger gener-

ation – in-depth live report).

Kikuyu elders visited the Odinga family at Opoda Farm, where they delivered nine cows as a gesture of cultural reconciliation (TV47, October 22). Framed as human interest with cultural diplomacy, the segment carried a positive tone and was respectfully reported. It aligned with the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya provisions on promoting national cohesion and avoiding incitement. This story stood out as a rare optimistic counterweight in an otherwise conflict-heavy bulletin.



On October 21, NTV's primetime show: *The Last Word*, hosted by Eric Latiff and Sharon Momanyi, featured a special edition analysing the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga's impact on Kenya's democracy. Guests included Dr James Nyikal - Member of Parliament (MP) for Seme, who praised Odinga's pragmatic leadership during crises like the 2007-2008 post-election violence; Samuel Pogisio, a former Minister and Senator, who highlighted Odinga's historic role in advancing multi-party democracy; and activist Japheth Muroko, who shared personal experiences of Odinga's grassroots support.

Together, they celebrated Odinga as a key architect of the 2010 constitution, a unifying leader, and a steadfast advocate for ordinary Kenyans. The live studio audience was actively engaged, contributing personal tributes and connecting Odinga's legacy to current political issues, such as newly passed bills they viewed as threats to the very democratic freedoms Odinga championed. The hosts effectively moderated the discussion by weaving together historical narratives from the panel with contemporary concerns from the audience, ensuring the conversation remained focused on Odinga's democratic contributions while allowing for critical perspectives on his political compromises.

2.1.5 Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) leadership Changes (October 16-24, 2025)

The media for the period between October 16-24, 2025, trended toward analytical introspection on ODM's post-Raila, shifting from eulogies to succession debates amid the party's first formal leadership change since 2024, with outlets like *Etaya TV*, *TV47*, and *Citizen TV* framing Oburu Odinga's interim role as a "*temporary steer until ODM's top organs convene*," emphasising democratic continuity over chaos. *TV47's* Morning Café hosted Prof. Fred Ogola who reflected on Raila's "unmatched influence despite never winning the presidency," blending legacy with pragmatic analysis. *Citizen TV's* Trevor Ombija allowed Godfrey Osotsi to explore "*leadership dynamics*" respectfully. Regional stations like Mulembe FM and Kwitu FM excelled in listener engagement, with Omar Bakuli's Mununjiru fostering "diverse opinions on leadership succession," through call ins.

Gaps noted include gender inclusivity and editorial restraint, with panels like *TV47's* Morning Café featuring only men, falling

short of Clause 5 on balance. Editorial lapses were noted on TV47's Linda Alela interview with Kasmuel McOure, where abusive labels like "dogs" in reference to Rigathi Gachagua sentiments on Raila Odinga went unchecked despite a disclaimer, raising concerns on decency and editorial guidance on air. Busia Border Radio's successor debate lacked expert depth, relying on caller speculation without "deeper political context." These highlight a need for proactive moderation and diverse sourcing to sustain trust in transitional coverage, as Philip Masinde noted on West TV, "No current leader in Kenya can match Raila's legacy in championing democracy."

Media content

In a statement, Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) endorsed Siaya Senator Oburu Odinga as the Acting Party leader following the death of Raila Amollo Odinga. Read by the Deputy party Leader and Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Shariff Nassir after an emergency NEC meeting in Nairobi, the council noted that Oburu would temporarily steer the party until ODM's top organs convene to elect a substantive leader. This is the second time there is a formal leadership change in ODM, the last that was held 2024 when Odinga briefly delegated internal party functions to Kisumu Governor Prof. Anyang Nyong'o while he was pursuing African Union Commission (AUC) chairmanship bid. (*Etaya TV, KTN TV, Weru TV, Ramogi TV, KBC TV, Ramogi TV, October 16*) The coverage was framed in a neutral tone announcing the party's decision without apparent bias.

On October 20, TV47 explored the internal fragmentation of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) following Raila's death. The coverage profiled three emerging factions: the pro-government wing, the legacy custodians, and the younger generation

leaders. The coverage leaned heavily on political analysis, citing political analyst Mark Bichachi. The framing was analytical, with a neutral tone, with internal voices from ODM leadership. The story's strength was in its exploration of ideological divergence.



On October 20, during *Citizen TV's* Daily Report, Trevor Ombija hosted Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi, who also serves as ODM's Deputy Party Leader. The discussion focused on the future of the ODM party and its leadership dynamics following the passing of Raila Odinga. Ayub Abdikadir hosted Paul Mwangi, a High Court advocate, Raila Odinga's lawyer, and long-time confidant, who offered rare insights into Odinga's personality, leadership, and political legacy. Mwangi portrayed Odinga as a principled, fearless leader and a steadfast social democrat devoted to liberty, democracy, and social justice. He cited Odinga's firm stance on the Mau Forest issue as proof of his conviction-driven leadership. Reflecting on the 2013 election petition, Mwangi revealed that their legal team had uncovered evidence ca-

pable of nullifying over 80,000 votes enough to trigger a runoff, but the court dismissed their 800-page affidavit. (*Citizen TV, October 20*)

October 20, *TV47's* 'The Morning Café' segment hosted by Fred Indimuli, engaged Prof. Fred Ogola, political analyst Dismas Mokuu, and Advocate Kibe Mungai featured a discussion on the future of ODM after Raila Odinga's passing. Prof. Ogola reflected on how many people only truly appreciated Raila Odinga's contributions after benefiting from his efforts, particularly noting his advocacy for the 2010 Constitution and devolution. He described Raila as a visionary and valuable political figure. Ogola expressed uncertainty about ODM's future leadership, metaphorically saying that with Raila gone, God would need to "improvise a tail" for the party, which he viewed as lacking a clear successor. Mokuu emphasised the importance of recognising Raila Odinga's courageous, though sometimes unpopular, decisions. He urged Kenyans to distinguish political rivalry from outright enmity.

The segment highlighted the leadership vacuum and the need for transparent party processes. The tone was neutral, balancing respect for Raila's legacy with critique on the party leadership. While the discussion was professional, formal, and met ethical guidelines, it was noted that the guest panel lacked gender diversity, featuring only men.

Kisii Governor Simba Arati urged President William Ruto to rejoin the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and become its flagbearer in the 2027 General Election. Speaking at a rally in Kisii, Arati praised Ruto's past contribution to ODM during the 2007 coalition era, saying his leadership skills could help unite the party. The statement sparked lively reactions across political circles, with some interpreting it as sarcasm and others

as a call for political reconciliation. Arati's remarks come amid renewed debates about alliances and possible realignments ahead of the next polls (*Kameme TV, October 21*). Tone: Neutral: The report presents the statement and public reactions without judgment, focusing on political dialogue.



Following the conclusion of the seven-day official mourning period for former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, former Labour Minister Philip Masinde remarked that no current leader in Kenya can match Raila's legacy in championing democracy and defending the rights of citizens. He emphasised that Raila's absence left a significant gap in Kenya's political landscape, as no politician had demonstrated the same courage and consistency in advocating for democratic ideals (*West TV, October 21*) The statement framed Raila Odinga as an irreplaceable figure in Kenya's political history, reflecting a tone of respect and national admiration. The coverage adopted a positive and reflective tone, focusing on Raila's enduring influence and democratic contributions rather than polit-

ical divisions. The framing elevated Raila's legacy as a unifying national symbol, and the journalist effectively maintained neutral professionalism while allowing the tribute to carry emotional and historical weight.

Two days after the burial of an enigma, the firebrand politician, leaders across the political divide returned to the drawing board to rethink their strategies without him as the ODM party faces internal cracks. Raila died without publicly appointing a successor nor mentoring anyone to prepare for this moment (*KTN TV, October 21*).

On October 21, *TV47* delved into the succession crisis within ODM following Raila Odinga's death. Political analyst Arnold Maliba declared ODM politically lifeless, describing its current leadership as "political orphans." The political analysts indicated that ODM is "*politically lifeless*" and its leaders "*political orphans*." They focused on internal party fragmentation and scrutinised President Ruto's controversial statement about ODM's future role in government.

October 21, *TV47's* 'The Morning Café' segment hosted by Fred Indimuli, engaged former ICT Cabinet Minister Samuel Poghiso and former Agriculture Cabinet Ministers Kipruto Arap Kirwa. The discussants acknowledged President Ruto's honors for Raila and contrasted them with the past. While also noting Ruto's statement about ODM's future, the analysis framed Raila as a resilient democratic leader and suggested Ruto was attempting to align with ODM, presenting a less fragmented perspective.

On October 21, *Kamba TV's* presenter Albanus Wambua hosted an insightful political discussion featuring Hon. Peter Mutuku, the Head of the Nairobi County Service Delivery Unit. The conversation centered on the fate of the Orange Democratic Movement

(ODM) following the passing of the Right Honourable Raila Amollo Odinga, who had been the party's long-serving leader and symbol of reform politics in Kenya. The segment, broadcast during a prime talk show, explored the growing debate within the political landscape regarding the future direction of ODM.

The conversation, between host Wambua and Hon. Peter Mutuku, analysed the internal debate over the party's leadership and direction. Mutuku emphasized the need for unity and integrity, urging leaders to uphold Raila Odinga's legacy of democracy, justice, and inclusivity by prioritizing the interests of Kenyans over personal ambition. The host facilitated the discussion with well-researched questions on how ODM can maintain its relevance.

On October 21, *Busia Border Radio, Breakfast Show* presenters Richard Omuse and Elias Iteba introduced a discussion referencing the *People Daily* headline, "Raila Honoured by State as ODM Power Battle Kicks Off." The presenters engaged listeners on whom they believed should succeed Raila Odinga as the ODM party's flag bearer. Omuse noted that some people had proposed Edwin Sifuna for his leadership qualities, while others mentioned Babu Owino based on regional representation. Iteba added that names such as Wycliffe Oparanya, Gladys Wanga, and Hassan Joho had also been floated as potential successors. The hosts invited listeners to share their opinions on who could best "fit Raila's shoes" and carry forward his political legacy.

The discussion was lively and engaging, offering a platform for public participation in post-Raila political succession debates. The tone was neutral, and the framing focused on political continuity within ODM rather than personal rivalry. Presenters encour-

aged balanced dialogue and avoided speculative or divisive remarks. However, the analysis could have been enriched by including expert commentary on party structures or succession procedures to provide listeners with deeper political context.

On October 21, *Mulembe FM Breakfast show Mununjiru'* presenters Omar Bakuli and Rozy Atieno, hosted Martin Andati, Political Analyst for a discussion on ODM transition. Andati noted that the party's fate in western region was shaky and the anticipated infighting which according to the analyst, would eventually lead to splitting in the party resulting in many factions. The discussion was timely and with the Andati having knowledge of western region politics, was able to share informed insights, the moderation by the presenters was professional and balanced.

October 21, *Kwitu FM Breakfast show* presenters Syuki wa Syuki, Kisangi wa Kisangi, and Mulisi wa Mukuyu engaged listeners in a discussion on the varying sentiments expressed by ODM party members during the burial of the late Odinga and deliberated on the future of the party. The presenters encouraged listener participation, capturing diverse opinions on leadership succession and the direction ODM may take moving forward. The tone of the discussion remained neutral to ensure balanced representation of differing views.

On October 22, the political analysts who appeared on the Daybreak programme of the *Citizen TV* were quoted saying that the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) Party has a big test of loyalty after the death of the party leader, Raila Odinga. The commentators noted that in-fighting can now arise as members disagree on who is to succeed and the path of ideological orientation. The analysts indicated that the transition process

will be the deciding factor of ODM unity and relevance in future elections. (The tone was neutral. It was an objective and fair report that illustrated several points of view from the analysts without any bias and sensations. It has been presented as political commentary, with editorial restraint and good comment being shown).

