



The Personalization Of Power: Why Issue-Based Politics Remains Elusive In Kenya

The ideal of issue-based governance has long been touted as the panacea for the country's myriad socio-economic challenges in Kenya. However, a closer examination of the political landscape reveals a stark reality: the dominance of personality-driven politics and the conspicuous absence of ideological commitment among political actors.

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P. 12. Under the guise of highly secretive Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement, the Adani Group has secured KENTRACO deal and almost getting JKIA. Kenyans have overwhelmingly rejected this shadowy deals.

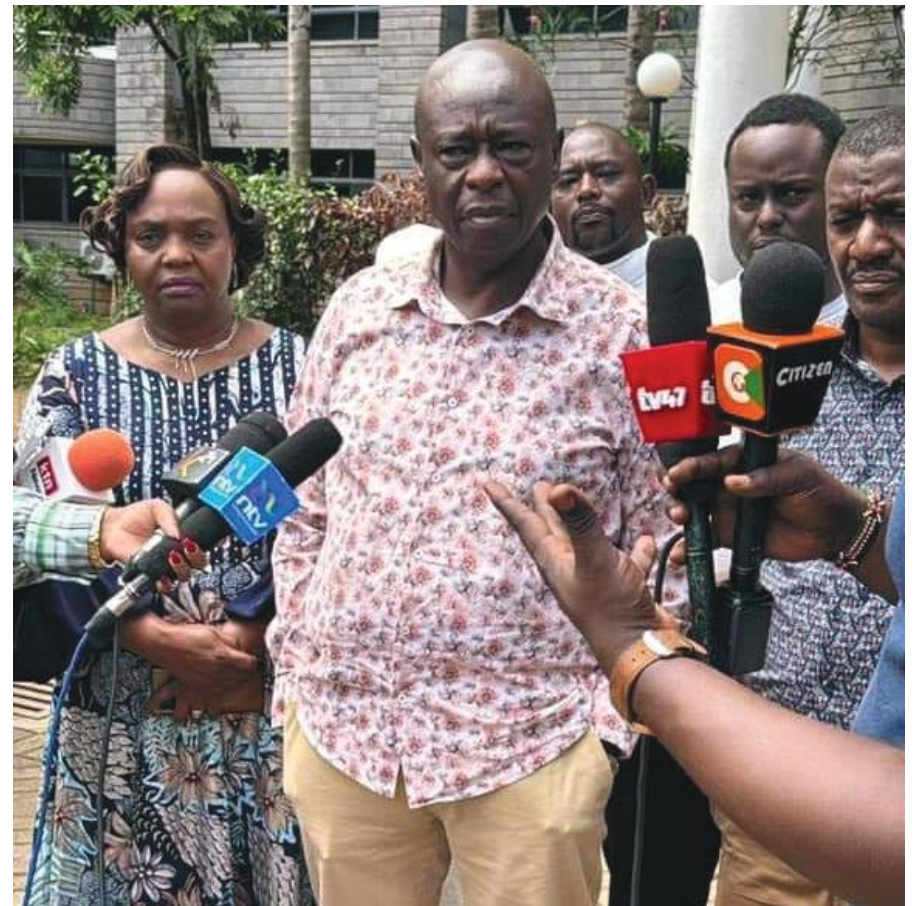
Leave Me Alone



Impeached Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has broken his silence after being admitted for over 60 hours at the Karen Hospital where he had been admitted after suffering severe chest pains.

Speaking after being discharged, an impassioned Gachagua blamed President William Ruto for the political turmoil he has undergone that has seen him suffer an impeachment by the Senate.

Gachagua expressed regret in supporting President William Ruto's political trek only to be "viciously" spat out two years after taking office.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and his spouse Dorcas Rigathi

STORY ON PAGE 9

KETEPA PRIDE
Spiced Black Tea

Cinnamon
A spicy delight

Cardamom
Spice of life

Masala Tea
Blend of delicious spices

Ginger Tea
A zingy and tasty treat

CHAI NI KETEPA

Increased School Break-Ins And Theft Worrying Murang'a Leaders

By: Bernard Munyao and
Anjaliwa Francis

@themtkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- Nkanatha said some of the targeted items include computers, books, medals among others saying they have arrested some suspects who are aiding in investigations.
- "It's worrying to witness schools losing properties to thieves. The schools which have been hit by the robbery have lost their computers and other office items thus causing huge losses to the institutions.
- "We have established that the burglars usually tie the school guards with robes before they commit the crime. Security agents are investigating to establish if the robbery is planned by some of the workers of the schools," he stated.



Murang'a County Commissioner Joshua Nkanatha has raised concerns over increased school break-ins and theft in the recent past.

During this year's Mashujaa Day Celebrations at Ihura Stadium, Nkanatha divulged that for a period less than one month, six secondary schools have been broken into and property worth thousands of shillings stolen.

He revealed that theft cases have been reported in high schools within Gatanga and Kandara sub counties.

Nkanatha said some of the targeted items include computers, books, medals among others saying they have arrested some suspects who are aiding in investigations.

"It's worrying to witness schools losing properties to thieves. The schools which have been hit by the robbery have lost their computers and other office items thus causing huge losses to the institu-

tions.

"We have established that the burglars usually tie the school guards with robes before they commit the crime. Security agents are investigating to establish if the robbery is planned by some of the workers of the schools," he stated.

He noted as candidates prepare to sit for their national examinations, security in all examination centres will be beefed up and called on members of the public to keep off from the areas where the exams will be conducted.

"Only authorized people are allowed to access examination centres. Residents, parents among other individuals should stay away from the centres. This is to ensure the examinations are conducted credibly," remarked Nkanatha.

He appealed to communities living near learning institutions to provide any information that may lead to the arrest of those behind the school break-ins.

Meanwhile the County Commissioner raised concerns on increased cases of suicide in the county saying almost every week, a suicide case is reported.

He explained more than 95 percent of suicide cases are committed by men calling community leaders, the clergy among other stakeholders to help in mitigating the situation.

"It's worrying to lose people through suicide. We understand some of these cases are attributed to depression, drug abuse and alcoholism; and also domestic related wrangles and differences.

"I appeal to chiefs and their assistants, community leaders and the clergy to help in talking to our people and giving them hope despite difficulties they are going through," pleaded Nkanatha.

The administrator further cautioned bar owners who are trying to bring back banned second generation alcoholic brands.

The County Commissioner said some unscrupulous bar owners are attempting to sell the outlawed brands saying inspection of liquor outlets will be intensified.

"We are approaching the festive season and some people may think of bringing back the outlawed alcoholic drinks and that will not happen. The only licensed liquor outlets will be allowed to operate and stock the right brands," he added.

The county peace chairperson Jane Kamwanga observed that selling of illicit brews is slowly coming back in some parts of the county.

"We ask members of the county security committee to intensify the fight against illicit brews and drugs. From assessments it shows some bars have resumed selling outlawed brews. It's unfortunate we see our young people drunk in morning hours," claimed Kamwanga.

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kajiado East Constituency Member of Parliament Kakuta Ole Maimai commissioned a classroom for the Junior Secondary School (JSS) learners in Noonkopir Primary school. The classroom was constructed through the Kajiado East National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF). Ole Maimai said that the construction of four more JSS classes in the school are ongoing and will be ready by January for use by the Grade 9 learners. Last month, the Ministry of Education disbursed Sh11 billion for the construction of 11,000 classrooms while the National Treasury released Sh7.8 billion to NG-CDF to also aid in the construction of 5,000 classrooms.



In a move to support vocational education in Mandera, the county government has paid examination fees for 476 trainees enrolled in its Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centers. These trainees were set to sit for government trade tests administered by the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) but some students from less fortunate families had difficulties clearing the examination fees. Speaking during the announcement Bashir Ibrahim Alio, the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education and Human Capital Development, highlights the government's commitment to ensuring access to skill-based education for its youth. A total of Ksh. 2,463,000 will be paid to NITA to cover the examination fees for the trainees, enabling them to take the tests without financial burden.

Nyeri County Deputy Governor David Kinaniri Warui celebrated his birthday in style by joining children at Neema GBV Rescue Centre family in Kagayu area near Nyeri town. He was joined by among others, nominated Member of Nyeri County Assembly Ms Agnes Wachira who, alongside the kids, assisted him in cutting the birthday cake. "These wonderful souls have ushered me into a new year with happiness and indeed as scripted in Luke 18:16....For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children," he quipped after the ceremony. The home offers solace and refuge to vulnerable children.

Narok Governor Patrick Ole Ntutu (in Maasai attire) and Narok County Commissioner Kipkech Lotiatia at Ole Ntimama Secondary school in Narok North Sub county during Mashujaa Day celebrations yesterday.



Detectives from Nakuru Central Police Station have successfully dismantled a gang of violent robbery suspects who have been striking terror in the hearts of innocent residents of Eveready area in Nakuru and recovered a Ceska pistol. Acting on vital tips from vigilant locals, the detectives executed a swift raid at the suspects' house in Soilo area in Nakuru West Sub-County. Their meticulous search bore fruit, uncovering a Ceska pistol (serial no. 75P07) with a loaded magazine of 12 rounds. In the house, the following suspects were arrested: Sammy Lolmigan, Simon Lesuruan, Samuel Lengaur, Saidimu Lenamarle, James Lesuruan, Saidi Lepadasa, and Saloi Lengewa. FichuaKwaDCI Call 0800 722 203 to report anonymously



The collapse of Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) in Embu County has been attributed to poor management, lack of accountability, and democracy. Deputy Governor Kinyua Mugo reported that out of the registered 315 Saccos, 126 are dormant and on the brink of collapse due to mismanagement. Conflicts between management boards and fiscal indiscipline are causing significant damage to many Sacco's, causing disintegration and damage to their reputation among potential members.



