

Three innocent under-ten girls who lost their lives

Knife Crime

Eight other children suffered stab wounds, and two adults were seriously injured, with five in critical condition:



Knife crime carnage in Southport, British-Rwandan charged, Police under siege as sickening violence shocks the nation: BRITAIN IN FLAMES, KILLER ON THE RAMPAGE, THREE DEAD IN SENSELESS SUMMER STABBINGS, RIOTS, FIGHTS FLARE IN CITIES

By: Shamlal Puri
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A sizzling British summer day on Monday, July 29, in the tranquil seaside town of Southport, near Liverpool, 220 miles from London, north-west England, was turned into a scene of carnage when a crazed 17-year-old knifeman went on a stabbing spree, killing three little girls. The children had gone to learn dancing at a Taylor Swift-themed class and yoga workshop in Southport.



Farewell thee Angels...Three innocent lives were lost in senseless stabbings in Southport, left to right: Alice DaSilva Aguiar, nine; centre Bebe King, six; and Elzie Dot Stancombe, seven

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African ministers meeting P 4

Motivation Page 8

Award-Winning Kenyan

Mixologist Annette Mulama

News Backpage

Kamala Harris raises Ksh.40.3B in July as campaign shakeup energizes donors



"The Diaspora Times Global"

Nigerians are tired': Protesters fed up with bad governance, soaring costs

Lagos, Nigeria – Armed with a protest sign, 20-year-old Samuel Adeleke joined a crowd of angry Nigerians gathered in Ikeja, the heart of Nigeria's commercial capital Lagos, on Thursday morning. Passing through nearby residential areas, the few hundred protesters

raised placards decrying the high cost of food and rising cost of living, while pumping their fists in the air and chanting songs to urge more people to join them. By the time they arrived in Ojota, the area 7.5km away where demonstrators were converging for the first

of a planned 10-day-long protest, the number of demonstrators had swelled to a couple of thousand. Tens of thousands of people across Africa's most populous country are participating in the protests under the banner of #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria. Organisers have called

for days of street demonstrations beginning on August 1 to protest against bad governance, corruption and the increasing cost of living that

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The 'ungoverning' of Kenya

Kenya is living through a period of ungoverning

Kenya



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Harris campaign dismisses Trump's proposal to change debate date

Donald Trump and Kamala Harris

America



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The New Young Smart: "Young Do Good" - Kiddie or Ms.Suparada Paosatheanpan

Asia



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North Korea shuns international aid workers amid severe flooding

North Korea continues to keep its doors shut to international aid workers

Asia



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At least 32 killed in al-Shabab beach attack in Somalia's capital Mogadishu

More than 60 people also wounded, some of them critically, in attack on popular seaside spot frequented by Somalis on weekends.

Worth Noting:

- A witness told The Associated Press news agency in a phone call that he saw an attacker wearing an explosive vest moments before the man "blew himself up next to the Beach View Hotel". Mohamud Moalim also said some of his friends who were with him at the hotel were killed and others were wounded.
- "Everybody was panicked and it was hard to know what was happening because shooting started soon after the blast," another witness, Abdilatif Ali, told the AFP news agency, adding that people attempted take cover on the ground or flee.
- "I saw many people strewn [on the ground] and some of them were dead and others wounded," he said.



People carry the dead body of an unidentified woman killed in an explosion that occurred while revellers were swimming at the Lido Beach in Mogadishu, Somalia [Feisal Omar/Reuters]

At least 32 people have been killed and many more wounded in a suicide bombing and gun attack on a popular beach in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, according to officials. Al-Shabab, an al-Qaeda-linked armed group, claimed responsibility for the attack on Lido Beach late on Friday via an affiliated radio station. The assault began when a suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance of Beach View Hotel. Several other attackers tried to storm the hotel and also fired on people on the beach, where many residents were walking or sitting, according to witnesses and police. "More than 32 civilians died in this attack, and about 63 others were wounded, some of them critically," police spokesman Abdifatah Adan Hassan told reporters, increasing the initial death toll from seven.

He said security forces had killed all the attackers at the scene and captured another one who was driving a car filled with explosives. One soldier was killed and another sustained injuries, he added. A witness told The Associated Press news agency in a phone call that he saw an attacker wearing an explosive vest moments before the man "blew himself up next to the Beach View Hotel". Mohamud Moalim also said some of his friends who were with him at the hotel were killed and others were wounded. "Everybody was panicked and it was hard to know what was happening because shooting started soon after the blast," another witness, Abdilatif Ali, told the AFP news agency, adding that people attempted take cover on the ground or flee. "I saw many people strewn [on the ground] and some of them were dead and others

wounded," he said. Somalia's federal government condemned the attack, state media reported on Saturday. In a post on X, former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire sent his "deepest condolences to the families, relatives and friends" of those killed. "The fact that the terrorist attack coincides with this night when the beach is the most congested shows the hostility of the terrorists to the Somali people." Lido Beach, a popular area in Mogadishu, is bustling on Friday nights as Somalis enjoy their weekend. The area has in the past been targeted by al-Shabab fighters. Al-Shabab has been fighting to topple the fragile central government in Mogadishu for more than 17 years, carrying out numerous bombings and other attacks in the capital and other parts of the country.

The government depends on the support of foreign troops to stay in power. It has also joined forces with local armed groups to fight the group in a campaign supported by an African Union force and United States air raids. But the offensive has suffered setbacks, with al-Shabab earlier this year claiming it had taken multiple locations in the centre of the country. In June, Somalia called for the slowing down of the withdrawal of an African peacekeeping mission, known as ATMIS, which is expected to pull out by December 31. Matt Bryden, strategic adviser with the Sahan Research think tank, said the attack was the largest to hit the country in months. "It's a massive security failure," Bryden told Al Jazeera, noting that this suggested the government's challenges in fighting al-Shabab ahead

of the planned departure of the AU peacekeepers. On the other hand, Bryden said al-Shabab sent a message that it has the capability to ramp up attacks in the capital as long as the government does not negotiate with it. "But it's a fine line that al-Shabab has to walk," the analyst said. The prospect of negotiations between the government and the armed group has been floated for years, and there are indications the government is closer than it has been for a long time in talking with the armed group, he added. "Al-Shabab doesn't want to delegitimise itself, portraying itself as an indiscriminate terrorist group just as it is seeking political power in the Somali capital ... [but] it has just done that," Bryden said.

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies

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Mama Judith Ongoro MEDICAL APPEAL

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AFRICA

African ministers, experts meet in Addis in social development reform push

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

- The STC will review specific roadmaps aimed at implementing policies and strategies in areas such as social protection, social and solidarity economy, labour migration, youth employment, child marriage, female genital mutilation, and the exploitation and abuse of children.
- Additionally, the STC will receive knowledge products offering insights into wage issues in Africa and the operationalization of dialogue mechanisms related to labour migration.
- Focus of the session is on the Social Solidarity Economy which balances economic, social, and environmental goals.



The Fifth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour, and Employment (STC-SDLE-5) is running under the theme: "Social Agenda 2063: Promoting Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Ecosystems".

Government ministers and over 300 experts from across Africa are meeting in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to discuss, evaluate, and endorse strategies aimed at boosting social development, labour, and ethical employment. The Fifth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour, and Employment (STC-SDLE-5) is running under the theme: "Social Agenda 2063: Promoting Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Ecosystems." The event which began on Monday will feature experts' session from 29 – 31 July followed by the Ministers from August 1- 2. "A 10-year Social and Solidarity Economy has been developed as a significant

policy framework to support RECs and Member States, involving multi-sectoral and multi-partner collaboration. This framework ensures that interventions encompass the needs and address the gaps in programs targeted at different demographics," said Angela Martins, Acting Director – Directorate of Sports, Culture and Social Development. The STC will review specific roadmaps aimed at implementing policies and strategies in areas such as social protection, social and solidarity economy, labour migration, youth employment, child marriage, female genital mutilation, and the exploitation and abuse of children. Additionally, the STC will receive knowledge products offering insights into wage

issues in Africa and the operationalization of dialogue mechanisms related to labour migration. Focus of the session is on the Social Solidarity Economy which balances economic, social, and environmental goals. The SSE fosters solidarity, democracy, and mutualism, prioritizing collective gains over individual benefits. SSE entities operate based on principles of voluntary cooperation, mutual aid, democratic governance, and social purpose over capital. These organizations play a crucial role in social services, poverty reduction, job creation, community development, environmental protection, and the empowerment of marginalized groups.

"To ensure the success of

our initiatives, we must turn our discussions into actions and implement strategies that deliver tangible improvements," said Mahmoud Moussa (Chad), the incoming Chair of the STC. This STC's priorities are rooted in several AUC-led commitments, which among them is the Ouagadougou + 10 Declaration and Plan of Action 2004, which emphasized prioritizing employment creation within economic and social policies. This declaration highlighted the need for political leadership, youth and women empowerment, social protection, productivity, labour migration, and regional integration. This is further redirected by the African Union's Agenda 2063, underscoring

a human rights approach to eradicating poverty and inequality, advocating for solidarity, self-reliance, and social cohesion as essential components of sustainable development.

"The people we represent in this meeting—from the citizens in our villages, cities, towns, and neighborhoods; the workers in our factories; the business community in our countries—all have one demand: let Africa Walk the talk! We cannot afford to have good strategies and frameworks that gather dust on our shelves," said Jacqueline Mugo, the Secretary General of BusinessAfrica.

Experts and ministers will also take stock of progress on strategies adopted during the Fourth Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-4), which include policies on ageing, ending child marriage, eliminating female genital mutilation, and ending online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

They will also review frameworks for ending harmful practices, protecting migrant workers' rights, establishing integrated labour market information systems, developing model migrant welfare programs, and guidelines on bilateral labour agreements.

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Somali beach attack kills 32, police say

By: BBC
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At least 32 people were killed and several others injured after a suicide bomber and gunmen targeted a popular beachfront location in the Somali capital on Saturday, a police spokesman has said.

Abdifatah Adan Hassan said around 63 people are wounded, some of them critically.

Video footage showed a number of bodies and injured people in Mogadishu's Abdiaziz district.

Local media say the attack was carried out by al-Shabab militants who control large parts of southern and central Somalia.

The group is affiliated to al-Qaeda and has waged a brutal insurgency for nearly 20 years against the UN-backed government in Somalia.



Gender

Gender Inequality: Causes, Effects And Solutions



By: Gulyamova Aziza Sarvar

Gender inequality is a major problem worldwide and refers to the lack of equal rights and opportunities between women and men.

