

# CONFLICT

# ‘We now face guns’: Small-scale miners fear Wagner’s advances in Central African Republic

A photograph showing a person in a striped shirt crouching in muddy water, washing a large metal bowl. In the foreground, the arm and rifle of a soldier in camouflage gear are visible, pointing towards the person.

ing artisanal miners in the [northwest] region,” Sadock, who wanted to be identified by only his first name for fear of retribution, told Al Jazeera. “We soon found out that we made a huge mistake,” the 23-year-old said. After President Faustin-Archange Touadera asked for help to deal with rebel groups in CAR in 2017, Russia’s Wagner Group arrived. The group has since amassed significant security and economic power and according to investigative group The Sentry, it is believed to have laid a blueprint for state capture, with reports that Wagner has “created a complex



## A Collection Of Early Written Laws Of Ancient History

**Contd Page 14**



# Bottom-Up has failed & It's no Bottoms Up!!

By: Danny Munyi  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

- Jetting into Kenya from the US she was well and thoroughly informed, through unofficial American intelligence cables she knew the kind of government she would be met with. A government of self aggrandisement, possibly the only cohort known to have the ability to drill holes in their own boat, and what was left for her to do was confirm the cables; and she did!
- Quickly, Kenya's President William Ruto was courted, with invites to big global summits exclusive only to superpower economies, addressing European houses of Parliament to a standing ovation only for them to overwhelmingly vote against his agitation, a state visit to the white house, -with his entire family and a government entourage of skirt blowers, unfettered access to the heavenly gates of the IMF and the World Bank and world adoration on the global stage; all a faff, culminating to a dogs dinner that was yet to be served! But the US was getting what they wanted, to make money.



Violent protests rocked Kenya in June/July 2024 sparked by the rejection of the Finance Bill 2024.

Kenya with all its wealth and riches is a dystopian society, engaged in a game theory revolving door among many players but largely between the citizens [Wanjiku] and their political rats – a bunch of self-serving, economic gangstas, well known for their nefarious acts, spreading and seeing over ruin, destruction and malfeasance.

The big picture remains, of a country that has the Sub-Saharan coordinates in an operational chokehold with advanced technologies, and skills- despite of this every Wanjiku is, besides the political rats; six pence none the richer trying to fend of predatory loans and punitive tax measures introduced by the once infamous bottom-up government.

Last year in August during the devolution conference, the United States ambassador Meg Whitman in the boldest statement pronounced the position of the United States government

that, 'Kenya's 2022 elections were the most credible in history ...' sending many into a convulsion, especially the opposition members. Which history? What would Meg Whitman know of our/Kenya's history, especially with elections your head may ring? On pure 'transparency', were the 2002 elections a blur? The dirty dancing!

In an editorial on foreign-policy.com published on the 27th of June titled, Washington fails to 'read the room' in Kenya highlighted how experts and US officials working on Africa questioned the flaws in the Biden administration's Africa policy. Meg Whitman the United States ambassador to Kenya landed on 1st August, just in time for Kenya's historical presumably superstitious love-hate relationship with the month. However, this appointment was not a clanger!

The United States had not failed to read the room it

had done that exceptionally well- its policy was not to push Kenya to new frontiers but draw first blood in their bigger strategy in Africa and there was no perfect environment than in Kenya and most importantly sending a blinder. Having transformed eBay from \$5.7m to \$8bn during her time as the CEO of the company from 1998 – 2008, Madam Whitman is a specialist in psychology, human behaviour and a business shark.

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'Massenwahn'

During the state visit to the US, in front of the world media President William Ruto was asked how he could defend the obstinate position to send a police force to Haiti in a deal inked in mystery by the US and Kenya ringfenced with 'Chinese' whispers. The details are yet to be revealed.

Akin to Savonarola and his expulsion of the ruling Medici family, Kenya's genZ and millennials put the country through an opposite portal of well-meaning protests with a sensorial overload, kicking off 'massenwahn' – mass madness! An electric atmosphere gripped the nation as they carried out an ascetic purge on the corruption of the political class that has been the most crucial variable in putting Kenya on its knees. This purge is vicious, an understated undercurrent with massive support from boomers and parents alike, that has not been tapped by a government still largely clueless on how to handle the protests emanating from the wastage of immense resources! And like a magnet repelling metal, in an attempt to stop the fire from spreading is tearing down an innocent man's house.

The sands of the hourglass have emptied for; Kenyan politicians, weak, corrupt institutions, incompetence, rent-seeking, political patronage corruption, and theocracy with the people of Kenya- scrutiny will be the portion. Politicians and governors should prepare to face jail time there's a schism and only one side can win there's no escaping this. The international acclaim, respect, credibility and globetrotting so much desired by this government from its African peers and on the global stage has suffered irreparable damage, and even as they ignore the message the only way out for President Ruto is to change, put the heads of his wicked henchmen on a pike for the nation to see!

*For the message to the President and the government from the Kenya genZ & Millennials is 'dum spiro, spero – while I breathe, I hope'*

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KENYA

# President Ruto promises comprehensive probe on Kware bodies

By: Presidential Communication Service  
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Worth Noting:

- “Nine bodies have been retrieved from Kware dumpsite in Mukuru kwa Njenga, majority being bodies of women and girls,” he said.
- At the same time, President Ruto said he was ready to form a broad-based government to accelerate efforts to unite the country.
- He said the new government will focus on the fight against corruption and create more job opportunities.
- President Ruto urged Kenyans to unite and work together for the sake of peace and development.

President William Ruto has asked security agencies to speed up investigation into the mysterious killings in Nairobi. He assured Kenyans the government will hold to account those behind the killings and said police will leave no stone unturned. The President said police were under firm instructions to expedite investigations into the killings and bring those responsible to book. Speaking at Kaptagat, Elgeyo-Marakwet County, during the 8th edition of the Kaptagat Forest Rehabilitation Programme, President Ruto said it is the responsibility of security agencies to protect lives of Kenyans and their property. “Nine bodies have been retrieved from Kware dumpsite in Mukuru kwa Njenga, majority being bodies of women and girls,” he said. At the same time, President Ruto said he was ready to form a broad-based government to accelerate efforts to unite the country. He said the new government will focus on the fight against corruption and create more job opportunities. President Ruto urged Kenyans to unite and work together for the sake of peace and development. “This is time for us to unite and work together for prosperity. Transformation of Kenya can’t be delayed,” President Ruto said.



President William Ruto/FILE

**Guarding peace**  
He urged Kenyans to jealously guard peace in the country, noting that without it development would be elusive. President Ruto told the young people not to allow anyone to incite them to engage in acts of lawlessness because of politics. “There is no justification for any Kenyan to lose life or property. Kenya is a democratic country that operates under the rule of law,” said President Ruto. He added: “We have a great

nation, Kenya, and we must protect it by all means.” Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua commended President Ruto for dismissing the Cabinet, saying leaders should serve Kenyans with humility. Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi urged Kenyans to support President Ruto’s initiatives aimed at transforming the country. Earlier, President Ruto commissioned the Kipsoen Technical and Vocational College and the Yokot Kapteren integrated Dam,

and launched the rehabilitation works of the Etio Dam. He said Kipsoen TVET in Keiyo South is a powerful story of how progressive learning can transform a society. “By integrating a digital hub in the institution, we have mentored and empowered more than 100 youth who are now making money digitally,” said President Ruto. He pointed out that the construction of Yokot and Etio dams will ensure adequate supply of water for home use, livestock and irrigation.

“The two dams will cumulatively benefit more than 15,000 farmers and create over 2,000 direct jobs in the area,” President Ruto said. He added that the dams will support the cultivation of passion fruits, avocado, black nightshade, beans, cabbages, kales and potatoes. Others who accompanied the President included Governors Wisely Rotich (Elgeyo Marakwet) and Chelilim Bii (Uasin Gishu), and several MPs.

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# Ugandan TikToker jailed for insulting president

By: BBC  
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A Ugandan court has sentenced a 24-year-old man to six years in prison for insulting the president and the first family through his video posted on TikTok. Edward Awebwa was charged with hate speech and spreading “misleading and malicious” information against President Yoweri Museveni, First Lady Janet Museveni and son Muhoozi Kainerugaba, who is the head of the military. The court also heard that Awebwa had shared abusive information – saying there would be an increase in taxes under President Museveni. He had pleaded guilty and asked for forgiveness. The presiding magistrate said that while he had pleaded for mercy, he did not look remorseful for his actions, and the words used in the video were “really vulgar”. “The accused deserves a punishment which will enable him learn from his past so that next time he will respect the person of the president, the first lady and the first son,” magistrate Stella Maris Amabilis said.



Yoweri Museveni,

He was sentenced to six years for each of the four charges against him, which are to run concurrently. Rights groups regularly denounce Ugandan authorities for violations

of human rights and freedom of expression. In 2022, award-winning Ugandan author Kakwenza Rukirabashaija was charged with two counts of “of-

fensive communication” after making unflattering remarks about the president and his son on Twitter. He fled the country to Germany after spending a month in jail, where

he claimed he had been tortured. Activist and writer Stella Nyanzi, who is also in exile, had earlier been jailed after publishing a poem that was critical against Mr Museveni. President Museveni has been in power since 1986 – 14 years before Awebwa was born. In 2022 he signed into law a against speech which rights groups criticised, saying it was aimed at suppressing freedom of speech online. Last year, the constitutional court ruled that a section of the act that penalised “offensive communication” was unconstitutional. Ugandan human rights lawyer Michael Aboneka said Awebwa had been charged under the same broader law that they are still challenging in court because “it is vague”. He told the BBC Newsday programme that the president and his family should expect to be criticised “at whatever angle”. “Unless they are saying that they are going to arrest every Ugandan for criticising them at every point,” he said.

## Liberian

# Liberian president cuts his salary by 40per cent

Liberia’s President Joseph Boakai has announced that he will slash his salary by 40%. His office said he hoped to set a precedent for “responsible governance” and demonstrate “solidarity” with Liberians. Government salaries have been under intense scrutiny recently as Liberians complain about the rising cost of living. Around one in five people live on less than \$2 (£1.70) a day in the West African state. Mr Boakai revealed in February that his annual salary was \$13,400. The cut will bring it down to \$8,000. Boakai’s move echoes that of his predecessor, George Weah, who took a 25% cut in his salary. Some in the West African nation have hailed Mr Boakai’s decision, but others wonder whether it is truly a sacrifice given that he also receives benefits like a daily allowance and medical cover. The presidential office’s budget is almost \$3m this year. Anderson D Miamen, from non-profit organisation the Centre of Transparency and Accountability in Liberia, said the president’s pay cut is “welcoming”. “We just hope that the public will

clearly see where the deductions will go and how they will be used to positively impact the lives of the people,” he told the BBC. W Lawrence Yealue II, whose organisation also campaigns for government transparency, described the president’s decision as “very commendable” and said that “leadership has to be provided from the top”. He added that hoped Mr Boakai’s benefits would be reviewed in the budget for the next financial year. As well as reducing his salary, Mr Boakai has pledged to “empower” Liberia’s Civil Service Agency to make sure public servants “receive fair compensation for their contributions to the country”. Last week a group of lawmakers complained they had not received their official cars, which they needed to perform their duties. As a form of protest, they turned up to parliament in tuk-tuks, known locally as keh keh, a common mode of transport for ordinary Liberians. Mr Boakai took office in January after defeating Mr Weah in a run-off election. He vowed to tackle corruption and financial mismanagement. As well as declaring his assets since



Liberia’s President Joseph Boakai

taking office, Mr Boakai has ordered an audit of the presidential office. The results have not yet been released. Mr Boakai has also beefed up the General Auditing Commission and

the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission. Mr Weah’s government was plagued by allegations of corruption, and lavish spending, which triggered mass protests as the cost of living

spiralled for ordinary people. BBC

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Motivation

# A Trailblazing Winemaker. Meet Dr. Christine Wachira, the First Kenyan Winemaker in California, USA

By: Capital Lifestyle  
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Worth Noting:

- The winery currently boasts three collections. The Black Label Collection, also known as The Big Five, includes a Chardonnay (Buffalo), Cabernet Sauvignon (Rhino), Zinfandel (Elephant), Muscat (Leopard), and a Sparkling white (Lion). The Rose Gold Collection features a Rose (Impala), while The Queens Collection offers natural wines, including a Pinot Noir and a White blend.
- Choosing the name ‘Wachira’ for her winery was a decision rooted in legacy and pride. Christine wanted a brand that stood for quality and timelessness, one that represented more than just herself. “The French name their wineries after their French families, the Italians do the same, and so do the Americans. It is about legacy. I have such tremendous pride in who I am and where I am from. I am a Wachira,” she says.