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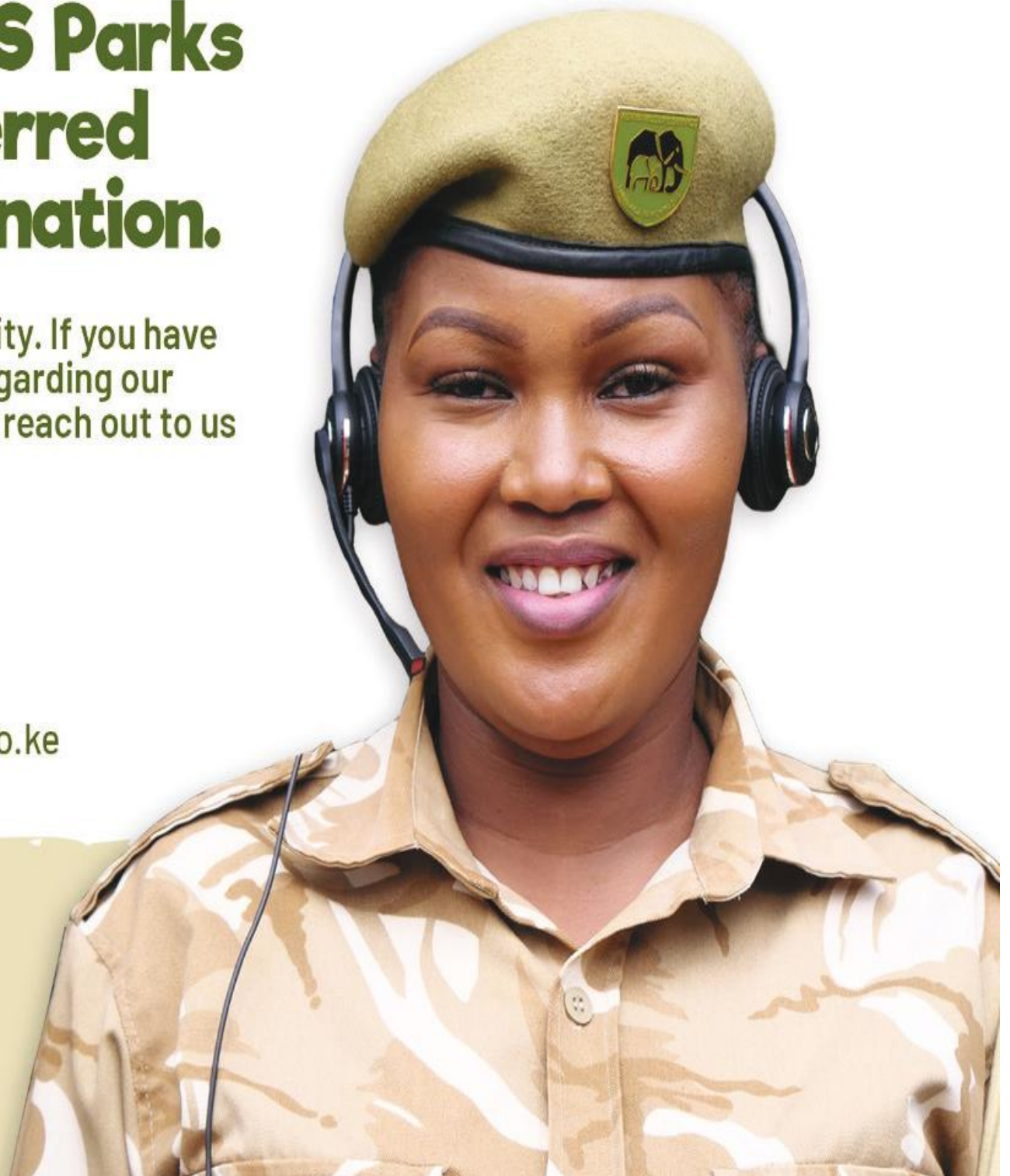
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PS Nixon Korir Chairs Northern Corridor Meeting Ahead Of Planned Heads Of State Summit

By: Catherine Muindi

@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- The meeting, which reviewed Land Cluster projects was attended by delegations from Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and South Sudan.
- Korir said the report of the meeting of the cluster group will, after being signed by the respective Cabinet Secretaries/Ministers, form part of the agenda for the 15th Heads of State Summit of the NCIP.
- "Land is a very crucial factor for the Northern Corridor Projects and programmes, I assure you of my commitment to work together with you in matters of land acquisition for NCIP," said PS Korir.

The Northern Corridor Integration Projects (NCIP) partner States are finalizing plans for a Heads of States Summit after a six-year lull in presidential-level consultations on regional development.

The summit is set to be hosted by Rwanda before the end of the year.

In recent months, the partner States comprising the NCIP, namely; Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, South Sudan and DRC, have shown renewed vigour and commitment to implementation of projects.

The NCIP has 14 cluster groups, each dealing with projects grouped together on the basis of sector.

Lands and Physical Planning Principal Secretary Generali Nixon Korir chaired a Principal Secretaries/ Permanent Secretaries meeting of the Northern Corridor Integration Projects as NCIP partner States prepare for the upcoming 15th Heads of State Summit.

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Korir said the report of the meeting of the cluster group will, after being signed by the respective Cabinet Secretaries/Ministers, form part of the agenda for the 15th Heads of State Summit of the NCIP.

"Land is a very crucial factor for the Northern Corridor Projects and programmes, I assure you of my commitment to work together with you in matters of land acquisition for NCIP," said PS Korir.

He urged the Cluster to hold regular meetings for the effective realization of its deliverables and reiterated the importance of the regional meeting



in developing solutions to address issues pertaining to land acquisition for Northern Corridor projects and programs.

The PS called on all partner States to dedicate extra efforts to ensure land issues are resolved to facilitate the timely implementation of regional integration projects.

Head of the Ugandan delegation, Ambassador Richard Kabonero, thanked the Government of Kenya for convening the Land for Infrastructure Corridor Cluster meeting. He expressed appreciation for the Cluster Chair's dedication in preparing the necessary documentation.

Amb. Kabonero also informed the meeting that Uganda recently signed a contract with a Turkish company for the construction of a Standard Gauge Railway.

The Head of delegation from Rwanda, Donne Besigye (First Counsellor at the High Commission of Rwanda to Kenya), who also spoke during the meeting assured that the cluster was going to do a good job in facilitating infrastructure projects aimed at

strengthening regional integration and development.

"I affirm Rwanda's commitment to supporting the Cluster by implementing sustainable land management projects under the Northern Corridor to ensure regional development and economic prosperity," said Donne Besigye.

Besides the Lands Cluster, the NCIP has another 13 clusters through which the NCIP activities and projects are implemented.

The NCIP was initiated in 2013 and has been an avenue through which the presidents of the member countries have spearheaded major infrastructure projects aimed at bolstering development and integration across the region.

Member States have undertaken to prioritize land cluster initiatives including registration of community land, valuation of NCIP projects, sharing of geospatial data among others.



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Mashujaa Day Celebrations In Photos



Blame Ruto If Anything Happens To Me; Gachagua Decries Betrayal From ‘Man He Trusted’

By: Moses Kinyanjui
@themkenyatimes

Impeached Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has broken his silence after being admitted for over 60 hours at the Karen Hospital where he had been admitted after suffering severe chest pains.

Speaking after being discharged, an impassioned Gachagua blamed President William Ruto for the political turmoil he has undergone that has seen him suffer an impeachment by the Senate.

Gachagua expressed regret in supporting President William Ruto’s political trek only to be “viciously” spat out two years after taking office.

“I didn’t know President Ruto could be that vicious. I am so shocked by how vicious a man I helped to be president, that I believed in, I was persecuted for supporting him, could be so vicious against me when I am literally fighting for my life in hospital,” he said.

A bitter Gachagua narrated how he had suffered the aftermath of political betrayal from a President he believed would cherish their bromance at the reigns of power.

He even noted that he has been made privy to an alleged plan of preventing him from attending the Mashujaa Day celebrations held in Kwale, claiming that all chopper owners had been ordered to deny him flight access.

“I bear no grudge against anybody. The man I am seeing is not the one I thought I knew. I know there was a concerted effort that I should not go to Kwale for the celebration and Wilson Airport was told that I should not go through their airport,” Gachagua added.

The embattled political premier further stated that his security has been withdrawn from his Karen and Nyeri residences, questioning the intent behind the extended purge that targeted his office staff members.

“I have been here alone without a single officer looking after me. All officers close to me were disarmed and given a warning that they should not be near me. As we speak the Deputy President has no single security officer around him. He is alone,” said Gachagua.

“Last night all vehicles of offices who work under me were impounded to cripple the office of the DP. I don’t understand this level of viciousness to a man who helped you



President William Ruto (right) and impeached DP Rigathi Gachagua at State House on December 18, 2023..

to become president.”

He therefore stated that President Ruto should be held responsible in the event anything happens to him and his family.

“If anything happens to me or my family President Ruto must be held to account,” he noted.

He claims that his only crime against his boss was “just being truthful because nobody else can tell him”.

I am the only man in Cabinet who can stand up to President Ruto and tell him hey brother this is not right. This Adani thing is not right for the country, there is too much corruption in the country,” he narrated.

Gachagua still holds that he is the appointed Deputy President following a stay order from the Court halting the Senate’s decision to oust him. He has noted that he will use the

corridors of justice to allow him a second appearance before the Senate to defend himself.

He was impeached by the Senate on October 17, 2024, as Senators voted in favour of five out of the 11 grounds presented as grounds for his removal.

President Ruto has nominated Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki to replace Gachagua.

Gachagua Says He Dropped NIS After 2 Poisoning Attempts

By: Bruhan Makong
@themkenyatimes

Rigathi Gachagua has made shocking claims linking the National Intelligence Service (NIS) to an attempt to assassinate him on two occasions.

Speaking from Karen Hospital in Nairobi, Gachagua shed light on what he described as a deliberate effort by the country’s spy agency to eliminate him through poisoning.

“I want to tell the people of Kenya that I do not feel safe,” Gachagua stated.

He recounted the first incident, which reportedly occurred on August 30 in Kisumu, where undercover security agents allegedly entered his hotel room.

“They bugged my room, and one of them tried to poison my food, but we detected it and escaped the scheme,” he claimed. “I was supposed to be

killed through poisoning.”

Gachagua further alleged a second attempt on his life just days later, on September 30 in Nyeri, during a meeting with the Kikuyu Council of Elders.

“Another team from the National Intelligence Service tried to poison food meant for me and the elders,” he said.

“After these two attempts, I reported the matter to NIS and asked the officers assigned to me to leave because I did not feel safe.”

Gachagua who is fighting his removal as Deputy President in court claimedt his impeachment finalised on Thursday followed the failed assassination attempts.

“After the two attempts to assassinate me failed, that is when this impeachment motion was hatched,” Gachagua asserted.

He also said that the withdrawal of his security detail while in the hospital has left him vulnerable.

Gachagua told reportters NIS officers lurked around the hospital during his time there.

“Officers from the NIS have been hovering in every room, in every compound here,” Gachagua said, noting that he had to call his wife and children to stay in his hospital room out of fear for his safety.

Expressing frustration and disappointment, Gachagua made a personal plea to President William Ruto: “I helped you become president. Leave me and my children alone. Do whatever you want, but let me live, let me look after my children.”

He also accused the President of orchestrating his downfall and likened his situation to that of the late politician Kenneth Matiba, who suffered a stroke after enduring political persecution under the Moi regime.

“The president wants to take me down the same path President Daniel Arap Moi took with Kenneth Matiba. He pushed Matiba to the point of get-



DP Rigathi Gachagua

ting a stroke and eventually dying,” Gachagua claimed, expressing fear that Ruto was similarly trying to “cripple” him.

Additionally, Gachagua lamented the apparent eagerness of some government officials to see him incapacitated or dead.

“I hear many of his people were

calling here [in the hospital], asking whether I was dead, whether I would survive, whether I would recover. They were celebrating. It’s the most unfortunate thing that has ever happened in this country.”

MKU Student Innovates Artificial Intelligence Virtual Learning System

By: Kenya News Agency

A student at Mount Kenya University (MKU) has come up with an Artificial Intelligence (AI) innovation that allows lecturers to teach virtually without the need for blackboards, white boards or pens.

Daniel Irunga Mulala from the Democratic Republic of Congo says the lecturers will only be able to use hands to write and explain mathematical concepts.

Mulala, who studies Bachelor of Technology, Computer and Electronic Systems, says students learning virtually will see and understand concept, after which the lecturers can then erase the virtually written material using his or her hand.

Speaking while showcasing his innovation during a symposium at the institution last week, Mulala said if supported, the innovation will revolutionize the education sector, making away with the purchase of

the blackboards, dusters and pens.

He added that the innovation can be integrated into a 3D model where one can interact with electronic components, show pads and other components needed in 3D.

“Hailing from DRC, I thought I should have learnt online without physically having to attend classes at MKU in Thika. However, some learning methods especially on tech courses need physical presence to see and touch some electronic components. This informed me to come up with this innovation as students can now interact with those components even virtually,” Mulala observed.