Reasons

1. Historical and cultural traditions: In many societies, historical and cultural traditions have caused women to be treated as second-class citizens. These traditions often restricted women to family and domestic work.
2. Lack of education: Educational opportunities for girls are limited in many developing countries. This limits their future professional opportunities and economic independence.
3. Labor market discrimination:

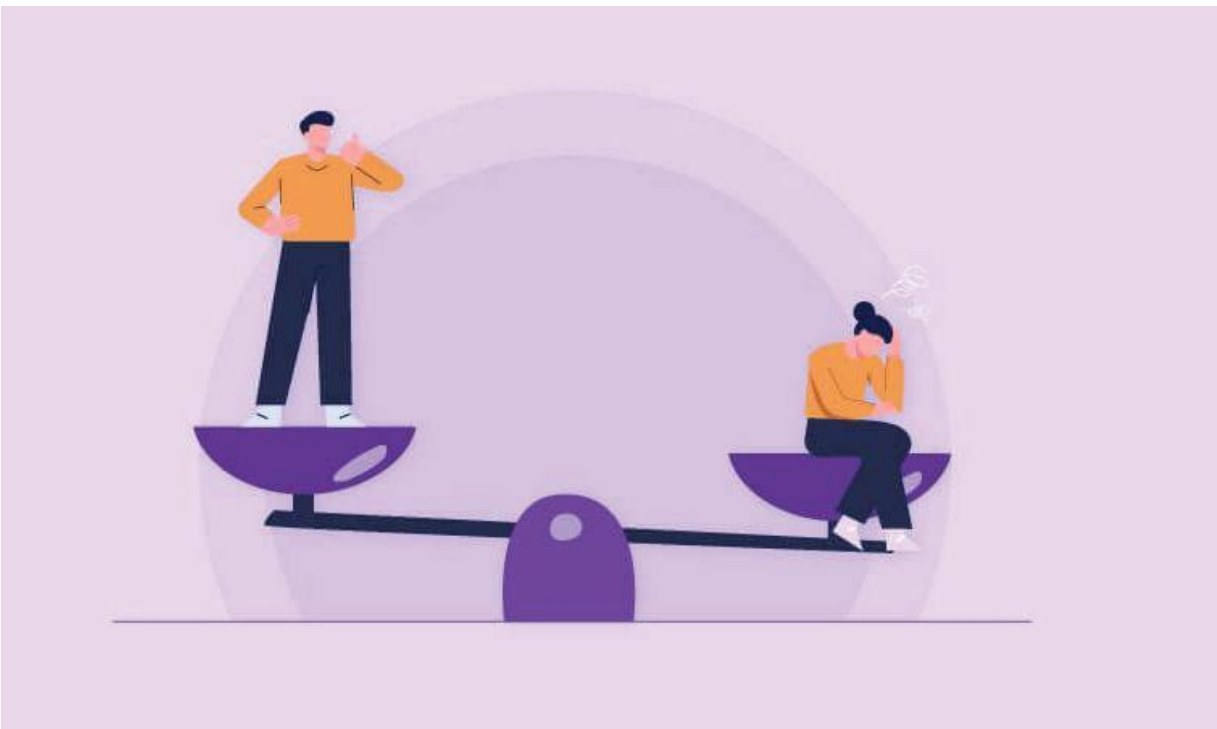
Women often work in low-paid, low-status jobs. And their opportunities to rise are limited.

Effects

1. Economic harm: Gender inequality has a negative impact on economic development. Women's inability to fully enter the labor market hinders economic growth.
2. Health problems: Gender inequality exacerbates health problems. Women often do not have or have access to the resources they need for their health.
3. Low level of education: When girls are not educated due to gender inequality, it reduces the overall literacy level in the society and limits the opportunities of future generations.

Solutions

1. Improving education and training: Expanding educational opportunities for girls and removing all barriers to their education.
2. Legislation Strengthening: It is necessary to strengthen the legislation against gender inequality and ensure their implementation. Strong laws should be enacted to eliminate practices that discriminate against women.
3. International cooperation: Inter-



national cooperation and exchange of experience are important in the fight against gender inequality. International organizations and governments need to work together. The problem of gender inequality is complex and multifaceted, but it is necessary to take concrete and systematic measures to solve it. Ensuring equal rights and opportuni-

ties between women and men is an important factor for the sustainable development of society

I was the daughter of Gulyamova Aziza Sarvar, born on June 15, 1992 in Tashkent. My nationality is Uzbek. There are 5 people in our family. Father, my mother, my two brother.

I entered secondary special school in 1998 and graduated in 2007 with honors. After graduating there, in 2007, I entered the P. F. Borosky Medical College. In 2023, I was assigned to the Psychology Department of the Pedagogical Faculty of Alfraganus University, and now I am a 2nd year student.



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Motivation

Award-Winning Kenyan Mixologist Annette Mulama: Crafting Excellence in Her Trade

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

- Her first job at Noir Gallery provided the perfect platform to nurture her talents. When the Diageo World Class competition 2022 came around, Annette, despite being only five months into the industry, fearlessly competed and emerged as a top-six finalist.
- In 2023, she joined Tribe Hotel, working at Hero Restaurant. Here, she continued to refine her craft, exploring new techniques and technologies, and reading extensively about cocktail modifiers. Her dedication paid off when she again made it to the top six finalists in the Diageo World Class competition 2023. This resilience and commitment opened doors to international competitions, where she ranked among the top 25 in The Blend Scholarship by @50BestBars 2023, allowing her to network with young bartenders globally.



Award-Winning Kenyan Mixologist Annette Mulama

It's not every day you come across a female mixologist, let alone one who is young, black, and award-winning. Annette Mulama stands out in an industry often dominated by men, breaking barriers and setting new standards of excellence in Kenya with her talent and dedication. Last month, she was crowned the champion of the 2024 World Class Kenya Bartender competition, a contest that began in April with 278 participants competing in online challenges. She clinched the title after an intense final round against four other finalists and will now represent Kenya at the global finals in Shanghai, China, in September.

Annette's journey into the world of mixology began with her passion for the hospitality industry. After earning a bachelor's degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Kenyatta University, she discovered a spark of interest in mixology and enrolled at the Nairobi Bar School to master its basics.

Her first job at Noir Gallery provided the perfect platform to nurture her talents. When the Diageo World Class competition 2022 came around, Annette, despite being only five months into the industry, fearlessly

competed and emerged as a top-six finalist.

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What are your top tips for winning a cocktail competition? (smiling) "You have to follow the rules on the brief. You have to remember never to underestimate any competitor and lastly, show up and show off your skills – find your balance."

Tell us about your signature cocktail. "It's called THE BUZZ," Annette begins, her eyes lighting up. "Here's what I use to make it:

- 45ml gastrique
- 50ml Singleton 12

Method: shaken and served

in a whisky glass with an ice block. Garnish: beef skewer. Gastrique, typically a sauce for steak, is enhanced with green chillies, sweetened with maple syrup, and balanced with red wine vinegar. The result is a cocktail where the beef taste complements the maple syrup, ending with a mild peppery finish."

What sets a great mixologist apart? "Professionalism. Positive reception to criticism. Willingness to seek assistance from maestros. Commitment to practicing and perfecting weaknesses. Unafraid of losing – driven to improve. Consistency – perseverance despite setbacks."

Can you describe your creative process for developing a new cocktail? "Sure. I start by understanding the spirit's tasting notes and origin. Then, I identify complementary ingredients and choose the appropriate technique. I attach a story to the drink and name it accordingly. Finally, I select serveware that enhances the cocktail's presentation."

What are some of the current trends in mixology that you find exciting? "Fat washing, milk washing, clarification, infusions, and

carbonation," she lists, clearly enthusiastic about these innovations.

What advice would you give to aspiring mixologists? "Stay disciplined, rise above fear, be ready to learn, and be a professional," she advises, her voice full of encouragement.

What are some of the challenges you face in the industry, especially as a female mixologist? "Maintaining professionalism and continuous improvement can be challenging," Annette admits. "I stay motivated by focusing on my goals, breathing through stressful moments, and balancing work and emotions." Regarding Kenyan perceptions of mixology, one of the biggest concerns is the rise of counterfeit alcohol and watered-down cocktails. Annette emphasizes the importance of sourcing alcohol from trusted suppliers and educating customers about cocktail concepts. She advises choosing reputable outlets and understanding the purpose of ice in drinks. For a longer-lasting experience, she recommends opting for straight-up drinks like martinis or cosmopolitans. To stay updated with the lat-

est trends and innovations in the industry, Annette leverages online resources like the Diageo Bar Academy and learns from international bartenders during takeovers at Hero Bar. She also draws inspiration from books, discovering how past bartending trends are being innovated today.

As we conclude our chat, I ask her about her expectations as she represents Kenya at the Global World Class Finals in China. She responds with that big smile on her face, "I am looking forward to first and foremost representing my country and carrying the flag high. I am also excited to meet industry leaders like the Diageo World Class team, Bob Nolet of Ketel One distillery, and legends like Julie Reinert." She aims to learn diverse techniques, network extensively, and showcase Kenya's rich heritage on the global stage.

Annette aspires to be the Voice of Women in Cocktails. From her first community day at EABL, where she was the only female bartender, she realized her mission: to inspire women to overcome fear and excel in the industry.

(Location; Hero, Trademark Hotel, Village Market)

