

President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in Washington was framed by urgency and overshadowed by the escalating war with Iran.

US-Japan

To understand the summit, one must revisit the long arc of U.S.-Japan relations.:



Trump and Takaichi: War, Trade, and the Fragile Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance

The Summit in Washington

President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in Washington was framed by urgency and overshadowed by the escalating war with Iran. The two leaders stood side by side at the White House, projecting unity while carefully navigating their differences. Trump, blunt as ever, declared: "We are not putting troops anywhere unnecessarily. But we will defend our interests, and we expect our allies to stand with us." His words were both a warning to Tehran and a challenge to Tokyo, reflecting his broader approach to foreign policy: transactional, demanding, and rooted in the belief that



President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in Washington

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From Ghats to K-Dramas: How India's Youth Is Embracing Korean and Japanese Culture

Here's your document with the spaces after each paragraph removed, keeping the flow intact:

Imagine a city where temple bells echo at sunrise and by evening,

K-drama OSTs play softly inside cafés serving ramen and tteok-bokki (simmered fried rice). This is Kashi or Varanasi on the banks of the River Ganges... Ancient, eternal and quietly global. Once known only for its ghats, scriptures, and spiritual rhythm, Kashi is

now witnessing a cultural crossover led by its youth. Korean dramas streamed late at night, K-Pop playlists on morning walks, anime posters on hostel walls, and Japanese dishes replacing routine snacks. This is the new urban emotion of the city.

For the young generation of Kashi, K-dramas are not just shows; they are comfort, aspiration, and storytelling without borders.

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"ALL BUSINESSES
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Calls to close Wilson Airport spark debate after Osotsi's harrowing flight experience

By: Deborah Soi
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

• **Wilson Airport's role:** Established in 1933, Wilson Airport is one of Kenya's oldest and busiest domestic airports. It handles an estimated 120,000 flights annually, serving humanitarian missions, tourism, and business travel across East Africa.

• **Past concerns:** Aviation experts have repeatedly raised alarms about runway wear and tear at Wilson. In 2019, a Kenya Civil Aviation Authority audit flagged "urgent need for resurfacing and drainage improvements."

• **Economic impact:** Closing Wilson Airport, even temporarily, could affect Nairobi's tourism sector and disrupt regional connectivity. Many safari operators and NGOs rely on Wilson for quick access to remote areas.

• **Global standards:** According to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Kenya has improved compliance with international safety standards but still faces infrastructure challenges. A 2023 ICAO report recommended stronger enforcement of maintenance schedules.

The debate over aviation safety in Kenya has been reignited after Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi recounted what he described as a "life-threatening" landing at Wilson Airport. His remarks, delivered with urgency and conviction, have placed one of the country's busiest domestic airports under intense scrutiny and sparked calls for its temporary closure.

Osotsi was among 39 passengers aboard the aircraft when the incident occurred. What was meant to be a routine flight quickly turned into a moment of panic as passengers braced for the worst. "The landing was terrifying. We thought we might not make it," he said, visibly shaken. While no fatalities or serious injuries were reported, the senator's account has struck a nerve with Kenyans who have long expressed unease about the state of local aviation infrastructure.

Wilson Airport, located just a few kilometres from Nairobi's central business district, is a vital hub for domestic and regional flights. It connects the capital to remote areas, facilitates humanitarian operations, and supports business travel across East Africa. Yet Osotsi's experience has highlighted the delicate balance between maintaining essential transport services and ensuring passenger safety. His call for closure, though controversial, has forced aviation authorities to confront uncomfortable questions.

The senator pointed to what he termed "deteriorating infrastructure," particularly the runway, which he believes may have contributed to the landing difficulties. Aviation experts have previously warned that aging facilities, if not properly maintained, can pose significant risks. Captain Gilbert Kibe, former Director-General of the Kenya Civil Aviation

Authority (KCAA), once noted that "runway integrity is non-negotiable. Even minor defects can have catastrophic consequences."

Osotsi's remarks have placed pressure on the KCAA and the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA) to conduct a thorough inspection of Wilson's facilities. Already, there are growing demands for transparency regarding maintenance records and safety audits. Civil society groups have urged authorities to publish findings promptly, arguing that public confidence in air travel depends on accountability.