He added that their innovation if advanced is cheaper compared to similar innovations by the other multinationals in the tech industry.

On the challenges they have faced in coming up with such Artificial Intelligence innovations, Mulala cited lack of state of the art labs and expertise in most universities.

“Students have top notch innovations but always finds challenges in research and state of the art labs to



advance their solutions,” he said.

Other students showcased top end innovations during the Hackathon Artificial Intelligence (AI) competition at the university’s main campus in Thika.

Daniel Gathua, a student and one of the innovators emphasized the need for increased funding to help students bring their ideas to life. “In-

novation is the way to go but without proper support, many great ideas may never see the light of day,” he said.

Dr. Donatas Njoroge, the head of innovations at the university highlighted the university’s commitment to scaling new heights in research and innovation.

He said they are working with in-

dustry through partnerships and linkages to ensure more of these innovations are absorbed into the market.

The University Vice Chancellor Prof Daegratiuous Jaganyi said the institution will continue supporting innovators by offering expertise, state of the art facilities and funding to scale up their work.



Northern Kenya Conflicts: A Forum Constituted To Identify And Address Triggers Of Clashes

By: MKT Correspondents
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- The forum organized by Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) brought together Religious leaders, National Government Officials (NGAO), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) representatives and National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) from the counties of Isiolo, Samburu, Marsabit and Laikipia.
- Isiolo Interfaith Secretary Stephen Kalunyu noted that addressing peace in any of the four counties would have ripple benefits in other areas since they were facing common challenges.
- “Our situation and challenges in the counties of Isiolo, Marsabit and Samburu are similar. When problems of one county are solved, you will have solved a big percentage of the other since we are interconnected,” said Bishop Kalunyu.

In an effort to address perennial conflicts that dogs northern Kenya counties, a forum bringing together various stakeholders has been constituted to identify and address triggers of clashes. Speaking in Nanyuki town during a three days’ workshop on Peace Building and Cohesion the participants identified cattle rustling, boundary disputes, clan tensions, political interferences and effects of climate change. “We are in a position to discuss the key drivers of conflict within the three counties and develop strategies, address the gaps. Conflict in the pastoralists areas are historical and key drivers are cattle rustling, tribal hostility as a result of resource sharing which has been exacerbated by climatic conditions,” revealed Dr. Arimara Galwab Isiolo County CEC in charge of Administration, adding that they had developed measures and strategies to counter the hostilities in their region at grass root level. The forum organized by Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) brought together Religious leaders, National Government Officials (NGAO), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) representatives and National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) from the counties of Isiolo, Samburu, Marsabit and Laikipia. Isiolo Interfaith Secretary Stephen Kalunyu noted that addressing peace in any of the four counties would have ripple benefits in other areas since they were facing common challenges. “Our situation and challenges in the

counties of Isiolo, Marsabit and Samburu are similar. When problems of one county are solved, you will have solved a big percentage of the other since we are interconnected,” said Bishop Kalunyu. According to FCDC programme Manager Saiyana Lembara, emphasized that with the partnership from the stakeholders would boost their effort in attaining peace and at the same ensure pastoralists thrive since they lagged behind as a result of historical conflicts. “We aim to support communities, manage their resources and live peacefully for them to thrive in their pastoralism venture which is their economic backbone. Through collaboration, we will be able to sensitize them to coexist peacefully,” pointed Lembara. Samburu county investment and partnership coordinator Lydia Letinina pointed out that conflicts were aggravated during drought seasons where pastoralist communities competed for pasture and water. She added that the same challenges were replicated when it rained since herders involved in cattle rustling for restocking resulting in clashes the Northern region , a situation that would be a thing of the past after they implement innovative strategies to address the menace. Ms Letinina highlighted that managing grazing patterns, establishing cross-border peace committees, supporting livelihood diversification by encouraging alternative economic activities and



Leaders addressing the media after the meeting

value addition of agro-pastoralism and building community resilience to climate change by enhancing community driven projects would promote peace in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). After the intense workshop, stakeholders further resolved to sensitize the local communities, youth and the elderly through dialogue since they are critical in the peace keeping mission. Based on a report released on February, 2024 by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) dubbed Northern Kenya Violence and Conflict Assessment, it indicated that intra-communal clashes, resource driven disputes, banditry and livestock raids had increased by 292 percent since 2019. National Police Service Crime Statistics between January and December 2021 indicated that 73 percent cattle rustling cases



Some of the stakeholders during the meeting in Nanyuki town

Why President Ruto Must Not Walk Kenya The South Africa's Guptas Path

Kenya Is Under Siege Under The Public Private Partnership(PPP) Secretive Deals. Any PPP Must Be Transparent For Accountability, Quality, Corporate Governance, Human Rights And Public Participation. Transparency in PPPs include; Why pursue PPP, Bidding process, Procurement process, PPP contract information, PPP reviews and benchmarking



By: Ndung'u Wainaina
@themkenyatiimes

Worth Noting:

- This is crux of matters. Few months after the Guptas bought the mine, a tectonic corruption scandal erupted.
- A government official testified at the Zondo Commission of inquiry into State capture that the Guptas had offered him the position of Finance Minister. It turns out that the three brothers had effectively seized control of the State instruments in one of the most audacious and lucrative scams of the century.
- This momentous scandal drew on their close ties to President Jacob Zuma and the help of leading international firms like KPMG, McKinsey, and SAP. The Guptas drained the National Treasury a whopping US \$7 billion. Disgraced Zuma was forced to resign.

Under the guise of highly secretive Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement, the Adani Group has secured KENTRACO deal and almost getting JKIA. Kenyans have overwhelmingly rejected this shadowy deals.

But the uncountable power barons are pushing on contemptuously. There is a devastating lesson down south.

In December 2015, the three Gupta brothers namely Ajay, Atul, and Rajesh bought the Optimum Coal in South Africa.

This is in addition to their emerging business empire they were building across the country with interests in uranium deposits, media outlets, computer companies, and arms suppliers.

The story is told that when the brothers were in a magnanimous mood, they would dole out fistfuls of cash to miners. As they did so, they cut corners ferociously.

Mine workers health insurance and pensions were slashed. Mining broken machines were repaired with old parts from other machines. Workers safety regulations were flouted.

And the journey to south of the mining company began in earnest.

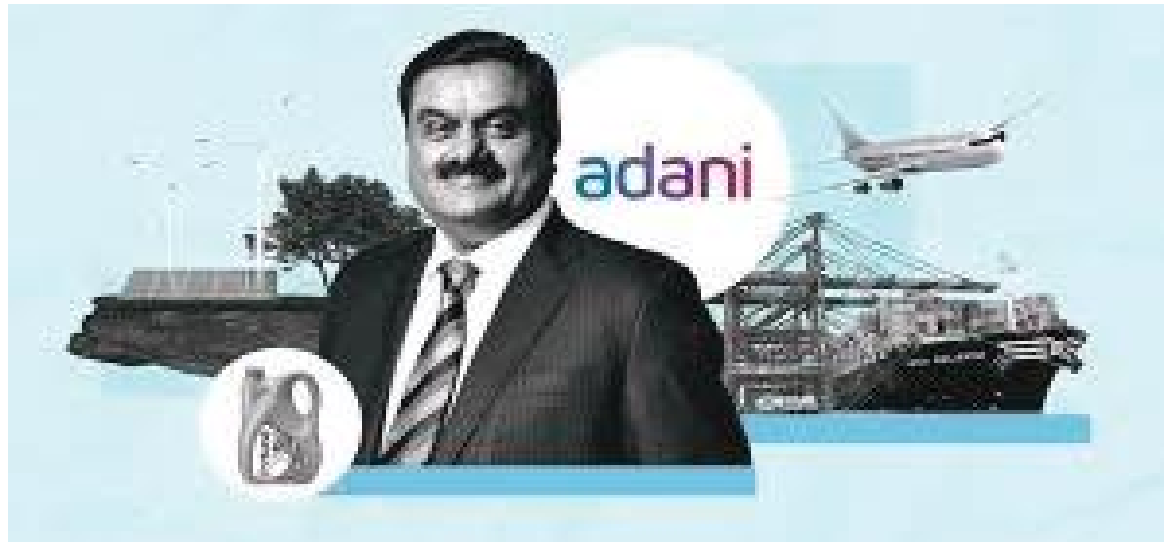
But that is not the main story. This is crux of matters. Few months after the Guptas bought the mine, a tectonic corruption scandal erupted.

A government official testified at the Zondo Commission of inquiry into State capture that the Guptas had offered him the position of Finance Minister. It turns out that the three brothers had effectively seized control of the State instruments in one of the most audacious and lucrative scams of the century.

This momentous scandal drew on their close ties to President Jacob Zuma and the help of leading international firms like KPMG, McKinsey, and SAP. The Guptas drained the National Treasury a whopping US \$7 billion. Disgraced Zuma was forced to resign.

McKinsey offered an extraordinary public apology for its role in the scandal. The Guptas fled to Dubai. The mine, which the brothers had obtained in a corrupt deal brokered and financed by the government crashed into bankruptcy and with it the mine and significantly South Africa's economy were devastatingly ruined.

The Guptas had pulled off a horrible



Adani Group

array of disastrous backroom deals, rigged contracts, and wholesale plunder of national funds and resources.

South Africa was sent almost into economic abyss by a coup d'état managed with bribes not bullet.

This is how an entire country fall to foreign economic hitmen without a single shot being fired but just because of local greedy, corrupt and devious top politicians, civil bureaucrats and security honchos.

The Guptas had immigrated to South Africa from a backwater in India, but the skills they learned there proved indispensable in an age of globalized corruption.

Many ANC top leadership were hungry for self-enrichment, believing it was their "time to eat." In the Guptas, they found the perfect enablers of their greed.

The Guptas were experts in gray markets of Nepal and Singapore. Why the Guptas moved from Singapore to South Africa remains a mystery.

The Guptas were welcomed into South Africa's inner circle of business and political elites. They enjoyed hobnobbing with the elites. The Guptas found way and befriended the man who would be most responsible for wrecking the South Africa; Jacob Zuma.

Zuma became notorious for his unchecked and opportunistic philandering. And he relied on handouts of cash from shady businessmen to keep himself afloat.

By the time the Guptas had met him, in 2002, Zuma was Deputy President of South Africa.

The South Africa State Capture Commission's blockbuster report in 2022 focused on how Zuma's state appointments were made to various public offices and expressed strong views on the system of political patronage employment.

Zuma also lived beyond his means, writing dud cheques and refusing to pay his taxes. Strapped for cash, he received interest-free loans from Schabir Shaik, a South African Indian businessman, who engineered an annual bribe for Zuma from a French arms company. This was to later become his Waterloo.

In 2005, Shaik was found guilty of having a corrupt relationship with Zuma and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Zuma, facing corruption charges of his own, was forced out of office.

The Guptas, who were canny investors, had begun playing the long game from the moment they met Zuma. They put his son Duduzane on their payroll in 2003, and continued to promote him even after Zuma's fall.

The Guptas insisted that Duduzane was employed on his own merits. The Guptas' loyalty to Zuma wound up paying massive dividends.

From the moment Zuma was elected president, the Guptas began to plunder the South African government on an unprecedented scale.

State capture goes far beyond paying off greedy officials; it's about distorting government policy for personal gain. The economy, meanwhile, remains devastated by all the plunder and corruption

What lessons can the people of Kenya learn from South Africa's Guptas bitter experience of state capture? Whilst it highlights the importance of Constitutional and parliamentary checks and balances, and the need to clarify the powers between politicians and public servants, it demonstrates that these checks and balances and even the best-in-class public finance management system are not sufficient to prevent corruption.

