

Homa Bay Community Radio was a novelty, with its founders envisioning that the airwaves should be used for community development.

The 1980s following a coup attempt proved to be a difficult time for Kenyan media, which led to severe restrictions. As Kenya became a one party state by law, media freedom space shrunk and a number of publications were closed down and some journalists, such as Salim Lone, fled the country.

This atmosphere saw the emergence of an “alternative” media to fill the void left by the mainstream media, which had been cowed into self-censorship by the authorities.

Publications such as **Mwakenya** and **Pambana** came on the scene, while some Church publications took an increasingly critical tone against the government. As a result, many publications, including **Beyond magazine**, **the Financial Review**, **the Nairobi Law Monthly**, and **Development Agenda** were banned in the late 1980s as the clamour for a multi-party political system gathered pace.

Kenneth Matiba who was a politician and entrepreneur at that time was one of the champions of multi-partyism. He who launched the weekly newspaper, **The People**, in 1992. It was later turned into a daily and was followed by a **Sunday edition** in December 1998. Before the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the media continued to reflect the social-political agenda of the day, which mainly centred on the push to introduce multi-party politics.

In 1991, when this goal was achieved, ownership of media expanded and the content became bolder to the extent that a popular comedy act, **Pedykyulass**, was formed in 1998. It was broadcast on Nation TV and regularly began satirising President Moi while his government's excesses were also lampooned.

In the mid – 1980s, the pioneering Hillary Ng'weno was back at it, this time switching from print to broadcasting. His STV television channel became the first fully Kenyan-owned indigenous TV station in Kenya. A few years later in 1989, the Kenya Times Media Trust, the publishers of Kenya Times, established the Kenya Television Network (KTN) TV. Under experienced editor Herman Igambi and unfettered by State ownership, KTN pioneered a new brand of television journalism and its prime time news bulletin became a daily appointment viewing for many Kenyans.

Rising to become head of news, Igambi started his career at KBC. At KBC he was famous for chairing the weekly TV press conference programme that featured several leading journalists, including Mutegi Njau of the Nation Media Group. Igambi was the pioneer editor of KTN, where he served for many years and later became the editor-in-chief of Citizen Radio and TV.