Dr. Chris (Christine) Wachira

It’s not every day that you come across someone who has stepped away from a promising career in healthcare—and ventured into an unconventional path like wine making. Yet, this is precisely what Dr. Chris (Christine) Wachira did. Defying traditional career expectations, especially those held by many African parents, she took a stab at wine making, and it has paid off. Christine is today a successful winemaker, of the very few female and black distributor, importer, and exporter. Born and raised in Kenya, and currently living in the US, Christine has fond memories of growing up with two brothers and spending time with her grandmother, mother, and aunts in Muranga. She attended Loreto High School, a National girls school in Limuru, a period she recalls with pride as a proud ‘Kotian.’ The late 90s brought significant change when her family moved to the United States. Here, Christine began her college education, which led to a 15-year career in healthcare. Despite her success in the corporate world, Christine felt the pull of a differ-

ent passion—wine making. What began as a personal passion project as a consumer soon turned into a mission to craft wines. **So how did she reinvent herself as a winemaker?** “My introduction to wine was purely from a consumer perspective. I enjoyed the wine culture in California’s wine regions—Napa, Sonoma, and Paso Robles. I loved meeting strangers who also enjoyed wine. We built friendships and relationships over glasses and bottles shared. Then I started crafting as a purely selfish passion project. Being a science nerd and then working in Improvement Science at Stanford Healthcare, I was tasked with identifying gaps in systems and leading teams to solutions for improved clinical outcomes. This background played a significant part when I couldn’t find wines in California’s wine country that complemented my Kenyan mom’s cooking. I decided to fix it and craft some wines for her. I learned wine making techniques from friends who owned wineries; techniques such as developing my palate, locking down my signature Kenyan Accent,

the ageing processes, etc., and the rest, as they say, is HERstory,” she says. Her determination and innovative spirit led her to create Wachira Wines, the first Kenyan-American winery in the US, where she crafts Californian wines with a distinct Kenyan flair. Christine takes her clientele on a sensory adventure she calls the Wachira Wine Safari. Each wine showcases wildlife on the labels, with the Black Labels featuring The Big Five: the buffalo, rhino, elephant, leopard, and lion. This blend of Californian craftsmanship and Kenyan culture creates a wine experience that is uniquely Kenyan-American. The winery currently boasts three collections. The Black Label Collection, also known as The Big Five, includes a Chardonnay (Buffalo), Cabernet Sauvignon (Rhino), Zinfandel (Elephant), Muscat (Leopard), and a Sparkling white (Lion). The Rose Gold Collection features a Rose (Impala), while The Queens Collection offers natural wines, including a Pinot Noir and a White blend. Choosing the name ‘Wachira’ for her winery was a decision rooted in legacy and

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they source grapes from esteemed regions like Napa, Lodi, Paso Robles, and recently, Mendocino for their natural wine collections. This variability in terroir contributes to the unique flavour profiles that define their signature, balanced wines. Her dedication to pairing wine with food is evident in her belief that the only correct palate is one’s own. She encourages wine lovers to break traditional pairing rules and embrace a sensory adventure with wines that complement her mom’s mukimo and lamb stew. Wachira Wines is however not yet in Kenya, but Christine says it will be available before the end of the year (2024). Christine Wachira’s story is one of courage, passion and resilience. From healthcare to wine making, she has carved out a niche and created a legacy that blends her Kenyan roots with her American experiences, proving that it is never too late to pursue what truly makes you happy. (You can find her wines on <https://wachirawines.com/>)



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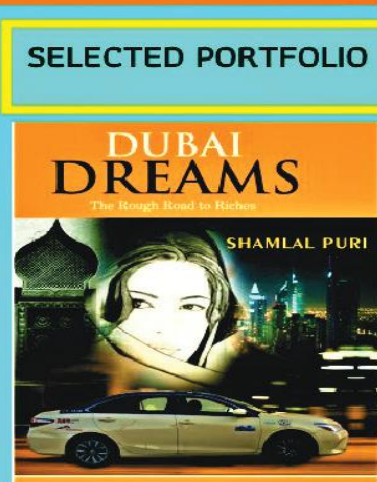
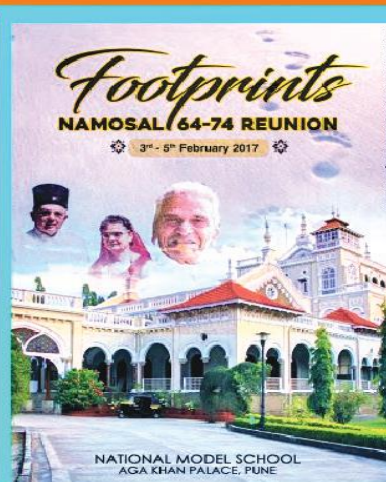
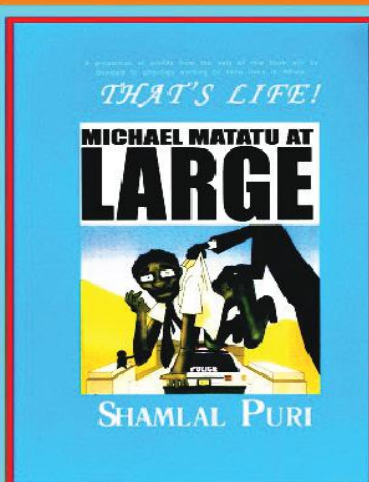
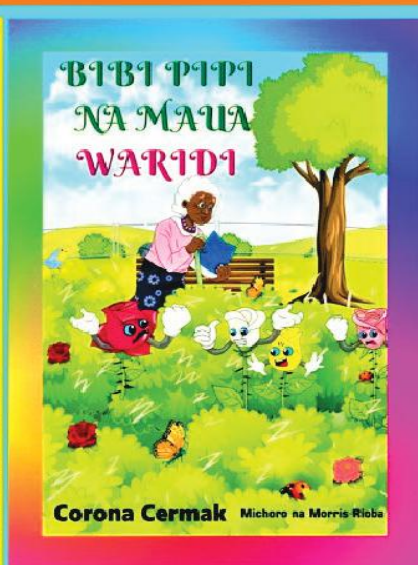
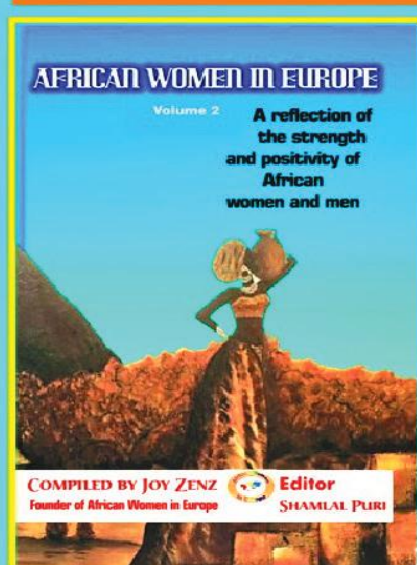
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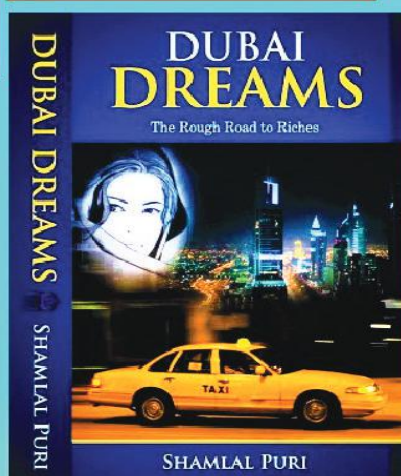
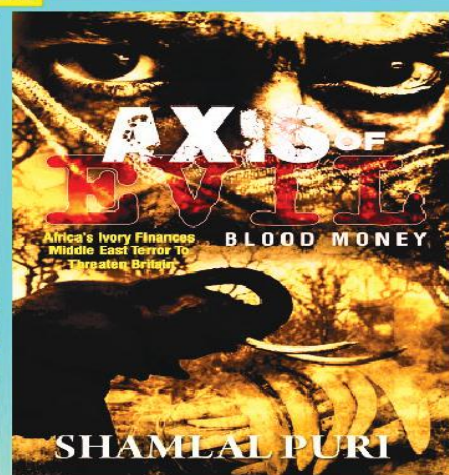
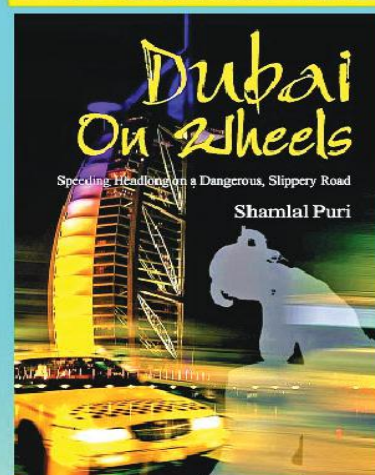
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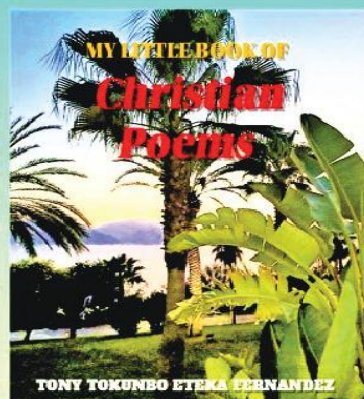
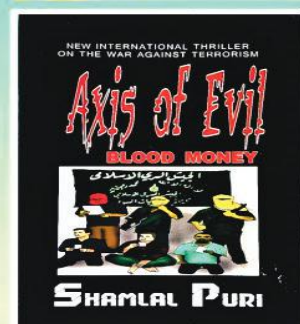
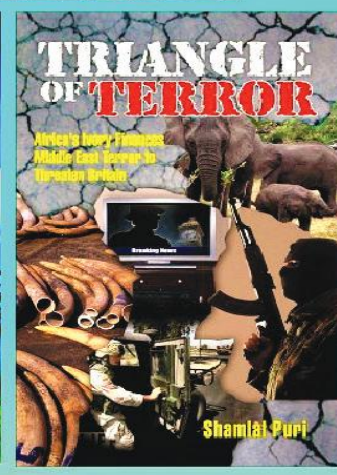
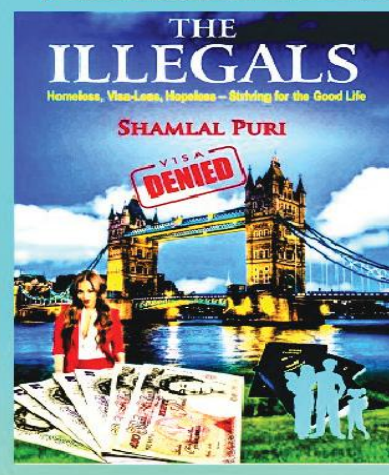
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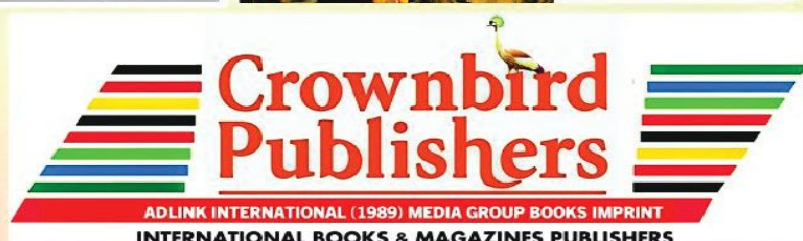


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## CAR News

# 'We now face guns': Small-scale miners fear Wagner's advances in CAR:

Local miners in the Central African Republic face eviction and violence as the Russian group takes over gold and diamond mines.

By: Philip Obaji Jr.  
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Contd from Page 1



Russian officers from the Wagner Group in Bangui, CAR [File: Leger Kokpakpa/Reuters]

## Worth Noting:

- In 2018, at the age of 17, he began working at the Ndassima gold mine in the central part of the country and earned enough to be able to buy a motorcycle in his first four months of work. But things changed not long after.
- The following year, the CAR government rescinded the exploration permits and mining licence for Ndassima gold mine from Axmin, a Canadian company, and then granted them in 2020 to Midas Ressources, a company affiliated to the Wagner Group.
- The Russian private military company paid rebels from Union for Peace (UPC), a local group which controlled the mine at the time, to ensure that staff and properties owned by Midas Ressources were secure. The Sentry reported. When its relationship with the UPC went sour, Wagner mercenaries began a counteroffensive in 2021 against the rebels but they also targeted civilians, especially artisanal miners who lived near the mine, it added.

network of operations to plunder diamonds, gold, and other natural resources" in CAR.