What more needs to be done to reduce the scope for corruption and state capture?

The evidence before the South Africa Zondo Commission demonstrates that the state capturers were able to: appoint willing collaborators in all kinds of key positions; hobble the law enforcement agencies, even making some of them complicit in corruption; weaken parliamentary oversight; and capture parts of the independent media.

The priority is to fix the political governance and accountability system, even as the country makes technical improvements to the accountability system. Public procurement process must be highly transparent, information must be fully disclosed, and every detail verifiable. At the same time, there is a need to rebuild state capability while putting in place a permanent punitive deterrence mechanism.

Writer is Transitional Justice and Human Security Fellow @Ndungu-Wainaina

Duale: We Will Surpass The 15 Billion Trees Planting Target By 2032

By: MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Forestry and Climate Change Aden Duale has said the national government is determined to surpass the ten-year target of planting 15 billion trees by the year 2032.

Duale has urged all citizens, regardless of age, to adopt the tree-planting culture to preserve and protect biodiversity in the country.

The CS spoke at Kibiri forest block, an extension of the tropical Kakamega rainforest during the inspection tour of the ongoing fencing which is funded by the Netfund, the Rhino Ark, Kenya Forest Service and the Kenya Wildlife Service.

He pledged that the government would degazette 500 hectares of the forest land to settle the people living there after being moved from Vokoli and Mbale areas in 1984 to pave the way for establishment of public build-

ings and amenities.

Duale gave preference for fruit trees for the realization of food and nutritional security, assuring the residents that the long wait for the title deeds would be over in two months' time as the cabinet resolution on the same is in the offing.

The CS, who was accompanied by Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo and a host of national as well as county government officers, proceeded to Maragoli South ward where he led the planting of 15,000 seedlings in a bid to restore the Maragoli forest.

The minister said they are calling for mainstreaming of tree-planting during all the public functions and that he intends to meet the Council of Governors (CoG) to chart ways of ensuring each devolved unit meets its target of trees to be planted.

On his part, Dr. Ottichilo said he was the first among his peers to operationalize the Financing Locally Led Climate Action (FLLoCA), World Bank funded programme that involves setting up of ward-based committees to



Cabinet Secretary for Environment Aden Duale addressing journalists in the company of among others, Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo.

oversee the tree-planting. He disclosed that they have exceeded the annual target of 1.3 million as so far 4.6 million trees have been planted in the past two years. Dr. Ottichilo added the efforts to return Maragoli forest to its old glory are going to bear fruits soon with the sustained reforestation from his administration and partners.

Parents Urged To Observe Strict Health Precautions During The Forthcoming Initiation Ceremonies

By: Kiptanui Cheronu
@themtkenyatimes

As the season for traditional initiation ceremonies approaches, Uasin Gishu County Commissioner Dr. Edison Nyale has implored parents and all stake holders to put emphasis on the health and safety of boys set to undergo circumcision.

The administrator stressed the need for strict adherence to high standards of safety measures to ensure no lives are lost during the circumcision period.

Dr Nyale said it was unfortunate that tragic incidents occurred in the past, where lives were lost during the rites, ostensibly because adequate health measures were not adhered to.

Speaking during the 60th Mashujaa day celebrations held at Naiberi primary school in Ainabkoi Sub Coun-

ty, Dr. Nyale urged circumcision service providers, parents, and other stakeholders to follow strict health protocols by ensuring the seclusion habitats where the boys will be staying during the entire rite of passage as well as tools used for circumcising are sterilized, safe and clean.

He underscored the importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of the children involved, highlighting that incidents of torture during the secluded rituals have been a leading cause of fatalities.

"As circumcisers, you are the mentors of the children you handle. Therefore, ensure that all the children who undergo the procedure come out safely, as our primary mandate is to save lives," said Dr Nyale.

He emphasized that prevention and control measures as well as adherence to quick emergency referrals are critical to ensure safety of the boys when undergoing the rites usu-



ally undertaken in the month of December.

The CC was flanked by members of his county security team led by the County Police Commander, Benjamin Mwanthi, and County Administration police commander Peter Chemos. Uasin Gishu Governor was represented by his County Executive committee member for Devolution Elijah Koskei.

Mother...



The burdens of the world pass, mother.
Let the work wait, mother.
There's no end to household chores.
Today will be spent with me, mother.

Wherever you say, I'll go with you.
In your eyes, I see joy.
For you, I'll give my all.
If my soul is needed, I will sacrifice it,
mother.

So many trials, so much suffering have
passed.
Four children have grown up.
Today your eldest goes to school.
Today, the castle of dreams has been
built.
Let's go together, mother.

Ziyoqulova Ziyoda, 10th A grade student
of School No.20 in Muzrabat district of
Surkhondarya region.

Mother, I Love You



In this life, my existence is you,
You never see a tear in your eyes.
May you always be healthy and safe,
Mother, I love you dearly.

I will be day when you are night,
I will be the star you desire.
Tell me, what will I do without you?
Mother, I love you dearly.

Sometimes I might cry, saying, "Oh my
child",
I proudly say, "This is my mother".
May my complaints reach God,
Mother, I love you dearly.

Without you, what is this son of yours?
Perhaps he will be a great poet.
What I write will remain forever,
Mother, I love you dearly.

What I've found in this world is you,
All my wealth and money are for you.
Come, I would give my soul to you,
Mother, I love you dearly.

Lazizbek Rakhimov
Bukhara State University

Goodness

Burning Darkness Into The Lamp



Stepping on the ice
With my rubber heel shoes,
I come into the house...
I shake off the memories that
Rain down on my head,
I hang someone who is ME
From the wardrobe
And nearby several of Me...
Turning on the lamps in the room,
I burn the darknesses...

Mom used to say "may you step into
the light"

When she couldn't find her Glasses at
night...

For many years, my mom found her
glasses in the irradiance
And I'm still looking for the light in the
dark valleys of the future...

Look!

He cannot light his room with a lamp son
of who was turning on the world with
her glasses.

Ali Chaghla

Ali Chaghla, was born in 2002 in the city
of Tabriz, South Azerbaijan. He is also
known as a translator, journalist, and
writer. Two of his novels and a poetry
book have been published in Baku and
Turkey. He is the translator of more
than 40 books.



By: Sultanaliyev Ruslanbek Rakhatali

My story today is about a wonderful story
that I didn't realize until today.

I was on an Umrah trip, and on one day of
the blessed trip, such an incident happened.
After performing Umrah for ourselves, we
had the opportunity to do it for our loved
ones who passed away. On one of those
days, if you want to perform Umrah on
behalf of another person, go to the mosque
of our blessed mother Hadeecha and pray
two rakats of prayer, then you will perform
Umrah for that person. We did the same
and made the intention, and one of the
most important acts of Umrah was to
circumambulate the Kaabaatullah. In this way,
while riding to the Haram, we entered in front
of the Kaaba to perform Tawaf and started
Tawaf. Naturally, there are many people
there, so many floors are built around the
Kabah so that everyone can pray together.
We started circumambulation on the first
floor, near the Fire of the Kabaa. I was in the
midst of miracles while doing Tawaf slowly.
Because just then the birds were circling
the Kaaba with us. The practice of Tawaf is

to circumambulate the Kabaani seven times,
and on the fourth circumambulation we call
for Fajr prayer. And gradually people began to
line up. We continued circumambulation with
our partners, but our partners wanted to
get up after saying the line. Of course, it was
difficult to perform Tawaf among the people
lined up. In such a situation, a push started
from behind and reached us. Then I bent
down as if to fall on a person. This situation
was very complicated and it was difficult to
control oneself in a traffic jam, and I was
crying. At that moment, someone grabbed
my hand and pulled me to him and saved me
from harming someone. The most interesting
thing was that the man was dark-skinned,
but his face was very fair, he had a beard
and thick eyebrows. I walked over to him and
began looking for a place in the chosen rows. I
couldn't say or gesture to thank that person.
Despite the fact that the person was black,
he was so bright that he envied the person
he saw. The dawn prayer was called and we
lined up and the prayer began, I was in the
third or fourth row of the Kabah if I am not
mistaken. It was a great happiness for me.
But what surprised me even more was that
person. After the prayer, we performed the
remaining Tawaf and headed towards Safa-
Marwa. That was the story that still amazes
me. I was looking for that person every day,
I roamed everywhere in Harami Sharif, but
unfortunately I could not find him. The bottom
line is that no matter where you are, if you do
not forget to trust in God, then God, Blessed
and Exalted, will not forget you.

