



*Approved
SNA
11/4/26*

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT – FIFTH SESSION – 2026

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

REPORT ON-

CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC PETITION NO. 01 OF 2025 BY HON JOHN BWIRE
MP ON BEHALF OF THE PARE COMMUNITY REGARDING RECOGNITION OF
THE PARE PEOPLE AS A TRIBE IN KENYA



Directorate of Audit Appropriations &
General-Purpose Committees
Clerk's Chambers
Main Parliament Buildings
NAIROBI


 THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID	
DATE: 01 APR 2026 MARCH, 2026 <i>Wednesday</i>	
TABLED BY:	<i>Hon. Muchangi Karemba Chair, Public Petitions</i>
CLERK-AT-TABLE:	<i>Modo Miniam</i>

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

On behalf of the Public Petitions Committee and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 227, it is my pleasant privilege and honour to present to this House the Report of the Committee on the Public Petition No. 01 of 2025 regarding recognition of the Pare Community as a tribe in Kenya. The petition was presented to the House pursuant to Standing Order No. 225 (2) (a) by the Member for Taveta on behalf of the Pare Community of Kenya in Taita Taveta County.

The petitioners prayed that the National Assembly, through the Public Petitions Committee, inquire into the matter with a view to securing urgent recognition of the Pare Community of Kenya as a tribe of the Republic of Kenya.

The Committee observed that, On the threshold to be recognized as a tribe, it was observed that there was no threshold but criteria is language, number of people, customs, beliefs and practices.

The Committee further noted that distinct data on Pare community is hardly available due to the fact that the community has been enumerated as communities under stateless.

In response to the prayer that the Committee inquire into the matter with a view to securing urgent recognition of the Chuka Community of Kenya as a tribe of the Republic of Kenya, the Committee notes the desire of the Pare people to be distinctively recognized as a tribe in Kenya and recommends that the Ministry of Interior and National Administrations through its internally developed framework to evaluate petitions for ethnic community recognition initiates and finalizes evaluation of the recognition of the Pare as a tribe in Kenya, within six months of tabling of this report.

The Committee appreciates the Offices of the Speaker and Clerk of the National Assembly for providing guidance and necessary technical support. The Chairperson expresses gratitude to the Committee Members for their devotion and commitment to duty during the consideration of the Petition.

On behalf of the Committee and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 199, I now wish to lay the Report on the Table of the House.

HON. MUCHANGI KAREMBA, CBS, M.P.

CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

PART ONE

1. PREFACE

1.1 Establishment and Mandate of the Committee

The Public Petitions Committee was established under the provisions of Standing Order 208A with the following terms of reference:

- a) considering all public petitions tabled in the House;
 - b) making such recommendations as may be appropriate with respect to the prayers sought in the petitions;
 - c) recommending whether the findings arising from consideration of a petition should be debated; and
 - d) advising the House and reporting on all public petitions committed to it.
-

1.2 Committee Membership

The Public Petitions Committee was constituted in October 2022 and comprises the following Members:

Chairperson

Hon. Muchangi Karemba, CBS, M.P.
Runyenjes Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Vice Chairperson

Hon. Janet Jepkemboi Sitienei, M.P.
Turbo Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Patrick Makau King'ola, M.P.
Mavoko Constituency

**Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya
(WDM-K)**

Hon. Edith Vethi Nyenze, M.P.
Kitui West Constituency

**Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya (WDM-
K)**

Hon. Ntwiga Patrick Munene, M.P.
Chuka Igambang'ombe Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Maisori Marwa Kitayama, M.P.
Kuria East Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Joshua Chepyegon Kandie, M.P.
Baringo Central Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Beatrice Kadeveresia Elachi, M.P.
Dagoretti North Constituency
Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)

Hon. Bernard Muriuki Nebart, M.P.
Mbeere South Constituency
Independent

Hon. Biego Paul Kibichy, M.P.
Chesumei
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Peter Irungu Kihungi, M.P.
Kangema Constituency
Maendeleo Chap Chap Party (MCCP)

Hon. John Bwire Okano, M.P.
Taveta Constituency
**Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya (WDM-
K)**

Hon. Peter Mbogho Shake, M.P.
Mwatate Constituency
Jubilee Party (JP)