Various political experts in Homa Bay County, led by Peter Odede, urged ODM to pause discussions about its next flag bearer following the death of its leader, emphasising that the party should first allow the family sufficient time to mourn (*Sky FM, October 22*). Neutral tonality was noted, focusing on respectful timing and caution in political discourse. Framing as a call for restraint to avoid public division and preserve dignity following the leader's death.

On October 22, *Spice FM, The Situation Room* presenters hosted Otiende Amollo, Rarieda Constituency Member of Parliament and member of the ODM party where the discussion focused on the ODM party, broad-based government following the passing of Raila Odinga. Amollo emphasised that the ODM had a strong democratic tradition and has always allowed diverse opinions within the party. He stated that this democratic nature of the party would be maintained, even in the absence of a strong charismatic leader like Raila Odinga. He explained that the implementation of the 10-point framework agreement that Odinga signed with President Ruto was an ongoing process. Amollo urged the government to fully implement the agreement to honor Odinga's legacy.

However, he expressed concerns about the perception of parliament being "captured" by the executive, with the ruling party having a supermajority. He emphasised the crucial role of parliament in scrutinising the executive and maintaining its independence,

even in the context of the broad-based Government. He urged his fellow members of parliament to maintain their independent thinking and robust scrutiny of government proposals. The discussion provided insights into the current state of the ODM party, its role in the broad-based government, and the challenges and opportunities it faces in the post-Raila Odinga era. The tone of the interview was positive, allowing Amollo to express his views and perspectives.

On October 22, *Spice FM, The Situation Room* presenters hosted Silas Jakakimba who described Odinga as having different personas - the man, the myth, the legend, the global leader, the democrat, the climate advocate, the former Prime Minister, and the mysterious “Agwambo”. He revealed that Odinga was a prolific philanthropist who gave generously without seeking public recognition. His foundation was only recently established, as he preferred direct giving without intermediaries. He discussed Odinga’s close and complex relationship with President Uhuru Kenyatta, who has been deeply mourning his passing and visiting his graveside regularly. Jakakimba highlighted Raila Odinga’s key role in the opposition movement, leading protests and demonstrations, and playing a crucial role in the country’s democratic processes. The tone of the reporting was positive, Odinga was framed as a transformative and multifaceted African leader, whose legacy extends beyond the borders of Kenya.

On October 21, *TV47’s* Linda Alela hosted Kasmuel McOure, a youthful ODM figure who discussed the future of political activism post-Raila. McOure’s comments were sharp, sometimes abusive, describing some leaders as “dogs” and accusing other ODM members of betrayal. The segment leaned into generational politics, though it lacked editorial moderation or balance, as no coun-

terviews were presented. The discussion was combative, with ethical grey zones due to personal attacks and unverifiable claims. Interviewing skills were provocative but insufficiently balanced, raising questions on editorial gatekeeping. Despite the news anchor asking him to put a disclaimer, he continued with the abusive language.

Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang’i called on leaders from the Nyanza region to have unity as a way of showing respect to the former Prime Minister, late Raila Odinga. Matiang’i, while in Homabay County, stated that Raila used to find ways of bringing people together even when political temperatures were high. (A positive tone was noted with highlights of calls to remain together as a family in honour of their fallen hero-Raila Odinga (*Kisii TV, October 21*).

2.1.6 Mashujaa Day Celebration



The broadcast media overwhelmingly re-framed the 62nd Mashujaa Day as a national tribute to Raila Odinga, with *KTN, Citizen TV, TV47, KBC, and Ramogi TV* leading wall-

to-wall coverage of the posthumous Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart (C.G.H.) award and the minute's silence observed countrywide. Outlets celebrated the historic first-ever conferment of the nation's highest honour on an opposition leader, with *Citizen TV* and *KTN* explaining that the C.G.H. "symbolises selfless service, national unity, and excellence in leadership" and noting it had previously only gone to heads of state or foreign dignitaries. Positive, unifying tones dominated majority of reports, as President Ruto's praise of Raila "placing Kenya's unity above personal ambition" (*KTN, Citizen TV*) and regional tributes from Narok's David Sankok and Kitilai Ole Ntutu thanking Ruto for the state burial (*Radio Citizen*) were amplified without adversarial framing.

Professionalism remained high with factual and contextual reporting, with *Citizen TV* and *KBC TV* delivering calm, informative packages on the award's history and symbolism, while Emoo FM's Geoffrey Osotsi interview reinforced "peace and unity" and countered tribalism accusations in measured language. However, gaps emerged in balance and restraint, Trans Nzoia Governor George Natembeya's accusation of presidential "hypocrisy" for a posthumous award (*Sky FM, Kisii TV*) was aired raw with little counter-context, and *KTN/Citizen TV*'s negative framing of Kalonzo Musyoka's deliberate absence - citing analysts claiming "government attempts to sideline the opposition" - reintroduced partisan tension into an otherwise reconciliatory day.

Media content

The death of Raila Odinga dominated Mashujaa Day celebrations, where a moment of silence was observed in his honour. President Ruto led in sharing the tributes, praising Raila as a visionary statesman who consistently placed Kenya's unity above per-

sonal ambition although the event was initially themed around sustainable energy. The celebrations turned into a moving tribute filled with songs, dances, and emotional eulogies in his memory. Ruto defended Raila's decision to cooperate with the government, noting that it was rooted in his commitment to stability and development. Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki and Senegal's President Diomaye Faye also recognised his immense contribution to the continent (*KTN, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, TV47, KBC TV, October 20*). The story carried a positive tone, celebrating Raila's iconic life and service to the nation and continent.

Leaders countrywide used the Mashujaa Day celebrations to offer their tributes to Raila Odinga. In Sogoo, Narok County, EALA MP, David Sankok, remembered the leader as forgiving and asked Kenyans to emulate the examples left by Mr Odinga. His sentiments were reiterated by the Narok South MP, Kitilai Ole Ntutu, who thanked President Ruto for according Odinga a state burial (*Radio Citizen, October 21*). Neutral tonality as the report objectively captured the tributes flowing in from various leaders in the country.

The late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was posthumously awarded Kenya's highest national honour, the Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart (C.G.H.), by President William Ruto during the celebrations. A gazette notice dated October 20 confirmed the award, recognizing Odinga's lifelong commitment to democracy, good governance, Pan-Africanism, and public service. This marked the first time the honour had been awarded to an opposition leader (*Citizen TV, KTN, TV47, KBC TV, NTV, October 20; Pwani FM, Capital FM, Mo Radio October 21*). The report carried a positive tone and respectful and unifying impact, emphasising national recognition and reconciliation. 15 Kenyans and one Ni-

gerian were awarded the National Heroes for their outstanding contribution that has made a significant impact in the country (*Capital FM, October 21*).

Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka was absent during the 62nd Mashujaa Day celebrations at Ithookwe Stadium, Kitui County which sparked speculation about growing rifts between Kenya Kwanza and the united opposition. Political analyst Prof. Peter Kagwanja argued that excluding Kalonzo from the national prayer service program for Raila at Nyayo Stadium was deliberate, signalling government attempts to sideline the opposition. Analyst Kenneth Ombigi added that had Kalonzo attended, it might have been misconstrued as he joined the government, noting that he remains a key political figure controlling the Lower Eastern region much like Raila did with Nyanza (*KTN, Citizen TV, October 20*).

President Ruto criticised opposition leaders, including Kalonzo Musyoka, accusing them of dividing Kenyans without offering solutions. Ruto pledged to revive stalled projects in the region and urged Kitui residents to unite behind his leadership for the sake of progress (*Citizen TV, October 20*). The tone was positive and negative, framed as developmental while exposing underlying political rivalries and the absence of key opposition leaders.

Kalonzo Musyoka skips Mashujaa Day celebrations in Kitui

Monday, October 20, 2025



Trans Nzoia Governor George Natembeya criticised President William Ruto for awarding the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga the Chief of the Golden Heart of Kenya (CGH) posthumously. He said the honour should have been given while Raila was alive and accused the President of hypocrisy (*Sky FM, Kisii TV, October 21*). The tone is negative, accusing the President of hypocrisy over Raila Odinga's posthumous award. The framing positions Natembeya as a truth-teller challenging the government's moral standing and policies.

ODM party members, led by Deputy Party Leader Geoffrey Osotsi, urged Kenyans to embrace peace and unity while mourning Raila Odinga and to avoid divisive rhetoric. Osotsi emphasised that Raila was not a tribalistic, addressing debates that arose after he received an award during Mashujaa Day, which President Ruto said he deserved for his dedication to democracy and good governance. Osotsi assured that the ODM party remains intact and urged supporters not worry (*Emoo FM, October 21*). The tone was positive, highlighting calls for peace, unity, and respect for Raila Odinga's legacy. Framing emphasised national cohesion and the party's stability while countering divisive narratives.

On October 22, in a prerecorded interview *KBC TV* presenter John Jacob Kioria engaged Principal Secretary State Department for Culture, Arts and Heritage Ummi Bashir who spoke about the Mashujaa Day celebrations. PS Ummi Bashir highlighted the state department's commitment to rotating national holiday celebrations to different counties. She explained that this strategy is intended to prevent the centralization of cultural events and to engage people directly where they live. She added that the state is trying to come up with a Kenyan musicians' museum where we will appreciate artists.

The C.G.H. is the top tier of Kenya's Order of the Golden Heart, established under the National Honours Act of 2013. The order has three levels Chief (C.G.H.), Elder (E.G.H.), and Moran (M.G.H.) and is awarded by the President to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional service, patriotism, leadership, and integrity. The medal, featuring a golden pointed star surrounded by a wreath and a ribbon in Kenya's national colours, symbolises selfless service, national unity, and excellence in leadership. The award was first introduced in 1966 by Kenya's founding President Jomo Kenyatta to honour individuals who made extraordinary contributions to the nation (*Citizen TV, October 20*). Notable recipients include Jomo Kenyatta, Uhuru Kenyatta, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Prince Rahim Aga Khan. This marks the first time in history that the award has been bestowed upon an opposition leader and non-head of state, underscoring Raila Odinga's enduring impact on Kenya's democracy and unity (*Citizen TV, KTN, October 20*). The tone was positive, framed as informative and historical, explaining the significance of the national honour and underscoring Raila's exceptional legacy and impact on the nation.

2.1.7 Remembering Raila Odinga

Kenyan broadcast media trended toward reflective, unifying legacy-building in the weeks following Raila Odinga's death, with outlets like *Citizen TV, KBC TV, TV47*, and Ramogi TV dedicating segments to tributes, cultural rites, and cross-community solidarity, framing him as "the father of modern democracy" and a "symbol of hope for countless Kenyans" (*KBC TV eulogy by Tom Mshindi*). Positive tone prevailed in majority of coverage, from Sulwe FM's listener tributes emphasizing Raila's "champion of democracy". Spice FM's Situation Room where Silas Jakakimba portrayed him as "a prolific

philanthropist who gave generously without seeking public recognition." Professionalism excelled in moderation, Citizen TV's Yvonne Okwara maintained a "*solemn and respectful tone*" in her Tonight segment with Alex Owiti and Nderitu Mureithi, while Ramogi TV's Trevor Ombija balanced Ouma Oluga's call for "peace and unity" with thoughtful probing, ensuring "nuanced views without escalation."