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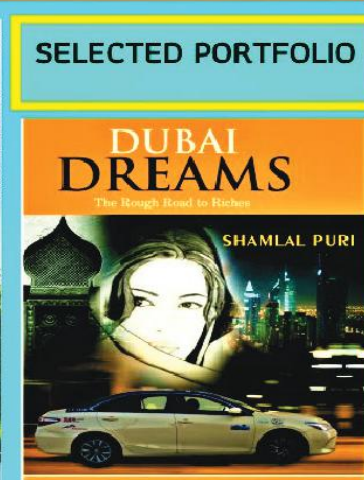
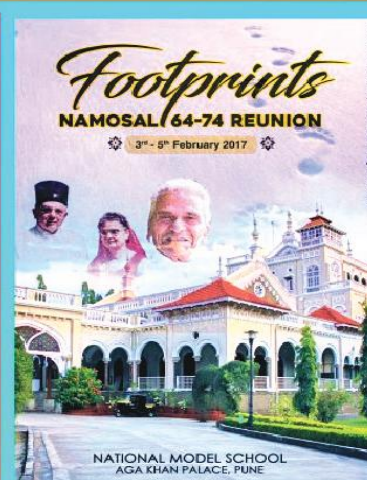
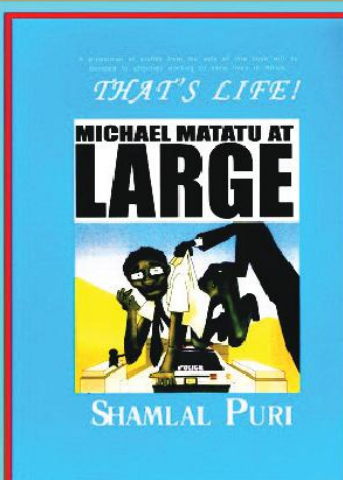
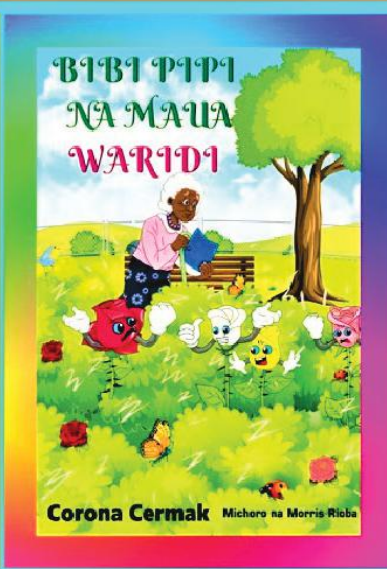
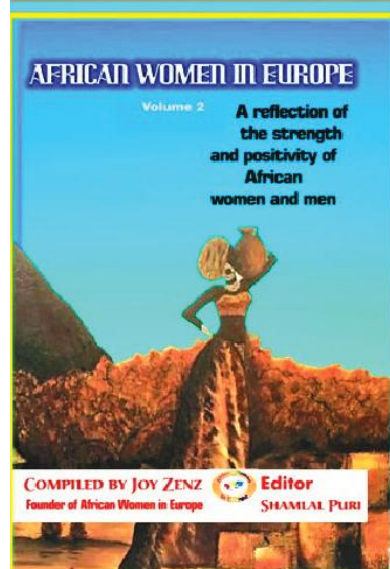
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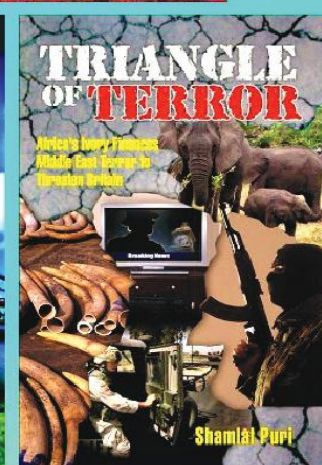
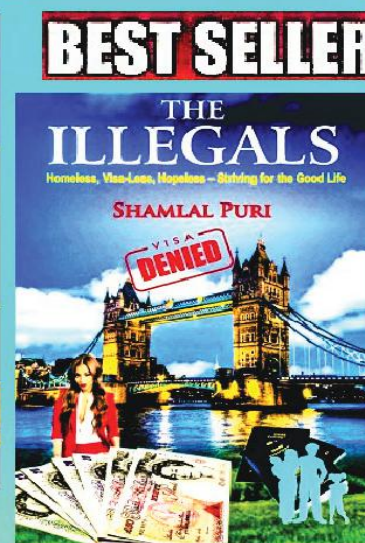
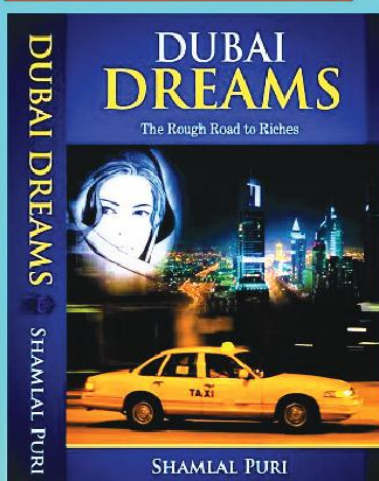
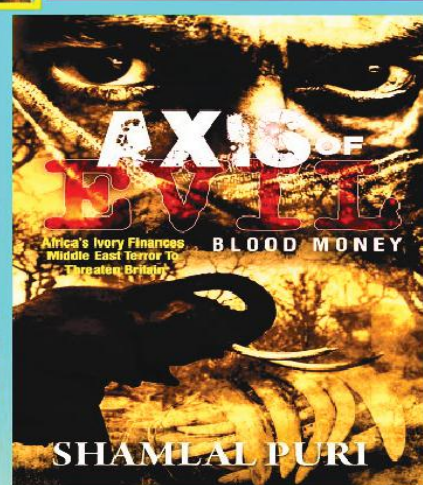
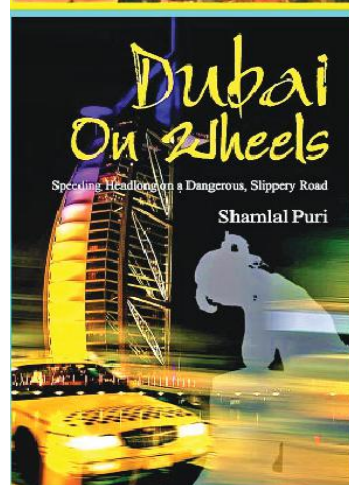
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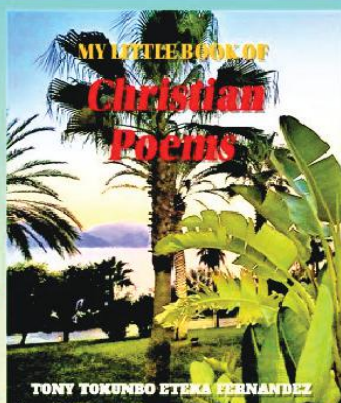
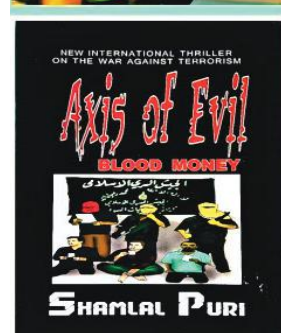
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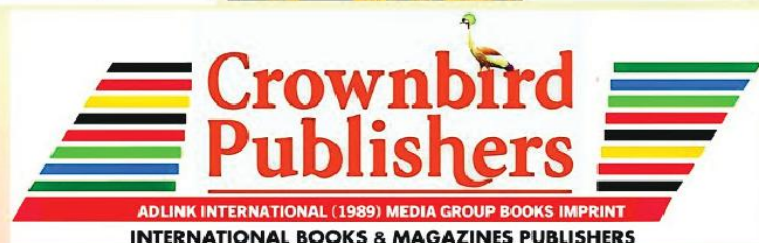


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Othaya Constituency Residents Join Hands In Clean-Up And Tree Planting Exercise

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

Hundreds of Othaya constituency residents joined hands in their headquarters cleaning and tree planting exercise, ahead of short-rains.

The Saturday exercise saw the entire town streets, market and adjacent roads tidied, courtesy of a local philanthropist Mr Antony Gitonga.

Gitonga, the Chief Executive Officer and founder of Antony Gitonga Foundation had mobilised hundreds of local residents from all corners of the constituency, dozens of Scouts and Girl Guide members, students from at least 26 primary, secondary and tertiary institutions as well as officials from national and county governments to make the exercise successful.

Further, Gitonga had dragged with him artists led by Stevo Simple Boy and Karwimbo Mükürino as well as Kenya's to magician, Chille De'Magician who entertained the residents atop an open lorry as they carried the cleaning, sweeping, drainage unblocking and tree planting exercise.

Gitonga who is also an International Commissioner of the Kenya Scouts Association said the activities theme of 'A Cleaner And Greener Othaya' was in line with addressing the call



The Foundation CEO/Founder Antony Gitonga (centre) with artists Steve Simple Boy (left) and Karwimbo Mükürino (right) in Othaya town on Saturday.

for serious address to climate change and best hygienic practices which a key to a prosperous society.

Saying that at least 1,000 trees were planted around the town, Gitonga noted, "tree planting is fundamental and is very important maintain a stable ecosystem, rainfall and good environment for air purification."

Apart from tree planting and cleaning, Gitonga and his team held consultative sessions with local residents where they were sensitised on the need to plant trees and practice public hygiene.

He said his foundation is also involved in various other activities

such as sports and economic empowerment initiatives.

Locals hailed Antony Gitonga Foundation boss for organising the activity, saying it was beneficial, not only to them, but all future generations.

"We thank this Foundation founder for remembering to come and assist us. We are calling him Othaya 1 for keeping us, as his first priority," said Mama Mary Wambui, a vendor in Othaya town.



Othaya constituency residents in procession before embarking on cleaning and tree planting exercise last Saturday..



The Foundation CEO/Founder, Antony Gitonga (right), with residents and government officials during the cleaning exercise. With the green jacket is artist Karwimbo Mükürino.

Kiambu Government Urged To Implement New Alcoholic Drinks Act

By: Felix Njenga
@themtkenyatimes

The county government of Kiambu has been urged to own and implement on the alcoholic drink Act by the national government in the fight against second-hand generation drinks, which has proliferated in the county.

According to the Deputy County Commissioner Kiambu Sub-County Titus Macharia while speaking during this year mashujaa day celebrations held at Ting'ang'a primary school grounds in Ting'ang'a ward said that the county government should own up their laws and the national security would come in to compliment in their efforts.

"The members of county assembly

make the laws and there is a comprehensive alcoholic drinks Act in place and county enforcement officers are here to implement the law, we only need to come in and compliment and give back up as national government when there is dire need," Macharia said.

The DCC called on residents not to offer government officers political gifts as it is not allowed under the constitution and the government is capable of funding themselves.

"You will find that there are people offering political gifts. I do not need them. You cannot offer to give water or sodas or bread at a government function which in turn you will need favours. The government has resources to fund their functions," he said.

He said the donations bring about conflict of interest among leaders and businesses people and that is

why they are disallowed by law.

Macharia said that in Kiambu sub-county people living with disabilities has been looked after through economic empowerment where those who applied for equipments have been issued and have started working and putting up businesses.

"Through the disability fund we have issued the PLWDs with tools and equipment to help them start their own businesses as per how they applied for what they need. There is a person who applied to be given goats but later changed and said that they want ducks and they have been supplied and has started his businesses," he said.

He said that any PLWD who wants to be economically empowered should approach their locality chief so that they can be taken through an application form and fill in their de-



Kiambu DCC Titus Macharia speaking during Mashujaa day celebrations

tails and indicate what they need and the government will cater for their needs.

He called on the youths to apply for short courses and also enrol for technical courses as there are many opportunities being offered by the government they can take opportu-

nity of.

"Those who did not perform well in high school also have a chance if they apply for courses within the technical institutions in the subcounty as they will get the skills government want to employ them," he said.

MOTHERHOOD WARRIOR

Elizabeth Anyango: Teenage Motherhood Warrior Changing The Story Of Her Community



By: Peter Aowa
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- As Elizabeth transitioned into her teenage years, challenges mounted. Her father, frustrated by the family’s inability to produce male heirs, took a second wife, creating a tumultuous home environment where Elizabeth witnessed her mother endure domestic abuse. These experiences left a profound mark on her, fostering a desire to advocate for women’s rights.
- At seventeen, Elizabeth’s life took another turn when she became pregnant and gave birth to her daughter, Bonita. This pivotal moment led her father to disown her, forcing her to flee home. Seeking refuge with her grandmother in Siaya, she found the strength to navigate motherhood while still yearning for education.

Elizabeth Anyango Odaga, otherwise known as Nyar Kathomo, reflects on her life growing up in the busy, chaotic slums of Nyalenda, Kisumu. Born into a family of eight surviving children, her family faced significant challenges due to limited resources. “It was a life of constant struggle. The family was large, and my parents struggled to feed us and pay for our education,” Elizabeth explains.

To contribute to her schooling, Elizabeth sold paraffin, simsim, mangoes, and sweets by the roadside whenever she was not in school. The harsh realities of her upbringing shaped her character and ignited a fierce determination to rise above her circumstances.

As Elizabeth transitioned into her teenage years, challenges mounted. Her father, frustrated by the family’s inability to produce male heirs, took a second wife, creating a tumultuous home environment where Elizabeth witnessed her mother endure domestic abuse. These experiences left a profound mark on her, fostering a desire to advocate for women’s rights.

At seventeen, Elizabeth’s life took another turn when she became pregnant and gave birth to her daughter, Bonita. This pivotal moment led her father to disown her, forcing her to flee home. Seeking refuge with her grandmother in Siaya, she found the strength to navigate motherhood while still yearning for education.

Eventually, she moved to Mombasa to live with her aunt, where she trained as a hairdresser, gaining skills that would serve her well in the future.

Turning Point in Elizabeth’s Life

While working in Mombasa, Elizabeth met her husband, a British national. Their relationship blossomed, leading her to move to the UK. This transition marked a significant turning point, as she embraced new opportunities for education and personal growth.

Elizabeth attended Cambridge University, determined to make up for the educational opportunities she had missed in her youth.