In 2019 the Kremlin-linked group began taking control of gold mines in the central and eastern parts of CAR. In recent years they have also extended northwards.

In October, less than a year after Sadock moved to Koki, locals told Al Jazeera that Russian paramilitaries, in an attempt to seize a gold mine, allegedly executed at least a dozen people who had been rounded up in the town where less than 5,000 people live.

Some of the victims, witnesses said, were small-scale miners who, like Sadock, had moved there after being chased out of gold mines in the Andaha region in eastern CAR by Wagner forces two years ago.

"On a Sunday morning, they [Russian paramilitaries] arrived by helicopter near the mine in Koki, where miners mostly live, and started shooting at people," said Sadock. "They killed 12 civilians, some of whom were artisanal miners, on that day." Wagner and the CAR government officials did not respond to Al Jazeera's requests for comment, but the Russian-linked forces have been accused of similar attacks against civilians in past years, and rights groups like Human Rights Watch have also denounced Wagner's alleged violations in CAR.

Wagner has said its forces are in the country at the behest of the government to assist with security. However, analysts say the group is exchanging paramilitary services for Russian geopolitical gains.

Ndassima, Aigbado, Yanga attacks

In the last four years, Sadock said he has worked in four different mines across CAR before being forcibly displaced.

In 2018, at the age of 17, he began working at the Ndas-

sima gold mine in the central part of the country and earned enough to be able to buy a motorcycle in his first four months of work. But things changed not long after.

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"The white soldiers [Wagner paramilitaries] came to Ndassima in 2021 and ordered all artisanal miners to quit the area but we all refused to leave," Sadock told Al Jazeera. "Then they began to shoot at us."

At least eight miners were killed on that day, according to Sadock, who said he was lucky to escape death because he ran away quickly as soon as he heard the first gunshot.

"The victims were people I knew so closely," Sadock said. "They were making a living out of the work they did and catering for their families, but the white soldiers ended their lives and made the people they were looking after begin to suffer."

After the incident, Midas Ressources gained complete control of the Ndassima gold mine, which has a gold deposit valued by the CAR government at an estimated \$2.8bn. Last year, the com-

pany was sanctioned by the United States Department of the Treasury for "financing Wagner's operations in the CAR and beyond".

Sadock and four other artisanal miners, in search of a new gold mine to work in, then moved to Aigbado village in eastern CAR but tragedy struck just days after they arrived.

On January 16, 2022, two days after Sadock and his colleagues reached Aigbado, heavily armed mercenaries in a pick-up truck drove in, opened fire, and burned down houses near the gold mine, he said. At least 70 people were killed during the attacks that extended to the neighbouring Yanga community, where hundreds of frightened Aigbado villagers ran to but were still met by Wagner forces.

"Many of the people who fled to Yanga were artisanal miners and that was why the white soldiers chased us there because they wanted to make sure they killed us so that we won't return to the Aigbado mine," said Sadock. "Two of my colleagues who came with us from Ndassima were slaughtered when we fled to Yanga."

### 'Face consequences'

Following the incidents in Aigbado and Yanga, Sadock and a few other miners moved to the northwest in search of new mines.

They eventually settled in Koki after being unwelcome in a couple of other places.

"We first went to Baboua and later to Abba, but the people there were not friendly to us because we were outsiders," said Sadock. "We feared for our safety so we went to Koki, where we felt at home before the white soldiers attacked the area."

Russian paramilitaries have always targeted local miners in mining areas where they have interest, according to reports. Two years ago, dozens of miners were killed – some buried in a mass grave

– in at least three attacks in the middle of March 2022 involving Russian paramilitaries who swept through encampments full of migrant miners mostly from Sudan and Chad in CAR's Andaha region, according to a report by The Guardian. Around the same period, more than 100 gold miners from Chad, Sudan, Niger and CAR were killed during a "massacre" by Wagner mercenaries in the same region, as Russia sought to establish control over the flow of gold and diamonds in the restive Central African nation, an investigation by Middle East Eye revealed. Since the Russian Ministry of Defence stepped in to oversee the operations of Russian mercenaries in CAR, now operating under a paramilitary structure referred to as Africa Corps following the death of Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin in a plane crash near Moscow last August, Russian-linked entities have been attempting to seize new gold mines. Last September, Russian representatives from Midas Ressources arrived in the central town of Ndachima where they met community leaders and informed them that the company had bought the area of the town where mining activities take place from the CAR government. Local artisanal miners were told to evacuate the area.

"They [the Russians] said if the miners who live in the area do not leave the place they will face the consequences," Tresor Baboua, one of the youth leaders who attended the meeting, told Al Jazeera. "The miners haven't left yet, and we are hoping that nothing catastrophic happens in the future."

Al Jazeera reached out to a representative of Midas Ressources for comment but did not receive a reply.

### 'Disappearances'

The targeting of small-scale miners has continued this year.

In March, Russian mercenaries carried out numerous attacks on mining sites in Kotabara and Zaranga in the northwest, reportedly killing about 60 civilians, injuring others, and forcing survivors to carry stolen goods and gold, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) project.

Despite its rich natural resources, CAR, a former French colony of about five million people, remains one of the most impoverished countries in the world.

The country has been in

conflict since 2013, when Seleka rebels seized power and sacked the president. Militias called anti-Balaka groups then fought back, causing the United Nations to impose an arms embargo and create a peacekeeping mission.

President Touadera, who came to power in 2016, turned to Russia the following year for security assistance, securing weapons and military instructors drawn from the Wagner Group which has been exploring CAR's natural resources, committing a number of atrocities in the process, according to rights groups.

Russian and CAR officials did not respond to Al Jazeera's requests for comments on allegations of the killing of artisanal miners in various locations across the conflict-hit nation. Emails sent to the Russian embassy in Bangui and to the spokesperson of the CAR government went unanswered.

Following October's attack in Koki, some miners who survived the raid moved to neighbouring Markounda, a town just 48km (30 miles) from Koki, to find work in a gold mine, but they are facing new challenges there.

"Many of our colleagues have disappeared mysteriously without trace since we got here last year," Juste, an artisanal miner who also wanted only his first name mentioned for fear of retribution, told Al Jazeera. "We don't know who is behind these disappearances."

Since November, when they arrived in Markounda, as many as 10 artisanal miners haven't been seen or heard from. Their colleagues are worried they may have been killed.

"They couldn't have left Markounda without informing anyone," said Juste. "It must be some people out there who don't want artisanal miners to settle here that are behind these disappearances, just to scare us."

As the targeting of local artisanal miners across CAR continues, those lucky to survive continue to live in fear.

"I don't think I want to continue with artisanal mining because it has become so dangerous," said Sadock, who fled to the northwestern village of Beloko, on the border with Cameroon, where he buys and sells vegetables. "In the gold mines, we no longer face dust and toxic chemicals alone, we now face guns."

Source: Al Jazeera



## Africa News

# Raila urges action on Embakasi quarry body discoveries

By: Sharon Resian

ODM leader Raila Odinga has called for action to unmask those behind a spate of post-protest murders following the discovery of mutilated bodies at Embakasi's Kware dumpsite near Mukuru Kwa Njenga slum in Nairobi.

In a statement on Saturday, Raila described the discovery as a sad and dark moment for Kenya.

He sent his condolences to the families who lost their loved ones.

"It's a sad and dark moment for Kenya, what we have witnessed in Mukuru Kwa Njenga, pains me deeply. The perpetrators of these and other heinous acts must face the full force of the law immediately," Raila said.

On Friday, human rights activists, including the Mukuru Community Justice Center, discovered mutilated bodies wrapped in polythene bags. The Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) reported the recovery of "at least nine" bodies, some dismembered, sparking speculation on the circumstances of the

deaths.

Governor Siaya County James Oren-go backed Odinga's call for accountability over the brutal killings which he termed "the order of the day in Kenya".

"We were told no more dead bodies to be dumped in River Yala only for quarries to be turned into the new graveyards. Extrajudicial killings must stop and the state has to bear responsibility," he said.

The Director of Criminal Investigations Mohamed Amin in a statement on Friday said the police recovered six bodies, all female, in various stages of decomposition.

"Homicide detectives and officers from the Forensics Division of the DCI are currently analyzing samples to identify the bodies," Amin said adding the agency had secured the crime scene.

"As we await the findings from the post-mortem and forensic examinations, the DCI appeals to the public to cooperate with the authorities as investigations continue."



Raila Odinga/FILE

## Africa News

## Uganda backed M23 in DRC, Rwanda's 'de facto control' on group: UN experts

*The United Nations report says the Ugandan army supported the rebels while some 3,000-4,000 Rwandan soldiers fought alongside them in the eastern DRC.*

The Ugandan army has provided support to the M23 rebel group operating in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), says a United Nations report as clashes escalate in the mineral-rich region.

The UN Security Council's group of experts on Monday also said some 3,000-4,000 Rwandan soldiers fought alongside M23 rebels in eastern DRC and that Kigali had "de facto control" of the group's operations. The DRC has been riven by conflict for decades. Uganda and Rwanda invaded in 1996 and 1998 for what they said was defence against local militia groups.

Uganda is still conducting joint operations with the DRC troops against a rebel Ugandan group. Meanwhile, M23 fighters began waging a fresh rebellion in the eastern DRC in late 2021.

Ugandan troops were part of a regional force deployed in November 2022 to monitor a ceasefire with the M23. Congolese authorities called for the force to withdraw last year, saying it was ineffective.

"Since the resurgence of the M23 crisis, Uganda has not prevented the presence of M23 and Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) troops on its territory or passage through it," said the UN report, which was sent to the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee in April and to members



Militiamen from the Patriotic Front for Peace/People's Army, one of the largest armed groups fighting M23 in North Kivu, at their headquarters in Mbwavinwa, Lubero territory, in eastern DRC [File: Alexis Huguet/AFP]

of the Security Council in June.

The UN group also said it had obtained evidence confirming active support for M23 by officials from the military and military intelligence, with M23 leaders travelling to Uganda for meetings.

The deputy spokesman for Uganda's armed forces, Deo Akiiki, told Reuters news agency such reports falsely accuse the East African country's army when its relationship with the

DRC forces is at its best.

"It would be mad for us to destabilise the same area we are sacrificing it all to have it stable," Akiiki said.

DRC-Rwanda tensions

The UN has long accused Rwanda of backing the M23, which has repeatedly seized large parts of eastern DRC. Rwanda denies the allegations and has never acknowledged its troops are operating there.

The UN experts in their report said Rwandan army's "de facto control and direction over M23 operations also renders Rwanda liable for the actions of M23".

Therese Kayikwamba Wagner, the DRC's minister of state for foreign affairs, also told Al Jazeera on Monday that the situation in the country's east had deteriorated over the past few weeks and accused the Rwandan army of continuing to en-

ter their territory.

"The situation that we're looking at is one where we're facing an influx of soldiers from our neighbouring country Rwanda, that has sent over 4,000 troops, that have fuelled a massive displacement crisis in eastern DRC," she said.

"The question we should be asking ourselves is why Rwanda is not being sanctioned for violation of our territory," Wagner added.

In response to the UN report, Rwanda said the DRC was financing and fighting alongside a Hutu rebel group, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), that has attacked the Tutsis in both countries.

"The DRC has all the power to de-escalate the situation if they want to, but until then Rwanda will continue to defend itself," Rwanda government spokesperson Yolande Makolo said.

The renewed fighting in eastern DRC came two days after a United States-brokered truce plan fell through. The truce was aimed to ease hostilities, allow for the voluntary return of displaced people, and provide humanitarian access to vulnerable people.

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies



KENYA

# From The Hustler’s President To An Oppressive Leader: Parallelism Between President Ruto And Tayyib Al-Mahdi In Naguib Mahfouz’s Short Story ‘A Man Of Awesome Powers.’

*Naguib Mahfouz’s short story, “A Man of Awesome Powers,” presents a compelling narrative of transformation and the corrupting influence of power. The*

By: Kamomonti wa Kiambati  
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## Worth Noting:

- When William Ruto ascended to the presidency, he did so on the wave of support from the ‘hustlers,’ Kenya’s disenfranchised lower and middle classes. His campaign was built on the promise of economic empowerment and justice for the common citizen. Ruto’s rhetoric of uplifting the underprivileged and dismantling the entrenched elitism resonated with many Kenyans who felt marginalized by the political and economic system.
- In this, he mirrored Tayyib al-Mahdi’s initial altruistic use of his newfound powers to address societal injustices and support the needy in Mahfouz’s story.
- However, the narrative of power is often one of transformation, and not always for the better. In “A Man of Awesome Powers,” al-Mahdi’s gradual corruption is marked by a shift from benevolent acts to self-serving actions.