Gaps were minor but notable in inclusivity and depth, gender diversity lagged, with TV47's Morning Café panel of Samuel Poghisio and Kipruto Arap Kirwa featuring only men, echoing Clause 5's balance concerns. Busia Border Radio's successor debate relied on callers without "deeper political context," risking superficiality. Overall, media's dignified restraint - avoiding sensationalism amid investigations into Kasarani fatalities (TV47) - upheld the Code, fostering national healing while amplifying voices like Koigi wa Wamwere's on "*the freedoms we had fought for*" (*Spice FM*), reinforcing journalism's role in reconciliation.

Media content

On October 16, during Tonight segment on *Citizen TV*, Yvonne Okwara hosted Governance Expert Alex Owiti and Kenya Revenue Authority Chair Nderitu Mureithi in a discussion reflecting on the legacy of Raila Odinga. Owiti emphasised the need to recognise and celebrate Raila's sacrifices for the nation, while Mureithi noted that Raila's legacy will endure, with Kenyans continuing to debate his role in advancing democracy, defending rights, and pushing the state toward greater democratic governance. Okwara conducted the interview in a solemn and respectful tone, acknowledging the gravity of the national moment while maintaining professional control of the discussion.

On October 16, *KBC TV's* Marie Yambo engaged Opiyo Owidi Political Analyst and discussed the Death of a political Enigma. Owidi stated that Raila was widely referred to as the “*political enigma*” of Kenya due to his enduring influence and ability to shape national politics for decades despite never winning the presidency. He admitted that both he and others had underrated Odinga’s immense popularity following the turnout of mourners for his repatriation at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) and subsequent public viewing far exceeded expectations. He added that people were willing to endure hardship and risk injury just to catch a glimpse of their “hero,” demonstrating the profound impact Odinga had on his supporters. On explaining the meaning of Enigma, Owidi stated that Odinga confounded rivals with his ability to remain a central political figure even without holding the highest office as his career was defined by survival, reinvention and handshakes with opponents.

Governor Ochilo Ayacko described Raila as a peace-loving leader, urging Kenyans to learn from his example and always put the nation’s interests before personal ambitions (*Ramogi TV, October 16*). Emanuel Ochieng effectively moderated a multi-guest panel featuring religious leaders, a governor, and an academic. He managed to bring out diverse perspectives on Raila Odinga’s life and legacy, allowing each speaker to contribute meaningful insights. Ochieng’s moderation helped weave a cohesive narrative honouring Raila’s contributions while encouraging unity and reflection, showing his ability to handle complex group dynamics sensitively and constructively. The overall tone was neutral, reflecting the mood of national mourning following Raila Odinga’s death. The framing centers on honour, unity, and cultural respect, portraying Odinga as a revered statesman whose passing has brought Ken-

yans and the international community together in grief.

On October 15, *Sulwe FM Mumilimo show*, the discussion focused on Raila’s life and legacy, allowing listeners to share their views. Most listeners agreed that he was a politician who championed democracy, contributing significantly to the enactment of the new constitution. They noted that he groomed many leaders across the country, advocated for media freedom, and had a great passion for sports, particularly football. Listeners also described him as a defender of the people who valued peace during and after elections, even in moments of defeat. The station gathered views from various parts of the western region of Kenya. The tone was positive, honouring Rt. Hon Raila Odinga legacy.

On October 16, *KBC English Service Breakfast show* presenter Nick Ndeda hosted Odoyo Owidi Policy and Political commentator and Milly Lwanga Advocate of the High court of Kenya whom they discussed about the life and legacy of Raila Odinga, they both agreed that Raila Odinga was an enigma. A true face of opposition. Through him so many politicians found their footing in the political arena. Raila also fought for democracy and multiparty and will forever remember him and his doings. The framing portrayed his passing as a national tragedy that transcended politics, emphasising official mourning. The coverage was professional and focused on Raila’s legacy and the country’s collective honour for a respected statesman.

On October 16 *Musyi FM* presenter Sir. Mwenge played tribute songs and goodwill speeches from various people across Ukambani. On phone he engaged leaders from Ukambani who have at one point worked with Raila Odinga either as politicians or

privately. Jonh Kiema who was at one-point personal assistant to Raila talked about his personal relationship with Raila highlighting how the late displayed leadership skills and had desire to change the country. Peter Mutulu who was at one-point Ukambani ODM branch chairman, he narrated how good a leader Raila was and how open he was ready to work with every leader for the good of the country.

On October 16, *Emoo FM Breakfast show* presenters Edwin Tanui and Eric Ronoh engaged listeners in a discussion about the death of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. They reflected on Raila's significant contribution to Kenya's democratic space and asked the audience what lessons current leaders could learn from his political life. Callers expressed their condolences to the family and offered glowing tributes, describing Raila as a champion of democracy and good leadership, even though he never had the chance to lead the country. Some noted that through Raila's handshakes, the nation experienced unity and calm after periods of political tension. The presenters handled the discussion with empathy and respect, maintaining a solemn and reflective tone appropriate for the subject. They effectively guided callers to focus on Raila Odinga's legacy and the lessons for current leaders, showing good moderation skills and sensitivity on the subject.

On October 16, *Sulwe FM* breakfast show hosted a segment celebrating the life and legacy of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. The presenters and listeners shared positive memories, praising his excellent listening skills, sharp memory, and role as a firm advocate for the people who kept the government in check. The tone was positive and commemorative, focusing on his contributions to democracy and national unity. The station honored him by playing

Dholuo songs, though a lack of interpretation for these songs potentially limited understanding for non-Dholuo speaking members of the diverse audience.

On October 16, *Classic 105 Breakfast show* presenters Maina and Kingangi addressed social media hatred toward Raila's legacy. Maina posted online that he did not have a good night's sleep, insinuating mourning; the post went viral, attracting negative comments. He responded by confronting keyboard warriors who criticised Raila's achievements, including political pluralism, electoral transparency, the 2010 Constitution, devolution, and freedom of speech that some misused. Callers were respectful and reminisced about Raila's successes, acknowledging he had faults but truly loved Kenya. Some callers became emotional and even cried on air.

On October 16, *Spice FM, The Situation Room* presenters hosted Richard Onyonka Senator, Kisii County to explore the the life, legacy, and impact of the late Raila Odinga. Onyonka shared his initial concerns about Odinga's health, his reflections on Odinga's controversial decisions, and the difficult conversations he had with friends and opponents about Odinga's legacy. Onyonka explained how Odinga made difficult decisions, such as working with the Ruto administration, to prevent the country from collapsing. He highlighted the nuanced discussions within the ODM caucus and Odinga's efforts to find a balance between idealism and pragmatism. Onyonka expressed disappointment that the current administration had not implemented the reforms and good governance measures that Odinga championed. He argued that honoring Odinga's legacy required concrete actions, not just a grand funeral.

Onyonka emphasised Odinga's significant contributions to the country, including his role in the constitutional changes, his advocacy for devolution, and his willingness to speak truth to power. He believed Odinga's influence would continue through the younger generation of leaders. Onyonka discussed the potential challenges facing ODM, Odinga's political party, in the wake of his passing. He expressed confidence in the party's ability to groom the next generation of leaders, such as Edwin Sifuna and Babu Owino, to carry on Odinga's legacy. The interview was framed around the life, legacy, and impact of Raila Odinga, a prominent Kenyan political figure. The host maintained a good balance between allowing the interviewee to share his perspectives. The host's interventions were appropriate and did not overshadow the interviewee's voice.



Kenyans across the country paid tribute to Odinga's lifelong struggle for democracy and justice. Leaders including Bungoma Governor Kenneth Lusaka, Kajiado Governor Joseph ole Lenku, Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka, and LSK President Faith Odhiambo reflected on his immense contributions (*KTN, October 20*).

A day after the state burial of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, retired President Uhuru Kenyatta visited Opoda Farm and Kang'o Ka Jaramogi to console the Odinga family. Accompanied by Raila's brother, Oburu Oginga, Uhuru visited Raila's grave, offered prayers, and toured the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Mausoleum in honour of the Odinga family's contribution to Kenya's history and democracy. Later, he proceeded to Raila's home, where he personally conveyed his condolences to Mama Ida Odinga (*Citizen TV, TV47, Kamba TV, KTN, October 20*). The tone was positive, framed as reflective and compassionate, emphasising friendship, respect, and continuity in honouring the Odinga family's contribution to Kenya's democracy.

On October 21, *Ramogi TV*, Presenter Trevor Ombija hosted Kisumu Senator Tom Ojienda to discuss the succession of the late ODM leader Raila Odinga. Senator Ojienda noted that many people were hesitant to stand for leadership, assuming Raila would hand-pick his successor without a proper voting process. He emphasised that the passing of Raila Odinga will have significant political effects on many ODM politicians. However, Ojienda warned against letting Edwin Sifuna interfere or manipulate the upcoming presidential elections. He assured that the ODM party will follow its established rules and processes. Ojienda further stated that ODM will not field a presidential candidate in 2027 and instead will support William Ruto. He urged Kenyans not to fear Raila's death, highlighting that he had mentored many leaders who are ready to carry on his legacy and complete his vision. Trevor Ombija demonstrated strong moderation skills by facilitating. He guided discussions on sensitive topic party succession and ensured clarity around political processes and future party directions.

On 22 October, report by Millicent Adhiambo, Bungoma Governor Kenneth Lusaka led a delegation of Bukusu elders to the home of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga in Bondo, Siaya County, to perform a traditional burial rite. Migori Governor Ochilo Ayacko led eight communities from Migori County to Raila's home to offer condolences and solidarity to the bereaved family (*Ramogi TV, October 22*). Tone is Positive, Framing is Cultural respect and unity framing, portraying a sense of togetherness and shared mourning across Kenya's diverse communities.



Elders from various communities visited the gravesite of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga to pay their final respects to a leader they described as a symbol of unity across the nation. By 10 a.m. Wednesday, a herd was ceremoniously led into Kang'o Kajaromogi in Bondo, three days after Odinga's burial. Luhya elders, led by Bungoma Governor Kenneth Lusaka, honoured Odinga as a lifelong friend of the Masinde family and a respected ally of the Luhya community. Elders from the Gikuyu community also condemned divisive politics, urging the country's leaders to embrace peace and sobriety.

During the visit, the elders performed traditional prayers, emphasising the need for continued national cohesion because Odinga and his family had long championed. Earlier, Ida Odinga and her daughter Rosemary had visited the gravesite. The late Prime Minister was laid to rest beside his father, Mzee Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, as the family prepared to perform the final rites in line with Luo traditions. Meanwhile, hundreds of mourners continued to flock to Kang'o Kajaromogi to pay their last respects to the late statesman (*Citizen TV, October 22*). The tone was positive, framed around unity, respect, and national healing. It highlighted the symbolic coming together of elders and leaders from diverse communities to honour Raila Odinga's legacy, promoting messages of peace, cohesion, and inter-ethnic respect.

Three days after former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was buried next to his father's grave at Kang'o Ka Jaramogi in Bondo, Siaya County, delegations of family, political and community leaders continued to stream to his home to condole with the family. Agikuyu elders drawn from Nakuru, Kiambu, Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Meru and Nyeri counties visited his graveside to pay homage. The leaders urged the region to maintain the friendship fostered by the departed former Prime Minister with the central Kenya community. (*KBC TV, October 22*)

On 22 October, A delegation from the Kikuyu Council of Elders, led by Ndia MP George Kariuki, visited the family of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga at his Opoda home in Bondo, Siaya County, in a symbolic gesture of peace, respect, and national unity. The elders were warmly received by Ida Odinga and Raila Junior before conducting special prayers at Raila's grave and presenting bulls to the family (*Ramogi TV, October 22*). The tone was positive. Framing is Peace and reconciliation framing, symbolising na-

tional unity, cross-community respect, and cultural solidarity during mourning.