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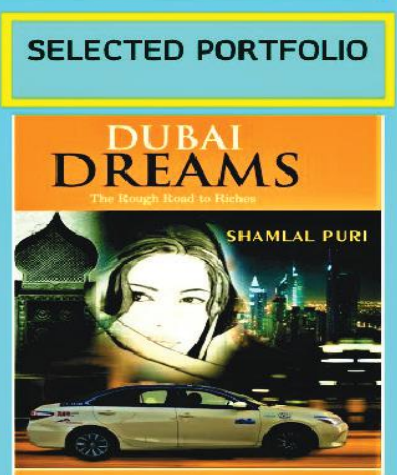
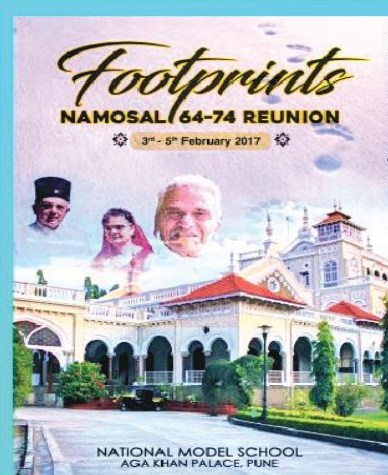
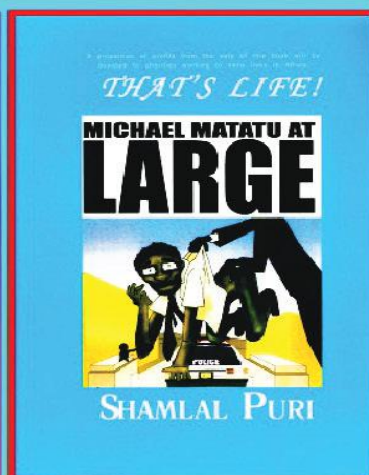
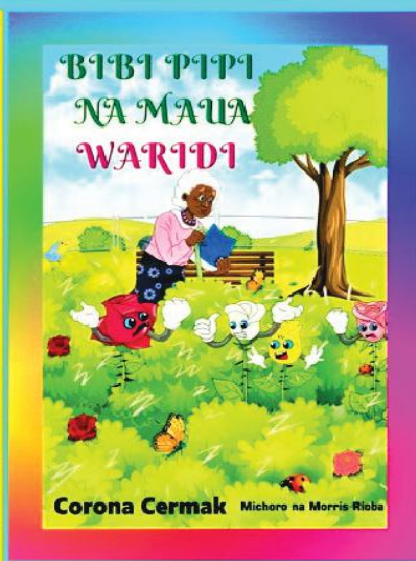
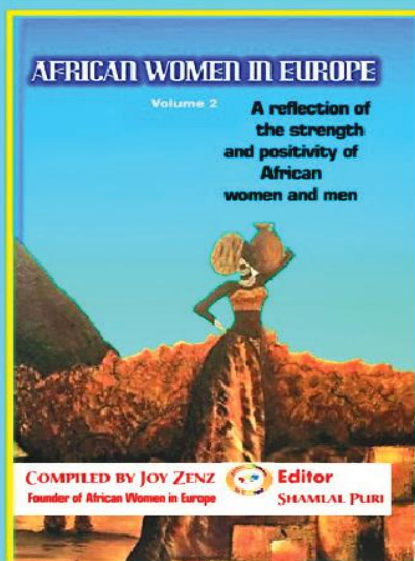
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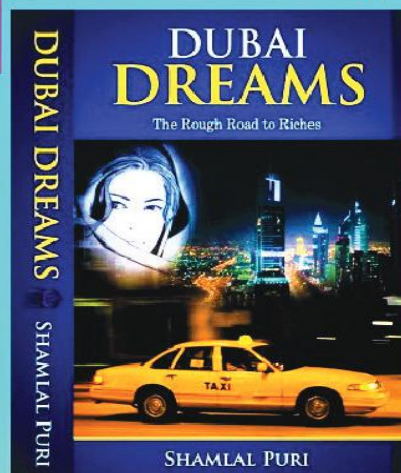
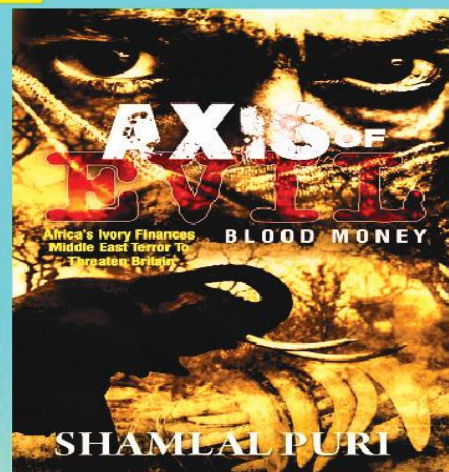
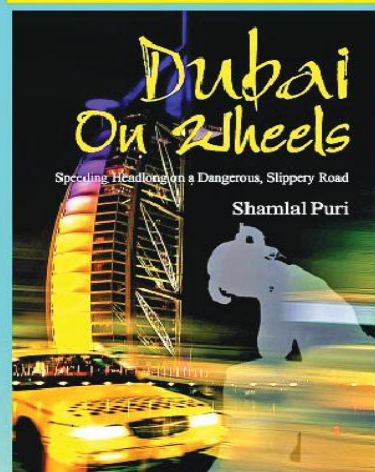
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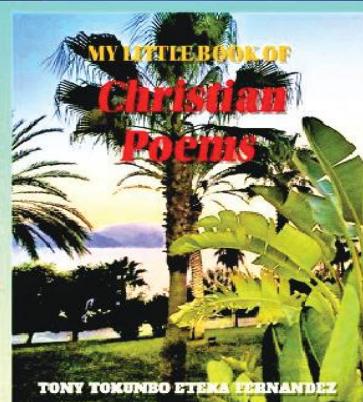
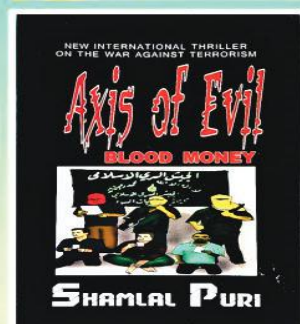
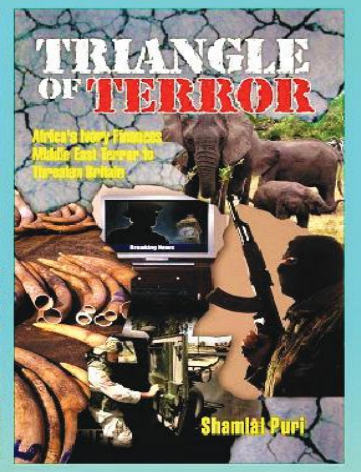
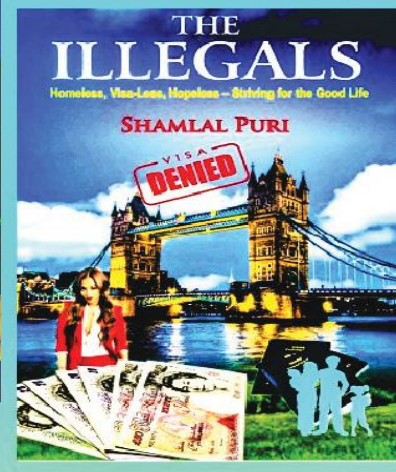
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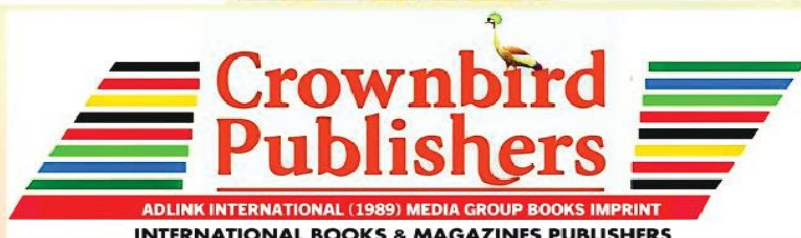


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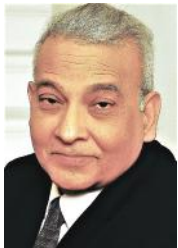
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UK News

Knife crime carnage in Southport, British-Rwandan charged, Police under siege as sickening violence shocks the nation:

BRITAIN IN FLAMES, KILLER ON THE RAMPAGE, THREE DEAD IN SENSELESS SUMMER STABBINGS, RIOTS, FIGHTS FLARE IN CITIES



By: Shamlal Puri
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Worth Noting:

- The murders of three little girls and the attacks on other innocents angered many Britons.
- Housewife Mary, a mother of two teenagers, said seeing these beautiful, innocent souls was heartbreaking and devastating. It must be tough for the families of these babies to understand why they lost their loved ones."
- Her friend, Charlene, said that she could not hold back her tears on hearing of these deaths. We live in England, a peaceful country, and the carnage I saw on the news resembled violent America, where killings are so common. Our thoughts go out to the families at this really tough time."
- The reason behind these killings was not immediately known, but social media was rife with misleading and misinformed speculation claims accusing immigrants and Muslims of these killings. This fuelled the ensuing riots, which the Government alleged were provoked by right-wingers.

Three innocent under-ten girls who lost their lives were named Bebe King, six, Elsie Dot Stancombe, seven, and Alice DaSilva Aguiar, aged nine.

Eight other children suffered stab wounds, and two adults were seriously injured, with five in critical condition. They were hospitalised; some of them have since been released, but it will take an exceptionally long time to heal their trauma.

Hours later, Britons mourning the deaths of the three girls placed flowers in the spot where they fell with poignant tributes.

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Only the teenager who stabbed these little girls knew why he did that.

Vicky, a pensioner, said, "It's heartbreaking; I send my sincere condolences as well as healing love to those recovering from the injuries."

Prominent UK diaspora lawyer S Mamtara, formerly working in London and now living in South Africa, said, "The heartbreaking tragedy in Southport where three innocents, literally babies, were murdered has not only left people in the UK with shock but also in other parts of the world including South Africa where I am at the moment.

"Around the world, millions of British citizens who, despite not living in the UK, have families and friends

and are in regular communications; therefore, such tragic news is not only via media but physical communication.

"During the past fourteen years, we have noticed that the Tory party blatantly destroyed the fabric of the country by allowing crime to go out of control. They have not cared nor taken any action to support the Police, who once were respected as the best in the world.

"On the contrary, instead of supporting the law enforcement agencies, Tories started their austerity plans by cutting the police force, and since then, crime has increased, and areas have become unsafe to walk.

"In the past, we used to walk from West End to North London at 2 am, which is not advisable.

"It's deplorable what is happening in such a world-renowned country where even children are not safe.

"Returning to the tragedy of Southport, Premier Sir Keir Starmer has said the rioters will be dealt with "full force", so we wait and see what he does.

Mr Mamtara said it has now become a habit to throw items at Police to overturn police vehicles, and one would never have imagined this happening before the Tories entered Government in 2010.

"The present Government must bring back the order; the laws exist. Judges must be given more sentencing powers to tighten the rule of law to protect people."

He said the present situation in the UK has made the country a laughingstock of the world and that unless the Government of the day can ensure the people's safety, the country will slide backwards.

In further developments, Merseyside Police confirmed that a 17-year-old boy from Banks has been charged with the murders of Bebe King, Elsie Dot Stancombe and Alice DaSilva Aguiar; 10 counts of attempted murder; and possession of a bladed article, following the tragic incident in Southport on Monday, July 29.

The bladed article was described as a "kitchen knife



Britain in flames...Southport is under attack from rioters over the senseless stabbings



Police car torched in Hartlepool. An 11-year-old schoolboy has been charged with arson in the town.



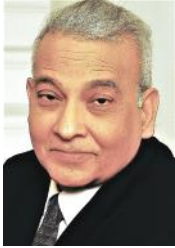
Police station set on fire in Sunderland during protests. Photo Courtesy.



Charged... UK-born Rwandan-British Axel Rudakubana, now 17 (18 on 7 August), pictured when he was younger, is accused of murder and attempted murder. His parents came from Rwanda as refugees—photo Family Album.

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with a curved blade”.

The 17-year-old could not be named immediately for legal reasons, as he is under 18 and considered a minor. He was just a few days away from his 18th birthday on August 7.

He was remanded in custody to appear on Thursday, August 1, at Liverpool Magistrates Court.

There was a strong police presence outside the courtroom.

Merseyside Police Chief Constable Serena Kennedy said: “Whilst these charges are a significant milestone within this investigation, this remains very much a live investigation, and we continue to work with our partners from Lancashire Police and Counter Terrorism Policing Northwest (CTPNW).”

When the teenager appeared at Liverpool Crown Court charged on Thursday, Judge Andrew Menary KC, the Recorder of Liverpool, made the ruling immediately lifted the ban on naming the accused. He is UK-born diasporan Axel Muganwa Rudakubana, from Banks in Lancashire, whose family comes from Rwanda.

Judge Menary said: “Continuing to prevent the full reporting has the disadvantage of allowing others to spread misinformation in a vacuum.”

“Whilst I accept it is exceptional given his age, principally because he is 18 in six days, I do not make an order under section 45.” Prosecuting officer, arguing against naming him, said Axel Muganwa Rudakubana had an “autism spectrum disorder diagnosis” and had been “unwilling to leave the house and communicate with family for a period of time.”

He will appear at Liverpool Crown Court on October 25. A provisional trial date, lasting six weeks, was scheduled for January 20, 2025.

Until these proceedings have been completed, he will be remanded into youth detention.

The public’s anger spread like wildfire. People became violent and attacked the Police in Southport with bricks, bottles and beer cans. Police cars were torched, and public property was destroyed as protesters demolished garden walls to pull out bricks to hit police officers in the mindless vio-

lence.

Merseyside Police confirmed 22 officers were injured following violent disorder in Southport on Tuesday evening, July 30. Of those, eight sustained severe injuries, including fractures, lacerations, a suspected broken nose and concussion.

Other officers suffered varying degrees of injury, including head injuries and severe facial injuries, and one was knocked unconscious.