Throughout her time in the UK, Elizabeth has remained deeply connected to her roots, frequently returning to Kenya. Each visit reinforced her commitment to improving the lives of those in her home community, where she witnessed the ongoing struggles

of women and children.

On her visits to her motherland, Elizabeth became acutely aware of the pervasive suffering among the less fortunate, particularly in the male-dominated society of Siaya County. Women were often relegated to subservient roles, treated as mere caretakers and laborers.

This reality, coupled with her own experiences growing up, galvanized Elizabeth into action. She founded the Change Africa Foundation, registered in both the UK and Kenya, with the goal of transforming the lives of orphans and vulnerable children.

The foundation focuses on providing loving homes, education, and healthcare for those in need. Through tireless efforts, Elizabeth has established numerous community projects, supporting livelihoods and empowering marginalized groups.

Empowering Communities and Individuals

Change Africa Foundation has seen numerous success stories under Elizabeth’s leadership.

The foundation provides essential resources, educational support, and emotional guidance to orphans and vulnerable children, ensuring they grow up in nurturing environments. Elizabeth also prioritizes empowering women with disabilities, promoting their rights and offering vocational training to help them participate actively in society.

Additionally, the foundation supports elderly citizens by building houses for widows, widowers, and orphans. Elizabeth believes that every member of the community deserves dignity and support, regardless of their circumstances. By equipping children and youth with essential life skills, mentorship, and educational resources, she aims to foster the next generation of leaders.

A Call to Leadership

With a wealth of experience in community development and a heart for service, Elizabeth has announced her candidacy for the position of Woman Representative for Siaya County in the 2027 general elections, responding to a series of calls from the local community.

Her journey has given her a unique perspective on the needs of her community, and she is determined to bring about meaningful change.

Elizabeth’s vision is to address the



Elizabeth Anyango Odaga (third from right) alongside her husband (her immediate left) when they visited the foundations headquarters in Siaya



Elizabeth Anyango Odaga.

inadequacies of the current leadership, which she believes has failed to prioritize the needs of Siaya County’s residents.

Her experience managing community projects and building networks with organizations in the UK positions her well to create opportunities

for business, education, and empowerment for the youth of Siaya County. She holds Master’s degree in law, politics and sociology from and Bachelor of arts Counseling psychology from Cambridge University.

The Personalization Of Power: Why Issue-Based Politics Remains Elusive In Kenya



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

The 2022 Kenyan general election provides a compelling case study of the entrenchment of personality politics. Despite calls for issue-based campaigns, the election was largely framed around the personalities of the two main contenders, William Ruto and Raila Odinga. Professor Macharia Munene of the United States International University-Africa notes, "The 2022 election demonstrated once again that Kenyan politics revolves around big men and their ethnic constituencies, rather than coherent ideologies or policy platforms" (Munene, 2023).

International scholars have also commented on this phenomenon. Professor Nic Cheeseman, a British political scientist specializing in African politics, observes that "the personalization of power in Kenya has created a political system where parties are little more than vehicles for individual ambitions, lacking coherent ideologies or policy agendas" (Cheeseman, 2018).

The ideal of issue-based governance has long been touted as the panacea for the country's myriad socio-economic challenges in Kenya. However, a closer examination of the political landscape reveals a stark reality: the dominance of personality-driven politics and the conspicuous absence of ideological commitment among political actors. This phenomenon has led many scholars and political observers to conclude that issue-based politics in Kenya remains a utopian concept, far removed from the pragmatic realities of power dynamics in the country.

The personalization of politics in Kenya has deep historical roots, tracing back to the immediate post-independence era. The first president, Jomo Kenyatta, established a pattern of ethnic-based patronage that subsequent leaders have largely emulated. This system, characterized by the distribution of resources and opportunities along ethnic lines, has created a political culture where personal loyalty to leaders trumps ideological alignment or policy preferences.

Professor Karuti Kanyinga, a prominent Kenyan political scientist from the University of Nairobi, argues that "the persistence of ethnic-based politics in Kenya is a result of the instrumentalization of ethnicity by political elites for personal gain". This observation underscores the entrenched nature of personality-driven politics, where ethnic identity serves as a proxy for political mobilization rather than substantive policy issues.

The 2022 Kenyan general election provides a compelling case study of the entrenchment of personality politics. Despite calls for issue-based campaigns, the election was largely framed around the personalities of the two main contenders, William Ruto and Raila Odinga. Professor Macharia Munene of the United States International University-Africa notes, "The 2022 election demonstrated once again that Kenyan politics revolves around big men and their ethnic constituencies, rather than coherent ideologies or policy platforms" (Munene, 2023).

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The first president Jomo Kenyatta.

Kenyans who have witnessed the fluidity of political alliances and the frequent defections of politicians based on personal interests rather than ideological convictions.

The impact of this personality-driven political culture is far-reaching. Dr. Westen Shilaho, a researcher at the University of Johannesburg, argues that "the absence of issue-based politics in Kenya has led to a governance crisis where public policy is shaped more by patronage networks than by national development imperatives". This observation highlights the detrimental effects of personalized politics on Kenya's developmental trajectory.

One of the most glaring examples of the triumph of personality over ideology in Kenyan politics is the phenomenon of "political party hopping." Politicians frequently switch allegiances between parties, often just before elections, with little regard for ideological consistency. Dr. Adams Oloo of the University of Nairobi points out that "the ease with which politicians change parties in Kenya is indicative of the lack of ideological grounding in our political system. Parties are seen as mere electoral vehicles rather than platforms for policy articulation".

The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), a recent attempt at constitutional reform in Kenya, further illustrates the prevalence of personality-driven politics. While ostensibly aimed at addressing national challenges, many critics viewed the BBI as a vehicle for power-sharing between political elites. Dr. Roseline Njogu, a legal scholar, argues that "the BBI process was more about

consolidating political alliances than addressing systemic issues in Kenyan governance" (Njogu, 2022).

The media landscape in Kenya also plays a role in perpetuating personality-centric politics. Dr. George Ogola, a Kenyan media scholar at the University of Central Lancashire, notes that "Kenyan media often focuses on the drama of political personalities rather than substantive policy debates, reinforcing the personalization of politics" (Ogola, 2019). This media approach contributes to a political discourse that prioritizes charisma and rhetoric over policy substance.

The challenge of implementing issue-based politics in Kenya is further compounded by the country's ethnic diversity and historical inequalities. Professor Gabrielle Lynch of the University of Warwick argues that "the salience of ethnicity in Kenyan politics is not merely a cultural phenomenon but a result of historical patterns of resource distribution and marginalization" (Lynch, 2017). This perspective suggests that addressing the root causes of personality-driven politics requires confronting deep-seated structural issues in Kenyan society.

Despite these challenges, there have been sporadic attempts to introduce issue-based politics in Kenya. The emergence of issue-focused civil society organizations and the increasing role of social media in political discourse have created some space for policy-oriented debates. However, Dr. Njoki Wamai of the United States International University-Africa cautions that "while there is growing awareness of the need for issue-based politics, the entrenched nature of

personality-driven political culture makes meaningful change a long-term prospect" (Wamai, 2024).

The persistence of personality-driven politics in Kenya has significant implications for governance and development. Professor Winnie Mitullah of the University of Nairobi argues that "the focus on personalities rather than issues has led to a disconnect between electoral promises and policy implementation, contributing to citizen disillusionment with the political process". This disconnect underscores the urgent need for a paradigm shift in Kenyan political culture.

In conclusion, while the aspiration for issue-based politics in Kenya remains strong among many citizens and scholars, the reality on the ground paints a different picture. The deeply entrenched culture of personality-driven politics, rooted in historical patterns of ethnic mobilization and patronage, continues to dominate the political landscape. As Professor Karuti Kanyinga aptly summarizes, "The transition to truly issue-based politics in Kenya will require not just institutional reforms but a fundamental reimagining of political engagement by both leaders and citizens". Until such a transformation occurs, the idea of issue-based politics in Kenya may indeed remain a utopian vision, overshadowed by the pragmatic realities of personality-centric power dynamics.

The writer is a lawyer and legal researcher



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mashujaa Day: Celebrating The Heroes Who Shaped Kenya's Identity

By: **Benard Mudogo**

Every year on October 20th, Kenyans come together to celebrate Mashujaa Day, a national holiday that pays tribute to the heroes who have shaped the country's history and identity. The day is not just a commemoration of the past but serves as a crucial reminder of the values that bind the nation together and the importance of recognizing those who have made significant contributions to Kenya's development. Mashujaa Day, which is also known as "Heroes' Day," was established in 2010 under the new constitution. This day honors freedom fighters like Jomo Kenyatta and Dedan Kimathi whose courage and sacrifices paved the way for Kenya's independence. However, it also acknowledges modern-day heroes—athletes, educators, health workers, community leaders, and ordinary citizens—who continue to contribute to the progress and unity of the nation.

Why Celebrating Mashujaa Day Matters
The celebration of Mashujaa Day plays a vital role in fostering a sense of national pride and unity among Kenyans. It serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who fought for the country's freedom, often at great personal risk. Reflecting on the struggles of independence, from colonial resistance to the early years of self-governance, helps younger generations appreciate the freedom and opportunities they now enjoy.

A Day to Recognize Everyday Heroes
Beyond honoring historical figures, Mashujaa Day also shines a spotlight on contemporary heroes who have made remarkable contributions to Kenyan society. From sports icons like Eliud Kipchoge and Faith Kipyegon, whose achievements have put Kenya on the global map, to healthcare workers who served tirelessly during

the COVID-19 pandemic, the day recognizes those who continue to inspire and uplift the nation. The celebration encourages Kenyans to recognize the heroic acts within their communities—be it a teacher, a farmer innovating sustainable practices or a youth leader championing change. These unsung heroes embody the spirit of selflessness and dedication, showing that heroism is not confined to the pages of history but lives on in everyday actions.

Instilling Patriotism and National Unity
Mashujaa Day is an opportunity to instill a sense of patriotism and foster national unity. During the celebrations, Kenyans from diverse backgrounds come together, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage. The event features traditional dances, music, and parades that showcase the diversity of Kenya's 47 counties, reminding citizens of the strength found in unity.

Local celebrations in towns and villages across Kenya further emphasize this unity. In communities, people gather to share stories, hold discussions, and reflect on what it means to be Kenyan. Such gatherings help to bridge divides and create a shared sense of purpose, reminding everyone that, despite differences, they are all part of one nation.

Inspiring the Next Generation
Perhaps one of the most important aspects of Mashujaa Day is its role in inspiring the next generation. By learning about the sacrifices of past heroes and the achievements of present-day champions, young Kenyans are motivated to take up the mantle and contribute to the country's growth. Many schools and youth programs use the occasion to teach students about Kenya's history and the importance of values like integrity, hard work, and community service. These lessons encourage young people to see themselves as potential changemakers, ca-

pable of building on the foundations laid by those who came before them.

Looking Forward While Honoring the Past
As Kenya celebrates Mashujaa Day, it is clear that the occasion is more than just a public holiday—it is a national tradition that helps preserve Kenya's heritage while also looking towards a brighter future. It is a day when Kenyans honor their shared struggles and triumphs, celebrate their diversity, and reaffirm their commitment to building a just and prosperous nation. In a world that is increasingly fast-paced and sometimes divided, Mashujaa Day stands as a powerful reminder of the enduring values that bind Kenyans together. It is a day to honor those who came before, appreciate those who are making a difference today, and inspire those who will carry the nation forward.