Just this week when Gen Z started nationwide protests dubbed ‘Occupy Parliament,’ to register their displeasure with the Finance Bill, I found myself reflecting on where we have come from with President William Ruto. Ruto rode to State House on the platform of youth. How come the same youths are increasingly becoming disillusioned by their own choice. I found some solace in this year’s KCSE set book: ‘A Silent Song and Other Stories.’ There is a story there that relates so well with Ruto’s sudden change. It is titled: A Man of Awesome Powers. What a title! Naguib Mahfouz’s short story, “A Man of Awesome Powers,” presents a compelling narrative of transformation and the corrupting influence of power. The protagonist, Tayyib al-Mahdi, is an ordinary man endowed with extraordinary abilities, who initially uses his powers for the benefit of society. However, over time, he succumbs to the seductions of authority, ultimately becoming the very tyrant he once opposed. This tale is strikingly analogous to the political journey of President William Ruto of Kenya, whose transition from a champion of the ‘hustlers’ - the struggling masses - to an oppressive leader mirrors al-Mahdi’s descent into autocracy. When William Ruto ascended to the presidency, he did so on the wave of support from the ‘hustlers,’ Kenya’s disenfranchised lower and middle classes. His campaign was built on the promise of economic empowerment and justice for the common citizen. Ruto’s rhetoric of uplifting the underprivileged and dismantling the entrenched elitism resonated with many Kenyans who felt marginalized by the political and economic system. In this, he mirrored Tayyib al-Mahdi’s initial altruistic use of his newfound powers to address societal injustices and support the needy in Mahfouz’s story.

However, the narrative of power is often one of transformation, and not always for the better. In “A Man of Awesome Powers,” al-Mahdi’s gradual corruption is marked by a shift from benevolent acts to self-serving actions. His powers, which initially served the public good, become tools of personal gain and control. Similarly, Ruto’s presidency has witnessed a disturbing shift from his campaign promises to actions that seem increasingly autocratic and oppressive. The very hustlers who propelled him to power are now finding themselves at the receiving end of policies and actions that betray the ideals they believed Ruto stood for. One of the key issues has been the economic burden placed on the populace. Ruto’s administration has introduced tax measures and policies that disproportionately affect the lower and middle classes, exacerbating the economic hardships of those who had placed their hopes in his leadership. This mirrors al-Mahdi’s eventual use of his powers to bolster his own position and wealth at the expense of those he once helped. The initial fervor of support that Ruto enjoyed is now waning, replaced by growing disillusionment and resentment among the hustlers who feel abandoned and betrayed. Moreover, Ruto’s administration has displayed increasingly authoritarian tendencies, stifling dissent and curtailing freedoms. This shift towards repression is reminiscent of Tayyib al-Mahdi’s descent into tyranny, using his abilities to silence opposition and maintain his dominance. In Kenya, critics of Ruto’s government have faced intimidation and harassment, a clear departure from the democratic ideals that Ruto once championed. This erosion of democratic norms and the consolidation of power are hallmarks of the very despotism that both Ruto and al-Mahdi originally opposed. The tragedy in both narra-



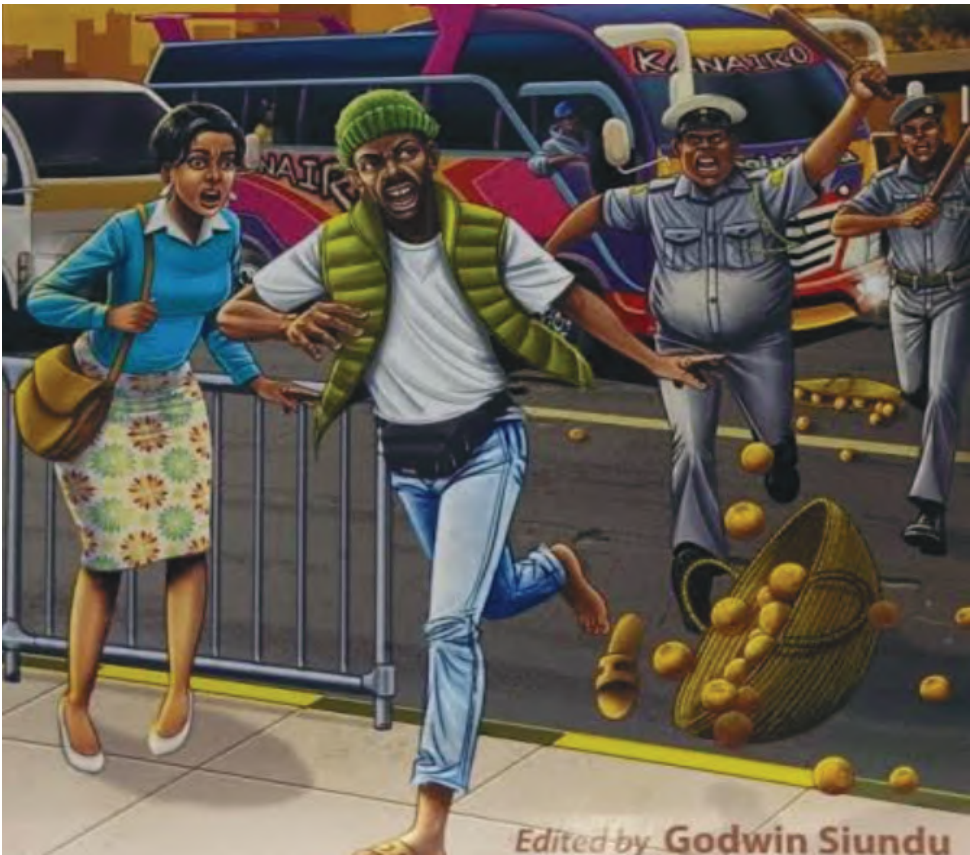
President William Ruto

tives is the profound sense of betrayal. In Mahfouz’s story, the people’s trust in al-Mahdi is shattered as he becomes indistinguishable from the oppressors he once fought against. Similarly, the hustlers in Kenya, who saw in Ruto a beacon of hope and change, now see a leader who has turned his back on them. The sense of disillusionment is palpable, as the promises of economic revival and empowerment remain unfulfilled, replaced by policies that further en-

trench inequality and hardship. In conclusion, Naguib Mahfouz’s “A Man of Awesome Powers” offers a poignant reflection on the corrupting influence of power and the fragile nature of trust between leaders and their followers. The story of Tayyib al-Mahdi serves as a cautionary tale, warning of the dangers that accompany the transition from populist hero to autocratic ruler. President William Ruto’s journey from a hustler’s

president to an oppressive leader mirrors this narrative, underscoring the timeless and universal themes of Mahfouz’s work. As Kenyans grapple with the realities of Ruto’s leadership, the lessons from Mahfouz’s story resonate deeply, reminding us of the imperative to remain vigilant against the seductions of power and the betrayal of the public trust.

*\*Kamomonti teaches English and Literature in Gatundu North Sub County\**



Tayyib Al-Mahdi In Naguib Mahfouz’s Short Story ‘A Man Of Awesome Powers.’



## UzbeK News

# Processes Of Organization And Improvement Of Judicial Bodies In Independent Uzbekistan



By: SHODIYEV AKMAL  
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**Abstract:** This article tells about the history of the creation of the justice system in the independent Republic of Uzbekistan and its improvement, the functioning of the justice system today and its role.

**Keywords:** Justice, Ministry of Justice.

The justice system of the independent Republic of Uzbekistan began its new history on January 8, 1992. On this day, the Ministry of Justice was established on the basis of the historical decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan". Over the past 30 years, the justice system, along with other systems of our independent country, has gone through its periods of formation, development, progress and reform. The intensity of reforms in recent years is first of all reflected in the adopted legal documents. In particular, in the last decade, 4 laws, 15 decrees and decisions of the President and 26 decisions of the Government were adopted aimed at legal regulation of the activities of judicial bodies. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the state administration body that consistently implements the unified state policy in the field of norm creation and law enforcement in the field of society and state building. means like The main purpose of the establishment of justice agencies is to ensure justice.

The Ministry of Justice is subordinate to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, directly to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on specific issues of activity provided for by legislation. consists in the consistent implementation of a single state policy aimed at ensuring legitimacy in the field of state and community building. The Ministry is headed by the Minister of Justice, who is approved and dismissed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the recommendation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In 1991, the Republic of Uzbekistan gained its independence. Its historical importance was that, first of all, the priority of the human factor, the principles of state independence were



recognized, and goals such as the establishment of a people-friendly democratic legal state were set:

- January 8, 1992 - the historic Decree No. PF-314 of the head of our state "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted and the independent Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan was founded. That is, the Ministry of Justice of the Union-Republic of Uzbekistan SSR was transformed into the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan. November 12, 1992 - Resolution No. 523 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted and the Regulation of the Ministry of Justice was approved.

- June 17, 1993 - on the basis of the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 294 "On the approval of the regulation on the legal examination of the normative legal documents of the ministries, state committees and agencies of a general and mandatory nature and their state registration" according to the Ministry of Justice on Economic Reform a department for state registration of departmental regulatory documents was established as a part of the department of preparation and legal expertise of draft legislation and regulatory documents.

- May 13, 1994 - the International Legal Department was established based on the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 257 "On

some issues of improving the structure of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan".

- April 27, 1995 - in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan and changes in the structure of its apparatus", 3 states within the Department of the Ministry of Justice for the preparation of drafts of legislation and regulatory documents on economic reform and legal expertise In the amount of one unit, a department was established to control the implementation of the legislation on compliance with the rights of entrepreneurs and private property owners.

- August 5, 2000 - in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 304, to increase the legal culture of the population, to ensure the wide use of regulatory and legal documents by legal entities and individuals, to improve the system of providing the society with legal information, and to organize the classification of current legal documents step by step In order to achieve this, the Department of Classification of Laws and Legal Information was established in the central office of the Ministry of Justice.

- June 17, 2011 - Pursuant to the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to further increase the role of judicial bodies in the field of ensuring legality in the activities of state bodies" No. The Ministry was transformed

into the General Directorate of Supervision over Compliance with the Legislation and its regional departments were established. Later, by the Decree No. PF-4636 of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 24, 2014 "On Measures to Further Improve the Law Enforcement System", the Ministry of Justice's main department for monitoring compliance with legislation and its regional departments were abolished. 2011 August 23 - Decision PQ-1602 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to further improve the activities of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted and the new Regulations of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan were approved.

- May 15, 2015 - Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-4725 "On measures to ensure reliable protection of private property, small business and private entrepreneurship, and to eliminate obstacles to their rapid development" maintaining the limited amount, the tasks of coordination, control and methodical support of the activities of "one-stop" centers were assigned.

- April 13, 2018 - by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to radically improve the activities of justice bodies and institutions in the implementation of the state legal policy", justice departments were established in districts (cities) and the Department of Control of Contractual-Legal Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and its territorial divisions were

abolished.

**Conclusion:** A new justice of the new Uzbekistan has been formed. Today, the justice system has become a young, intellectual and active system based on the three-tier "center - region - district (city)" vertical, which actively penetrates to the lowest levels of society and works tirelessly to gain the approval of the people. The most important thing is that judicial bodies have begun to serve as a bridge in simplifying relations between the state and citizens, bringing them closer to the people. The concept of communication with the people, including the slogan "Pleasing the population is the service they want" came to the fore. Putting an end to citizens' excessive distractions, saving time, and preventing wastefulness has become the highest goal. In the justice system, serious attention is being paid to the fight against corruption and the vaccine of honesty.