The protestors also set cars belonging to members of the public alight, threw bricks at the local Mosque, damaged a local convenience store, and set wheelie bins on fire.

Three police dogs, which are used to ensure public order and safety, were injured. Police Dogs Zoe and Ike have sustained leg injuries from bricks thrown at them.

A third dog, PD Quga, who was bitten, strangled and kicked by an offender at the beginning of this month, has tonight suffered burns to her back leg.

Following the disorder, a 24-hour Section 60 Order was introduced in the area, and extra officers remained there to provide a visible presence to reassure communities.

Under S60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the order gives officers enhanced powers to stop and search individuals in the area and is designed to minimise serious violence.

A Section 34 Order was introduced under the Antisocial Behaviour & Policing Act 2014, giving officers powers to direct people engaging in antisocial behaviour or likely to become involved in such incidents.

These powers will not be used for anyone visiting the area and doing daily business.

Officers can seize any item, including vehicles, used in the commission of antisocial behaviour.

A person who has previously been directed to leave returned may ultimately be arrested.

Assistant Chief Constable Alex Goss said: “Merseyside Police has faced serious violence in Southport, and I am so proud to have witnessed off-duty officers. Many had finished a full shift but returned to duty to support



Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, accompanied by officials, arrives in Southport and laid flowers to mourn the three deaths and injured residents.



Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer meets emergency services officials in Southport, where he warned strong action against hooligans.



Tense moments...Police guard sensitive areas of the town to quell any violence



Neighbours and well-wishers laid flowers under the watchful eye of the Police to mourn the deaths in Southport.

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OPINION

The 'ungoverning' of Kenya

Since the beginning of antigovernment protests in June, Kenya is living through a period of ungoverning, in which institutions and rules are being undermined by the state itself.

By: Nanjala Nyabola
xxxxxxxxxxxx

One of the most interesting grammatical elements of Kiswahili, the most widely spoken African language in the world, is that you can always create the negative form of an infinitive verb. In English, to be grammatically correct, the opposite of a verb has to have some kind of meaning in the real world. For example, the opposite of "to live" is "to die". But in Kiswahili, you can always have a logical opposite and a grammatical opposite thanks to a specific way in which verbs can be changed in the infinitive form. Thus, the opposite of to live – kuishi – is to die – kufa – but to "unlive" or to "not live" – kutoishi – is also grammatically correct, poetic and potent because it doesn't mean death but the act of inverting actions necessary to living. And you can do this with any verb in the infinitive sense in Kiswahili, giving the impression that in Kiswahili cosmology, or sense of the world, what can be done can always be undone.

This element of Kiswahili grammar offers a powerful framework for thinking through the events in Kenya in June and July, a sequence of events that I call "ungoverning". If governing is developing rules and using institutions in order to create a functional society, then Kenya is living through a period of ungoverning, in which institutions and rules are being undermined by the state itself, by extension undermining the society as a whole.

After the president and the legislature attempted to force through a finance bill in Parliament, Kenya entered an unprecedented wave of protest and an unprecedented violent wave of policing. While protesters insist that they are peaceful, particularly in the capital city of Nairobi, the police behave as if the very act of gathering is an affront to the executive that must be met with maximum force. Thus, protesters have been teargassed and shot at with live bullets. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights has recorded at least 50 protest deaths – the highest number of protest-related deaths in the country's independent history. Protesters have promised to continue to gather, no longer just rejecting the finance bill, but now demanding reparations for all the lives lost and for the president to step down for his failure to manage the situation peacefully.

I call this sequence of events "ungoverning" because these are not passive outcomes of an unavoidable situation but active decisions being taken by those who wield power in the country to misuse or undermine the political institutions of the country in order to strengthen the person of the executive – the president – against enemies of his own making. For context, after 40 years of



A teargas canister detonates as a protester gestures at Kenyan anti-riot police officers during anti-government protests in Nairobi on July 16, 2024 [Simon Maina/AFP]

one-party rule, Kenya went into an intense period of institution-building to avoid recreating an all-powerful presidency. A new constitution was delivered after 20 years of deliberation, protest and a hotly contested referendum in 2010 to get rid of the vestiges of coloniality in the supreme law of the land. It redistributed power between the three arms of government in order to compel them to keep each other accountable. The new constitution also introduced measures of accountability for other institutions like the police. Significantly, the Constitution of Kenya protects the right to protest, seeing it as part of a chain of democratic actions that people are allowed to undertake in order to keep the government honest.

The ungoverning in Kenya begins with the too-cosy relationship between the National Assembly and the executive, in which elected members of Parliament have said on camera that when passing the finance bill, their loyalty was to the president and not to the electorate. This obviously goes against the very concept of the legislature which, by definition, is supposed to scrutinise legislation independently before submitting it to the president for assent. William Ruto's ruling coalition, the Kenya Kwanza coalition, since coming into power two and a half years ago has abdicated this responsibility completely and instead focused on rubber-stamping whatever agenda the executive presents.

It is important to note that many of the mechanisms that exist in Kenya's constitution presume a legislature that wants to be independent of the president and not one that seeks to be their lapdog.

Kenya is severely hobbled by a toothless, sycophantic National Assembly. Under the authoritarian state, Parliament was systematically defanged and one of the most common tactics for killing legislation

was the presidential veto, in which the president would simply refuse to assent to any bills that reduced his power. Thus Article 115 of the 2010 constitution has a provision that allows for the National Assembly to work around the president if they refuse to assent to or amend a bill that basically means that after a back-and-forth process, the bill can pass if two-thirds of both the Parliament and the Senate vote for it. Until it finally happened in late July, it was unclear whether or not Parliament would actually reject the finance bill or await further instructions from the executive.

In a similar vein, while the president did follow through on the protesters' demand that he sack all his cabinet secretaries, he has submitted many of the same names to the Senate for confirmation. Last Wednesday, he nominated four prominent opposition figures – allies of political veteran Raila Odinga, whom Ruto defeated in elections in 2022 – to his new cabinet, but named members of the disbanded cabinet for the majority of the remaining 16 positions.

Given that these individuals were fired, they should prima facie be ineligible for public office because the president himself found them ineligible for public office. The much celebrated cabinet firing is so far simply moving unfit individuals around. Moreover, Musalia Mudavadi also continues to occupy the position of the Prime Cabinet Secretary – an unconstitutional office that has been challenged in court. Mudavadi lost elections in 2013, 2017 and 2022 – voters have been clear about how they feel about him – but the office was created for political expediency because he brought to the coalition a chunk of voters that made enough of a difference to cost the opposition the presidential election.

This proposed new cabinet is an act of ungoverning because it is the use of executive power to serve the

political interests of the coalition rather than the national interest and it should be undone by creating a constitution – and indeed a National Assembly – that conforms to what was drafted.

But perhaps the clearest element of Kenya's ungoverning is the refusal to allow people to protest, and the violent policing of unarmed protesters. Kenyans are being shot and killed merely for the act of gathering to express dissent. The 2010 constitution envisions protest as a democratic act that must be undertaken if the government fails to listen to people through elections or mechanisms of public participation. But the presidency is reading any act of dissent as a threat and responding with the aforementioned disproportionate use of force. The mere act of gathering is being criminalised, with people being abducted and disappeared for holding placards or for creating protest materials. Kenyans are not only being squeezed by austerity measures; they are also being punished for expressing their unhappiness about it.

As I argued elsewhere, this violent policing is in part a product of the president's own insecurity based in part on the fragility of his coalition, and of his own inability to trust citizens in general. To be sure, there is already a significant part of his ruling coalition that is organising to run independently in 2027 – an ethnonationalist faction that if he allowed himself to think logically he would see cannot win an election because they simply do not have the numbers. But rationality has taken a backseat to fear and lately, the president's speeches drip with concerns about external actors mobilising against him rather than listening to what the protesters are saying and taking accountability for the things he has done to himself and to the country. A secure government would have allowed protests to pro-

ceed peacefully, reading it as a signal that the process through which the finance bill came to his desk was flawed. A secure government would see protest as an expression of democratic health. Instead, the presidency chose to swat at a fly on their head with a hammer, creating a much bigger problem than he initially had. Ungoverning is not a uniquely Kenyan experience. It is the United States Supreme Court's campaign of undoing several hard-won protections in law and in the Conservative Party's steady dismantling of the United Kingdom's welfare state. It is the attempt to decriminalise female genital mutilation (FGM) in The Gambia and the draconian drug wars in Central America. Ungoverning is what populist administrations do because they have sharpened their ability to gain power but have no idea what to do with government once they control it. Ungoverning is watching a cartoon in rewind – it looks like governing because it has so many of the trappings of power but it's all happening in reverse. And protest is the language of people who are frustrated with being deliberately unheard by political institutions that are solely focused on gaining power.

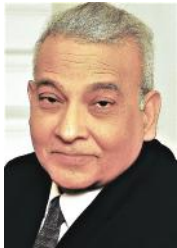
It is difficult to say what will happen next in Kenya because we are so deep in uncharted territory. The protesters' demands are clearer than ever, shifting from "reject the finance bill" to "Ruto Must Go" in response to the devastating violence. Meanwhile, the president has increasingly suggested he would rather fight the apparitions that he thinks are doing this to him rather than what he has done to himself and to the country and needs to repair. Ideally, the short-term tasks include full and transparent accountability for police violence, the reinforcement of constitutional principles through the transparent use of existing mechanisms, and finality over the future of the finance bill through a much more democratic process of public participation. But this would only be the path taken by someone who was interested in governing and not ungoverning: the first short steps of moving from crisis towards resolution that drawing from what Kiswahili grammar teaches us – that anything that is done can always be undone.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect our editorial stance.

Nanjala Nyabola is a political analyst and the author of "Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics".

Nanjala Nyabola is a writer and political analyst based in Nairobi, Kenya. She is the author of "Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics", a book on the impact of the internet on Kenyan politics (Zed Books, 2018)

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Worth Noting:

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- Three police dogs, which are used to ensure public order and safety, were injured. Police Dogs Zoe and Ike have sustained leg injuries from bricks thrown at them.
- A third dog, PD Quga, who was bitten, strangled and kicked by an offender at the beginning of this month, has tonight suffered burns to her back leg.
- Following the disorder, a 24-hour Section 60 Order was introduced in the area, and extra officers remained there to provide a visible presence to reassure communities.
- Under S60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the order gives officers enhanced powers to stop and search individuals in the area and is designed to minimise serious violence.

their colleagues who had displayed courage under constant and sustained attack.

"I would also like to thank officers from Greater Manchester Police, Cheshire Police, Lancashire Police and North Wales Police, who also provided mutual aid and support.

"Sadly, offenders have destroyed garden walls so they could use the bricks to attack our officers and have set cars belonging to the public on fire and damaged cars parked in the Mosque car park.

"This is no way to treat a community, least of all a community that is still reeling from the events of Monday."

The stabbings provoked Britons so much that they took to the streets in several cities, including London, to vent their anger, whipping a frenzy and putting Police under siege pelting bottles at them.

There were several nights of violent protests across Britain.

The Government accused right-wingers of travelling from other areas to fuel the riots, causing severe damage to property and threat to life.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, who visited Southport and the scene of the stabbings, vowed to take stern action against the right-wing rioters.