Hon. Sloya Clement Logova, M.P.
Sabatia Constituency
United Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Hon. Suzanne Ndunge Kiamba, M.P.
Makueni Constituency
**Wiper Democratic Movement-Kenya
(WDM-K)**

1.3 Committee Secretariat

The Public Petitions Committee is facilitated by the following members of the secretariat:

Lead Clerk
Mr. Victor Weke
Principal Clerk Assistant II

Ms. Miriam Modo
First Clerk Assistant

Mr. Benard Toroitich
Third Clerk Assistant

Ms. Kafuyai Wamae
Third Clerk Assistant

Mr. Clinton Sindiga
Legal Counsel II

Ms. Nancy Akinyi
Research Officer III

Mr. Arkan Mumin
Research Officer III

Ms. Roselyne Njuki
Principal Serjeant-at-Arms

Mr. Paul Shana
Serjeant-at-Arms

Mr. Pascal Valerian
Hansard Officer III

Mr. Collins Mahamba
Audio Officer III

Ms. Felistus Muiya
Public Communication Officer

Mr. Calvin Karungo
Media Relations Officer III

PART ONE

2. PREFACE

1.4 Establishment and Mandate of the Committee

The Public Petitions Committee was established under the provisions of Standing Order 208A with the following terms of reference:

- a) considering all public petitions tabled in the House;
- b) making such recommendations as may be appropriate with respect to the prayers sought in the petitions;
- c) recommending whether the findings arising from consideration of a petition should be debated; and
- d) advising the House and reporting on all public petitions committed to it.

PART TWO

2 BACKGROUND OF THE PETITION

2.1 Introduction

1. Public Petition No. 01 of 2025 regarding recognition of the Pare Community as a tribe in the Republic of Kenya was presented to the House on 18th February 2025 by the Member for Taveta on behalf of the Pare Community of Kenya in Taita Taveta County.
2. The Constitution of Kenya in its preamble affirms the national pride in the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity as the bedrock of unity of a Sovereign nation;
3. Article 44 of the Constitution recognizes that “every person has the right to use the language, and to participate in the cultural life, of the person's choice” and, a person belonging to a cultural or linguistic community has the right, with other members of that community to enjoy the person's culture and use the person's language;
4. The Pare People, referred to as Wapare, have been an integral part of the communities living in Taveta Constituency and constitute a significant portion of the population in Jipe, Mata, Marodo, Ngutini, Kitoghoti, Eldoro, Kitobo, and Madarasani villages in Taveta Constituency;
5. The Wapare are a Bantu ethnic group who migrated to Kenya in the precolonial period of 1800s from the Pare Mountains in Kilimanjaro region in Northern East Tanzania. Their migration was primarily influenced by trade and social relations, with the Taveta people;

6. Some Pare traders and small groups settled in Taveta to engage in commerce, particularly in iron-smelting, salt trade, and agriculture. In the early 1900s, the Pare people increasingly migrated to Taveta region due to conflicts in the Kilimanjaro region;
7. The expansion of the long-distance trade in ivory and iron saw more Pare traders and skilled blacksmiths moving to Taveta, where they found a welcoming environment in the 19th century;
8. The Pare people have been part of the social fabric of Taveta Constituency since time immemorial, contributing significantly to the local and national economies;
9. In recent years, Kenya has made important strides in efforts to resolve statelessness by recognizing as citizens thousands of other previously stateless people, including those from the Makonde and Shona communities and others of Indian descent;
10. Therefore, the recognition of the Pare People would allow the Community to be fully integrated into the country's legal framework in consistency with national values and governance principles that prioritize inclusivity, equality and diversity;

11. Efforts to have this matter addressed by relevant authorities have been futile; and; that the matter presented in this petition is not pending before any court of law, or any constitutional or legal body.

2.2 Prayers

12. The Petitioners prayed that the Committee inquire into the matter with a view to securing urgent recognition of the Pare Community of Kenya as a tribe of the Republic of Kenya.