The incident has also exposed a wider tension in Kenya's aviation sector: the struggle to balance rapid growth with safety oversight. According to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Kenya has made significant strides in compliance with global standards, but challenges remain. A 2023 ICAO audit highlighted gaps in infrastructure maintenance and recommended stronger enforcement of safety protocols.

Stakeholders are divided on the senator's call. Business leaders warn that closing Wilson Airport, even temporarily, could disrupt commerce and tourism. The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) issued a statement noting that "Wilson is critical for connecting Nairobi to key economic zones. Closure would have ripple effects across industries." Yet others insist that safety must come first. "Preventive measures are far less costly than the consequences of a tragedy," said aviation analyst Alex Mwangi.

The debate has spilled into Parliament, where legislators are pressing for answers. Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah urged caution, saying, "We must



Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi

not rush to close an airport without evidence. But we must also not ignore credible warnings." Opposition figures, meanwhile, have seized on the incident to demand broader reforms in transport safety.

International observers are watching closely. Kenya's aviation sector is considered a regional leader, and any lapse could undermine its reputation. The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) has called for "swift and transparent action to reassure passengers and partners."

For passengers, the incident has been a sobering reminder of the risks inherent in air travel. Social media was flooded with accounts from those on board, many describing moments of fear and prayers whispered as the plane struggled to land. "It felt like the longest few minutes of my life," wrote one passenger.

The government now faces a difficult decision. Closing Wilson Airport would disrupt operations, but failing to act decisively could erode

public trust. Transport Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen has promised a full investigation, stating: "Safety is our top priority. We will not hesitate to take necessary measures once the facts are established."

The incident also raises broader questions about Kenya's preparedness for aviation emergencies. Experts argue that beyond infrastructure, training and emergency response protocols must be strengthened. "Airports must be equipped not only with sound runways but also with systems to handle crises," said Professor Joseph Mutua, a transport policy scholar at the University of Nairobi.

As investigations continue, Osotsi's experience has become a catalyst for national reflection. It has reminded Kenyans that aviation safety is not a luxury but a necessity, and that complacency can be dangerous. Whether Wilson Airport will be closed remains uncertain, but the senator's call has ensured that the issue will not be ignored.

The Mt Kenya Times believes this debate is timely and necessary. Kenya's aviation sector is a source of pride, but it must also be a source of trust. The harrowing experience of one flight should not be dismissed as an isolated incident. It should be treated as a warning, a chance to strengthen systems before tragedy strikes.

In the words of Osotsi: "We cannot gamble with lives. Safety must come before convenience." His statement captures the essence of the debate. Airports are gateways to opportunity, but they must never become gateways to disaster.

The nation now waits for answers, and for action. The credibility of Kenya's aviation authorities, and the confidence of its passengers, depend on it.

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Big cheer for Indian actress Sona Singh as she celebrates her birthday



By: Shamlal Puri
Associate Publisher
& Senior Editor - UK
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Family, friends and fans raised their glasses to cheer Indian actress Sona Singh as she celebrated her 25th birthday in her hometown of Shahdol, in Madhya Pradesh, last week. A poolside party was organised at a five-star hotel for this beautiful actress, attended by close family members and friends. They enjoyed a feast of a tantalising menu of Indian and oriental dishes, including Manchurian fried rice and butter paneer, which were a treat to the palate. A loud cheer went out when Sona Singh cut her birthday cake. Fans from all over India and around the world greeted Sona Singh on her birthday via phone calls, emails and social media.