Benard Mudogo, Rongo University

Empowering Youths Through Global Media And Information Literacy Week: A Step Towards Combatting Misinformation

By **Perpetual John**

In an era where digital technology reigns supreme, young people are at the forefront of media consumption. As avid users of social media, they engage with vast amounts of information daily—much of which is user-generated and unverified. The challenge for youths, therefore, is not just accessing information but discerning what is credible and what is misleading, manipulated, or outright false. This is where the Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week comes into play. An initiative spearheaded by UNESCO and partners worldwide, the annual event aims to promote media and information literacy as a way to empower individuals to navigate the digital landscape responsibly. With this year's Global MIL Week, young people have a unique opportunity to learn, understand, and apply critical skills needed to identify credible information sources and avoid falling prey to misinformation—false or inaccurate information spread unintentionally—and disinformation—deliberate falsehoods shared to mislead—are rampant on

social media platforms. This digital age has given rise to "fake news," where fabricated stories often spread faster than factual news due to their sensationalist nature. For youths, who are often targeted with viral content, distinguishing between facts and falsehoods can be challenging. Moreover, algorithms used by social media platforms tend to show content similar to what a user has previously interacted with, potentially creating echo chambers that reinforce false beliefs. The consequences of misinformation can be severe, leading to misguided behaviors, divisive social tensions, and even public health crises, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic when false claims about treatments and vaccines spread widely. Given these dangers, it is crucial to equip young people with the skills to discern reliable information and engage critically with media content. Global MIL Week addresses these concerns by fostering media and information literacy education. The event's core message is to promote the competencies necessary to seek, critically evaluate, and create content. This year's theme underscores the importance of empowering in-

dividuals, particularly youths, to become active participants in the information environment rather than passive consumers. **Identify Credible Sources:** Youths are taught to assess the reliability of sources by checking the author's credentials, the publication's reputation, and cross-referencing information with other credible sources. **Evaluate Content for Bias and Accuracy:** They learn how to recognize bias, propaganda, and sensationalism in media content. Understanding the motives behind different types of content helps them to filter out manipulative or agenda-driven information. **Combat Digital Manipulation:** With the increasing use of deepfake technology and edited videos, youths are educated on how to spot digitally altered content and avoid being misled by such material. **Engage in Responsible Sharing:** By understanding the role of information consumers in the spread of misinformation, youths are encouraged to fact-check content before sharing it and avoid spreading unverified claims. Media and information literacy is not just about immediate solutions to misinformation. It also builds a foundation for lifelong learning and

critical thinking skills. When youths are equipped with the right tools, they can make informed decisions that affect their personal lives, communities, and even broader societal issues. Being media-literate enables them to participate meaningfully in democratic processes, as they can discern truthful political messaging from deceptive rhetoric. Moreover, the skills gained from MIL extend beyond information consumption; they can enhance academic performance, career development, and social engagement. In an age where employers value critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital communication, media literacy becomes a vital asset. To maximize the impact of Global MIL Week, support from educational institutions, governments, and tech companies is essential. Schools can incorporate MIL into their curricula, making it a part of formal education. Governments can support policies that promote media literacy initiatives and encourage responsible journalism. Meanwhile, social media platforms can take a proactive stance by integrating media literacy tools into their interfaces, offering users guidance on evaluating content.

As the world becomes increasingly digital, youths will continue to be the primary consumers of online content. The Global Media and Information Literacy Week provides a much-needed platform to address the challenges posed by misinformation and disinformation. By equipping young people with the skills to critically analyze information, the event helps to create a more informed and resilient society. For young people, learning to differentiate between accurate information and fake news is not just a skill—it's a necessity. The path to a misinformation-free future depends on the collective effort of educators, policymakers, media professionals, and social media companies to promote media and information literacy. The Global MIL Week represents a step in the right direction, empowering youths to navigate the complex media landscape responsibly, ultimately leading to a better-informed global community.

The Truthful Ibrahim Traore And Populist Liar William Ruto In The Race Of Power

A comparative exploration of the contrasting leadership styles and political climates of Burkina Faso's Ibrahim Traore and Kenya's Populist William Ruto



By: Midmark Onsongo
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Worth Noting:

- Like a fresh breeze on a scorching day, Traore's ideas bring hope where once there was despair, setting forth on a mission to empower youth and redefine national identity. In the shadows of his leadership, one finds echoes of history—figures like Thomas Sankara, whose revolutionary zeal inspired a generation, now seemingly reborn in the spirit of this young leader.
- The anaphora of hope is palpable as citizens chant his name, rallying behind a figure who appears ready to steer the ship of state into calmer waters.
- Conversely, William Ruto's administration paints a portrait less favorable, marred by accusations of mismanagement and allegations of corruption that cling to him like a shroud.

Two men stand as disparate figures of influence, each weaving a tapestry of governance with threads of ambition, charisma, and the shadows of their predecessors. Ibrahim Traore, the thirty-six-year-old wonderboy of Burkina Faso, and William Ruto, the seasoned yet often controversial figure at the helm of Kenya, present a curious case of contrasts. One, a burgeoning beacon of hope amidst a tumultuous landscape, the other, a political enigma often mired in the swirling currents of public dissent. In this dizzying dance of governance, where the flicker of progress battles the tempest of turmoil, one must ask: which leader exemplifies the true essence of African resilience and innovation?

Traore, who ascended to power in a whirlwind of youthful vigor following the ousting of President Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba in September 2022, embodies the spirit of a new generation eager to reclaim the narrative of their nation. His administration, despite its infancy, is painted with broad strokes of promise and purpose, fueled by a deep-seated desire to address the root causes of insecurity and socio-economic strife that plague his country.

In stark contrast, Ruto's leadership—marked by the dissonance of unfulfilled promises and economic hardship—often finds itself on the receiving end of public scorn, a cacophony of disappointment that rings louder with each passing day. When the winds of change swept through Burkina Faso, it was Traore's vision that captured the imagination of a nation. His commitment to eradicating terrorism, promoting education, and fostering economic independence resonates deeply with a populace yearning for stability and progress.

Like a fresh breeze on a scorching day, Traore's ideas bring hope where once there was despair, setting forth on a mission to empower youth and redefine national identity. In the shadows of his leadership, one finds echoes of history—figures like Thomas Sankara, whose revolutionary zeal inspired a generation, now seemingly reborn in the spirit of this young leader. The anaphora of hope is palpable as citizens chant his name, rallying behind a figure who appears ready to steer the ship of state into calmer waters.

Conversely, William Ruto's administration paints a portrait less



Ibrahim Traore.

favorable, marred by accusations of mismanagement and allegations of corruption that cling to him like a shroud. Since taking office in September 2022, Ruto has faced mounting challenges, from escalating prices of basic commodities to widespread unemployment rates that hover ominously over the Kenyan populace.

The hyperbole surrounding his campaign promises now stands in stark antithesis to the reality faced by ordinary Kenyans, who struggle under the weight of a stagnant economy. Where Traore offers a glimmer of hope, Ruto's tenure has become a litany of woes, with citizens questioning the very fabric of his leadership.

Imagine, if you will, a young leader rallying his people with fervor, yet contrasting it with an older counterpart who has seemingly lost touch with the struggles of his constituency. As Ruto's administration grapples with the fallout of his decisions, the irony is stark: a leader who once championed the cause of the down-trodden now stands accused of betraying their trust.

It is a paradox that serves as a poignant reminder of the fickle nature of political power. Ruto's path, lined with promises of prosperity, has

turned into a labyrinth of disillusionment, with citizens feeling as though they have been sold a mirage—a cruel joke played by the very person who once inspired their dreams.

The juxtaposition of these two leaders extends beyond their policies; it delves deep into the heart of leadership styles. Traore's approach exudes authenticity, engaging with the grassroots, listening to the voices of the people, and echoing their aspirations. His administration has made strides in improving security, a pressing issue in a nation that has borne the brunt of terrorism and instability.

With an emphasis on community-based initiatives, he aims to unite a fractured society, one often divided along ethnic lines. It is a shrewd maneuver, reminiscent of great African leaders of yore who understood the power of collective identity.

This inclusive approach contrasts sharply with Ruto's often polarizing rhetoric, which seems to widen the chasm between the privileged and the marginalized, creating an oxymoron where hope collides with despair. Yet, let us not forget the power of symbolism that underscores this analysis.

Traore stands as a symbol of youthful vigor, a phoenix rising from the

ashes of his nation's challenges, while Ruto's administration has become synonymous with stagnation and scandal. The imagery of a vibrant youth leading the charge for change juxtaposed against the backdrop of an aging political landscape creates a striking visual of what could be versus what is.

It compels one to question: is Ruto merely a relic of a bygone era, or can he redefine his legacy amidst the rubble of public discontent?

In a nation grappling with complex socio-economic realities, Traore has made strides in addressing the issues that resonate with the populace. His administration's focus on agricultural reform is a breath of fresh air, akin to the rain that falls on parched land, nurturing the seeds of growth and prosperity.

In stark contrast, Ruto's policies often seem detached from the realities faced by everyday Kenyans, leading to a dissonance that echoes in the hearts of the people. His attempts at economic reforms have been met with skepticism, leaving citizens to wonder if they are merely pawns in

The Harzadous Impact Of Social Media On Mental Health



By: Amruta Makode
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Exotic holidays, delicious food, grand wedding celebrations, fancy pre-wedding shots, major achievements and memorable special events of life. Social media platforms are full of such posts. Social media is a great platform for connecting people. It also gives a sense of recognition and a platform where the users can share their life's experiences. Also users can unleash

their creativity and explore their areas of interest on social media platforms. A platform which was meant to connect people has become a major cause of mental health issues among the users. Social media users with low self-esteem seek validation from others and through their posts. It should be remembered one should not seek validation from others but a person's self-worth should be fueled by believe in oneself. It is also seen that there were users who constantly keep on comparing their lives with luxurious lifestyles depicted by most of the users on social media not realising that everyone have their own journey and own struggles. Each person's path is different. Most of the people showcase fancy and pleasant part of their lives on social media, which is the half-truth. Looking at the luxurious lives of other users, as showcased by them on social media people are developing a feeling of inadequacy and jealousy also. Social media has glamourized ev-

erything. Most of the people don't live in the moment but tend to be in a hurry of posting posts to share the good time they are having. Being restless and continuous checking feeds is also not good for mental health. Being active on social media is fine but getting affected by the reactions you are getting for your post is not a healthy habit. Feeling low if your posts do not get the number of likes which you were expecting is not good for mental health. Also, you need to remember not all users are your well-wishers They are cases of cyberbullying. A cyberbullying is when someone repeatedly and intentionally harasses, mistreats and makes fun of another person by the way of an electronic device. It can severely impact self-esteem and mental health. Social media platforms can be hotspots for cyber bullying and spreading hurtful rumours, lies and abuse that can leave lasting emotional scars. Your accomplishments posts on social me-

dia can also invite jealous eyes. People are becoming more and more addictive to social media these days. Social media use may increase feelings of anxiety and depression. The addictive nature of social media activates the brain's reward center by releasing dopamine. This is a "feel-good chemical" linked to pleasurable activities. Social media focuses on physical appearance. Social media platforms provide user with the option to use filters on an image. Constant exposure to altered images can lead you to self-conscious and dislike the way you look. The use of social media increases feeling of Fear of Missing Out. Checking your friends, family and relatives through social media may make you feel that others are having more or living better lives than you are. Also too much of screen time overloads the sensory system, fractures attention and depletes mental reserves. Every coin has two side similarly

social media has positive and negative effects. A great way to improve your relationship with social media and help decrease the negative effects is to decrease screen time. Following tips would help: Set time limits on social media apps within your phone settings.