*SHODIYEV AKMAL was born on February 24, 1999 in Navbahor District, Navoi Region. In 2020, he was admitted to the Faculty of History of the Navoi State Pedagogical Institute on the basis of a state grant. Since 2021, he has been an official member of the Council of Young Scientists of the Republic, more than 50 young people He is a participant of forums and conferences, a leader of talented young people of the institute, and an initiator of many volunteer activities.*

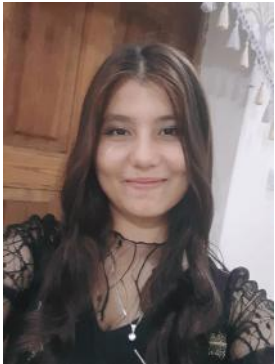
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- In 1991, the Republic of Uzbekistan gained its independence. Its historical importance was that, first of all, the priority of the human factor, the principles of state independence were recognized, and goals such as the establishment of a people-friendly democratic legal state were set



Uzbekistan

# A Collection Of Early Written Laws Of Ancient History



By: Aziza Saparbaeva  
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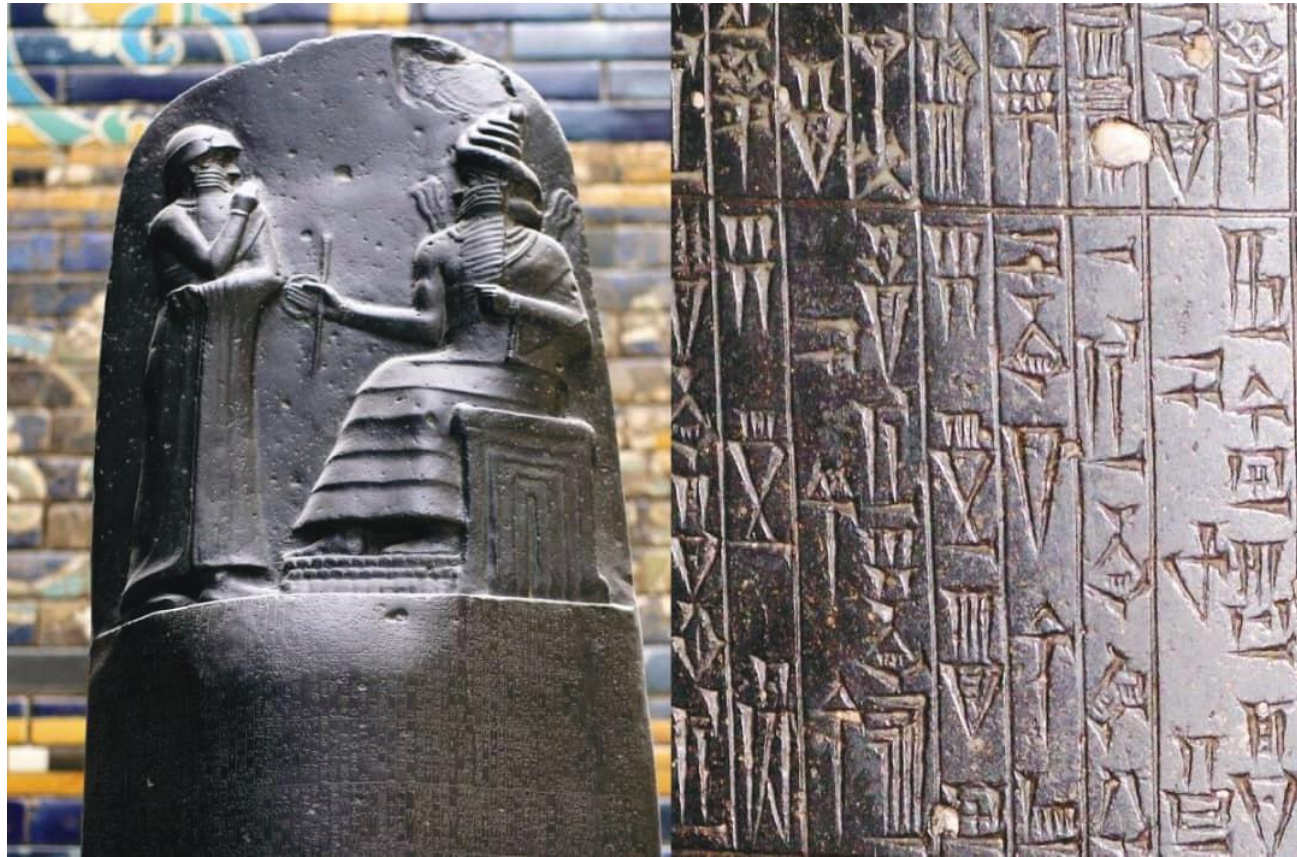
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## Worth Noting:

• The introduction states that the main purpose of establishing laws is to punish Justice in the country. In law, the King cites his services to the people. It is also talked about the fact that it is necessary to honor the Kings who will fulfill these laws in the future, curse my king who did not fulfill them or wanted to abolish them.

• In the main part of the law, the norms on court and trial (articles 1-5), violation of property rights and penalties applied to it (Articles 6-120), marriage, family and inheritance law (articles 127-195), Criminal Law (responsibility for crimes against the life and health of a person, articles 196-214), labor and labor weapons (articles 215-282), as well as other relations are established.

The law of ancient custom, Sumerian laws and new laws were taken as the basis for the drafting of the code.



Ancient History

Kings who will fulfill these laws in the future, curse my king who did not fulfill them or wanted to abolish them.

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The law of ancient custom, Sumerian laws and new laws were taken as the basis for the drafting of the code. The laws of khammurapi differ from other Eastern laws in that they do not retain elements of religion and exhortation. If so, then the signs of the seed arrangement were kept in it.

The laws of khammurapi reflected forms of land ownership such as tsarist, synagogue, community and private land ownership. Muik ilku, which was given to officials and military, was called mulk. Community ownership remained in later periods.

The laws separate obligations arising from contracts and damages. Contract law developed widely during this period. Purchase and sale of contracts, Rent, Deduction, debt. shipping, assignment, company (majority), gift and other types are regulated by many norms.

The marriage was formalized on the basis of contracts concluded in writing. If a person takes a wife and does not conclude a written contract, this woman is not a wife to him (Article 128). The contract was also concluded between the family of the husband and wife. Slaves and freemen could start families, and children born were considered free. Before the conclusion of the marriage contract, the groom had to give his future mother-in-law thick money-"tirkhatum", wedding gifts to the family members of the bride - "biblum", the daughter-in-law's father-sep-sidirga - "sharhtum". One marriage was valid so that the husband could enter into a second marriage with a valid one. The child's parents were cut off by the tongue of the sock, and the fingers of the ursa. The inheritance was initially preceded by sons, girls without sons, and later girls with equal inheritance rights with sons. If the son died, the grandchildren were the heirs. Brothers without children and grandchildren, and uncles without them, came to the field as heirs. Inheritance is evenly distributed among children. The adopted child also received an equal share. The husband gave his wife a gift - "nudunum", and it was preserved. In the laws of khammurapi, nothing is mentioned about the habit of bloody revenge, which is characteristic of the primitive community system.

He vacated his Omino for penalties imposed by public authorities and the fees the offender pays to the victim or his relatives. However, other remains were preserved, typical of the primitive community system. In particular, if the culprit is unknown, the responsibility of the entire team, the responsibility of the children for the parents, the expulsion of the culprit from his territory, etc. The punishments were primarily aimed at holding the Babylonian system of slavery. In addition to the types of criminal penalties, the penalties of disgrace, deprivation of the right to conduct certain activities and removal from office can also be said. Death is punishable by death for causing human death as a result of negligence. For example, when the house, the castle, breaks down and the landlord's son dies, the builder's son is also killed (Art. 230). If the accused was in a high position, he paid a fine. Among the crimes against the person was the crime of stealing young children. Of course, the goal in this was to sell as slaves. (Article 14), qui was called "vardum" in ancient Babylon. Very severe penalties were provided for crimes against property. For the theft of the property of the palace and synagogue, in some cases, the death penalty is provided, in other cases, a fine of 30 times. If the culprit could not pay him, he was sentenced to

death. During the fire, the perpetrator of the burglary was set on fire. Property rights against a slave were heavily defended. In accordance with the khammurapi laws, the judge was removed from office if he changed his previous decision and paid a fine of 12 times the amount of the suit. Criminal penalties for failure to report the crime being prepared, perjury and defamation have been set. Court records are written on the cellars. They record the directions of your orientation, oaths, the names of witnesses and the content of the court sentence. As a rule, it was not possible for parties to initiate a case a second time. Articles 278-282 of the law define laws relating to slavery. For example, Section 282 states that "if a qui tells the owner that he is not his slave, then if the owner proves that he is a slave, then the slave can have his slave cut off his ear". In general, the laws of Hammurabi reflected the rules of order inherent in the ancient Babylonian society.

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\* Photo: Aziza Saparbaeva A Collection Of Early Written Laws Of Ancient History



# NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS



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## America

# 'I'm not going anywhere,' Biden says as campaign struggles

By: Reuters  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

- While union and religious leaders attended, Michigan's governor Gretchen Whitmer and its Democratic senators, Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters, did not.
- Earlier on Friday, Biden made a surprise stop at a restaurant in a Detroit suburb, where he told diners he planned to "finish the job," and said: "I promise you... I'm okay."
- Biden got a boost on Friday when two prominent Democrats - Representative James Clyburn and California Governor Gavin Newsom - said he should stay in the race.
- On Friday afternoon, United Auto Workers president Shawn Fain, who had previously said he was worried about the president's chances, praised Biden for standing "with the working class," without using his name.
- But there were signs that his support was weakening elsewhere, as two more lawmakers called on him to drop out.



U.S. President Joe Biden speaks as he visits Garage Grill and Fuel Bar in Northville, Michigan, U.S., July 12, 2024. REUTERS/Elizabeth Frantz

Seeking to revive his struggling reelection campaign, President Joe Biden held a rare rally in Detroit on Friday, telling a cheering crowd he wasn't going to leave the race and warning that Republican Donald Trump poses a serious threat. Biden, 81, is trying to shift the conversation from his mental sharpness and a growing number of Democratic defections to the impact of another Trump presidency, as he tries to reboot his campaign after a shaky debate performance on June 27. "I am running and we're going to win," he said to a crowd that carried "Motown is Joetown" signs and chanted: "Don't you quit." "I'm the nominee," he said. "I'm not going anywhere." Pointing to the press area in the gym, Biden said: "They've been hammering me," to which the crowd booed. "Guess what, Donald Trump has gotten a free pass," he added. "Hopefully with age comes a little wisdom," Biden said, in a defiant and sometimes gleeful performance. "Here's what I know - I know how to tell the truth, I know right from wrong ... and I know Americans want a president, not a dictator." Biden also laid out what he intended to do with his first 100 days of a second term, including codifying abortion rights, signing the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, ending medical debt, rais-

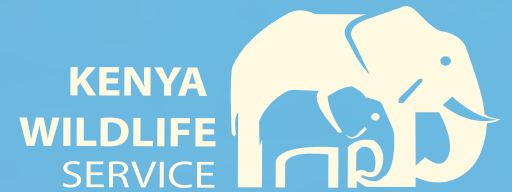
ing the minimum wage and banning assault weapons. These sweeping changes would be difficult or impossible without Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress. While union and religious leaders attended, Michigan's governor Gretchen Whitmer and its Democratic senators, Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters, did not. Earlier on Friday, Biden made a surprise stop at a restaurant in a Detroit suburb, where he told diners he planned to "finish the job," and said: "I promise you... I'm okay." Biden got a boost on Friday when two prominent Democrats - Representative James Clyburn and California Governor Gavin Newsom - said he should stay in the race. On Friday afternoon, United Auto Workers president Shawn Fain, who had previously said he was worried about the president's chances, praised Biden for standing "with the working class," without using his name. But there were signs that his support was weakening elsewhere, as two more lawmakers called on him to drop out. "It is time to move forward. With a new leader," Representative Mike Levin, from California, said in a statement. Levin, like many others who have called on Biden to leave the race, faces a competitive reelection battle of his own this year.

Since the debate, at least 19 lawmakers have urged Biden to step aside so the party can pick another candidate, as have some donors, Hollywood stars, activist groups and news outlets. Biden retains support from key figures in the party, however, less than five months from the Nov. 5 election. "I'm riding with Biden no matter which direction he goes," Clyburn said on NBC's "Today" program. Newsom likewise said he was sticking with Biden in an interview excerpt released by CBS. Clyburn, 83, is a respected voice among Black Americans whose support is essential to Biden's 2024 campaign, while Newsom, 56, is one of several younger governors who are widely seen as the future of the party. While Biden courted Michigan voters, Trump challenged him on Friday to take a cognitive test, writing on Truth Social: "I will go with him, and take one also. For the first time we'll be a team, and do it for the good of the Country." Trump will be in the national spotlight next week, when the Republican Party holds its convention in Milwaukee to award him the presidential nomination. CRUCIAL CALLS Democrats are worried that Biden's low approval ratings and growing concerns that he is too old for the job could cause them to lose seats in the House

of Representatives and Senate, leaving them with no grip on power in Washington should Trump win the White House. As he worked to stem further defections, Biden held separate phone calls with groups of Hispanic, Asian and Democratic lawmakers, according to aides. While the Hispanic group's top two leaders have endorsed Biden, some other members have not stated their positions. Democratic officeholders, donors and activists are trying to determine whether Biden is their best bet to defeat Trump and serve another four-year term in the White House. The New York Times reported that unnamed donors have told a pro-Biden Super PAC fundraising committee that roughly \$90 million in pledges will remain on hold as long as he is in the race. As Air Force One flew to the Motor City, campaign spokesperson Michael Tyler told reporters that donations "exploded" during Biden's Thursday night press conference to seven times the usual level. Hakeem Jeffries, the Democratic leader in the House, said he met with Biden on Thursday night to convey the range of thoughts his 213-member caucus held about Biden's candidacy. He did not say whether he personally thought Biden should stay in the race. "I directly expressed the full

breadth of insight, heartfelt perspectives and conclusions about the path forward," Jeffries wrote in a letter to colleagues. Thursday's closely-watched press conference provided fodder for Biden supporters and doubters alike. At one point, Biden referred to his vice president, Kamala Harris, as "Vice President Trump." Hours earlier he introduced Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as "President Putin" at the NATO summit, drawing gasps from those in the room. He also delivered detailed assessments of global issues that served as a reminder of his decades of experience on the world stage. With most U.S. voters firmly divided into ideological camps, opinion polls show the race remains close. An NPR/PBS poll released on Friday found Biden leading Trump 50% to 48%, a slight increase from his position before the June 27 debate. But some analysts have warned that Biden is losing ground in the handful of competitive states that will determine the outcome of the election. "If current trends continue, Mr. Trump could rack up one of the most decisive presidential victories since 2008," Democratic strategist Doug Sosnik wrote in the New York Times.