On October 22, *Ramogi TV* Presenter Trevor Ombija hosted Ouma Oluga, the Principal Secretary for the State Department for Medical Services, in a heartfelt conversation remembering the late ODM leader Raila Omollo Odinga. Oluga reflected on Raila's selflessness, noting that he was never self-centred but always prioritised the wishes and welfare of the people. He praised his relentless fight for democracy, which he saw to empower and uplift citizens. Addressing the future of the ODM party, Oluga advised the Luo community and party members not to rush into making critical decisions in the wake of Raila's passing. He emphasized the importance of taking time to reflect carefully, warning that hasty choices could lead the party into turmoil or division. Ombija allowed thoughtful reflections on Raila Odinga's legacy, and maintained a balanced and respectful tone, helping guests express nuanced views without escalation.

Three days after former Prime Minister Raila Odinga was buried next to his father's grave at Kang'o Ka Jaramogi in Bondo, Siaya County, delegations of family, political and community leaders continued to stream to his home to condole with the family. Agikuyu elders drawn from Nakuru, Kiambu, Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Meru and Nyeri counties visited his graveside to pay homage. The leaders urged the region to maintain the friendship fostered by the departed former Prime Minister with the central Kenya community. (*KBC TV, October 22*).

Raila Odinga Jr. was installed as the head of the Raila Odinga family, taking over the mantle of leadership following his father's passing (*Sky FM, October 24*). The tone was positive, emphasising continuity, legacy, and

the preservation of the family's influence. The news was framed around the succession event, highlighting the ceremonial and symbolic aspects of leadership transfer.

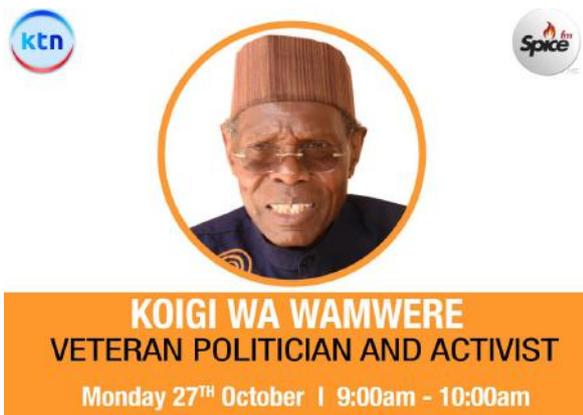
On October 27, *Ramogi FM "Kaka Wanene"*, Ken Muga and the People's Governor (name not mentioned) discussed Raila's death. Ken Muga warned politicians against politising Odinga's death. The trio noted that the journalist's fraternity had lost a good person given Odinga had never sued any media house their coverage notwithstanding. They both dismissed the rumours of Odinga dying earlier. The tone was positive, the trio were objective and respectful, avoiding sensationalism. The questions asked were relevant and timely. However, the discussion lacked a female voice.

On October 27, *Spice FM* hosted political analyst Bosco Mutegi Ikura, who argued that the ODM party is at a critical juncture and risks fragmentation without Raila Odinga's unifying leadership. Ikura expressed skepticism that the current party elite truly represent Raila's ideals, suggesting they are more focused on political expediency. He contended that younger, energetic leaders like Babu Owino and Edwin Sifuna have the innovation to carry forward Raila's legacy but may be blocked by the party's old guard. Ikura warned that if these progressive youth are not given leadership roles, they might break away to form their own movement, significantly shaking up Kenyan politics.

He emphasised the need for genuine, bottom-up public participation and incorporating diverse youth voices, rather than the current top-down approach. The discussion was balanced and objective, with the moderator actively guiding the conversation.

On October 27, *Spice FM*, The Situation Room hosted Koigi wa Wamwere, Veteran

Politician and Activist. Koigi reflected deeply on the aspirations and struggles of democracy fighters like himself, and the progress, or lack thereof, in achieving the freedoms and rights they had fought for in the past. Drawing parallels with the late Raila Odinga, whom Koigi saw as a comrade in the trenches of the struggle, he spoke of the torture and lasting marks that both had endured in their pursuit of democracy and human rights. Koigi felt that the freedoms they had fought for had yet to be achieved in their fullness. Reflecting on the progress and setbacks, Koigi pointed to the laxity and self-interest of some Kenyans, are willing to be “*accommodated into the system that crushes our determination to be free*” in exchange for personal gains. He believed that this has allowed the government to sabotage the collective struggle for freedom and rights. The interviewer framed these questions in a way that encouraged Koigi to reflect on the past struggles, compare the current situation to the aspirations of that time, and provide insights for the way forward for Kenyans.



KOIGI WA WAMWERE
VETERAN POLITICIAN AND ACTIVIST
 Monday 27TH October | 9:00am - 10:00am

RAO'S REFLECTIONS: THE DREAM THEY FOUGHT FOR

the
Situation
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Nomiya Church led a service at Raila Odinga's gravesite in Bondo, calling for peace

and unity. He emphasised that ODM was a party for all Kenyans, not just the Luo community, and urged humility in waiting for future leadership. Ida Odinga thanked attendees for their support and visit (*Sky FM, October 28*). The tone was positive, emphasising peace, unity, and humility. The news was framed around calls for national and party cohesion following the passing of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, highlighting solidarity within the Luo community and ODM supporters.

A special memorial service was held at All Saints Cathedral, Kampala, in honour of the late Raila Odinga. Speakers praised his courage and contribution to democracy in Africa (*Milele FM, Radio Maisha October 28*). Senior leaders from both nations, including Uganda's Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, who officially represented the Ugandan government was flanked by Kenya's Rosemary Odinga and Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o. In the event, the Late Odinga was remembered having maintained a long-standing relationship with Uganda's leadership, including President Yoweri Museveni, a relationship forged over decades (*Radio Maisha, October 28*).

On October 28, *Radio Citizen Kikao cha Jambo Kenya* hosted a panel discussion moderated by Ateya with Lincoln Njogu, Jamila Mohamed, and Philip Murutu, focusing on ODM politics following the death of former PM Raila Odinga. Secretary General Edwin Sifuna stated that ODM would remain in the broad-based government until 2027 to maintain peace and stability, endorsing Oburu Odinga as party leader. Ayub suggested that Sifuna's support for the broad-based government was likely due to pressure from influential party leaders and warned that the 2027 elections might cause ODM to split. Jamila emphasised that ODM

represents Raila's legacy, having secured over 6 million votes in his presidential bids, and urged party leaders to heed public opinion on the broad-based Government.

The hosts concluded that decisions on ODM's collaboration with the government on President Ruto's re-election would be made privately by senior party officials and President Ruto, not subject to public debate. The discussion featured the voice of the ODM Secretary General, Edwin Sifuna, clarifying ODM's decision to remain in the broad-based formation until 2027. The discussion remained balanced with Ateya, ensuring each panellist had the opportunity to speak. Equally, the panellists demonstrated commendable preparation on the topic of discussion, giving insightful answers and reflective viewpoints to listeners. The segment also featured listener engagement, fostering inclusive discussion.

On October 29, *Sulwe FM Breakfast show* presenters Kisondio and Khayota hosted former Kanduyi MP Alfred Khang'ati to discuss Raila Odinga's death, the sugar sector, and his political ambitions. Khang'ati began by sending condolences to Raila's family, recalling his time working under him in the Office of the Prime Minister. He described Raila as the greatest Shujaa who was jailed for eight years for opposing bad governance and advocated for development and the new constitution. The tone was neutral towards devolution and Khangati's political ambition. The presenters demonstrated good moderation skills; When Khang'ati wanted to continue speaking during the news hour, they respectfully paused the discussion and resumed it after the news segment as planned.

On October 29, *Ramogi TV* hosted Homa-Bay County, Senator, Moses Kajwang for a discussion on Odinga's death and his leg-

acy. Kajwang eulogised Odinga as the father of devolution, multiparty and the new constitution. Kajwang quoted the wage bill and pending bills as challenges affecting devolution. Sen. Kajwang urged the Luo community to support the government to develop more. The tone of the discussion was positive; the political discussion was timely and there was no sensationalism given the family was still mourning. The questions asked were timely and gave the guest ample time to answer the questions rightfully.

Isaiah Omondi, Kisumu County Officer for Bunge la Wananchi, called for unity among the Luo community, saying solidarity was key to regional and national development following the death of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga (*Sky FM, October 29*). The tone was positive, stressing that solidarity was essential for regional and national development. The news was framed around promoting cohesion within the Luo community in the aftermath of Raila Odinga's death.

National and international leaders continued visiting Raila Odinga's residence to pay tribute. Among them were former Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo, Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, and National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula. Leaders from western Kenya hailed Raila as a symbol of unity (*Milele FM, Ramogi FM October 29*). KANU Chairperson Gideon Moi remembered Raila Odinga as a true friend and a great leader who would be deeply missed (*Radio Maisha, October 29*).

On October 23, *TV47* reported investigations into fatalities during the funeral of Raila Odinga, where five victims died under unclear circumstances. Postmortem results confirmed death from gunshot wounds, intensifying calls for accountability. Framed investigative and judicially, the report carried a negative tone, focusing on state account-

ability and human rights. It featured the voices of victims' families, human rights defenders, and former Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko.

2.1.8 Mourning of Raila Odinga (October 23-29, 2025)

Kenyan broadcast media for the October 23-29, 2025 week, sustained a deeply reverent, reconciliation-focused narrative in the week following Raila Odinga's burial, with outlets like *Citizen TV*, *NTV*, *TV47*, *KBC TV*, *Tandao TV*, and *Ramogi TV* emphasising cross-community and Pan-African solidarity through visits by Bukusu elders led by Governor Kenneth Lusaka (*Tandao TV*), Kikuyu and Gusii delegations, former Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo, and even an intended visit by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua to Opoda Farm (*TV47*). Positive tones dominated, framing these gestures as "national healing and Pan-African solidarity" (*TV47*) and highlighting spontaneous tributes such as Kamatuto Estate residents naming a local road "Raila Odinga Road" (*Tandao TV*) and Royal Media Chairman Dr. S.K. Macharia laying flowers while praising him for his "huge sacrifices for Kenya's posterity" (*Citizen TV*). Emotional human-interest stories - pilots recounting 23 years of flying Raila (*NTV*) and Kenya Airways crew describing the renamed RAO 001 flight as "*the longest and most memorable journey of their careers*" (*Citizen TV*) added warmth without sensationalism.

Professionalism remained exemplary, with measured moderation (Elizabeth Mutuku's one-on-one with Mukhisa Kituyi on *TV47*) and respectful framing of cultural rites and regional memorial services, such as the All-Saints Cathedral event in Kampala (*TV47*, *Kisii TV*). Gaps were minimal, gender diversity in panels remained limited, and occasional slight negativity surfaced in Kituyi's observation that Raila's death "*significant-*

ly unsettled Ruto" (*TV47*), yet even this was delivered analytically rather than confrontationally. Overall, outlets consistently upheld the Code's standards on dignity, unity, and accuracy, transforming post-burial coverage into a nationwide masterclass in healing journalism that honored Raila as both friend and continental statesman.

Media content

Royal Media Services Chairman Dr. SK Macharia paid his last respects to his long-time friend and confidant, the late Raila Odinga, at Kango Ka Jaramogi in Bondo. Dr. Macharia laid flowers on Raila Odinga's grave and joined the Odinga family in mourning at their Opoda Farm home. He remembered Odinga for his Huge Sacrifices for Kenya's Posterity (*Citizen TV*, October 23). The tone was positive, framed as tribute and friendship-oriented, focusing on legacy, loyalty, and national remembrance. The taste was good, as the story was respectful and heartfelt, honoring both personal and national bonds without exaggeration.