- Designate specific hours for social media usage.
- Look through your friends and followers list and unfriend people whose accounts make you feel bad yourself.
- Spend time offline meeting friends, relatives and acquaintances.
- Take time to evaluate your social media use and how it affects you.
- Taking any steps to limit screen time or improve your relationship with your phone can positively impact your mental health.

It is suggested to find fulfillment and happiness outside of social media.

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a political game designed to line the pockets of the elite. In the grand scheme of African politics, where aspirations often collide with harsh realities, the tale of these two leaders is a reflection of the broader struggle for progress. Traore, with his youthful exuberance, captures the essence of a continent poised for transformation, while Ruto represents the challenges that come with power—an often treacherous path littered with the debris of broken promises and shattered dreams. The rhetorical question lingers in the air: can Ruto navigate the turbulent waters of public discontent and reclaim the trust of his people, or will he remain a cautionary tale of lost potential? As the sun sets on this comparative analysis, one must acknowledge the profound implications of leadership on the lives of ordinary citizens. Traore, through his actions and vi-

sion, inspires hope—a clarion call for a brighter tomorrow in Burkina Faso. Meanwhile, Ruto stands at a crossroads, faced with the daunting task of revitalizing a government that has lost its way. In this intricate dance of governance, the rhythms of leadership play a crucial role in shaping the narrative of a nation. As we bear witness to this unfolding saga, let us remember that the essence of leadership lies not merely in the title one holds, but in the impact one leaves behind. Ibrahim Traore's ascent heralds a new dawn for Burkina Faso, while William Ruto's journey serves as a reminder that the path to greatness is often fraught with challenges that demand introspection, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to the people one serves. In the end, it is the collective will of the people that will determine the legacy of these two leaders—a legacy that will echo through the corridors of history, shaping the future of a continent on the cusp of transformation. If you really feel mad as a Kenyan then here's Traore's achievement without any political

skills; Traore successfully launched a national education reform initiative while Ruto struggled to address the escalating rates of school dropouts. Traore implemented community-based security programs while Ruto faced widespread criticism for rising crime rates. Traore achieved significant improvements in agricultural productivity while Ruto's administration battled with soaring food prices. Traore fostered international partnerships to combat terrorism while Ruto was embroiled in scandals undermining public trust. Traore promoted youth employment initiatives while Ruto saw unemployment rates soar under his leadership. Traore gained popular support through transparency measures while Ruto faced allegations of corruption within his government. Traore prioritized health sector reforms leading to better access to healthcare while Ruto's administration struggled with healthcare system inefficiencies. Traore secured funding for infrastructure development while Ruto dealt with criticism over delayed public projects.



Thomas Sankara

Traore led initiatives to empower women in politics while Ruto's tenure saw a decrease in female representation in government. Traore effectively responded to public protests with dialogue while Ruto's government faced backlash for heavy-handed tactics against dissent. In light of recent security challenges facing Kenya, how can the

military balance its primary role of national defense with the need for community engagement and support in addressing internal security issues which is police brutality & abduction?

This article was scripted by; MIDMARK ONSONGO, SGS (Socio-Geographic Scholar)

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Sports >> *The inaugural Sakaja Super Cup champions Githurai All Stars (GAS) were in fine form winning the 2024 Sakaja Super Cup launch match 1-0 over hosts Dandora Youth FC

Champs Githurai Silence Home Team Dandora Youth As Sakaja Super Cup Second Edition Kicks-Off



The inaugural Sakaja Super Cup champions .

The inaugural Sakaja Super Cup champions Githurai All Stars (GAS) were in fine form winning the 2024 Sakaja Super Cup launch match 1-0 over hosts Dandora Youth FC at the newly refurbished Dandora Stadium on Saturday.

GAS was awarded a token of Ksh 100,000 for winning the match played as Dandora Youth also received Ksh 50,000.

Before the match, coordinators from Nairobi East and Nairobi West Football Kenya Federation branches led by Nairobi East Chairman Dickson Doyo and Nairobi West Chairman Caleb Malwey, played a curtain raiser match won by Nairobi East who also receive tokens of Ksh 100,000 and Ksh 50,000 respectively.

In the launch match, the home-side Dandora Youth held off the champions to play out a goalless first half producing several goal scoring opportunities which were swiftly denied by GAS custodian Gregory Kenan.

Githurai All Stars captain Kel-

vin Njuguna was instrumental in midfield as GAS pressed to break the Dandora Youth defense which was firmly marshaled by the Dandora captain Emmanuel Omondi alongside Jared Okwiri and Romaric Arnaud.

And after the break, it is the Githurai side that was first to press the gas pedal with constant attacks in the hosts goal. It took a moment of magic to break the deadlock as striker Patrick Lugo struck a thunderbolt in the 65th minute from outside the box to beat Dandora Youth goalkeeper Felix Mutie who fumbled with the hot shot slipping off his hands to hand Lugo the only goal of the match.

Struck with urgency to level thing, the home team Dandora Youth frontline led by prolific winger Moses Mwangi pressed on in search of an equalizing goal but the GAS defense kept off the constant attacks. Moses Mwangi's combination with Malcom Otieno nearly found GAS on the break before Kenan was quick to thwart their efforts

at the Githurai goal.

In an emphatic show of confidence on the opening day of the second edition of the Sakaja Super Cup, Githurai made a display of class above their opponents as they sought to send a warning to other teams of their intention to retain the title this year in Space and Style.

The Sakaja Super Cup, spearheaded by Governor Johnson Sakaja, aims to foster grassroots football development across Nairobi, offering young talents an unparalleled platform to showcase their skills.

Following the launch match, which was won by GAS, the tournament will officially begin on Mashujaa Day, Sunday, October 20, and Monday with the first-round knockout matches taking place across all sub counties within Nairobi.

This year's competition will follow a knockout format, with matches starting at the sub-county level.

-Draw-

In the draw, which was conducted yesterday, to include all the 17 sub-counties in Nairobi, teams which have registered to play in the lower Football Kenya Federation Nairobi Branches leagues will not be required to play in the preliminary knock outs as they got byes into the next round while teams not affiliated to any FKF league will face off as they seek a few representatives from every sub county to join the registered teams in the next round of matches.

In its inaugural edition, the Sakaja Super Cup made a lasting impact on Nairobi's football landscape. Its well-organized structure, significant prize money, and competitive atmosphere set it apart from other off-season tournaments often sponsored by political figures.

The unique approach of the Sakaja Super Cup, with its focus on emerging talent, substantial rewards, and strong organizational backing, ensured its place as one of the most notable competitions in Nairobi.

With a reputation for meticulous organization and a commitment to uplifting Nairobi's football talent, the Sakaja Super Cup promises to deliver another exciting edition.

Football fans, scouts, and clubs alike will be eagerly watching as the tournament unfolds, with the grand finale in December set to be one of the highlights of Nairobi's sports calendar.

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Sports >>> *Hosts Tanzania beat Kenya 2-1 to win the CECAFA region AFCON under 20 qualifiers final at KMC stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Kenya Goes Down Fighting To Tanzania In CECAFAU20 Finals



Hosts Tanzania beat Kenya 2-1 to win the CECAFA region AFCON under 20 qualifiers final at KMC stadium in Dar es Salaam. Both Tanzania and Kenya will represent the CECAFA region at next years AFCON U20 competition in South Africa.

AFC Leopards forward Hassan Beja gave Rising stars the lead two minutes into the second half. Valentino Mashaka equalized for Tanzania in the 65th minute before Sheikhhan Khamis won it for the host nation with a stunning left-footed volley from outside the box.

The two finalists had met at the group phase where Kenya beat hosts Tanzania 2-1.

Rising Stars then drew 0-0 against Rwanda followed by a 4-0 win over Djibouti before seeing off Sudan with a similar scoreline to qualify for semifinals as group A winners.

Both Tanzania and Kenya will represent the CECAFA region at next years AFCON U20 competition in South Africa.



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Abdulbasit's Journey Through the ALX Front-End Web Development Program

By: Joy Atieno Otieno
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Worth Noting:

- One of the initial surprises Abdulbasit encountered after joining the program was the eight-week ALX Foundations course. This mandatory first phase, focused on soft skills, came as a bit of a shock as Abdulbasit had expected to jump straight into coding.
- After completing the Foundations course, he then moved on to the core Front-End curriculum, where he began working with technologies like HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and React. These tools formed the foundation of his skills as a front-end developer, and the real-world applications and projects he worked on gave him both technical competence and confidence. "The hands-on projects helped me not only develop technical skills but also gave me the confidence to tackle complex problems," Abdulbasit noted.

Abdulbasit Kayode Imam recently made the bold decision to transition into the tech world, joining the ALX Front-End Web Development program. Currently still pursuing his undergraduate studies, Abdulbasit saw the potential of technology to enhance his skills and future career prospects, which led him to explore educational opportunities in the field of web development.

His journey into tech began in April, when he enrolled in the AiCE program offered by ALX. The experience, he says, was transformative, as it allowed him to acquire skills he hadn't imagined possible within a short time. This inspired him to continue his learning journey with ALX hence he joined the Front-End Web Development program.

ALX 8-weeks Foundations Course

One of the initial surprises Abdulbasit encountered after joining the program was the eight-week ALX Foundations course. This mandatory first phase, focused on soft skills, came as a bit of a shock as Abdulbasit had expected to jump straight into coding.

However, he quickly realized the value of this phase. The Foundations course is designed to equip learners with essential skills such as communication, collaboration, and time management—skills that are crucial for succeeding not only in the tech industry but in any career.

Through the Foundations phase, Abdulbasit had the opportunity to work with small groups of fellow learners, which helped him improve his communication skills and fostered a collaborative mindset. "The Foundation phase helped us connect with other learners in groups," Abdulbasit recalled. "It really enhanced my communication skills and prepared me for what was to come in the program."

ALX Front-End Web Development program curriculum

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Abdulbasit Kayode Imam..

HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and React. These tools formed the foundation of his skills as a front-end developer, and the real-world applications and projects he worked on gave him both technical competence and confidence. "The hands-on projects helped me not only develop technical skills but also gave me the confidence to tackle complex problems," Abdulbasit noted.

Throughout the program, Abdulbasit emphasized the importance of the support he received from the community. He particularly appreciated the mentorship provided by experienced program mentors like Andrew and Alfred whose guidance and encouragement were instrumental in his growth. Additionally, being part

of a vibrant learning community of talented individuals from across Africa gave him the motivation to keep improving himself.

Abdulbasit states that although some may shy away due to the payment requirements, he believes the value far outweighs the price. "I have taken various programs in web development, but ALX stands out as a game-changer. I'm glad I invested in this program, and I would recommend it to anyone," he said. He further quips that there is an option to pay monthly, which can make the program more affordable. "The payment options are flexible. You can pay at the end of each month, which makes it easier to manage," he shared.

For his end of program capstone project, Abdulbasit created a recipe finder application that allows users to search for, save, and view detailed recipes. This project exemplified the skills he had acquired throughout his journey, from coding to problem-solving, and demonstrated his growing competence as a front-end developer.

In closing, Abdulbasit had some words of wisdom for those considering the ALX program but still hesitant. "The program is rigorous, but it's worth it," he said. "The skills you gain will stay with you forever. If you're thinking about joining, just register and start—you won't regret it."