PART THREE

3 STAKEHOLDERS' SUBMISSIONS ON THE PETITION

3.1 The Petitioner

The Member for Taveta, Hon John Bwire, MP accompanied by members of the Pare Community, appeared before the Committee on Tuesday, 23rd April 2025, and submitted as follows—

13. The petitioner stated that the Pare people have been part of the social fabric of Taveta Constituency since time immemorial, contributing significantly to the local and national economies.
 14. In recent years, Kenya has made important strides in efforts to resolve statelessness by recognizing as citizens thousands of other previously stateless people, including those from the Makonde and Shona communities and others of Indian descent.
 15. Therefore, the recognition of the Pare People would allow the community to be fully integrated into the country's legal framework in consistency with national values and governance principles that prioritize inclusivity, equality and diversity
 16. The Petitioners pray that the National Assembly through the Public Petitions Committee to inquire into the matter with a view to securing urgent recognition of the Pare people of Kenya as a tribe of the Republic of Kenya.
-
17. Just like all other Bantu tribes in Kenya, the Pare community existed prior to colonization. After the boundaries instituted by colonial masters, some Pare people were domiciled in Kenya, while the majority were geographically in Tanzania.
 18. The Pare community are spread across the country in areas such as Mwatate, Taveta, Voi, Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi and Nairobi. Members of the community are employed as public officers as well as in the national administration.
 19. The community is deeply engrained in Taveta, to the extent that Lake Jipe is derived from a Pare word "*Ipe*" which means lots of waters in Pare language.
 20. The petitioner informed the committee that Mr. Ewart Scott Grogan, an English explorer, politician, and entrepreneur evicted the Pare people in Matta area in 1936 as the area was a fertile agricultural area with plenty of water. In 1963/1964 the Pare people attempted to force themselves back to the settled land because it was more favourable for agriculture.

21. However, their farms were given to other people leaving them as squatters due to lack of official recognition.
22. In addition, issuance of ID cards to the Pare was stopped for a period of over 22 years, as they had to declare themselves as Taita or Taveta since the Pare was not recognized as a tribe in Kenya but considered Tanzanians as majority of Members of the Pare tribe are domiciled there.
23. This led to some of the Pare people migrating from the country due to intimidation by the colonial government. Due to the migration, some of them have not been able to obtain ID cards upon return to date which has affected registration of their children.
24. Despite being issued a Code 2J in the year 2001 by the National Registration Bureau, and issuance of Identification cards to most members of the community, the Petitioners were regarded as stateless in the 2019 Census, which did provide disaggregated data for the Pare community, highlighting the continued risk of statelessness.
25. This omission reflects lack of official recognition in the national registry, leading to their exclusion from detailed ethnic demographic reporting by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
26. In addition, recently, some Pare people who upon attaining the age of majority have not been issued with Identification Cards because of aforementioned challenges.

3.2 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

On Wednesday, 18th June 2025, the Director General Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Dr. Macdonald Obudho appeared before the Committee and submitted as follows—

27. Ethnicity and tribal data collected through censuses and surveys serve several important purposes, especially in diverse nations like Kenya. These purposes include resource allocation; representation and inclusion; cultural and historical documentation; policy development; and conflict resolution and social integration.
28. Over the years, various ethnic communities living in the country have sought to be recognized as distinct tribes or sub-tribes of Kenya. This has mainly been driven by the desire to get statistical information, claim rights and advance community interests. Recent examples include the *Makonde*, *Kenyans of Asian Heritage*, *Shona* and *Pemba* communities who were given formal recognition during the last decade.

29. These communities were granted recognition after formally submitting petitions requesting the Government to recognize them as ethnic communities of Kenya.
30. Since independence, KNBS has collected data on ethnicity and tribes with the aim of enhancing understanding of the diverse nature of the people of Kenya and advancing equitable development in all spheres of life.
31. Collection, analysis and dissemination of data on ethnicity and tribes is supported by various legal provisions including:
- (i) Preamble to the Constitution of Kenya which affirms the national pride in ethnic, cultural and religious diversity being the bedrock of unity as a sovereign nation; and
 - (ii) Articles 11 and 44 of the Constitution which enshrine the duty of Government to promote and protect the diverse cultural heritage of Kenya.
32. In order to ease the production of statistics on ethnicity and tribes, KNBS assigns codes to the various ethnic/tribal communities at the beginning of any statistical project that seeks to collect data on ethnicity.
33. These codes are purely for statistical purposes and do not imply legal authority on the part of KNBS to confer official recognition of ethnic and tribal communities living in Kenya.
34. During the 1969,1979, 1989, 2009 and 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census (KPHC) the number of ethnic/tribal communities enumerated varied between 37 and 42. This was mainly due to inclusion of more ethnic/tribal communities and relegation of some to sub-communities.