Bungoma governor Kenneth Lusaka led a delegation of Bukusu community leaders to the grave of the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga's at his home in Bondo, Siaya County to pay tribute to affirm support and solidarity and further eulogised Raila Odinga as a selfless reformist who dreamt of a better Kenya and Africa at large (*Tandao TV*, October 23).

The flight carrying the late Raila Odinga's body back to Kenya, was renamed from KQ 202 to RAO 001. The flight's captain and in-flight manager described the profound honor and sadness of their duty, stating the flight's renaming created a somber atmosphere and made it the longest and most memorable journey of their careers. The segment was framed as a national tribute,

highlighting unity and respect for Raila Odinga's legacy while maintaining a solemn and respectful tone.

Two longtime pilots from Twin Star Aviation, Dr Richard Kubo and Captain Raphael Wamwati, shared personal memories from their 23-year friendship and flying experience with the late Prime Minister Raila Odinga and his late son, Fidel Odinga, his wife Ida, and close associates across Kenya and abroad. They described Raila as warm, humorous, and detail-oriented, recalling his love for sitting near the cockpit, engaging in lively conversation, and even playfully suggesting flying close to storm clouds. Beyond politics, they remembered Raila's generosity and humanity, including helping connect them with an East African president for business opportunities. (*NTV October 23*). The tone was positive, as it warmly celebrated Raila Odinga's character, humanity, and personal relationships through affectionate recollections from those who knew him closely.

The renaming of Mbagathi Way to Raila Odinga way in October 2021, was the recognition of a man whose influence on Kenya's democratic and infrastructural landscape will remain etched in history. A legacy that saw him receive the coveted state commendation, first class order of the Chief of the Golden Heart posthumously. As the country continues to pay tribute to his legacy, KBC TV visited the two-kilometre cement road named after him that connects Ngong Road and Langata road, a road that is now a symbol of his legacy (*KBC TV, October 24*). The coverage was objective and formal with a neutral tone focusing on the factual details of the road's renaming.

Residents of Kamatuto Estate in Njiru, Kasarani constituency, Nairobi, named a lo-

cal road in Raila's honour. The community members including boda boda riders and local leaders gathered to launch a bold orange-and-blue signpost inscribed "Raila Odinga Road," symbolising the legacy of the former Prime Minister and at one time a roads minister (*Tandao TV, October 27*).

On October 28, *TV47 'Ukumbi wa Kisiasa'* Segment hosted by Elizabeth Mutuku engaged Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, former Opposition Coalition spokesperson. Dr. Kituyi recounted his experiences with Raila Odinga, explaining that when Odinga was campaigning for a multiparty political system, he had sought refuge with Raila. Dr. Kituyi concluded that Raila Odinga's death had significantly unsettled Ruto, noting that no other ODM leader could provide a similar counterbalance. Mutuku's moderation followed professional standards, providing a neutral platform and using professional language. It was a one-on-one interview. The segment's tone leaned slightly negative due to criticism of current leadership, though parts were neutral or constructive.

In a display of political reconciliation, the Odinga family welcomed former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and other leaders to Bondo to condole with the family of the late Raila Odinga. The story captured scenes of unity as political rivals gathered at Opoda Farm, joined by Ghana's former President Nana Akufo-Addo, National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula, Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, and KANU Chair Gideon Moi (*TV47, October 29*). The piece was framed culturally and politically, exuding a positive tone that highlighted national healing and Pan-African solidarity.

Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i also visited Raila Odinga's Opoda Farm in Bondo with a delegation from the

Gusii region to pay tribute to the late leader. Matiang'i eulogised Raila as a national icon whose courage and selflessness inspired unity (*TV47, October 27, Kisii TV, October 28*). The piece was framed culturally and emotionally, carrying a positive tone that reflected national mourning and political reflection. It demonstrated respect for privacy and dignity, adhering to ethical standards for covering bereavement.

A special memorial service was held at All Saints Cathedral Church in Kampala, Uganda, in honour of the late Raila Odinga. A section of leaders from Uganda, Kenya and family members from the late Raila attended the service where they reflected on his efforts to fight for democracy in Africa and unity among people (*TV 47, October 27, Kisii TV, October 29*). Kisii TV's coverage adopted a neutral tone with highlights that are intended to honour and celebrate Raila's life work, hence commemorating and showing respect for him. On TV 47, the story was framed diplomatically and culturally, carrying a positive tone that underscored regional solidarity and respect for democratic ideals. It exhibited emotional sensitivity and international cooperation, aligning with ethical standards on covering bereavement and diplomacy.

Senators Karungo wa Thang'wa (Kiambu) and John Methu (Nyandarua) paid a courtesy visit to Oburu Odinga at his home in Siaya as he takes up the role of acting leader of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) following the passing of his brother. They brought three sheep as a gesture of respect and solidarity, and emphasised mentorship, unity, and the new leadership transition within the party. He described the meeting as an enriching experience, noting that as young leaders, they had the privilege of learning from Dr Odinga's deep wisdom, shared

through his stories and decades of political experience (*Kameme TV, October 29*). The tone of coverage was positive and conveys a message of unity, respect, and constructive political transition in ODM, highlighting co-operation rather than conflict.

Former Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo led mourners in paying tribute to the late Raila Odinga at his family home in Bondo. The event honored Odinga's legacy as a Pan-African statesman and champion of Kenya's democratic struggle, with leaders including Moses Wetang'ula, Musalia Mudavadi, KANU Chairman Gideon Moi, Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa, attending (*NTV, Ramogi TV, October 29*). On Ramogi TV, the report was balanced, presenting the tribute and attendance of various leaders without editorialising. The tone was positive, honoring Odinga's legacy and contributions. The framing emphasises Odinga's stature as a Pan-African statesman and democratic champion, highlighting respect and recognition from national and regional figures. NTV also adopted a positive tone, framing Raila Odinga as a revered statesman and unifying figure whose legacy inspires both national reflection and continental respect.



2.1.9 Governor Kahiga's Controversial Remarks



Kenyan broadcast media trended toward unified condemnation of Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga's insensitive remarks framing Raila Odinga's death as "divine intervention" to restore Mt. Kenya resources, with outlets like *NTV*, *Weru TV*, *KTN*, *KBC TV*, *Citizen TV*, *Ramogi TV*, and *Pwani FM* amplifying public outrage and institutional backlash in a negative, accountability-driven narrative. Coverage emphasised ethical lapses during national mourning, as NCIC summoned Kahiga for "divisive rhetoric" (*NTV*) and CoG passed a vote of no-confidence, removing him while stating his views were "personal and did not reflect the Council's position" (*KTN*). Professionalism was strong in pluralistic sourcing - featuring responses from CS Alice Wahome ("reckless, insensitive, and unacceptable") and ODM's Gladys Wanga ("primitive, insensitive, and insulting") - while *Mo Radio's* Breakfast show engaged listeners who "strongly condemned the remarks as insensitive, divisive, and politically reckless," maintaining respectful dialogue. *Classic 105's* Maina and King'ang'i exemplified balanced moderation, prompting callers to reflect on "choosing good leaders who can

lead without leading the public astray."

Gaps were limited but notable in occasional sensationalism, such as *NTV's* Dann Mwangi editorial repeating "Read the room" as a "repeated refrain urging...empathy, restraint, and cultural sensitivity," which bordered on poetic indictment without equal air for Kahiga's partial apology. *KTN's* profile portrayed Kahiga as "a lucky man with a loose tongue," risking character assassination over analysis, though it adhered to Clause 5's fairness by citing past controversies.

Media content

Governor Mutahi Kahiga stirred public outrage with remarks made during a funeral in Kieni Constituency about the death of former Prime Minister and ODM leader Raila Odinga, which many viewed as insensitive. In the video, he claimed that Raila's death was divine intervention — God's way of restoring Mt. Kenya's access to state resources, he alleged had been diverted to the Nyanza region, while at a funeral in Kieni, Nyeri County (*NTV*, *Weru TV*, *KTN*, *KBC TV*, *Citizen TV*, *Ramogi TV*, *Pwani FM*, *Kameme FM*, *Mo Radio*, *Tuliza FM*, *October 21*; *Maua FM*, *October 22*). The tone was negative and framed, focusing on public outrage and the divisive nature of the remarks in political and ethical conflict while underscoring moral responsibility in leadership. It portrayed the governor's comments as insensitive and politically provocative in the context of national mourning.

On October 21, *Mo Radio Breakfast show* presenters engaged listeners who strongly condemned the remarks as insensitive, divisive, and politically reckless. Presenters emphasised the need for maturity, empathy, and restraint in political discourse, particularly when addressing matters of national mourning and legacy. The presenters con-

cluded that the incident underscored the urgent need for responsible communication and ethical leadership, reminding listeners that public offices demand both decorum and accountability. While most callers had a negative tone, the conversation was respectful.



Governor Kahiga resigned as the Vice Chairperson of the Council of Governors following public backlash over his controversial remarks. He issued an apology from his Nyeri home but maintained some of his sentiments, insisted his comments were personal and not celebratory and stepped down from his CoG leadership role. His remarks ignited widespread discussion, felt more like a celebration than a condolence as Kenyans condemned his provocative remarks (*NTV, Weru TV, KTN, West TV, KBC TV, TV47, Ramogi TV, Citizen TV, Pwani FM, Milele FM, Sky FM, Maua FM, Mo Radio, Capital FM, Tuliza FM, October 22*). The tone was negative, with a focus on accountability and controversy and damage control, showing Kahiga facing consequences for insensitive remarks and attempting to restore public trust. The story highlights public backlash and the history of divisive remarks, portraying Governor Kahiga as a leader facing the consequences of

his own rhetoric.

The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) summoned Governor Kahiga over divisive rhetoric, as calls mounted for his resignation amid escalating tribal tensions (*NTV, TV47, KBC TV, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, Sky FM, October 22*). NCIC Chairperson Dr Reverend Simon Kobia said that the Governor would bear full responsibility for his words (*Citizen TV, October 22*). The tone was negative. Farming emphasised public outrage, political backlash, and escalating tribal tensions in response to Governor Kahiga's remarks and the national mourning.

Governor Kahiga's comments drew sharp criticism from key leaders, including Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, Siaya Governor James Orengo, Council of Governors Chair Ahmed Abdullahi, Nyeri Senator Wahome Wamatangi, Agriculture CS Mutahi Kagwe, Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa, and ODM Chair Gladys Wanga. Many link Kahiga's remarks to DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua (*NTV, Weru TV, West TV, KBC TV, TV47, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, Sky FM, October 22*). ODM National Chairperson Gladys Wanga responded sharply, declaring that "the line is drawn" and warning that anyone associating with Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and leaders like Kahiga "is not our friend." (*NTV, Weru TV, KBC TV, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, Maua FM, October 22*). Meru Senator Kathuri Murungi urged Governor Kahiga to go further and step down as Nyeri Governor, arguing that the CoG position holds no legal standing and accusing Kahiga of making grossly disorderly remarks unfit for a state officer (*Weru TV, Maua FM, October 22*). The tone was neutral. The station adopted standard, unbiased and professional reporting focusing on the criticism and Governor Kahiga's apology. The coverage focused on calling for unity and caution against divisive politics, especially during sensitive times.

A delegation from the ODM Party issued a statement condemning Governor Kahiga. The delegation described Kahiga's statement as insensitive, divisive, and disrespectful, particularly at a time when the country was mourning a national figure. They demanded that the Governor publicly apologise to Raila's family and to all Kenyans, and further called for his immediate resignation, arguing that his conduct was unbecoming of a public leader. (*West TV, Weru TV, NTV, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, Sky FM, October 22*). The coverage framing leaned toward accountability and ethical leadership, emphasising ODM's call for integrity in public office. The journalist-maintained neutrality, focusing on the party's official position without sensationalising the issue. Overall, the report contributed to a broader conversation about responsible political communication and the importance of respectful discourse in moments of national grief.