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## Diaspora

## Desperate Zimbabweans cross Zambia border for cheaper healthcare, medicines

*With essential drugs and specialised care expensive or unavailable, poor Zimbabweans opt to travel long distances to seek treatment.*

By: Calvin Manika  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe – At 5pm at the Victoria Falls border post, Margaret Tshuma – who has a 24-hour day pass to be in Zambia – is in a rush to return home to Zimbabwe before dusk.

This is not the first time Tshuma, 53, has travelled from her rural home in Diki village, 120km (75 miles) away, to cross into Zambia for the day. It has become a routine trip she makes monthly to buy medication for her husband who has scleritis – an inflammatory condition that affects the outer covering of the eye.

The prescribed medication is barely available on the shelves of pharmacies in Hwange district, where she lives. Of what is there, the high cost makes it inaccessible to many, she said.

“The same medication is expensive back home. If you add transport and medication costs altogether, it is still cheaper to come to Zambia. Also most times, some of this medication is not readily available which risks the patients’ lives,” said Tshuma.

Buying the medicines in Zimbabwe costs Tshuma about \$85 a month, whereas just across the border in Livingstone she pays 320 kwacha (\$13). Even with travel, it works in her favour, as a two-way trip from Hwange to Livingstone costs \$14. Zimbabwe’s economy has been hit hard by decades of economic crises and soaring inflation. Many basics are not as easily available or affordable, and Zimbabweans themselves have lost confidence in the local currency.

At the border, Tshuma follows a small queue, before officials check her luggage and papers without much trouble and stamp her 24-hour pass – a process that takes less than 10 minutes.

Speaking to Al Jazeera, Mike Muleya, a commuter bus operator who ferries passengers back and forth to the border area, said a significant number of people make the daily trip from Hwange – a community of some 21,300 people – to buy medicines or visit hospitals in Zambia.

“My first early morning trip from Hwange, I carry at least six to nine passengers going to Victoria Falls to cross to Livingstone. We chat along the way and I find that five to seven are going for medical-related trips,” he said.

“In the evening, on my last trip, I literally park near the border as they will be calling me to take them back to Hwange. In between, I will be carrying one or two, so it’s a big number [making the daily trip], given that it’s not me alone in the transport business.”



A man shops at a pharmacy in Zambia [File: Emmanuel Mwiche/AP]

#### The cost analysis

According to a 2023 report by the local advocacy group Community Working Group on Health, most Zimbabweans do not have access to quality and affordable healthcare. The group has called on the government to prioritise primary healthcare to achieve universal health coverage.

Poor Zimbabweans who depend on state healthcare struggle significantly more to obtain treatment than wealthier citizens, who can turn to more expensive private services. In addition to difficulties in obtaining care, many complain of long queues at public hospitals – often requiring four to seven hours of waiting. In Matetsi Ward 1 in Hwange Rural, 20km (12 miles) from Victoria Falls, Mercy Khumalo recounted the ordeal of taking her aunt to Zambia for treatment.

It was not an easy situation for the family, Khumalo said. Using their meagre savings and the money from selling a cow, they were finally able to get enough to afford to see a specialist at a private hospital in Zimbabwe. But after doing a cost analysis, they chose to go to Zambia instead. “We had consulted locally and got some quotations from various specialists. Aunt was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Our neighbour told us that treatment was affordable and a pure public service in Zambia. We saw that, with the money we had, it will have been spent within a month at a private doctor locally; yet, in Zambia, we will save a lot as we monitor the situation,” she explained.

“Foreigners are allowed to use the public healthcare system in Zambia and are generally free as long as you have your passport and health

records in order,” Natasha Chola Mukuka, a public health practitioner and student of medicine at Levy Mwanawasa Medical University in Lusaka, Zambia, told Al Jazeera.

Although specialists and surgery cases do attract a cost, Zimbabwean patients told Al Jazeera they find it more affordable than at home.

5 Miles Hospital still miles away Matabeleland North province, home to Victoria Falls and Hwange, is historically marginalised despite it being a tourism hub that also houses the largest colliery and the biggest national parks. Locals bemoan the lack of tangible infrastructural development, including health facilities.

The construction of the 5 Miles Hospital – named for being 5 miles (8km) from Hwange Town Central Business District – gave hope to residents and villagers. However, when it was nearly complete in 2018, construction stopped.

“The government started to build some hospitals to demystify that the region is marginalised but the structures have remained white elephants for decades,” said Fidelis Chima, the coordinator of the Greater Whange Residents Trust.

“There is nothing to indicate that the hospital will open soon. We have waited for the longest time. People in Hwange depend on Hwange Colliery Company Hospital, but it’s a private facility and very expensive. The government wanted 5 Miles Hospital to be a district hospital, covering both Hwange and Victoria Falls,” added Chima.

Matabeleland North has a record of poorly equipped hospitals. Existing facilities also lack essential drugs and sufficient trained personnel, lo-

cals say.

In Hwange district, five hospitals provide services to a population of about 125,800.

But according to Hwange Rural District Ward 12 Councillor Jowani Chuma, four wards are serviced by one hospital, St Marys – a missionary facility run jointly by the government and the Catholic church where patients receive a combination of free and paid-for services.

Each ward, or subdivision of a district, generally has between 2,000 and 7,000 people. Chuma deems it fortunate that some parts of the district have St Marys, as most wards have no such facility.

“St Mary’s is better because most of the rural clinics are manned by hybrid personnel, with one or two government registered nurses while the rest are nurse aides or village health workers. In the absence of the senior sister, one is in the care of the inexperienced personnel,” said Chuma.

#### The electoral promise

During campaigning for the 2023 elections, the governing ZANU-PF party said Lupane Provincial Hospital in Matabeleland North – a large 250-bed facility – was set to become the biggest in the country upon its completion and ease pressure on referral hospitals in the southern region.

“The hospital will be the largest in all provinces in the country,” said President Emerson Mnangagwa while addressing party supporters at a rally in Binga.

Binga villagers, however, who live in the Zambezi Valley, cross to Zambia every day using canoe boats in search of medication and other basics. Unlike in Victoria Falls, Binga and Zambia are separated by the Zambezi River, and in the absence

of a bridge, boats become a mode of transport.

The few functional hospitals from Lupane to Victoria Falls in Matabeleland North are either missionary or private, and both come at a cost for patients who use them.

Despite the government allocating \$47 million for construction of the Lupane hospital in 2023 – and the government promising that the facility would be complete by the end of last year – most patients in the province are still referred to the Catholic-run St Luke’s for health services, while the critically-ill are referred to Bulawayo.

To date, people still travel long distances to seek basic treatment. Meanwhile, Matabeleland North, home to some 827,600 people, remains the only province in the country without a provincial hospital.

#### Averting smuggling

With the influx of people across the Zambia-Zimbabwe border every day, immigration authorities are tightening the requirements for people bringing medication into Zimbabwe.

They now require a prescription from a doctor that is stamped by a medical facility.

Previously, people would cross over to buy drugs without a prescription, a situation authorities say was creating a fertile ground for smuggling and unregulated medical drug businesses within Victoria Falls and Hwange.

“The border is busy on a normal day, mostly its people crossing for same day services ... some are tourists,” said a security official at the border who requested anonymity as he is not allowed to speak to the press.

“But the bulk are vendors from Zambia and individuals from Zimbabwe going shopping which includes medical drugs. It’s not a lot, but for drugs, we now require a stamped prescription and we check the purchased drugs to reduce smuggling,” he told Al Jazeera.

The immigration officer in charge of the border was not readily available when asked for comment.

As Margaret Tshuma makes her way from the border to her home in Diki village, she knows she will be back in a few weeks. But she also looks forward to the day that Hwange has a district hospital and the Lupane Provincial Hospital is complete.

“This will save lives as it will cut distances to Bulawayo referral hospitals,” she said, adding that adequate facilities and steady affordable supplies of medicine nearer to home “will be welcome”.

“Otherwise,” she cautioned, “people will still trace medical facilities and medicine in Zambia if there are no prescribed drugs on the shelves.”

Source: Al Jazeera



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## Diaspora

# In Rwanda, ethnicity doesn't matter to people if their needs are met: study

*Since 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front – led by Paul Kagame, who was first elected president in April 2000 – has been at the country's helm.*

By: Réginas Ndayiragije, University of Antwerp and Marijke Verpoorten, University of Antwerp  
xxxxxxxxxxxx



Since 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front – led by Paul Kagame, who was first elected president in April 2000 – has been at the country's helm/Rwanda Presidency

## Worth Noting:

- Initiatives to address ethnic conflicts tend to revolve around institutional remaking. This generally involves power-sharing between groups competing for power (as in the cases of Burundi and Lebanon). Or integrative state institutions – that is, a political system pushing for moderation and national unity (as in post-genocide Rwanda).

- We set out to get answers on how such institutional reforms influence the individual. Our research investigated the perceptions of political representation by the Hutu and Tutsi before, during and after the 1994 genocide.

- Political representation is an important political resource. Its deficit lies at the origin of horizontal inequality – that is, inequality among citizens in terms of access to opportunities. This inequality is linked to many identity-based conflicts.

- In two data collection rounds, we asked more than 400 Rwandan citizens to tell us their life history. We asked them to rank their perceived political representation for each year in their life history, and explain any change in ranking over time.

Thirty years ago, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a predominantly Tutsi armed group, took over Kigali, Rwanda's capital city – and soon after, the country's governance. This victory occurred amid a horrific genocide masterminded by a Hutu-dominated regime. Rwanda's main ethnic groups are the Hutu, who make up a majority of the population, and the Tutsi.

Since 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front – led by Paul Kagame, who was first elected president in April 2000 – has been at the country's helm. Kagame is expected to extend his rule in the July 2024 elections. The law allows him to serve two more five-year terms.

We are researchers who study political representation in post-conflict contexts. We recently sought to understand to what extent Rwanda has managed to overcome the fault lines that got it to a dark place in 1994. In recent research, we looked at how the country has fared in managing the fissures in society that led to the violence.

Our findings show that the country's Hutu majority have over time reported feeling more represented by government. This is despite it being largely made up of a Tutsi ruling elite.

What has made the ruling elite legitimate among the Hutu?

We found that the Kagame regime has rolled out policies that seek to improve state-citizen relations and highlight the state's capacity to deliver. The government has invested in public goods, such as universal healthcare, that include both the Hutu and Tutsi. It has also emphasised Rwanda's improved socioeconomic situation.

Our findings illustrate that even when ethnicity is an important political identity, what matters for citizens is not only their ethnic group's proportional representation in state institutions. More importantly, it's the extent to which the ruling system acts on their fundamental needs. This suggests that real or perceived uneven ethnic representation in state institutions can be compensated by the development and implementation of policies that appeal to citizens' interests and needs.

The research

Initiatives to address ethnic conflicts tend to revolve around institutional remaking. This generally involves power-sharing between groups competing for power (as in the cases of Burundi and Lebanon). Or integrative state institutions – that is, a political system pushing for moderation and national unity (as in post-genocide Rwanda).

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Political representation is an important political resource. Its deficit lies at the origin of horizontal inequality – that is, inequality among citizens in terms of access to opportunities. This inequality is linked to many identity-based conflicts.