35. In 1999, data on ethnicity was not collected during the census.

Table 1. Trend in the Number of Ethnic/Tribal Communities Enumerated during past KPHCS

	1969	1979	1989	1999	2009	2019
No. of main ethnic communities	42	38	40	N/A	37	42
No. of sub-ethnic Communities	0	0	0	N/A	71	75

Source: Kenya Population and Housing Census, (1969-2019)

36. The process used by KNBS to assign statistical codes to ethnic communities is guided by the following:
- (i) Gazette notices issued by the Government recognizing ethnic communities as an integral part of the tribes of Kenya; and
 - (ii) Recommendations made to KNBS by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) recommending the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on ethnic communities whose interests need to be protected and promoted. These ethnic communities include those that are regarded as minorities and marginalized.
37. Distinct data on Pare community is hardly available due to the fact that the community has been enumerated as communities under stateless.
38. The Pare community living in Kenya are mainly found in the Taveta constituency of Taita Taveta County.
39. During the 2019 KPHC, members of this community were enumerated among the 6,272 Stateless persons living in the country at the time. Other communities enumerated as Stateless during this census exercise included the Shona, Wanyarwanda and Wapemba communities.
40. Once the petition is endorsed by the National Assembly and gazetted as so, KNBS will go ahead to distinctly enumerate the community in the 2029 KPHC.
41. The Bureau requested the leaders to encourage their community members to always identify themselves with the correct name of their preferred ethnic community whenever they participate in censuses and surveys undertaken by KNBS. This will enable the Bureau to collect, analyse and disseminate more accurate and comprehensive statistical information on these communities.
42. Regarding the criteria used to recognize tribes and sub-tribes, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) relied on the precedence established during the ethnic enumeration in the 1969 Kenya Population and Housing Census. In subsequent years, recognition of tribes and sub-tribes was granted based on petitions submitted to relevant government agencies.

3.3 Ministry of Interior and National Administration

43. The Principal Secretary for the State Department for Immigration and Citizen Affairs appeared before the committee and responded to the petition as follows—

Background

44. The Wapare are an ethnic group primarily living in the Pare Mountains of Tanzania's Kilimanjaro Region, with a smaller population in Kenya's Taita-Taveta County near the border.
45. Their presence stems from historical migrations, economic activities, and cross-border marriages. Known for their industriousness, the Wapare engage in agriculture, trade, and various economic pursuits.

Identity and Interactions with other Communities

46. Linguistic influences suggest long-standing interactions between the Wapare and Kenya's Taita, Taveta, and Akamba communities, consistent with historical migration patterns in the Kilimanjaro Corridor spanning Kenya and Tanzania. Some Wapare likely settled permanently in Kenya, integrating with local communities over centuries.
 47. In modern times, the Wapare have settled in Kenya due to cross-border marriages and economic opportunities. Like many Kenyan communities, Wapare from Tanzania often enter informal "come-we-stay" marriages with Kenyans living near the border.
 48. The undocumented nature of these marriages complicates their path to citizenship due to marriage under Section 11 of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act (2011). The cost and bureaucratic complexity of obtaining citizenship pose significant barriers for rural Wapare communities.
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49. Children of Wapare women married to Kenyan men are eligible for citizenship by birth (Article 14, 2010 Constitution), but parental statelessness often prevents access to identification documents, particularly when mothers have separated and remarried.

Communal Recognition Versus Citizenship

50. The key challenge for the Wapare in Kenya centers on resolving their citizenship status rather than their recognition as a community. The Wapare may not be considered stateless in accordance with Section 15 of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act (2011), as statelessness pertains to individuals without an enforceable claim to citizenship of any recognized state. Most Wapare maintain ties to Tanzania, disqualifying them from this status.

51. However, some Wapare may qualify for citizenship under Section 16 of the Act, which applies to migrants who voluntarily entered Kenya before December 12, 1963, and have continuously resided here lawfully. Section 17 could subsequently apply to their dependents, extending citizenship eligibility.