Text by Shamlal Puri, London



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OPINION

When survival becomes dangerous: the reality of economic struggles in Kenya

By: Charles Musyoki
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In Kenya today, survival itself has become a dangerous pursuit. For countless families across the country, poverty and economic hardship are not abstract concepts but daily realities that shape every decision. The rising cost of living, limited job opportunities, and the precarious nature of informal work have created a situation where ordinary citizens are forced to risk their lives simply to put food on the table. The tragedy in Shauri Moyo, where residents entered a building under demolition to collect scrap metal, is a stark reminder of this reality. Those who went in understood the danger, yet desperation left them no choice. Their actions were not careless but calculated against the harsh backdrop of economic struggle. For them, the risk was outweighed by the immediate need to earn something—anything—that could sustain their families. This incident is not isolated. Across Nairobi's informal settlements and in towns across the country, similar stories unfold daily. Men and women take on hazardous jobs without protective equipment, scavenge in unsafe areas, or engage in work that exposes them to injury and illness. These are not acts of recklessness but of necessity. When survival is at stake, safety becomes a luxury few can afford.

A historical struggle
Kenya's economic story has always been one of resilience in the face of adversity. From the structural adjustments of the 1980s to the global financial crisis of 2008, citizens have repeatedly borne the brunt of economic shocks. The COVID 19 pandemic added another layer of hardship, wiping out jobs, shrinking small businesses, and pushing more families into poverty. Inflation, driven by global fuel prices and local supply chain challenges, has eroded household incomes. For many, the informal sector has become the default employer. It absorbs millions who cannot find formal work, but it does so at great cost. Workers lack protection, benefits, and safety standards. They are exposed to risks that formal workers rarely encounter. Poverty, therefore, is not simply about low income—it is about the absence of secure, dignified opportunities.



Youth protests in past

The human face of poverty

Behind the statistics are human stories that reveal the depth of the crisis. In Mathare, mothers wake before dawn to sell vegetables by the roadside, knowing that a single day of poor sales means their children go hungry. In Kibera, young men scour construction sites for leftover materials, risking injury for a few shillings. In rural counties, families walk long distances to fetch firewood, balancing the dangers of exhaustion and exposure against the need for fuel.

These acts of survival are not choices in the conventional sense. They are forced decisions, shaped by circumstances beyond individual control. They show how poverty transforms ordinary spaces into zones of risk: a collapsing building becomes a source of livelihood, a pile of scrap metal becomes a lifeline, and unsafe jobs become the only available op-

tion.

The wider impact

The consequences of this crisis ripple across society. Families live with constant anxiety, knowing that a breadwinner's pursuit of income could end in tragedy. Communities mourn preventable accidents, and the nation loses productive citizens to hazards born of desperation. Education suffers when children are pulled out of school to help earn money. Health deteriorates when families cannot afford proper nutrition or medical care.

The erosion of dignity is perhaps the most painful consequence. Citizens who should be building futures are instead locked in a cycle of survival. The daily struggle undermines confidence in institutions and weakens the social fabric.

The path forward

Kenya stands at a crossroads. Addressing this crisis

requires more than sympathy—it demands systemic change. Government must prioritize policies that expand employment, support small enterprises, and reduce the cost of living. Affordable housing, accessible healthcare, and reliable transport are not luxuries but necessities that shape the quality of life.

The private sector has a role to play in investing in inclusive growth, creating opportunities that reach beyond urban elites. Civil society must continue to advocate for vulnerable communities, ensuring their struggles are not ignored. International partners, too, can support Kenya's development agenda, particularly in areas that create safe and sustainable livelihoods.

A call to dignity

Ultimately, the crisis is not about scrap metal or unsafe buildings. It is about the economic struggles that drive people into danger.

Poverty should never force citizens to gamble with their lives. Yet for many Kenyans, this is the daily reality.

The Shauri Moyo tragedy is emblematic of a larger truth: until unemployment, inequality, and the rising cost of living are addressed, citizens will continue to risk everything—not because they want to, but because they must.

Kenya's future depends on building an economy where survival is no longer dangerous, and where dignity is not a privilege but a right. The path forward requires courage, vision, and commitment. It requires leaders who understand that the measure of progress is not in statistics alone, but in the safety, security, and dignity of ordinary citizens.

Survival should never be dangerous. Yet until real solutions are found, it will remain so for too many.