In two data collection rounds, we asked more than 400 Rwandan citizens to tell us their life history. We asked them to rank their perceived political representation for each year in their life history, and explain any change in ranking over time. The respondent narratives we collected related to “the standing for” dimension (whether they recognised themselves in the rulers), the “acting for” dimension (whether their needs and priorities were considered), and the emotional connection they felt with rulers and the political system. We also covered the processes (such as elections) through which they felt represented.

Unsurprisingly, we found that perceived political representation was at a low during the genocide. This was true for Hutu and Tutsi respondents who at the time were experiencing extreme

insecurity.

Prior to the genocide, when the Hutu dominated political power, the Hutu respondents in our survey perceived greater political representation than Tutsi respondents. This reversed when the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front came to power.

The Rwandan Patriotic Front's grip on power has increased over the past three decades. But we found that the inter-ethnic gap in perceived political representation has narrowed over time. In other words, despite a concentration of power in the hands of a Tutsi elite, Hutu respondents experienced improved political representation over time.

This finding can come across as puzzling. But we found an answer to the puzzle in the respondents' narratives, that is, their explanations for changes in their perceived political representation.

Hutu respondents often referred to “substantive” representation – understood as the alignment between policy outputs and policy preferences by citizens. Or simply put: what a government does to make your life better. Our study found that the Tutsi regime in Rwanda boosts its legitimacy by adopting policies that appeal to both the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. These policies include the universal healthcare policy

and improvements in public infrastructures.

This finding aligns with an argument made by researchers that the Rwandan Patriotic Front had to invest in substantive representation to compensate for a lack of descriptive representation. Descriptive representation refers to the extent to which a representative or legislative body resembles constituents and their social or demographic identities.

Why it matters

Our findings are important for two major reasons.

First, we provide an empirical account of what it means for citizens to (not) have their co-ethnics in state institutions.

Second, our research makes the case for a more holistic approach to post-conflict institutional remaking in divided societies.

As international and national actors increasingly recommend power sharing between groups competing for power, they should equally devise strategies that enable state institutions to deliver on key governance outcomes. This can include capacity building for state institutions and mechanisms to make these institutions accountable to citizens.

It's on this condition that citizens can feel the superior value of institutional engineering.

Of course, while we show that the Rwandan government gained legitimacy by providing public goods and services to both ethnic groups internally, this doesn't justify the many human rights violations ascribed to the regime, both internally and externally.

Bert Ingelaere, who was a professor at the University of Antwerp, collected the data used in this research, and led the writing of the first draft of the paper. He unexpectedly passed away on 4 February 2022.

Réginas Ndayiragije, Associate researcher, University of Antwerp and Marijke Verpoorten, Associate Professor, University of Antwerp

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Diaspora

Fields of modern linguistics

By: Eshmurzayeva Zuhra  
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

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Eshmurzayeva Zuhra a student in the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literature at the State University of World Languages of Uzbekistan.

Abstract

In this article, the concept of modern linguistics, the fields of linguistics, goals and tasks, dynamic linguistics and its use in the speech process are discussed and researched.

Keywords: linguistics, general linguistics, special linguistics, applied linguistics, fields and tasks of linguistics, dynamic linguistics

Linguistics (linguistics: Greek lingua - "language", logos - "science") is complex and multifaceted, it studies language scientifically and practically in an integral relationship with other social sciences, it deals with the main issues of linguistics, the emergence of language and language It is a science that analyzes the general laws of development, language and speech features. [1,6]

Language serves society, it plays an important role in people's communication and exchange of ideas. Language serves for the formation and development of a person from the spiritual and educational side. Language is related to human thinking, mentality, culture, tradition and personal development. There are several directions of linguistics, and they are: general linguistics - the field whose main task is to identify and illuminate the most common signs-characteristics characteristic of world languages, special linguistics - the field that studies the characteristics of certain language signs; applied linguistics is divided into fields

that develop methods for solving practical problems, and this is their main goal and task.

According to V. Humboldt, language is a phenomenon that embodies complex, conflicting qualities and characteristics. In fact, the languages of the world differ from each other due to their unique features, i.e. in which direction they differ. The scientist says that the language is always developing and changing, which is its main feature. The main problem of the science of linguistics is to study this feature of the language. Linguistics or linguistics is studied in the following areas in the process of learning a strong and unique language, which is the wealth of the nation:

1. Dynamic linguistics.
  2. Static linguistics
  3. Synchronous linguistics
  4. Diachronic linguistics
  5. Intralinguistics
  6. Extralinguistics
  7. Paeralinguistics
  8. Psycholinguistics
  9. Sociolinguistics
  10. Mathematical linguistics
  11. Computational linguistics
  12. Cognitive linguistics
  13. Pragmalinguistics
  14. Linguistics
- Dynamic linguistics, which is one of the important and starting fields of linguistics, is a field that mainly studies the language in its real existence, actively performing various tasks in the communicative process, and changing "in progress".
1. Dynamic Syntax (DS) is a grammatical formalism and linguistic theory whose overall goal is to explain the real-time processes of lan-

guage comprehension and production and to describe the gradual evolution of language structures over time. According to the DS approach, syntactic knowledge is understood as the ability to progressively analyze the structure and content of spoken and written language in context and in real time. While it provides representations similar to those used in Combinatorial Categorical Grammars (CCGs), it creates left-to-right literal representations. it differs from other syntactic models, which generally abstract from the features of everyday conversation such as interruptions, backtracking, and self-correction. Moreover, it differs from other approaches in that it does not postulate an independent level of syntactic structure in relation to words.

Dynamic syntax emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s through the work of notable figures such as Ruth Kempson, Ronnie Kahn, Wilfried Meyer-Viol, and Dov Gabbay. The first monograph-length work on the framework was published in 2001. Dynamic Syntax: The Flow of Understanding Archived 2019-05-27 at the Wayback Machine. It is embedded in broader trends in 20th-century linguistic thought, especially syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and phonology. Ronnie Kann, Ruth Kempson, and Lutz Marten's The Dynamics of Language (2005) continued the 2001 title and expanded the discussion and empirical scope of the framework. In subsequent years, the framework's empirical coverage has expanded to include modeling structures in Japanese, Korean, modern Greek, medieval Spanish dialects, and various Bantu languages, including Swahili, Rangi, and SiSwati. Recent work has also explored ways in which the framework can be naturally extended to model dialogue. [3]

2. Static linguistics. A field that examines a certain "stuck" state of the language related to the present-modern period, which is completely removed from the process of development and change in the language, without approaching it.

3. Synchronous linguistics - this field of linguistics, different from static linguistics, serves to describe the "stuck", "stagnant" state of the language in a certain period.

4. Diaxon linguistics. The development of language is

a field that studies the laws and results of the development of language units. Diaxon linguistics is inextricably linked with dynamic and atomistic linguistics.

5. Intralinguistics (also known as internal linguistics). Phonology, lexicology, and grammar are the sources of his research.

6. Extralinguistics (external linguistics). Foreign linguistics studies the development and function of language in connection with socio-political, socio-historical, ethnic, geographical factors.

7. Paralinguistics. Hand and face movements (gestures, facial expressions), speech pitch, expressive-emotional, which are directly related to speech activity and occur simultaneously with the expression of thoughts in the speech process, are a constant companion of conversational speech. is a field that studies a number of aspects such as paint.

8. The field that studies how language is processed in the brain by studying the mental processes involved in language production and comprehension is called psycholinguistics.

9. The field that studies the relationship between language and society, aspects of language related to philosophy, social psychology, and ethnography is called sociolinguistics (sociolinguistics) [1,21].

Sociolinguistics does not stop at the analysis of the relations between language and society, but follows the criteria of historicity, vitality, normativity, territoriality in highlighting its social nature.

10. Mathematical science, its subject, the formal apparatus for describing the structure of natural and some artificial languages can be recognized in the field of mathematical linguistics.

11. An interdisciplinary field that combines linguistics, computer science and artificial intelligence to study and process natural language using computer methods and tools.

The most important conceptual categories of computer linguistics:

Knowledge structures such as "framey" (conceptual structures for the declarative representation of knowledge about a typical thematic integrated situation, such as "scenarios" (conceptual structures for the procedural representation of knowledge about a stereotypical situation or stereotypical behavior), "plans" (knowledge structures that include

ideas about possible actions, a category that leads to the achievement of a specific goal)

12. Cognitive linguistics. It is the newest direction in linguistics, and it was created from the necessary connection between the sciences of cognitology (a science that studies human knowledge) and linguistics, in order to work together.

13. Pragmalinguistics. It studies and examines a specific unit in speech activity, realization, invisibility in speech, in cooperation with various non-linguistic factors and at various levels, in their interrelationship.

14. Specific problems of the relationship between language and culture are mainly solved by linguo-cultural studies.

Lingvoculturology studies the influence of the cultural factor on language (problems of cultural linguistics), on the other hand, the influence of the language factor on culture (problems of linguistic culturology) [4,8]

The result

Linguistics is enriched with the complexity of the language system with various features and fields, and with unlimited communicative possibilities. It actively participates in the coverage of topical and extremely complex issues such as language and speech, including a number of disciplines.

Summary

If the science of linguistics serves to confirm and prove that language is one of the most important, basic and incomparable criteria for the flourishing of society, dynamic linguistics serves to understand and analyze the language in real time. Other fields of linguistics complement each other according to their places of use and tasks.

Eshmurzayeva Zuhra

I was born on April 9, 2005, in the Narpay district of the Samarkand region. At the moment, I am a student in the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literature at the State University of World Languages of Uzbekistan.



# ‘We know the tactics they use’: The poachers turned gamekeepers of Kenya

*An anti-poaching unit in Kenya’s Aberdare National Park employs former poachers from the local community to curb wildlife crime and promote conservation.*

By: Ana Norman Bermudez  
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## Worth Noting:

- A loud trumpeting sound coming from deep within the forest confirms Gioko’s suspicions: there is a herd of wild elephants nearby. “We must not disturb them,” he says, guiding the group in the other direction.
- For the Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU), every day on a patrol mission involves encounters like this. From dawn until dusk, this group patrols the forests of Kenya’s Aberdare National Park, in central Kenya, looking for evidence of poaching and illegal logging.
- The park covers an area of 767 square kilometres (296 square miles) and includes a range of landscapes – mountains, moorlands and rainforests. The black rhino and mountain bongo are the most endangered species here, but antelope and buffalo are just as popular with poachers looking for bushmeat to sell.
- Their work requires commitment – missions last for 14 days and nights at a time – after which they only have three or four days off.



Mercy Nyambura recalls when ‘elephants, buffalos and baboons would invade our land and destroy everything’ when she was a child. Now she works as part of a ranger unit preventing poaching and logging [Ana Norman Bermudez/Al Jazeera]

Aberdare National Park, Kenya – Beneath the dense canopy of redwood trees, a uniformed group flanked by armed men treads silently through the thicket, dodging the overgrown stinging nettles that spill over the narrow trail with impressive skill. “Stop!” whispers Wilson Gioko, the team leader, as he points to a mound of fresh dung. The other men freeze in their tracks and look around, carefully observing their surroundings. A loud trumpeting sound coming from deep within the forest confirms Gioko’s suspicions: there is a herd of wild elephants nearby. “We must not disturb them,” he says, guiding the group in the other direction. For the Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU), every day on a patrol mission involves encounters like this. From dawn until dusk, this group patrols the forests of Kenya’s Aberdare National Park, in central Kenya, looking for evidence of poaching and illegal logging. The park covers an area of 767 square kilometres (296 square miles) and includes a range of landscapes – mountains, moorlands and rainforests. The black rhino and mountain bongo are the most endangered species here, but antelope and buffalo are just as popular with

poachers looking for bushmeat to sell. Their work requires commitment – missions last for 14 days and nights at a time – after which they only have three or four days off. The core members of the unit, the AJSU scouts, do not carry firearms but they are accompanied at all times by four armed rangers from the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Kenya Forest Service – government agencies devoted respectively to wildlife conservation and forest management. The armed rangers provide security against the wildlife poachers (every year, approximately 150 rangers worldwide die while on duty, according to the Thin Green Line Foundation, a British charity which supports wildlife rangers). The scouts provide the in-depth knowledge of the forest they need to patrol. They also know the community that lives around it intimately, and understand the techniques favoured by poachers. This knowledge is derived from first-hand experience. Before they committed to conservation and joined the unit, most of the members were themselves involved in wildlife crime. “We used to hunt rabbits and deer,” says scout John Mugo, a quiet man in his 40s who never takes off his

sunglasses. “We would go and put a snare, then the following day we would go and check whether it’s caught or not, just for meat.” One of the original members of the unit, Mugo became involved in conservation 15 years ago, after he saw the positive effects that conservation initiatives were having on his community. Mercy Nyambura, 42, is the only woman in the unit. She has cropped hair and a warm yet tough demeanour and says: “I used to be part of the conflict. Now I’m part of the conservation side.” Growing up in a community in Nyandarua County bordering the west of Aberdare National Park, Nyambura was taught that her community was living in competition with the wildlife. She recalls a time when “elephants, buffalos and baboons would invade our land and destroy everything”. But, like Mugo, she soon saw that conservation initiatives could have a mutually beneficial impact. She has been a member of the unit for 14 years and, despite being the smallest person in the group, she is often at the front of the patrol line.