Governor Wanga and Deputy Party Leader Simba Arati demanded the immediate arrest of Governor Kahiga as they termed the comments as ethnic incitement capable of plunging the country into chaos. Wanga, speaking from Kisumu, accused Kahiga of repeatedly mocking the Odinga family and recalled similar controversial remarks he made when Odinga was hospitalised in India. Odinga family, led by Ruth and Winnie Odinga, denounced the Governor's remarks as shameful and disrespectful, noting that it was disheartening to hear such words from a leader who has benefited from the democratic struggles championed by Raila Odinga (*Citizen TV, October 22*). The tone was negative, framed around political tension and public outrage. It emphasises widespread condemnation from ODM leaders, the Odinga family, and various political figures, presenting Kahiga's remarks as ethnically insensitive and capable of fueling division.

On October 22, *NTV* presenter Dann Mwangi exhibited a powerful fusion of journalistic critique and artistic expression to deliver a pointed editorial commentary on The Memo Segment. The central message, 'Read the room,' was a repeated refrain urging political leaders, particularly Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga, to exercise empathy, restraint, and cultural sensitivity, especially in moments of national grief following the death of Raila Odinga. The piece sharply condemned reckless, divisive rhetoric, especially ethnic bigotry, during emotionally charged periods, warning that such actions risked undoing the progress made by youth-led movements like the Gen Z protests. The tone was negative, laced with criticism and poetic indignation. The rap piece enhanced the emotional intensity and rhetorical force, delivering critique with rhythm, rhyme, and layered metaphors. The framing depicted youth-led resistance to tribalism and calling for a new era of accountability, unity, and respect for cultural values.

On October 22, *KTN, Citizen TV* and *Ramogi TV* aired a career profile of Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga, revealing that he was a teacher and unionist before venturing into politics. In 2017, he ascended to the position of Nyeri's fourth governor following the death of Dr Wahome Gakuru, a seat he successfully defended in the 2022 general election and was now serving his second term. The report noted that Kahiga is no stranger to controversy, earning both praise and criticism. Earlier in 2025, he apologised for a reckless statement directed at the Maasai community, where he compared the political rift between the Kikuyu community and President William Ruto to "the wearing of underwear," remarks widely condemned as insulting and demeaning. In another incident, he was caught on camera advising Murang'a Governor Irungu Kang'ata that to win re-election in 2027, he must align with

former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua an utterance that again forced him to apologise. The tone was negative, portraying Kahiga as a divisive leader “*a lucky man with a loose tongue.*”

The Council of Governors (CoG), through its Chairperson, Ahmed Abdullahi, disassociated itself from Governor Kahiga’s comments, terming them untimely, reckless, and unspeakable at a time when the country was still in grief, emphasising that his views were personal and did not reflect the Council’s position and passed a vote of no confidence against him. The Council unanimously agreed to remove him from its leadership and extended an apology to the family of the late Raila Odinga over the unfortunate remarks. ODM National Chair and Homabay Governor Gladys Wanga described the remarks as primitive, insensitive, and insulting.

The United Opposition, including Wiper Patriotic Front, DCP, PLP, DAP-K, Jubilee Party, and DP parties, also distanced itself from the utterances, urging UDA party leader, President William Ruto, to reprimand him. Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe also condemned Kahiga as culturally repugnant, morally indefensible and politically retrogressive (*KTN, TV47, Kisii TV, KBC TV, TV47, Citizen TV, Ramogi TV, Musyi FM, Capital FM, KBC English Service, Busia Border Radio, Radio Citizen, Milele FM, Radio Masha, October 22*). United Opposition of Kenya spokesperson Mukhisa Kituyi, in a statement, termed Governor Kahiga’s remarks as hate speech under Article 33 of the Constitution and urged authorities to act (*Mo Radio, October 22*). The story adopted a negative tone with critical and provocative framing, focusing on the public fury over Kahiga’s remarks and balancing different perspectives on the issue. The report demonstrated good taste, focusing on institutional action rather than character assassination. Framing em-

phasised accountability and ethical leadership, showcasing the CoG’s swift response as a measure to preserve public integrity and respect during a national mourning period.

In addition, the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa (AIPCA), through its Chair Bernard Maina, banned Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga from speaking in any of its churches or gatherings following his controversial remarks until he issues a formal written apology for his insensitive remarks. (*Citizen TV, TV47, Ramogi TV, October 22*). This story was combatively framed, and the tone remained negative, further magnifying the crisis. Though pluralistic in featuring multiple voices.

Demonstrations erupted in Nyeri town as residents protested Governor Mutahi Kahiga’s remarks and denounced the comments, saying they did not reflect the views of the Mount Kenya community (*Citizen TV, KTN, October 22*). Several Nyeri and Mount Kenya leaders, including Mathira MP Eric Wamumbi, Kieni MP Njoroge Wainaina, Othaya MP Wainaina Wambugu, Mukurwieni MP George Kaguchia, MP Gitonga Mukunji, and Senator Wahome Wamatinga, condemned the governor’s statements, calling for his resignation and pledging to visit Mama Ida Odinga to offer their condolences (*Citizen TV, Etaya TV, Ramogi TV, Musyi FM, Milele FM, Chamgei FM, KTN, October 22*). The tone was negative, highlighting public dissent and political isolation. The story captures the growing rejection of Kahiga’s apology, protests from residents, and disapproval from fellow leaders and religious institutions, reinforcing his image as a divisive figure under siege.

On October 22, KTN presenter Dennis Aseto engaged Lawyer Fanya Mambo Kinuthia, who condemned Governor Kahiga’s reckless utterances, emphasising that they were per-



sonal and should not be attributed to the Kikuyu community. He also urged Kenyans to reject ethnic divisions and embrace national unity.

On October 22, *Classic 105 Breakfast show* hosts Maina and Kingangi engaged the audience to share their opinion on Mutahi Kahiga's remarks on the death of Raila Odinga. One caller responded and pointed out the importance of choosing good leaders who can lead without leading the public astray/conflict with their reckless remarks. He pitied the kind of leaders Kenyans choose and how they should learn to be keen to learn the characters of their soon-to-be leaders.

Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development Cabinet Secretary, Alice Wahome condemned Governor Kahiga's remarks, terming them as reckless, insensitive, and unacceptable during national mourning and demanded a public apology to the family and Kenyans. CS Wahome urged the nation to focus on honouring Odinga's life rather than interpreting the incident along tribal lines (*Kameme FM, October 23*). Framing highlighted the political and ethical implications of Kahiga's remarks while emphasising the need for unity and respect. The story refrained from sensationalism or inflammatory language.



Print

Kenyan newspapers delivered an overwhelmingly respectful, celebratory, and dignified coverage of Raila Odinga's passing from 16 October 2025, framing him as the undisputed "giant of democracy," champion of constitutional reform, Pan-Africanist, unifier, and, in Business Daily's distinctive angle, a pioneering entrepreneur who linked industrialisation with social justice. Major dailies (*Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, *The Star*, *People Daily*, *Taifa Leo*) devoted extensive front-page real estate, multi-page special pulls, and souvenir editions (notably *The Star*'s 20-page "Asante Baba") to chronicle his life, legacy, and the seven-day national mourning period. The tone remained consistently adoring, with headlines such as "Enigma bows out," "Baba Atuacha," "A Giant of Democracy," and "Shujaa wa Mashujaa" reflecting a rare national consensus in eulogising a polarising figure, while cartoons symbolically depicted his final bow, resting hut, or ascent to heroic status. Coverage strictly adhered to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya, particularly Clause 5(g) on dignity and sensitivity in reporting death, avoiding sensationalism even when addressing delicate issues such as the 72-hour burial directive or emerging ODM succession battles.

Journalistic professionalism was exemplary in depth, balance, and restraint. Newspapers blended factual reporting with rich historical context, personal tributes from family and global leaders, and reflective editorials urging Kenyans to translate eulogies into action on devolution, justice, and economic inclusion. Editorial pieces and opinion pages honoured both his public achievements and private humanity, acknowledging flaws only in passing and with affection. Even when political analysis surfaced on 21 October regarding opposition fragmentation and President Ruto's 2027 calculations - reporting remained measured, sourced, and free of speculation or malice. Letters to the editor reinforced this maturity, offering citizens a platform for collective grief and gratitude without descending into acrimony. The media's unified restraint during a potentially divisive moment demonstrated a clear understanding that Raila's death transcended partisan lines and required treatment as a national rite of passage.

Except for outlets like *Business Daily*, which maintained an economic focus, most coverage avoided rigorous examination of the more contentious chapters of Raila's career. This included his contested role in past post-election violence, the political compromises made within various coalitions, and specific policy failures during his tenures. Consequently, the portrayal risked presenting a one-dimensional figure, sidelining the complex and often debated aspects of his legacy that are essential for a full historical understanding. Beyond acknowledging Ida Odinga's role, broader gender perspectives were scarce. More notably, the voices of a younger generation of Kenyans, who grew up in the very multiparty era Raila helped birth and who view his legacy through a different lens, were largely absent.

October 16, 2025

The framing of Raila Odinga's death across Kenyan newspapers on 16th October 2025 was largely celebratory and respectful, with all major papers except *Business Daily* featuring headlines that emphasised his life, legacy, and transformative role in Kenya's democracy. He was portrayed as a towering political figure, democracy champion, and reformist. The coverage was largely positive, highlighting his fight for justice, constitutional reform, and human rights, while respectfully acknowledging national grief. The Standard ("Enigma bows out," Pg. 1-15) celebrated his resilience and political impact. Daily Nation ("*Kenyans Mourn Raila Amollo Odinga 1945-2025*," Pg. 1-16) highlighted his legacy, President Ruto's declaration of seven days of national mourning, and tributes from leaders worldwide.

The Star ("*A Giant of Democracy*," Pg. 2-12) honored his activism and pan-African vision. People Daily ("*Raila Odinga, the giant who shaped Kenya's democracy*," Pg. 4) reflected on his bold political moves and enduring influence. Taifa Leo ("*Baba Atuacha 1945-2025*," Pg. 1-9) covered national mourning, condolences, security measures, and political reflections, including his self-declaration as People's President. *Business Daily* (Pg. 2) reported neutrally on Odinga's death in India, noting his will requested burial within 72 hours, detailing logistical challenges, differing interpretations of his wishes, and coordination between his family, ODM, and the government, with an editorial describing his passing as a profound loss to his family, Kenya, the region, and the continent, highlighting his influence as a reformist and statesman.

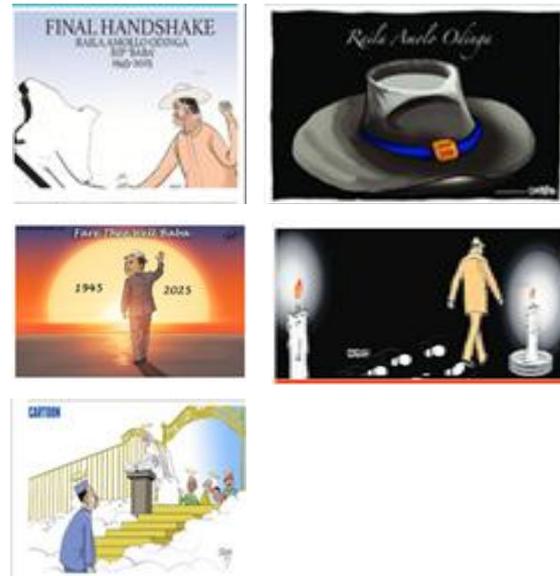
The front pages prominently feature a picture of Raila Odinga and adopt a common, respectful theme celebrating his life and leg-

acy. The coverage across platforms demonstrates adherence to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya (5g), treating the subject with dignity, respect, factual reporting, and sensitivity.