Worth Noting:

- The tragedy in Shauri Moyo, where residents entered a building under demolition to collect scrap metal, is a stark reminder of this reality. Those who went in understood the danger, yet desperation left them no choice. Their actions were not careless but calculated against the harsh backdrop of economic struggle. For them, the risk was outweighed by the immediate need to earn something—anything—that could sustain their families.
- This incident is not isolated. Across Nairobi's informal settlements and in towns across the country, similar stories unfold daily. Men and women take on hazardous jobs without protective equipment, scavenge in unsafe areas, or engage in work that exposes them to injury and illness. These are not acts of recklessness but of necessity. When survival is at stake, safety becomes a luxury few can afford.

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Motivation

The Longevity Equation: Rethinking the Science of Aging Well

By: **Magdaline Amusugut**
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Worth Noting:

- At its heart lies a simple but profound idea: aging is not merely a calendar of years but a biological process that can be influenced. The hallmarks of aging explain why cells deteriorate; longevity interventions reveal how we might slow, or even reverse, that trajectory. Together, they form a new frontier in human health—one that blends biology, psychology, and community into a holistic vision of what it means to grow old well.
- Hormesis, the principle of “good stress,” is one of the most compelling discoveries. It shows that short, controlled stressors can trigger powerful repair mechanisms, leaving the body stronger than before. Regular sauna use, for instance, has been linked to a dramatic reduction in mortality, as heat activates proteins that refold damaged molecules before they become toxic. Similarly, brief exposure to low oxygen—through breathwork or high altitude training—stimulates pathways that improve mitochondrial efficiency and encourage new blood vessel growth. These stressors, once seen as harmful, are now understood as catalysts for resilience.



Aging has long been seen as an inevitable decline, a slow surrender to time. Yet science today is rewriting that narrative. In 2026, geroscience—the study of aging itself—has moved from theory to practice, offering interventions that promise not just longer lives, but healthier ones. The “longevity equation,” as researchers call it, is no longer confined to laboratories. It is becoming a roadmap for how ordinary people might extend vitality, resilience, and purpose deep into their later years.

At its heart lies a simple but profound idea: aging is not merely a calendar of years but a biological process that can be influenced. The hallmarks of aging explain why cells deteriorate; longevity interventions reveal how we might slow, or even reverse, that trajectory. Together, they form a new frontier in human health—one that blends biology, psychology, and community into a holistic vision of what it means to grow old well.

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But lifestyle alone is not the full story. The rise of “geroprotectors”—compounds designed to interfere directly with aging—marks a turning point. NAD+, a coenzyme essential for energy and DNA repair, declines steadily with age. Boosting its levels through precursors like NMN or NR fuels sirtuins, aptly nicknamed the “guardians of the genome,” which repair broken DNA strands. Rapamycin, perhaps the most studied longevity drug, targets the mTOR pathway, the body’s growth switch. When con-

stantly active, mTOR prevents cellular cleanup. By inhibiting it periodically, Rapamycin mimics fasting, triggering autophagy—the deep housekeeping that keeps cells young.

Yet longevity is not purely mechanical. Decades of research, from the famed Blue Zones to modern longitudinal studies, reveal that biology alone cannot explain why some people thrive into their nineties while others falter. The social and psychological dimensions matter just as much. Chronic stress, for example, keeps the body in a pro inflammatory state, accelerating immune system decline. Elevated cortisol levels shorten telomeres, effectively aging the body by years in mere months. Conversely, individuals with a strong sense of purpose—what the Japanese call *ikigai*—show lower levels of inflammation markers. Community, meaning, and connection act as buffers against cellular decay, proving that longevity is as much about the mind as the body.

The ultimate ambition of geroscience is to reshape the morbidity curve. Instead of

a drawn out decline, the goal is to “square the curve”—maintaining high physical and cognitive function until the very end, followed by a rapid drop. To achieve this, scientists speak of the “Centenarian Decathlon,” a set of benchmarks designed to prepare people in midlife for thriving in old age. Can you rise from the floor with one hand? Carry heavy groceries up several flights of stairs? Process complex new information with ease? These are not trivial tests but predictors of independence and vitality in advanced age.

The checklist for longevity is expanding. Nutritional strategies like protein cycling target nutrient sensing pathways. Cold exposure strengthens mitochondrial health. Senolytics, compounds that clear out senescent “zombie” cells, promise to rejuvenate tissues. And deep social connection, often overlooked, is now recognized as a powerful intervention against epigenetic aging. Together, these measures form a toolkit for extending not just lifespan—the number of years lived—but healthspan, the quality of those years.