Gaining the knowledge of the ‘other side’ The AJSU was formed in 2010 through a joint project

of the Kenya Wildlife Service and Rhino Ark, a Kenyan non-governmental organisation (NGO) involved in conservation. The purpose of the unit is to curb illegal activities inside the forest by removing snare traps which have been placed by poachers, managing bushfires, seizing poached animals or plants and arresting the poachers themselves. According to Christian Lambrechts, executive director of Rhino Ark, hiring members of the community with a background in wildlife crime themselves was a strategic decision, not only to benefit from their insider knowledge and networks, but also to promote anti-poaching attitudes within the community. “It was really important that we were able to bring them on board and benefit from the knowledge of the other side,” he says. AJSU team leader Gioko recalls many moments when the scouts’ past experiences of poaching and logging have been critical to the success of an operation. Once, they were able to arrest a group of men planning an illegal dog hunt of endangered giant forest hogs; another time they were able to arrest a man who had poached a buffalo. “[The scouts] know the tactics that are used by poach-

ers,” Gioko says. “They will tell you that a certain poacher will strike from a certain direction, they will use this route to attain their target, what time do they get in, where do they sell their merchandise, etc.” According to Giovanni Broussard, coordinator of the UNODC environment team in Africa, which oversees anti-wildlife crime programmes in the region, Kenya has massively reduced poaching over recent decades, partly as a result of the Kenya Wildlife Service’s hardline approach to the enforcement of anti-poaching laws. “However, in recent years we have witnessed concerning new threats to the biodiversity of Kenya,” he says, “such as a surge in illegal poaching of bushmeat and the illegal trade of sandalwood, often perpetrated through collusion with public officials. The fight against wildlife crime in Kenya is not over yet and the level of alert must remain high despite the recent successes”. Encroaching on habitats The drivers of wildlife crime are complex. Zachary Kamau, one of the scouts, says:

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# ‘We know the tactics they use’: The poachers turned gamekeepers of Kenya

By: Ana Norman Bermudez  
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Contd from Page 22

Worth Noting:

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A pile of buffalo bones and skulls, the remains of carcasses seized from poachers, at the Kenya Wildlife Service office in Aberdare National Park [Ana Norman Bermudez/Al Jazeera]

“When it is dry [season] there is no work in the community. People are idle.” Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the communities around Aberdare, and when the rain stops, crop yields drop. “So what do they do? They just get into the forest where they can cut trees, where they can burn charcoal, where they can poach, so that they can get at least something.” Traditionally, people here collect wood and burn it in kilns to make charcoal which they can use to generate energy or sell on to others. It’s a common practice but it’s illegal to do it with wood from a protected area. As human populations continue to encroach into wildlife habitats, causing them to become more fragmented, people find themselves competing with animals for resources. “Since there is a lot of poverty and no food, [we] would end up going inside the park, doing logging, at least to get school fees for the children and to buy food,” Nyambura explains. In 2010, Rhino Ark and the Kenya Wildlife Service built an electrified fence around the perimeter of the national park – one of the first such fences constructed in Africa. According to the Kenya

Wildlife Service, incidents of both poaching and wildlife-human conflict are no longer on the rise in Aberdare, as a combined result of the fence and the AJSU’s efforts to deter and sensitise the community. While the fence stopped wild animals from going into human settlements, “some illegal activities were still going on”, says Daniel Kosgey, assistant di-

rector of Aberdare National Park at the Kenya Wildlife Service. “But they have reduced drastically thanks to the AJSU. [...] This is a model that we need to embrace.” Indeed, Rhino Ark has already replicated this model in Mount Kenya National Park (70km north of Aberdare) and part of the Mau Forest complex (200 km

west of Aberdare). Within the next year, it is also planning to expand the AJSU in order to deepen its coverage of Aberdare. The scouts say they believe a new generation is now emerging from childhood with a deeper appreciation for wildlife and the need to protect it. As cicadas hum in the background marking the end of

the working day, the youngest scout, Samuel Kariuki, says he has influenced some of his friends, who no longer engage in poaching. Most importantly, he has had an effect on his six-year-old sister. “Day by day, she is saying, ‘I want to be like my brother, conserving [wildlife]’, ” he says, a broad smile stretching across his face.



Spotted hyenas walk on the road at Aberdare National Park [Ana Norman Bermudez/Al Jazeera]



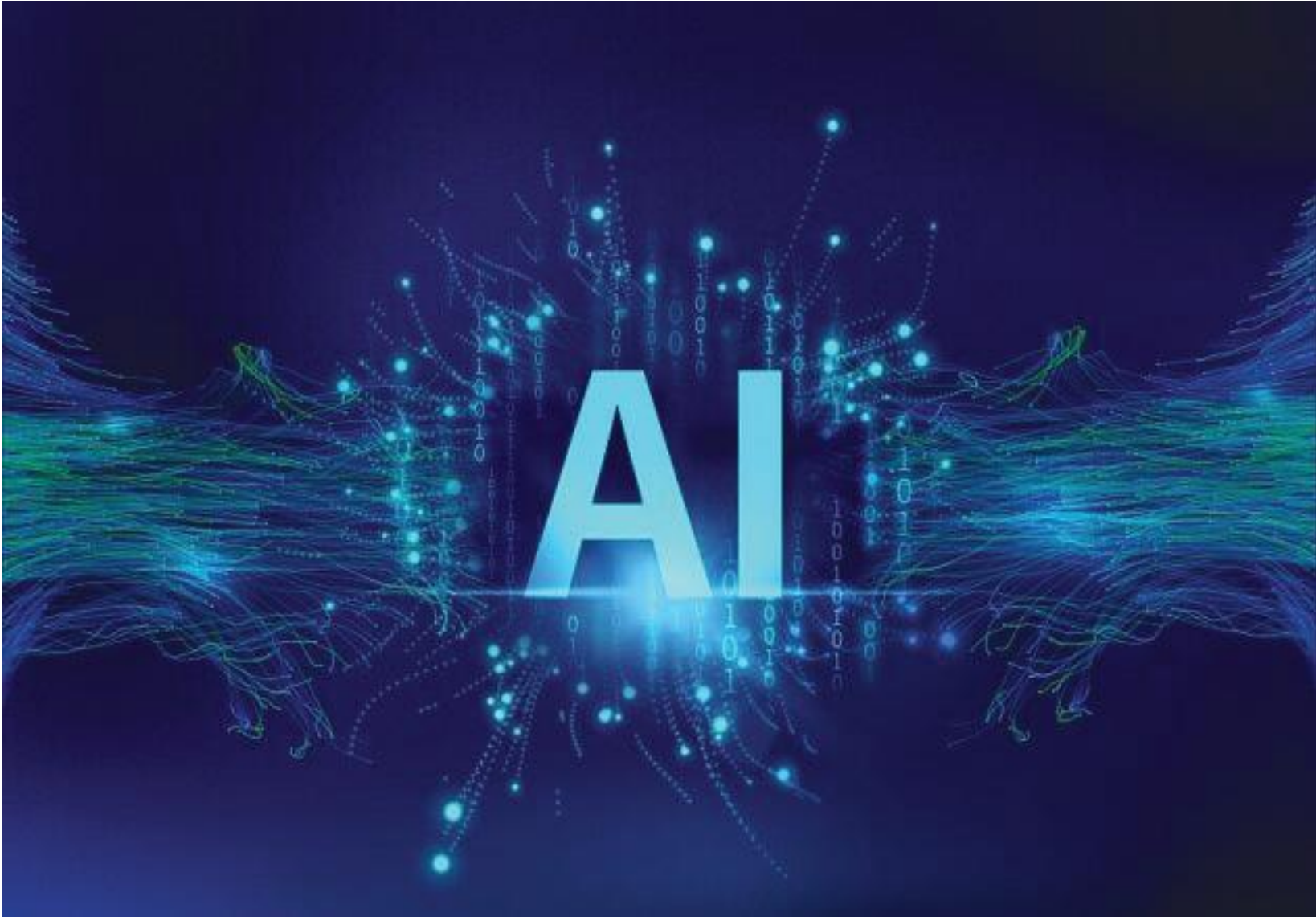
# The surge in civic tech and the need for inclusive AI in Africa

*The bill was quickly dissected and explained in bite-sized videos shared on platforms like TikTok, X and Instagram.*

By: Kavengi Kitonga and Dr. Shikoh Gitau  
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Worth Noting:

- It serves as the official working language for the East African Community, Southern African Development Community, and the African Union. Despite its widespread use, Kiswahili's digital presence is limited, making it a low-resource language. This scarcity of digitized text and speech data is a common issue for many African languages, given the continent's linguistic diversity, with over 2,000 languages spoken. The lack of digital data is exclusionary, especially in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), which has seen the proliferation of language applications (text-to-speech, machine translation), virtual assistants like Alexa and Siri, and tools such as ChatGPT, Llama2, and Mistral AI. The development of these tools involves collecting language data, training models, and deploying the tools.



In recent weeks, Kenya has experienced an unprecedented surge in Civic Tech development, driven by the passionate activism of Gen Z. As young Kenyans took to the streets to protest the Kenya Finance Bill 2024, a parallel digital movement emerged to educate and empower even more citizens. The bill was quickly dissected and explained in bite-sized videos shared on platforms like TikTok, X and Instagram. These videos then spread to WhatsApp groups, initially in English and aimed at Gen Z, but soon translated into over 10 local languages to reach parents and rural communities. This grassroots effort was mostly voluntary, highlighting the urgent need for accessible information. In contrast, a Large Language Model (LLM) for the Finance Bill was released in English and Kiswahili, underscoring a significant gap in the inclusivity of AI ecosystems in Africa. Our observations revealed two key issues: African languages remain predominantly oral and are critically underrepresented in AI, and there is a need for a different approach to creating language datasets, as evidenced by the success of the viral explainer videos. Coincidentally, Kenya recently hosted the World Kiswahili Language Day celebrations from July 5 to 7, featuring a series of events, including Usiku wa Mswahili. Established by UNESCO in November 2021, this day recognizes Kiswahili's role in cultural preservation, awareness creation, expression, and social participation. Kiswahili is the most widely spoken language in Sub-Saharan Africa, with over 200 million speakers across more than 14 countries, and is one of the top 10 most spoken languages globally. It serves as the official working language for the East African Community, Southern African Development Community, and the African Union. Despite its widespread use, Kiswahili's digital presence is limited, making it a low-resource language. This scarcity of digitized text and speech data is a common issue for many African languages, given the continent's linguistic diversity, with over 2,000 languages spoken. The lack of digital data is exclusionary, especially in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), which has seen the proliferation of language applications (text-to-speech, machine translation), virtual assistants like Alexa and Siri, and tools such as ChatGPT, Llama2, and Mistral AI. The development of these tools involves collecting language data, training models, and deploying the tools. The shortage of African language datasets limits the ability of AI researchers and Natural Language Processing (NLP) practitioners to build relevant tools, intensifying the digital divide and muting the digital presence of millions of Africans, thereby limiting economic opportunities. Creating and expanding language datasets is crucial for developing bespoke African models and AI tools. However, this task is enormous due to the continent's linguistic diversity and the various dialects within languages. With limited resources (time, talent, and finances), an efficient data creation/expansion pathway is necessary. Indexes like the Government AI Readiness Index 2023 are useful in assessing countries' preparedness to integrate AI within the public sector. A similar Global Language Readiness Index could be invaluable for prioritizing language data efforts. Through collaborative efforts among AI and NLP practitioners, such an index could outline critical pillars and indicators for gauging language readiness. It would help identify gaps in making African languages AI-ready, prioritize data collection/expansion efforts, and design efficient strategies for language data collection and expansion. An index would provide a systematic, efficient approach to creating and expanding African language datasets, accelerating the innovation of African languages tools and applications. This would ensure that speakers of African languages can access language tools in their own tongue, narrowing the digital divide, integrating African voices, and fostering accelerated economic growth. As digital civic engagement continues to spread across Africa, it is crucial to ensure that the tools being created are inclusive for all Africans.