For the new Prime Minister, who took office on July 5, the riots were a baptism of fire and a wake-up call on running Britain in 2024.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said, "Criminals attacking the police and stoking disorder on our streets will pay the price for their violence and thuggery".

Even though the killer was nabbed and taken to court, people's anger did not subside.

Riots flared up in several British cities, including London, Manchester, Hartlepool, Southend-on-Sea, and Liverpool.

There was disorder in Manchester broke out following the Southport mass stabbing, Police have said. About 100 demonstrators gathered on Wednesday outside a prominent hotel in Newton Heath, which was being used to house asylum seekers and protesting children were seen wearing balaclavas.

Manchester Councillor

John Flanagan wrote on social media to respond to the violence, calling those involved in the "sickening" incident as "mindless idiots". The mayor of Greater Manchester has cautioned against "mob rule" inspired by "half-truths" on social media.

Two men were arrested in Manchester after objects were thrown at the public and Police in the disturbance in Oldham Road, Newton Heath, on Wednesday.

Greater Manchester Police said their "early intervention" meant there was not "any serious injury or damage".

Andy Burnham said people were entitled to peaceful protest but added the city region was "better than this", according to the local media.

In Hartlepool, an 11-year-old schoolboy was arrested on suspicion of arson after a police car was set on fire, according to Cleveland Police. Seven men were charged with violent disorder in Hartlepool town, including a man of 42, for beating an emergency worker. Another man, 28, was charged with various offences, including carrying an offensive weapon in public and violent disorder.

In Sunderland, a police officer was attacked, and the property next to it was set alight as stores closed in the city with the Police patrolling during a demonstration against Southport stabbings.

Beer cans and stones were thrown at Police in riot gear outside a mosque in the city. Northumbria Police said its officers had been "subjected to serious violence."

Scores of people were arrested in London as further protests took place after the Southport stabbings.

On Wednesday, a large protest was staged under Enough is Enough, with arrests made after demonstrators clashed with officers in Whitehall, close to Downing Street.

The Metropolitan police said: "Over 100 people have been arrested for offences including violent disorder, assault on an emergency worker, and breach of protest conditions. Some officers suffered minor injuries." Demonstrators were seen launching beer cans and glass bottles at a line of Police in riot gear in front of



A fire engine on duty as protesters gathered in Southport.



The morning after the days of violence, rebuilding works start in Southport.



Violence in Hartlepool caused injuries and arson

Downing Street and throwing flares onto the statue of Winston Churchill in Parliament Square.

The angry scenes also included loud chants of "We want our country back". Some of those present were shouting anti-immigrant

slogans in these protests. This caused a lot of friction between the communities, and white Britons turning to social media were abusive towards migrants.

Britain remained alert as further demonstrations were planned in London

and elsewhere. Repairing the destroyed fabric of community relations will take a long time.

Nigeria

‘Nigerians are tired’: Protesters fed up with bad governance, soaring costs

Thousands are protesting poor governance, corruption and the increasing cost of living in Africa’s most populous nation.

By: Pelumi Salako
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Contd from Page 1

Worth Noting:

- “People [in government] that got free education came into power and withdrew free education,” he told Al Jazeera, urging the government to “reverse school fees and make the nation habitable for students”.
- Unilag increased university tuition fees while simultaneously instituting a rule that forbids students from doing business from their hostels, he said, which has left already vulnerable young people without sources of much-needed income.
- “Do they want them to drop out?” asked Adeleke, whose school recently raised fees by several thousand naira following the removal of a government subsidy. In May 2023, Bola Tinubu became president of Nigeria. In the year since, Nigerians have grappled with unprecedented economic hardships owing to his decision to remove a fuel subsidy, which was introduced in the 1970s to keep petrol affordable and help the naira increase in value.



A man holds a placard at a demonstration against bad governance in Lagos, Nigeria [Pelumi Salako/Al Jazeera]

has left millions of Nigerians reeling. In total, protesters have 19 demands.

In parts of the country, such as the northern Kano and Yobe states, authorities imposed a curfew as some protesters attacked vehicles, burning them. In capital Abuja, the police fired back tear gas shells to disperse protesters, and gunshots were heard. By Friday morning, rights group Amnesty International’s Nigeria head said at least 13 protesters had been killed, and more than 300 arrested.

Adeleke, a law student at the University of Lagos (Unilag), went out to register his displeasure with the government, which he said has put his education under threat because of its policies. “People [in government] that got free education came into power and withdrew free education,” he told Al Jazeera, urging the government to “reverse school fees and make the nation habitable for students”.

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In May 2023, Bola Tinubu became president of Nigeria. In the year since, Nigerians have grappled with unprecedented economic hardships owing to his decision to remove a fuel subsidy, which was introduced in the 1970s to keep petrol affordable and help the naira increase in value.

Although experts say Tinubu’s move will help rejuvenate Nigeria’s economy, it has had a biting effect on ordinary citizens whose disposable income has eroded as a result.

Food inflation in Nigeria also stands at 40 percent, the highest in nearly three decades, while unemployment maintains an upward posture, according to the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics. But economic insecurity is not the only challenge as kidnappings, terrorism and banditry pervades the country, including the capital city, Abuja.

Rising insecurity has affected protesters like Jibril Suleiman, a native of the Gwoza area in Maiduguri in Borno State – a stronghold of the armed group Boko Haram. Suleiman said he could not go home and was concerned about the suffering of his kinsmen.

“I want Nigeria to live in

peace. Because of insecurity, people are dying every day in my village. People are dying because of hunger, our sisters have turned to Ashewo [Yoruba for sex worker] because of hunger. That is why we have come out here to fight for our rights,” the logistics worker told Al Jazeera.

Basic commodities have become a luxury that is out of the grasp of many Nigerians; and unexplained fuel scarcities happen every other week even as Nigeria is one of the biggest oil exporting countries. Petrol sold at 1,300 naira (\$0.78) per litre this week, up from 580 naira (\$0.35) earlier this month. The naira has also maintained a downward slope despite government attempts to prop it up through policies and by forceful means. It is particularly challenging for students, many of whom struggle to pay their school fees or buy textbooks. The removal of an electricity subsidy for the highest power users in February also made matters worse. Because universities are typically large power consumers, some institutions have been unable to afford their high electricity bills, and have been disconnected from the national grid – leaving students having to find ways to work in the dark.

Last month, students at the

University of Ibadan in Oyo State took to the streets to vent their frustrations, while those at the University of Ilorin in Kwara State, where student dissent is outlawed, had to write their exams without any electricity to study.

The government’s tertiary education loan scheme has meanwhile been of little help to many at the brink of dropping out due to the complex requirements needed to access it.

Basket of grievances

Away from the protest grounds on Thursday, the characteristic buzz of Lagos traffic waned – the streets were scant as many shops and businesses shut in anticipation of violence. Yet the protests were not as big as anticipated as millions of Lagosians stayed home, many to avoid getting hurt in the event of violence.

Still, armed police were visible across the city – even in places like Yaba, kilometres away from the protest zones where no demonstrations were held. Passersby chanted “no violence” at military or police convoys they passed so they’d not be triggered to shoot.

When a helicopter hovered above, the crowd, imagining it was President Tinubu or an emissary flying overhead, shouted “thief” and waved

their fingers in the air in an insulting manner.

The protests are a byproduct of growing disenchantment with a poorly run administration that came to power with a fragile electoral mandate, according to Adewunmi Emowura, the global policy leader at Abuja-based public strategy firm, Gatefield.

“It’s a basket of grievances: the chronic hunger, high unemployment, the lack of accountability from a tone-deaf government that has imposed a crippling austerity programme on citizens while the ruling class live in luxury,” he said.

The muted protest atmosphere seen in Lagos was not mirrored across the country. In Abuja, protests turned violent; in Kano, curfews were declared; and about 25 people were arrested in Kaduna. Children joined the demonstrations in Taraba and Gombe State, where protesters pelted the government house with stones. Experts said the use of force and the clampdown on constitutional freedom shows the government’s lack of legitimacy and it could potentially lead to further escalation and anarchy.

“This just shows a government that has failed to properly address the situation and their role in law and order rather than simply regime protection,” said Afolabi Adekaiyaoja, a research analyst at the Abuja-based Centre for Democracy and Development.

Food insecurity and hardships

Adeola Babatunde, who just gave birth three months ago, is among those worst hit by the dire economic situation in Lagos. Her shop at Ketu market, where she sells soap, biscuits and soda, has been depleting for the last few months; this has spelled untold hardship for her family, who she struggles to feed.

Bemoaning the rising costs of basics, the mother-of-four said: “I am here to let the government know that there is something serious happening in this Nigeria. The whole place is bad, we

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Nigeria

‘Nigerians are tired’: Protesters fed up with bad governance, soaring costs

Contd from Page 14



Law student Samuel Adeleke went out to protest in Lagos [Pelumi Salako/Al Jazeera]

Worth Noting:

- Basic commodities have become a luxury that is out of the grasp of many Nigerians; and unexplained fuel scarcities happen every other week even as Nigeria is one of the biggest oil exporting countries. Petrol sold at 1,300 naira (\$0.78) per litre this week, up from 580 naira (\$0.35) earlier this month. The naira has also maintained a downward slope despite government attempts to prop it up through policies and by forceful means.
- It is particularly challenging for students, many of whom struggle to pay their school fees or buy textbooks. The removal of an electricity subsidy for the highest power users in February also made matters worse. Because universities are typically large power consumers, some institutions have been unable to afford their high electricity bills, and have been disconnected from the national grid – leaving students having to find ways to work in the dark.

work so hard yet go home with so little.”

Like Babatunde, Buchi Odikanwa, an IT salesman, said his family of six has been struggling since the change in government because rent, utility bills and other family expenses leave him with nothing at the end of the month.

“The gap is so wide and you can’t tell me to manage and endure [while] you are buying a private jet and yacht, and you are spending billions to renovate a residence where one man will live while we have people in IDP [internally displaced people] camps who can barely sleep,” the father of four said, referring to the newly renovated vice president’s residence. “We are here because the Nigerian irony needs to be corrected.”

In the past month, there have been pockets of protests by hungry people as well as attacks on food trucks and warehouses, as poverty levels increase, disposable income erodes and hunger rises.

These struggles are not unique to Nigeria. The protests come following similar recent demonstrations sweeping other African countries, including Kenya and Uganda. Protest action is also likely in Ghana due to corruption and the high cost of living, despite a court ban. In Nigeria, the hardships are now unbearable for many – as people seek extra work shifts and night jobs, and more begin to beg for alms. The cost of staples has also doubled and tripled, including bread and the local meal,

jollof rice, which now costs 20,274 naira (\$12.21) up from 16,955 naira (\$10.21) in June for an average family of five, according to Lagos-based intelligence firm SBM.

The food crisis shows no sign of slowing down, SBM Intelligence said, and it has given fodder to crime and exacerbated malnutrition and food insecurity – Nigeria has the highest number of food insecure people in the world at 31.8 million, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

Government divorced from reality Nigeria’s government has tried to push back against the protests in the weeks leading up to its start. Tinubu said last week that the protests could degenerate into violence and set the country backwards.

The secret service said it warned citizens not to partake in the demonstrations as it had “confirmed a sinister plan by some elements to infiltrate the protest and use it to cause chaos and extreme violence in the land”, to force a regime change. A defence spokesperson also warned against a Kenya-esque protest that could turn deadly.