Major publications, including *The Standard*, *Daily Nation*, *Business Daily*, *The Star*, *People Daily*, and *Taifa Leo*, published editorials that celebrated his lifelong crusade for justice, constitutional reform, and human rights. They collectively portrayed him as a visionary, a Pan-Africanist, and a unifying force, while also acknowledging his human imperfections. This narrative was visually echoed in emotional cartoons that symbolised his departure from the political stage. *The Standard* depicted his iconic hut at rest, *People Daily* chronicled his farewell, *Taifa*

Leo emphasised his enduring legacy, and *The Star* captured a nation in solemn reflection. Together, the print media cemented Raila Odinga's legacy as a symbol of resilience and transformative leadership, whose influence is expected to shape Kenya for generations to come.



October 17, 2025

Business Daily framed Raila Odinga as an entrepreneur and visionary economic leader, shifting the focus from his political career to his contributions in business and national development. On October 17, the paper published the headline "Raila the Businessman," profiling his journey from selling his car in 1971 to start East African Spectre to building a business empire spanning manufacturing, energy, and real estate, portraying him as a hands-on pioneer who linked industrialisation with social progress.



October 18, 2025

On Saturday, 18th October 2025, major newspapers in Kenya focused on honoring Raila Odinga’s legacy, highlighting his transformative role in national and continental politics. *Taifa Leo* under the headline “Raila Alivyoniokolea” emphasised his contribution to restoring peace after the June 2024 protests, portraying him as a unifying figure. *The Standard* (pages 1–39) described him as the “president we never had,” focusing on his dedication to democracy, human rights, and justice, while also recognising Ida Odinga’s influence in his personal and political life; *EVE magazine* further explored her role in shaping his legacy. *Daily Nation* (“*Unified in grief: The Raila we knew*”) shared tributes from family and leaders, underscoring his enduring impact as a unifier.

The Star (“*Unfading force*”) emphasised his resilience and lifelong dedication to national unity, while *The East African* (“*Pan-African man of the people*”) portrayed him as a committed Pan-Africanist whose vision for African unity left a lasting legacy. Editorials across all newspaper outlets celebrated his service, integrity, and principled leadership, highlighting his political influence, advocacy for peace, support for national cohesion, and moral lessons from his life. Coverage remained respectful, balanced, and factual, adhering to the Media Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya by avoiding sensationalism, promoting unity, and honoring his contributions to Kenya and Africa.



October 20 – Mashujaa Day

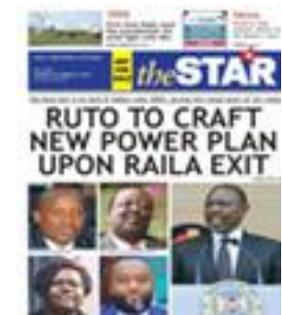
On October 20, *The Standard* (page 1-23) covered Raila Odinga’s funeral positively, highlighting ODM party tensions, his ties with the media, and the medical cause of his death, while *Daily Nation* celebrated his passion for sports, portraying him as a unifying leader and patriot. Additionally, on October 20, “*Raila’s Unfinished Businessman*” revisited his role in launching Vision 2030, highlighting his lifelong commitment to industrial growth, fair wealth distribution, and job creation. The coverage was positive and reflective, celebrating his entrepreneurial spirit and national influence. In its editorial, “*Walk the Talk Beyond Flowery Raila Tributes*,” the paper urged Kenyans and the government to honor Odinga’s legacy through tangible reforms, job creation, and promotion of justice, inclusivity, and economic empowerment.



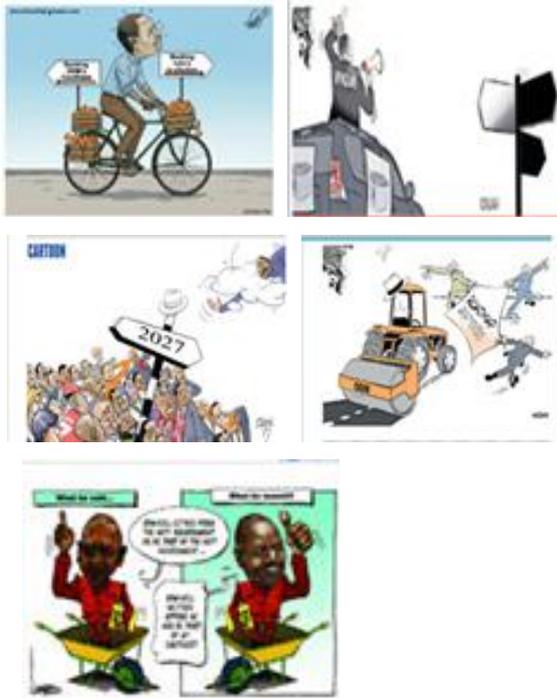


October 21, 2025

On 21st October, major newspapers in Kenya focused on Mashujaa Day celebrations, prominently honoring the late Raila Odinga with the nation's highest award, the Chief of the Golden Heart (CGH). *Taifa Leo* ("Shujaa wa Mashujaa"), *The Standard* ("Honoured in Death") dominated the newspapers' pages, except for the sports sections, highlighting Odinga's contributions to Kenya's democracy, development, and national unity. *Daily Nation* ("Raila's shadow looms large over Mashujaa Day"), and *People Daily* ("Raila honoured by State as ODM power battle kicks off") highlighted his contributions to Kenya's democracy, development, and unity, celebrating his legacy and courage with predominantly positive tones. *People Daily* also addressed emerging power struggles within ODM, maintaining a neutral stance on succession challenges and further published an opinion piece framing Raila as a staunch advocate for media freedom, portraying him as a close ally of journalists and a key figure in national discourse. *The Star* discussed President Ruto's need to recalibrate his political strategy ahead of the 2027 elections amid a fragmented opposition, with input from political analysts. Overall, the newspaper coverage combined celebratory and analytical framing, balancing tribute to Raila with attention to ongoing political dynamics.



Cartoons in *Taifa Leo*, *Daily Nation*, *People Daily*, *The Star*, and *The Standard*, coverage emphasised the political uncertainty and leadership challenges following Raila's death, reflecting both opposition fragmentation and Ruto's strategic considerations ahead of the 2027 general election. The common theme is the political uncertainty and leadership challenges following Raila Odinga's death, highlighting both the hard choices for the opposition's and President Ruto's ahead of the 2027 elections. The reporting adhered to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya, ensuring balance, fair, and respectful coverage, avoiding sensationalism, and upholding accuracy and public interest while responsibly addressing sensitive political developments.



Special Editions and Souvenir Coverage

The Star newspaper (October 19, 2025) published a special 20-page souvenir edition titled “*Asante Baba*” in honor of Raila Odinga and his State Funeral at Nyayo Stadium. The edition celebrated Odinga’s unmatched legacy as the father of devolution and featured heartfelt tributes from national leaders, reflections on his resilience in the face of political defeat, and accounts of his influence beyond politics including his impact on sports and youth empowerment. Richly illustrated with vivid photographs from the funeral service, the edition offered readers a comprehensive and emotionally resonant tribute to one of Kenya’s most iconic and transformative leaders.



Letters

From 16th to 20th October 2025, letters to the editors across major Kenyan newspapers consistently reflected the nation’s profound sense of loss following Raila Odinga’s passing. Writers celebrated him as a statesman, democracy champion, and unifying figure whose legacy will continue to shape Kenya’s political future. The letters emphasised that his death was not only a personal loss to his family but also a collective loss for the nation, the region, and the global community, highlighting his contributions to peacebuilding, democratic reform, and national unity. The tone throughout was overwhelmingly positive and respectful, mirroring the media’s framing of Odinga’s life and achievements while also conveying the emotional resonance of national mourning.

Despite the misinformation surge, verified accounts and established media outlets demonstrated professionalism. Azimio TV's live streams of the body's return from India and the ten-hour funeral service provided accurate, dignified coverage, while outlets such as *The Star*, *Nation*, *Citizen* and *Standard* consistently flagged false posts and cited official ODM statements. Hashtags #Raila, #Baba and #Enigma dominated trends, with President Ruto's and Rigathi Gachagua's tributes going viral. However, many influencers and unverified pages prioritised speed and engagement over verification, at times irresponsible using AI.

This revealed social media's dual role - a powerful platform for national mourning and collective tribute, yet also a vector for confusion and politically charged mis/disinformation. Pre-death rumours triggered public anxiety and heated debate, while controversial statements such as Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga's remarks prompted NCIC intervention. Overall, the coverage underscored the urgent need for enhanced media literacy, real-time fact-checking mechanisms, and stricter adherence to ethical guidelines when reporting on high-emotion national events.

Breaking News: Prior to the official death announcement, online platforms were saturated with rumors of Odinga's death starting October 6-7. Viral content includes fabricated digital cards, TikTok videos, and misleading posts.

Notably X, Facebook, and TikTok played a significant role in rapid dissemination, generating engagement of over 765K interactions and reach of 30K for health-related speculations (Oct 6-8).



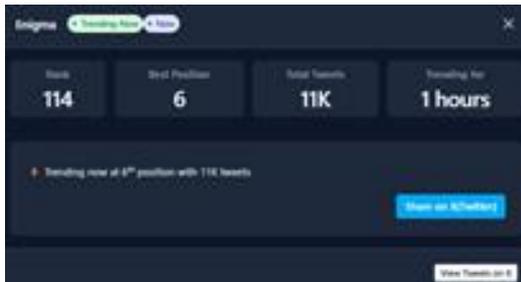
<https://x.com/Maloney1k/status/1975100767607644293?s=20>

Upon his death on October 15, official online channels quickly confirmed the news, but misinformation persisted with misleading visuals and posts. Example of false coverage post-death: October 15 - a video purporting to show "Dr. Ida Odinga mourning" was misleading, as the woman shown was not her.



Official posts and X trends were dominated on October 15 – October 16, by terms: "Raila" (#1, 174K tweets within 1 hour), "Ruto" (#3, 380K tweets in 12 hours), and "Enigma" (#6, 11K tweets in 1 hour).





Viral tweets/posts: President William Ruto's X post, Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's X post & Former LSK President Nelson Havi X post.

Professionalism - most online platforms, especially those run by influencers, failed to verify sources before amplification, particularly between October 6–8. Examples include fabricated digital cards and TikTok videos claiming Odinga's death. Instances of professionalism included major news outlets referencing ODM statements and denouncing misinformation, e.g., The Star. <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2025-10-08-he-is-fine-ida-dismisses-rumours-on-railas-health>.

Elsewhere, misleading reporting continued posthumously with claims such as Arsenal F.C. issuing condolences (October 16) and Oburu Odinga admitted to Karen Hospital (October 15) – all debunked by the iVerify Fact-checking team.

<https://x.com/MrKimmKE/status/1978495520642363617?s=20>

<https://x.com/switchtvkenya/status/1978724003645685881?s=20>

Key example included October 21 – Fabricated Standard front page “Angel of Death” falsely depicting Rigathi Gachagua and Raila Odinga. Actual headline: “Honoured in Death.”

https://x.com/standard_paper/status/1980719551269515313?s=20



Misinformation and Disinformation. Pre-death rumors (Oct 6–8) were evident via fabricated digital card, TikTok videos, and old images circulated falsely indicating Odinga's illness/death.