Challenges to Wapare Citizenship

- 1) **Documentation Challenges:** Proving residence in Kenya before December 12, 1963, and continuous stay as required by section 16 is difficult due to scarce records, prevalent illiteracy, and dependence on oral history among the Wapare.
- 2) **Proving Statelessness:** Demonstrating lack of other citizenship could be complicated, especially since many Wapare have ties to Tanzania, potentially disqualifying them from migrant status.
- 3) **Application Timeline:** Section 16(2) of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act (2011) provides a five-year period (from the Act's commencement) for migrants to apply for citizenship, with the possibility of a three-year extension by the Cabinet Secretary through a gazette notice. Legal Notice No. 178 (2016) extended the registration period for stateless persons and migrants, but this extension may not be applicable as of June 2025.

Possible way forward

52. **Legislative Amendments:** Parliament could amend Sections 15(2) and 16(2) of the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act (2011) to enable the Ministry to fully resolve issues related to statelessness and migrant communities in Kenya.
53. **Fact-Finding Mission:** The Committee could undertake a fact-finding mission to Taita-Taveta County to understand better the citizenship challenges faced by the Wapare.
54. **Structured Dialogue:** Petitioners could initiate structured discussions with the State Department for Immigration and Citizen Services regarding the Wapares citizenship status. The State Department could then submit recommendations to the Committee for further action.

PART FOUR

4 COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

Upon hearing from the Petitioner, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, and the Ministry of Interior and National Administration, the Committee observed that—

55. On the threshold to be recognized as a tribe, it was observed that there was no threshold but criteria is language, number of people, customs, beliefs and practices.
 56. Distinct data on Pare community is hardly available due to the fact that the community has been enumerated as communities under stateless.
 57. However, the petitioners availed their identification card numbers and are hence Kenyan citizens.
 58. Regarding the criteria used to recognize tribes and sub-tribes, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) relied on the precedence established during the ethnic enumeration in the 1969 Kenya Population and Housing Census. In subsequent years, recognition of tribes and sub-tribes was granted based on petitions submitted to relevant government agencies.
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PART FIVE

5 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

59. Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 227, the Committee responds to the Petition as follows—

- (i) On the prayer that that the Committee inquire into the matter with a view to securing urgent recognition of the Pare People of Kenya as a tribe of the Republic of Kenya, **the Committee notes the desire of the Pare people to be distinctively recognized as a tribe in Kenya and recommends that, within six (6) months of tabling of this report, the Ministry of Interior and National Administration through its internally developed framework, initiates and finalizes evaluation of recognition of the Pare Peoples of Kenya as a tribe and report back to the National Assembly.**

Signed:  Date: 01/04/2026

HON. MUCHANGI KAREMBA, CBS, M.P.

CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

ANNEXURES

Annex 1: The Adoption List

Annex 2: Public Petition No. 01 of 2025 regarding recognition of the Chuka Community as tribe in Kenya

Annex 3: Minutes of proceedings




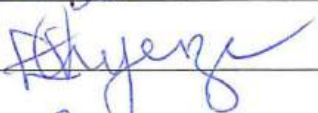



PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

ADOPTION LIST

- (i) **Consideration and adoption of the Report on Public Petition No. 01 of 2025 by Hon. John Bwire Taveta, MP, regarding the recognition of the Pare people as a tribe in Kenya.**

We, the undersigned, hereby affix our signatures to this Report to affirm our approval:

DATE: 18/03/2026

	HON. MEMBER	SIGNATURE
1.	Hon. Muchangi Karemba, CBS, M.P. (Chairperson)	
2.	Hon. Janet Jepkemboi Sitienei, CBS, M.P. (Vice Chairperson)	
3.	Hon. Patrick Makau King'ola, M.P.	
4.	Hon. Beatrice Kadeveresia Elachi, CBS, M.P.	
5.	Hon. Joshua Chepyegon Kandie, M.P.	
6.	Hon. Maisori Marwa Kitayama, M.P.	
7.	Hon. Edith Vethi Nyenze, M.P.	
8.	Hon. Patrick Ntwiga Munene, M.P.	
9.	Hon. Paul Biego Kibichy, M.P.	
10.	Hon. (Eng.) Bernard Muriuki Nebart, M.P.	
11.	Hon. Peter Mbogho Shake, M.P.	
12.	Hon. Suzanne Ndunge Kiamba, M.P.	
13.	Hon. John Bwire Okano, M.P.	
14.	Hon. Sloya Clement Logova, M.P.	
15.	Hon. Peter Irungu Kihungi, M.P.	