Experts said the government’s action is informed by its determination to stop the protests from becoming as big as the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest sparked by a fuel subsidy removal by then-President Goodluck Jonathan, and the 2020 #EndSARS protests against

the notorious police unit, which routinely harassed, robbed and killed citizens. The government met with key traditional leaders to appease citizens to give the Tinubu administration more time to deliver on its electoral promises. This week it tried to dissuade the protest by raising the minimum wage from 30,000 naira to 70,000 naira. It also advertised job opportunities in the country’s oil company and grants worth billions of naira to Nigerian youth. But that has not moved the needle.

Nigerians are convinced that the government is divorced from reality and shows no signs of empathy as it has not made any serious changes in government to accommodate the growing challenges. The country has a bloated cabinet, with hundreds of highly paid people employed to do the same jobs, citizens complain. Accusations of corruption also hang over government officials and ruling party members, who are accused of insensitive spending and benefitting unfairly from state opportunities.

“Go to the local governments, you cannot get basic amenities there if you don’t have an APC [membership] card,” said Babatunde, who claimed that her niece was denied a spot to take the state school leaving exam because she did not have the ruling party’s membership card.

A series of government actions, like demolishing the Landmark Centre, an entertainment hotspot in Lagos,

in favour of the construction of a coastal express road, which has now been suspended, has worsened the public’s perception of the government, which rode into office on the back of a disputed election pockmarked by claims of electoral malpractice and result rigging.

“Those who are down fear no fall” Three days ago, anti-protest advocates whose activities had until then largely dwelled on social media, took to the streets in Lagos and Abuja to demonstrate against the planned protests. Multiple people have since alleged that they are being sponsored by the state as part of the effort to stop citizens.

Some of the anti-protest advocates attended the demonstrations across the country on Thursday. In Lagos, they tried to intimidate protesters but were pushed back and eventually left. Allegedly paid thugs were also going around to intimidate protesters from coming out in Lagos, while also stoking the fires of fragile ethnic tensions between the Igbo and Yoruba that have lingered since the elections when some Igbo members were harassed when attempting to cast their votes.

“The divisions from last year’s elections are still rife. The issues that were prevalent have clearly not been addressed and it is a clear indication that the last year has not been anything to inspire confidence,” said Adekaiyaoja from the Cen-

tre for Democracy and Development.

Gatefield’s Emowura, meanwhile, said the intimidation tactics would not cripple the demonstrations because the government’s playbook is already known: from the failed attempt to co-opt purported protest leaders to infiltrating their ranks and the show-of-force and threats by state and non-state actors, including procuring illegitimate court orders from corrupt judges, to the extremes of physical violence.

“This protest feels different. It’s part of an ongoing wave of young Africans fighting for survival against an older and failed political class. As the saying goes: those who are down fear no fall. Nigerians are tired,” Emowura said.

For Adekaiyaoja, the protest is a reminder of the power of collective peoples movements and it should serve as a wake-up call to governments to be proactive and engage actively.

Yet, he doubts that will happen.

“These governments will simply see it as a sign to ensure more restrictions on future attempts,” he said.

In Lagos, Babatunde, who works in the beleaguered informal economy, hopes this protest can bring about serious improvements for her business to help improve the quality of life for her family. “My business is ruining, I am in debt. We are not here to fight, they should just do something about this situation,” she said. “It is getting out of hand.”

Source: Al Jazeera

Harris campaign dismisses Trump's proposal to change debate date

Donald Trump has proposed that the next US presidential debate take place on Fox News on September 4.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has proposed to debate Democratic US Vice President Kamala Harris on Fox News on September 4, and the Harris campaign responded saying Trump is trying to back out of a debate that had been set to run on ABC.

The rules would be similar to the first debate with President Joe Biden, who has since dropped his re-election bid, Trump said in a post on Truth Social late on Friday. But this time it would have a "full arena audience" and take place in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, Trump said.

"Donald Trump is running scared and trying to back out of the debate he already agreed to and running straight to Fox News to bail him out," the Harris campaign communications director Michael Tyler said in a statement on Saturday.

"He needs to stop playing games and show up to the debate he already committed to on Sept 10."

Trump's proposal for the debate on Fox came soon after the Democratic National Committee launched an advertising campaign on Friday taunting him by saying "the convicted felon is afraid to debate" and

questioned whether that is due to his stance on abortion.

"The Vice President will be there one way or the other to take the opportunity to speak to a prime time national audience," Tyler said, apparently suggesting she would show up if Trump does not.

"We're happy to discuss further debates after the one both campaigns have already agreed to."

After Biden dropped out of the race on July 21 and backed Harris, Trump said he would not debate her because she was not the official candidate.

On Friday, Harris, 59, secured the delegate votes needed to clinch the Democratic nomination.

Harris also said last month that she was "ready" after Fox News proposed the presidential debate between the two candidates on September 17.

Recent polls show a tight contest between Harris and Trump, who had enjoyed a bigger lead over Biden after the first debate.

Source: News Agencies



Vice President Kamala Harris, left, and Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump [File: AP]

Tanzania

Tanzania forcibly relocating Indigenous Maasai: HRW

Tanzania has been forcibly evicting Indigenous Maasai from their ancestral lands, a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report says.

The report, published on Wednesday, found that the Tanzanian government aims to relocate more than 82,000 people from lands it has earmarked for "conservation and tourism purposes".

The programme, launched in 2022, aims to move people living in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), home to the Maasai for generations, to Msomera village, which is roughly 600km (370 miles) away. Amid the push, tension has erupted between the authorities and the nomadic community, at times resulting in deadly clashes.

HRW interviewed nearly 100 people, including community members who had already moved to Msomera village and others who were facing relocation, between August 2022 and December 2023.

While Tanzania's nomadic community has been allowed to live within some national parks, authorities say that as the population increases, it encroaches on wildlife habitats.

Violations and violence

The resulting report found that the government had "not sought the free, prior, and informed consent of the Indigenous Maasai residents in the area" regarding its relocation plan.

The residents also described to HRW the "violations of their rights to land, education, health, and compensation and attacks on critics of the relocation process".

They also assert that violence has been used during the relocating process, with "government-employed rangers assaulting and beating residents with impunity".

HRW documented 13 incidents of beatings by rangers between September 2022 and July 2023.

One Msomera resident told HRW that those who spoke out against the relocation faced threats and intimidation from rangers and security forces.

"You're not allowed to say anything," the resident said, adding people have "fear in their hearts."

Juliana Nnoko, a senior researcher on women and land at HRW, said the Tanzanian government needs to respect the rights of Indigenous Maasai communities.



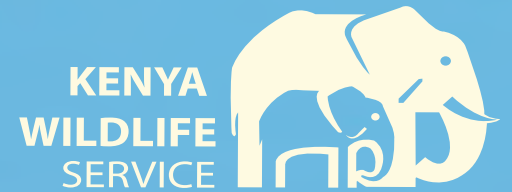
Maasai men attend a livestock auction at Msomera village, Tanzania [AFP]

"[It] is an ethical obligation as well as a legal one," she said. "The government should urgently reconsider its approach to ensure the survival, well-being, and dignity of the Maasai people, which this relocation process is putting at grave risk."

Tanzania's government has consistently maintained that its relocation scheme observes the country's laws

regarding rights.

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies



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Diaspora

The New Young Smart: “Young Do Good” - Kiddie or Ms.Suparada Paosatheanpan

Young Smart: “Young Do Good” - A platform encouraging children and youth to fearlessly Express and do good.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

- The “Young Smart: Young Do Good” activity falls under a broader social resilience project. It is one of many initiatives designed to encourage children and young people to bravely perform good deeds, with a focus on public and volunteer spirit. The program recognises and rewards role model children and youth with an award to celebrate their achievements.
- Driven by the Ministry of Culture, the project aligns with their strategy to awaken consciousness and foster positive values in a virtuous society, set against the backdrop of Thai and global communities. The program is committed to cultivating “Good People, Good Society”, in line with the second phase of the National Moral Promotion Plan (2023-2027).

Ms. Suparada Paosatheanpan or Kiddie, 12-year - old Thai actress and artist who has got the National Outstanding Youth and Child Award 2024 and 2023 from the Prime Minister of Thailand on the National Children Day. Kiddie or Ms. Suparada Paosatheanpan who dedicate her power and mind to working for making the better community and more beautiful society through many community projects and charity activities, that have been created for other people. Including receiving awards from many part of the Thai government and private agencies, such as the Moral Award 2024, from the center of Morality of the Ministry of Culture. Model Youth Award from M.R.W. Panithan Charoonroj, organized by the Council of Social Creative Artists Bangkok Ministry of Education Department of Children and Youth Affairs Ministry of Social Development and Human Security Ministry of Culture and partner networks at the Bureau of the Royal Household. Thailand Youth Awards 2024 from the Commission on Social Development and Affairs, children, youth, women, the elderly, people with disabilities Outstanding Person who has made a contribution to society and the nation, 2024, Cultural Heritage Preservation Association of Thailand and received a document of appreciation from Mr. Anukun Piedkaew, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

Young Smart: “Young Do Good” - A platform encouraging children and youth to fearlessly Express and do good.

The “Young Smart: Young Do Good” activity falls under a broader social resilience project. It is one of many initiatives designed to encourage children and young people to bravely perform good deeds, with a focus on public and volunteer spirit. The program recognises and rewards role model children and youth with an award to celebrate their achievements.

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positive values in a virtuous society, set against the backdrop of Thai and global communities. The program is committed to cultivating “Good People, Good Society”, in line with the second phase of the National Moral Promotion Plan (2023-2027).

The goal is to observe an increase in ethical behavior among Thais, striving towards a virtuous society where people live together in harmony. The project revolves around religious principles, sufficiency economy philosophy, and the beauty of Thai culture under the desired five virtues: “Sufficiency, Discipline, Honesty, Volunteer Spirit, and Respect.”

Hence, driving the strategic plan to create good, competent, and brave individuals and opportunities for society to contribute to the sustainable development of Thailand is in accordance with government policy. All sectors have been directed to integrate their efforts in driving the new generation of children and youth to understand the context of Thailand, the nation's institutions, and the monarchy. This collective endeavor is aimed at making Thais good, competent, brave, creating opportunities, and promoting roles in various aspects of national development.

The second iteration of the “Young Smart: Young Do Good” activity in 2023 continues to support children and youth in bravely doing good deeds and expressing themselves creatively. It instigates public spirit, fosters social resilience, and boosts pride in themselves and Thai culture. The initiative also promotes desired behaviors, recognising the value and benefits of virtue, morality, and the principles of sufficiency, discipline, honesty, volunteer spirit, and respect in daily life.

To qualify, applicants must be children aged between 8 and 15 years old, and youth aged from 15 years old up to 18 years old. They should have previously participated in activities or projects with state or private agencies and exhibit virtue, morality, and volunteer spirit. Moreover, they should possess knowledge in education and possess talents in sports, music, or other special abilities.



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Diaspora

North Korea shuns international aid workers amid severe flooding

The International Federation of Red Cross told VOA on Thursday that it was assessing North Korea’s humanitarian situation and needs from the floods as it remained hopeful about reentering the country.

By: VOA
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North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Premier Kim Tok Hun visit a flood-affected area near the border with China, in North Pyongan province, in this undated photo released July 31, 2024 by North Korea’s official Korean Central News Agency.