Also, post-death (Oct 15–21) misleading visuals and AI-generated content surfaced, e.g., AI aerial image of Mamboleo Stadium, fake video of funeral preparations.

Following such acts of the mis/disinformation, the following fact-checks were conducted by the MCK desk of fact checkers:

- Digital card (Oct 7) – Fabricated with watermark “Mastardcesh”; original photo from 2022.
- TikTok video (Oct 8) – Misleading; ODM and Ida Odinga refuted.
- “Dr. Ida Odinga” video (Oct 15) – False; visual comparison confirms woman not Ida Odinga.
- Oburu Odinga hospital claim (Oct 15) – False; confirmed by Karen Hospital.
- Arsenal F.C. condolences (Oct 16) – False; verified via the iVerify website.
- Standard front page “Angel of Death” (Oct 21) – Fabricated.
- Mamboleo Stadium image (Oct 18) – AI-generated.
- Funeral preparation video (Oct 17) – Misleading; casket and visuals inaccurate.

Trends and Audience Engagement

Social media was instrumental in shaping narratives as pre-death rumors generated intense debate and political commentary, post-death, the public engaged heavily in mourning rituals, tributes, and political discourse with viral hashtags across #Raila, #Baba, #Enigma, #MutahiKahiga. Additionally, TikTok and Facebook amplified funeral rituals, historic achievements, and public mourning.

Notably, Azimio TV, officially verified and affiliated with the Azimio la Umoja One Kenya Coalition, shared its live link with Citizen TV during key events.

- During the return of the late former Prime Minister Raila Odinga’s body from India on October 16, 2025, Azimio TV broadcasted live for the entire period, garnering 728,803 views.
- During the funeral and burial at Opoda Farm, Bondo on October 19, 2025, Azimio TV streamed live for 10 hours, 21 minutes, 40 seconds, amassing a total of 1,299,407 views.

Ethical Compliance

From the data above, there was clear spreading of false content violating ethical standards, including reusing old images out of context, misidentifying individuals and AI-generated depictions exaggerating crowds. Such is against The Media Council of Kenya’s Code of Conduct for media practice in Kenya, that addresses this directly under Section 27 on the use of artificial intelligence and other technologies: (a): Ensures that the use of AI and other emerging technologies in content creation does not compromise accuracy. (c): Ensures that AI and other technologies used in content creation do not generate or disseminate misinformation or disinformation. However, verified outlets adhered to ethical norms by clearly labeling rumors, providing sources, and avoiding sensationalism.

Public Impact

the false rumors peddled ultimately caused confusion, heated political debate, and public concern prior to official death confirmation. This included Governor Mutahi Kahiga controversial pronouncements over the death of the former PM. Thus, with this, social media played a dual role, of amplifying grief but also spreading false narratives simultaneously.

https://x.com/Terriz_Sam/status/1980654822656471201?s=20

Stakeholder perspectives

There were notable actions across the period by relevant stakeholders related to the media coverage, cutting across; ODM Secretariat - actively refuted rumors on X Oct. 5, 2025), emphasising misinformation); media Houses such as *Nation*, *The Star*, *Citizen*, *Standard* consistently flagged false posts and misinformation and; regulators such as

NCIC intervened in response to controversial and inflammatory comments by Nyeri Governor Kahiga (Oct 21–22).

<https://x.com/TheODMparty/status/1974709892129959946?s=20>

https://x.com/NCIC_Kenya/status/1980991432216437050?s=20





Findings

Pre-Announcement Phase (2–14 October 2025)

Kenyan media coverage of Raila Odinga’s health speculation was heavily politicised, with broadcast outlets (*TV47, Citizen TV, NTV, KBC, Milele FM*) and some radio stations framing his two-week absence as a 2027 succession battle rather than a private health matter.

While most reports included ODM rebuttals and adhered to accuracy requirements, a significant proportion adopted teaser narratives, selective sourcing, and combative tones that risked inflaming political tensions.

Ethical lapses were noted in revisiting historical rivalries during a health crisis and unbalanced interviews that amplified opposition voices without counterpoints.

Announcement and Immediate Mourning (15–16 October 2025)

While the news of Raila's death first broke on digital media, the legacy media delayed the news until three hours until the announcement was made by President Ruto. This was an indicator of caution and respect for family members who hold the right to know and break the news first. It was also noted that some stations made the announcement and lingered on normal programming before fully embarking on continuous live coverage. Broadcast, print, and verified digital platforms shifted dramatically to unified, respectful, and dignified commemoration. While some Television and radio abandoned partisan framing, devoting over majority of airtime to legacy tributes, official condolences, and factual reporting on the cause of death (cardiac arrest in India).

Citizen TV in particular suspended all advertisements to focus on the coverage of Raila's death. Print media led with reverent headlines ("*Enigma bows out*," "Baba Atuacha," "*Shujaa wa Mashujaa*") and extensive special editions. Professionalism was exemplary in tone, balance, and cultural sensitivity, fully complying with Clause 5(g) of the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya on dignity in reporting death.

Funeral, State Events, and Post-Burial Period (17–29 October 2025)

Broadcast and print media sustained exceptional standards throughout the state funeral at Nyayo Stadium, burial at Opoda Farm, Mashujaa Day (where Raila received the posthumous Chief of the Order of the Golden Heart), and subsequent reconciliation visits- were they reconciliation or mourning visits. Coverage emphasised national unity, cross-community solidarity, and Raila's democratic legacy, with regional and vernacular

stations playing a vital role in inclusive storytelling. Minor gaps persisted in gender and generational diversity on discussion panels and occasional superficial succession debates.

Social media, however, remained the primary vector for mis/disinformation pre-announcement hoaxes, AI-generated images, fabricated front pages, and misidentified videos with at least eight major incidents debunked by the MCK fact-checking desk, exposing widespread non-compliance with AI guidelines and accuracy among some accounts and influencers.

Exceptional Incidents and Overall Ethical Performance

The notable concern across mainstream media occurred with Governor Mutahi Kahiga's inflammatory "divine intervention" remarks, which were universally condemned by outlets and triggered NCIC and CoG action; coverage of the controversy was accountability-driven yet restrained. Across the entire period, established broadcast and print outlets demonstrated a rare uniform approach national consensus in treating Raila's passing as a moment of collective healing mourning rather than political contestation, upholding the highest standards of the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya. In contrast, unregulated social media/digital platforms repeatedly failed verification, accuracy, and decency thresholds, underscoring the urgent need for stronger digital literacy and real-time regulatory mechanisms during high-emotion national events.



Conclusion

The media collectively portrayed him as a visionary, a Pan-Africanist, and a unifying political force in Kenya, who had unfinished business in Kenya's history. The death came abruptly and robbed off Kenya a hero while acknowledging his human imperfections.

The heroic framing and narration of the Raila story, visually echoed in emotional cartoons that symbolised his departure from the political stage unexpectedly. *The Standard* depicted his iconic hut at rest, *People Daily* chronicled his farewell, *Taifa Leo* emphasised his enduring legacy, and *The Star* captured a nation in solemn reflection. The media cemented Raila Odinga's legacy as a symbol of resilience and transformative leadership, whose influence is expected to shape Kenya for generations to come.

The tone was very positive devoid of negative sentiments, and commentators firmly bringing out the positives that made Raila, a national embraced leader in Kenya, who cut across tribal, regional, professional and political boundaries.

Media covered the Raila story with the highest levels of dedication and professionalism, the best in caring journalism.

The Media Council of Kenya undertook this monitoring exercise with three clear objectives: to assess adherence to the Code of Conduct for Media Practice in Kenya, to identify dominant trends and framing patterns across the coverage, and to document best practices, ethical gaps, and actionable recommendations for future high-profile national events. Against the backdrop of Kenya's long tradition of according to state funerals to its most distinguished leaders since 1978, and recognising the media's pivotal role in both chronicling history and facilitating collective healing, the passing of Rt. (Eng.) Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, CGH, presented an unparalleled test of journalistic maturity in a media landscape now fortified by constitutional guarantees and robust self-regulation.

The findings reveal a media landscape that demonstrated remarkable professionalism and unity in its coverage of Raila Odinga's passing. Following the initial period of politicised speculation, media outlets decisively pivoted to a dignified, unifying, and deeply reverent tone that defined the entire mourning period. Across the spectrum from national to vernacular, and public to private broadcasters' outlets showed exceptional restraint and cultural sensitivity. This collective effort transformed a moment of national grief into a masterclass in healing journalism, honoring Odinga's legacy while fostering reconciliation and cross-commu-

nity solidarity. Regional and community stations were particularly vital in amplifying local voices and ensuring inclusivity.

This professionalism was further evidenced in the handling of contentious issues. When controversial incidents arose, such as Governor Mutahi Kahiga's inflammatory remarks, mainstream media responded with measured, accountability-focused reporting that served the public interest without resorting to sensationalism.

In stark contrast to mainstream media, social media functioned as a persistent outlier, acting as the primary vector for misinformation. Throughout the period, these platforms were flooded with AI-generated fabrications, recycled falsehoods, and politicised speculation. While the digital presence of verified news organisations upheld professional standards, the broader, unregulated ecosystem revealed a critical fragility in verification processes and ethical adherence, particularly among influencers and anonymous accounts. This divergence ultimately underscores a significant finding: when united by a profound national purpose, Kenyan journalism demonstrated its capacity to rise above partisan divides. The mainstream media distinguished itself, proving it can effectively serve as a custodian of collective memory and an architect of national healing.

Recommendations

- Create a joint real time verification/fact checking desk between MCK and media industry-This would provide media houses with real-time fact-checking services during crises or mourning periods to verify viral claims before they are published or broadcast.
- The MCK to reach out to major tech platforms (Meta, Google/YouTube, TikTok, and X) to secure binding agreements. These would ensure priority fact-checking of flagged content and reduced algorithmic amplification of unverified information, specifically during officially declared periods of national mourning.
- Media houses should formally adopt and implement internal policies that require equitable gender and generational representation on all discussion panels for national and public events.
- To institutionalise the high standards of journalism demonstrated during this period, stakeholders should consider establishing an annual “Raila Odinga Prize” within the AJEA (Annual Journalism Excellence Awards) framework.

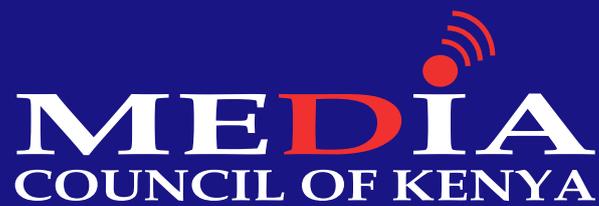
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CONTACT US



www.mediaobserver.co.ke



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



observer@mediacouncil.or.ke

Headquarters: Ground Floor, Britam Centre,
Mara/Ragati Road Junction, Upper Hill,
P.O. Box 43132-00100
Phone: +254 111 019 200
Email: info@mediacouncil.or.ke

Mombasa Office: Ground Floor, Kenya
Broadcasting Corporation Building, Sauti
House, off Moi Avenue, along Ngonyo Road
Phone: +254 111 019 220
Email: mombasa@mediacouncil.or.ke

Kisumu Office: Kenya Broadcasting
Corporation Offices, Awuor Otiende Road,
Milimani
Phone: +254 111 019 230
Email: kisumu@mediacouncil.or.ke

Meru Office: 1st Floor, Posta Buildings,
Meru Road B6
Phone: +254 111 019 250
Email: meru@mediacouncil.or.ke

Nakuru Office: Section 58 Area,
Opposite Crater Primary School,
along Kibwezi Close, 3rd Gate
Phone: +254 111 019 240
Email: nakuru@mediacouncil.or.ke