Worth Noting:

- The U.S. State Department told VOA Korean on Thursday that it hoped North Korea “will soon allow international humanitarian workers back into the country” as it stood ready to support international aid efforts.
- “We continue to support international efforts to provide critical humanitarian aid to the DPRK,” a State Department spokesperson said.
- The U.S. provided \$1 million in humanitarian aid to North Korea in 2017 after the country was hit by Typhoon Lionrock the previous year, resulting in flooding. But the U.S. does not currently provide any aid to North Korea.
- After being pummeled by heavy rains since last week, North Korea has mobilized officials and residents of several provinces to send relief items such as tents, blankets, garments and medical supplies to the flood-hit areas of North Pyongan and Jagang provinces, according to state-run KCNA on Thursday.

North Korea continues to keep its doors shut to international aid workers as the country struggles with massive flooding that destroyed thousands of homes and covered vast farmlands. The International Federation of Red Cross told VOA on Thursday that it was assessing North Korea’s humanitarian situation and needs from the floods as it remained hopeful about reentering the country. “We are deeply concerned about the impact of the floods and are working closely with the DPRK Red Cross Society to assess the situation,” the IFRC said in a statement to VOA Korean. “With the recent opening of DPRK borders and increased international co-operation, we are hopeful about the reestablishment of IFRC’s international presence in DPRK,” the statement continued. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is North Korea’s official name. The U.N. resident coordinator in North Korea, Joe Colombano, told VOA on Thursday that “we stand ready to return to the country to support” North Korea as it recovers from flood damage, “as well as with longer-term resilience work, should the government so request.” He also extended condolences to those impacted by

the floods in a written statement from the U.N. Development Coordination Office in New York. North Korea reopened its borders in August 2023 and lifted draconian pandemic measures put in place since 2020 that blocked all cross-border activities, including humanitarian aid. No international aid workers are in the country despite the open border, although there was a four-day visit to Pyongyang by the head of the Food and Agricultural Organization in July. The U.S. State Department told VOA Korean on Thursday that it hoped North Korea “will soon allow international humanitarian workers back into the country” as it stood ready to support international aid efforts. “We continue to support international efforts to provide critical humanitarian aid to the DPRK,” a State Department spokesperson said. The U.S. provided \$1 million in humanitarian aid to North Korea in 2017 after the country was hit by Typhoon Lionrock the previous year, resulting in flooding. But the U.S. does not currently provide any aid to North Korea. After being pummeled by heavy rains since last week, North Korea has mobilized officials and residents of several provinces to send relief items such as tents, blan-

kets, garments and medical supplies to the flood-hit areas of North Pyongan and Jagang provinces, according to state-run KCNA on Thursday. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un held an emergency meeting after inspecting flood-hit areas in North Pyongan province, where the rains flooded more than 4,100 houses and nearly 3,000 hectares of farmland in Sinuiju city and Uiju county that borders China, KCNA said Wednesday. More than 4,300 people were rescued by North Korean army helicopters from the flood-hit regions, according to KCNA on Monday. But North Korea did not provide an estimated number of deaths or injured from the devastating flood. North Korea is prone to flooding from summer downpours because the country lacks proper infrastructure to support drainage. VOA contacted North Korea’s mission at the U.N. and asked whether the country was willing to accept international aid toward flood recovery but did not receive an answer by the time this report was published. The South Korean Unification Ministry that handles inter-Korean affairs said Thursday that North Korea seemed to have incurred considerable casualties.

Some South Korean media reported the number of flood victims, including deaths and those displaced, to be more than 1,500. Jerome Sauvage, who served as the U.N. resident coordinator in North Korea from 2009 to 2013, said the impact of the flood, including an estimated number of deaths, is difficult to assess “from a distance” and should be done from inside the country. “Without data obtained on the ground and independently,” it is also difficult to assess how much aid is needed, Sauvage said. He suggested North Korea “urgently” let in a staff for an assessment on the impact of the floods, including damage done to crops, houses and facilities. South Korea’s Red Cross said in a statement released through the Unification Ministry on Thursday that it was willing to provide relief aid to North Korean flood victims. The Korean Red Cross said it was “ready to discuss details including relief items, amount of aid supplies and delivery methods” with the DPRK Red Cross Society as it looked forward to a “prompt response” from North Korea. It was uncertain whether Pyongyang would accept help from Seoul amid tense relations between the two.

Keith Luse, executive director at the National Committee on North Korea in Washington, who facilitates engagement between the U.S. and North Korea, said, “If DPRK officials decide to accept assistance from other countries, China and Russia will likely be the initial points of contact.” Liu Pengyu, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, told VOA that “China is paying close attention to the flooding and expresses heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families and those who are affected.” “We believe that the people of the DPRK are capable of overcoming the impact of the disaster and rebuilding their homes soon,” he said. Liu added, “In the meanwhile, areas on the Chinese side near the border have also been hit by severe flooding. We hope the two sides will share flooding information in a timely way to better prevent the flooding and ensure the safety of people’s life and property.” VOA contacted the Russian embassies in Washington and Seoul to ask whether Moscow had a plan to send disaster relief aid to North Korea but did not receive a reply.

Rwandans in Kenya celebrate the 30th Liberation Day

By: BRUHAN MAKONG

Rwandans living in Kenya on Saturday, celebrated the 30th Liberation Day anniversary.

The event brought together more than 800 people including members of the diplomatic corps in Nairobi, friends of Rwanda, and members of the Rwandan community in Kenya. Rwanda's Liberation Day is celebrated annually on 4th of July but Rwandan missions abroad mark the day on varying dates.

The event symbolises a historical day when the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) led by President Paul Kagame liberated the country and put an end to the genocide against the Tutsi that lasted 100 days and claimed a million innocent lives.

Addressing the gathering, High Commissioner Martin Ngoga stressed that the day signifies Rwanda's transition from an oppressive and discriminatory regime that oppressed its citizens, forced thousands of Rwandans to flee to exile, and perpetrated one of the harshest genocides in human history.

"Liberation Day represents the beginning of freedom from oppression and the rebirth of a nation. It also provides an opportunity for Rwandans to reflect on how far we have come as a nation and to share Rwanda's liberation story, the journey of unity and reconciliation, and the



The event brought together more than 800 people including members of the diplomatic corps in Nairobi/RwandaInKenya

country's ongoing renewal and vision for a brighter future," he added. The High Commissioner also thanked the government of Kenya for being a major partner in the country's reconstruction and development journey.

"I would like to thank the Kenyan government and the people of Kenya for the strong bonds of friendship

and the unwavering support that has enabled robust trade and investments, and the people to people ties that have continued to grow stronger over the years," he said.

Ambassador Joshat Maikara, the Deputy Director-General Americas and the Caribbean Directorate at the State Department for Foreign Affairs, who was representing the

government of Kenya at the event hailed Rwanda's remarkable transformation over the last 30 years.

"Rwanda has faced adversity with courage, healed wounds with compassion, and rebuilt a nation with determination," he said, adding "Presently, Rwanda stands as a beacon of hope and resilience – a testament to what can be achieved

when a nation chooses unity over division, peace over conflict, and progress over stagnation."

He reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to continue "working closely with the government of Rwanda to champion the cause of the continent and further strengthen the historical bonds of friendship" between the two countries.

Uganda

Transgender man in Uganda advocates for direct funding due to ant-LGBTIQ bill

By: ROSEMARY ONCHARI

Transgender people in Uganda have asked international communities to channel financial support directly to the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) in the country and not through the government.

This is after President Yoweri Museveni signed the ant-LGBTIQ bill into law.

The ant-LGBTIQ bill has thrown the community into distress not knowing what will happen because of the harsh environment with social stigma and attacks.

Speaking during the 2024 AIDS international day, Jay Muluncha Executive Director and founder Fem Alliance, Uganda representing transmen in Uganda said the community members are targeted, beaten and even denied access to essential medical services.

He noted ,being HIV positive is extremely dangerous saying there are many misconception that transmen cannot acquire the disease and those who acquire it are always discriminated against.

"Choosing who we are in Uganda is a crime, we face stigma from the public ,and recently got evicted from where we stay because no one wants

to associate with us," Muluncha said. Muluncha is the first trans person in history to speak during the opening of the International AIDS Conference hosted by International AIDS Society and said the needs of LQBTIQ people were not adequately.

He noted it's difficult for transmen to speak about their experiences because they are always discriminated against and threatened.

"it's no longer safe for many of us fearing to disclose your HIV status because threats are massively increasing and for us with physical identification fear of getting out in public," he added.

UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima said when governments such as Uganda are hurting LQBTIQ as criminals simply because of who they are and who they love is a crime because those people will not come out to the clinics to get life saving medication.

"Leaders and political leaders remove this hateful and harmful laws now because this is injustice and punitive approaches to the LQBTIQ community," said Byanyima



Slain Hamas leader Haniyeh’s funeral held in Qatar, Israel warned of revenge

The funeral of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh took place in Qatar on Friday following his assassination two days ago in Iran’s capital Tehran - one in a series of killings of senior figures in the Palestinian militant group as the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza rages.

By Reuters
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Worth Noting:

- Haniyeh was killed by a missile that hit him directly in a state guesthouse in Tehran where he was staying, senior Hamas official Khalil Al-Hayya told a news conference, quoting witnesses who were with him.
- Iran and Hamas have both accused Israel of carrying out the killing and have pledged to retaliate against their foe. Israel has not claimed responsibility for the death nor denied it.
- The strike was one of several that have killed senior figures in Hamas or the Lebanese movement Hezbollah, fuelling concern that the war in Gaza between Israel and Palestinian militants is turning into a regional conflict stretching from the Red Sea to the Lebanon-Israel border and beyond.
- In the United States, U.S. President Joe Biden said Haniyeh’s killing was not helpful to international efforts to secure a ceasefire in the war in Gaza, now in its 10th month.



Mourners carry the coffin of assassinated Hamas chief, Ismail Haniyeh during his funeral ceremony in Tehran, Iran, August 1, 2024. Office of the Iranian Supreme Leader/WANA (West Asia News Agency) Handout via REUTERS

The funeral of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh took place in Qatar on Friday following his assassination two days ago in Iran’s capital Tehran - one in a series of killings of senior figures in the Palestinian militant group as the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza rages. Mourners at the ceremony in a large mosque just north of the capital Doha included Khaled Meshaal, who is tipped to be the new Hamas leader. Other senior Hamas officials and Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani also attended. He will be buried in a cemetery in the city of Lusail, north of Doha. Haniyeh’s coffin, draped in the Palestinian flag, was carried across the mosque past hundreds of people along with the coffin of his bodyguard, who was killed in the same attack in Tehran on Wednesday. Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri to Reuters by phone as he attended the funeral: “Our message to the occupation (Israel) today is

that you are sinking deep in the mud and your end is getting closer than ever. The blood of Haniyeh will change all equations.” Haniyeh was killed by a missile that hit him directly in a state guesthouse in Tehran where he was staying, senior Hamas official Khalil Al-Hayya told a news conference, quoting witnesses who were with him. Iran and Hamas have both accused Israel of carrying out the killing and have pledged to retaliate against their foe. Israel has not claimed responsibility for the death nor denied it. The strike was one of several that have killed senior figures in Hamas or the Lebanese movement Hezbollah, fuelling concern that the war in Gaza between Israel and Palestinian militants is turning into a regional conflict stretching from the Red Sea to the Lebanon-Israel border and beyond. In the United States, U.S. President Joe Biden said Haniyeh’s killing was not helpful to international ef-

forts to secure a ceasefire in the war in Gaza, now in its 10th month. “It doesn’t help,” Biden told reporters on Thursday, when asked if the action ruined the chances of a truce. Qatar has been leading the peace effort along with Egypt and the United States, Israel’s main ally. **WIDOW MOURNS** Haniyeh had been the face of Hamas’s international diplomacy as war raged back in Gaza and had taken part in the indirect ceasefire talks. He was seen by many diplomats as a moderate compared to the more hardline members of the Iran-backed group inside Gaza, although some Israeli commentators have said he was considered by some on the Israeli side as an obstacle to a deal. Appointed to the Hamas top job in 2017, he moved between Turkey and Doha, escaping the travel curbs of the blockaded Gaza Strip. In May, the International Criminal Court prosecutor’s office requested arrest

warrants for three Hamas leaders, including Haniyeh, as well as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for alleged war crimes. Israel and Palestinian leaders have dismissed the allegations. Iran held its own funeral ceremony for Haniyeh on Thursday which was attended by his widow Amal. “Say hello to all the martyrs of Gaza, say hello to the leaders, to all Gaza’s martyrs, all the Muslims,” Amal Haniyeh said as she mourned beside his coffin. Hamas politburo member Izzat al-Rishq called on people to pray for his soul in all mosques around the world. “Let today, Friday, be a day of overwhelming anger denouncing the assassination crime and rejecting the genocide in the Gaza Strip,” he said in a statement. While Israel has not said it carried out the killing, it has announced that an airstrike it mounted last month killed the elusive Hamas military leader Mohammed Deif in Gaza. Hamas has not confirmed nor denied the death

of Deif. Hezbollah confirmed on Wednesday that its senior military commander Fuad Shukr had been killed in an Israeli strike on a building in Beirut. Hezbollah vowed on Thursday a “definite” response to Shukr’s killing, saying it had crossed red lines and that the decades-old rivalry between foes had entered a new phase. “We are looking for a real response, not a performative response, and for real opportunities. A studied response,” said Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, speaking in a televised address to mark the funeral of the slain commander.

U.S. to send more warships, fighter jets to Middle East to bolster defenses

By Reuters

The U.S. military will deploy additional fighter jets and Navy warships to the Middle East, the Pentagon said on Friday, as Washington seeks to bolster defenses following threats from Iran and its allies Hamas and Hezbollah.

The U.S. is bracing for Iran to make good on its vow to respond to the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh two days ago in Tehran - one in a series of killings of senior figures in the Palestinian militant group as the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza rages.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had approved sending additional Navy cruisers and destroyers-- which can shoot down ballistic missiles-- to the Middle East and Europe.

It is also sending an additional squadron of fighter jets to the Middle East.

"Austin has ordered adjustments to U.S. military posture designed to improve U.S. force protection, to increase support for the defense of Israel, and to ensure the United States is prepared to respond to various contingencies," the Pentagon said in a statement.

There had been speculation that the Pentagon might not replace the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike

group in the Middle East once it completed its ongoing deployment. But Austin decided to rotate in the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier strike group to replace it.

The Pentagon statement added it would increase readiness to deploy more land-based ballistic missile defenses.

The U.S. military also intensified deployments prior to April 13, when Iran launched an attack on Israeli territory with drones and missiles. Still, the threat from Hezbollah in Lebanon could present unique challenges to any efforts by the United States to intercept drones and missiles given the group's vast arsenal and immediate proximity to Israel. At the time, Israel successfully knocked down almost all of the roughly 300 drones and missiles with the help of the United States and other allies.

Biden, in a phone call on Thursday with Netanyahu, discussed new U.S. defensive military deployments to support Israel against threats such as missiles and drones, the White House said.

Iran and Hamas have both accused Israel of carrying out the killing and have pledged to retaliate against their foe. Israel has not claimed responsibility for the death nor denied it.



File photo: A F/A-18E Super Hornet fighter jet is catapulted off the flight deck of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) aircraft carrier in Southern Red Sea, Middle East, February 13, 2024. REUTERS/Hamad I Mohammed/File Photo

RUSSIA

Putin welcomes Russians freed in prisoner swap as heroes

By VOA

President Vladimir Putin gave Russian nationals freed in a historic prisoner exchange with the West a hero's welcome on Thursday as they stepped off a plane in Moscow, promising them state awards and a conversation about their futures.

Eight people were returned to Russia as part of the biggest East-West prisoner exchange since the end of the Cold War, including Vadim Krasikov, a hitman convicted by a German court of killing a former Chechen militant in a Berlin park, and two men convicted of cybercrimes in the United States, Vladislav Klyushin and Roman Seleznev.

Among those Moscow also got back: a Russian family, the Dultsevs, including their two children, whom a court in Slovenia convicted of pretending to be Argentinians in order to spy on the EU and NATO member state.

The couple are thought to be "illegals" — deep-cover agents trained to impersonate foreigners, who spend years living abroad in their cover identities.

In return, U.S. journalist Evan Gershkovich and ex-U.S. Marine Paul

Whelan were among those released by Moscow in a complex deal negotiated in secrecy for more than a year.

Putin, a former KGB officer and ex-head of Russia's FSB security service, met the eight returnees at a Moscow airport and hugged them or shook their hands, giving some of them bouquets of flowers as they came off the plane onto a red carpet flanked by a Kremlin honor guard.

The first to disembark, wearing a baseball cap and a track suit top, was Krasikov, the hitman, whom Putin hugged.

Inside the airport building, Putin, who looked visibly pleased, told the returnees:

"First of all, I would like to congratulate you all on your return to the Motherland. Now I would like to address those of you who have a direct connection to military service. I want to thank you for your loyalty to your oath and your duty to your Motherland, which has never forgotten you for a moment.

"All of you will be presented with state awards. I will see you again - we will talk about your future."

Alexander Bortnikov, the head of the domestic FSB intelligence service; Sergei Naryshkin, the head of



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, speaks to released Russian prisoners upon their arrival at the Vnukovo government airport outside Moscow, Aug. 1, 2024. (Kremlin pool photo via AP)

the SVR foreign intelligence service; and Defense Minister Andrei Belousov were also at the airport to welcome the group.

Earlier on Thursday, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, com-

menting on the prisoner exchange, said that traitors to his country should rot and die in prison, but that it was more useful for Moscow to get its own people home.

"And let the traitors now feverishly

adopt new names and actively disguise themselves under witness protection programs," Medvedev wrote on his Telegram channel.

Kamala Harris raises Ksh.40.3B in July as campaign shakeup energizes donors

By Reuters

The Harris campaign announced on Friday that it raised \$310 million (Ks.40.3 billion) in July, fueled by small-dollar donations that flowed into the war chest after President Joe Biden bowed out of the race and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris.

The July figure - more than double the \$138.7 million (Ksh.18 billion) raised by Republican rival Donald Trump in the same month - brings the total money raised by Harris and Biden before her to more than \$1 billion (Ksh.130 billion), the fastest a presidential campaign has crossed that threshold in history, the campaign said.

July was set to be a disappointing month for Democrats as big-dollar donors withheld money in an effort to force Biden out of the race, but Harris's emergence as the party's presidential candidate energized voters and donors.

More than \$200 million (Ksh.26 billion) of the \$310 million (Ksh.40.3 billion) came in the first week following Biden's endorsement of Harris, the campaign said.

Two-thirds of the July donations came from first-time donors and 94% of the donations were \$200 or less, the campaign said.

"This is a history-making haul for a candidate who will make history this November. The tremendous outpouring of support we've seen in just a short time makes clear the Harris coalition is mobilized, growing, and ready to put in the work to defeat Trump this November," said Harris for President Campaign Manager Julie Chavez Rodriguez.

The Harris campaign had \$377 million (Ksh.49 billion) in cash on hand at the end of the month, \$50 million (Ksh.6.5 billion) more than the Trump campaign's \$327 million (Ksh.42.5 billion).

Trump's fundraising for July was 24% higher than the \$111.8 million (Ksh.14.5 billion) that the campaign said it raised in June.

The assassination attempt against Trump on July 13 at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania was expected to spur campaign contributions to the former president.

Trump's fundraising had previously surged when he was convicted in late May on felony charges related



U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris speaks at a presidential election campaign event in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S. July 30, 2024. REUTERS/Dustin Chambers/File Photo

to a hush-money payment to a pornstar ahead of the 2016 election. Polls showed that Trump had built a lead over Biden, including in battleground states, after Biden's disastrous debate performance on June 27, but Harris's entry to the race changed the dynamic with recent polls showing a tight contest.

Tunisia

Tunisian presidential candidates complain of restrictions and intimidation

By Reuters

Tunisian opposition parties, presidential candidates and human rights groups have accused the authorities of using "arbitrary restrictions" and intimidation in order to ensure the re-election of President Kais Saied in a vote set for Oct. 6.

Saied announced on July 19 that he would seek another five-year term. Elected in 2019, Saied dissolved parliament in 2021 and began ruling by decree in a move the opposition described as a coup.

He has said he will not hand over power to what he calls "non-patriots".

As an Aug. 6 deadline for registering as a presidential candidate looms, 11 opposition figures who hope to run against Saied issued a joint statement this week criticising the authorities.

"The violations have affected most of the serious candidates to the point that they appear to indicate a desire to exclude them (from the election) and restrict them in order to make way for a specific candidate," they said in the joint statement.

None of the 11 opposition candidates have yet obtained a document certifying that they have no criminal

record - a new condition - which will then allow them to register.

The Election Commission spokesperson said the interior ministry would contact the candidates to provide them with the necessary document, without saying when this would happen. The Commission also rejected the accusations of bias.

'CLIMATE OF INTIMIDATION'

In a separate statement on Thursday, 17 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including Human Rights League, and six opposition parties criticised government control of public media, the judiciary, and the Elections Commission.

"A climate of intimidation of opponents and journalists through the use of the judiciary and the Election Commission to serve the interests of the authorities and the lack of equal opportunities does not provide guarantees for free and fair elections," they said in the statement.

One of the 11 presidential candidates, Nizar Chaari, said his campaign manager and a volunteer member had been arrested and that police had confiscated the signatures he had received from the public endorsing his candidacy.

The Public Prosecutor's office said



Supporters of Tunisian President Kais Saied carry flags and signs during a demonstration to show their support for him and to reject what they say is "foreign interference", in Tunis, Tunisia May 19, 2024. REUTERS/Jihed Abidellaoui/File Photo

the two people had been arrested over their seizure of a database and the forging of endorsements, accusations that Chaari's campaign deny. Earlier this month, a court sentenced another candidate, opposition party leader Lotfi Mraih, to eight months in prison on a charge of vote buying. It also imposed a lifetime ban on Mraih, one of Saied's most prominent critics, running in presidential elections.

Also this month, a judge barred candidate Abd Ellatif Mekki, opens new tab from appearing in the media or travelling around the country.

The head of the Freedoms Committee in Parliament, Hela Ben Jaballah, called in a statement for the lifting of restrictions on candidates. She also urged the Election Commission to perform its role in a neutral way, something it says it already does.