The distinction matters. Traditional medicine has focused on treating symptoms, reacting to disease as it arises. Science led aging, by contrast, is proactive, addressing the drivers of decline before they manifest. Chronological age, once the dominant metric, is giving way to biological age, measured by markers like VO₂ max and cellular resilience. The shift is profound: it reframes aging not as an unavoidable fate but as a variable we can influence.

Ultimately, the longevity equation is about more than science. It is about redefining what it means to live a full life. The promise is not immortality, nor the denial of death, but the possibility of vitality—of remaining strong, sharp, and connected until the very end. As researchers remind us, the goal is not simply to add years to life, but to add life to years. That, perhaps, is the most human aspiration of all.

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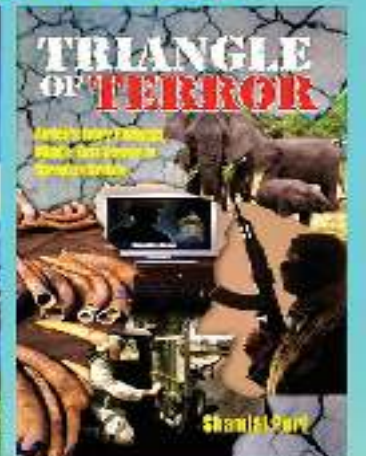
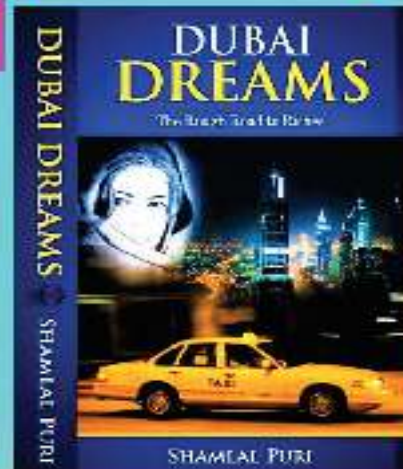
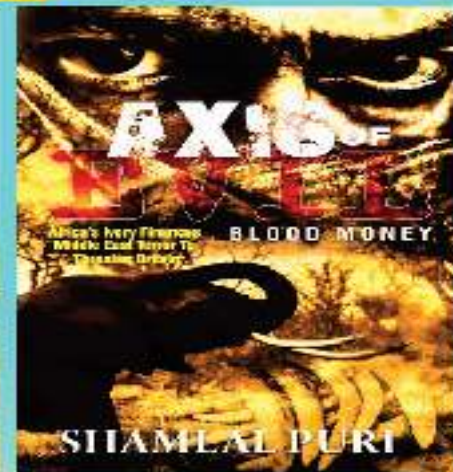
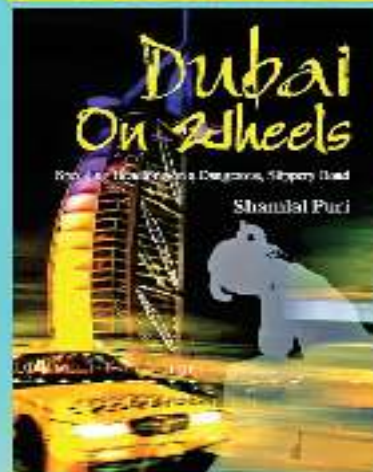
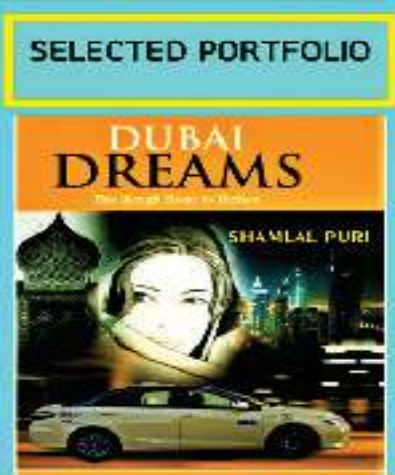
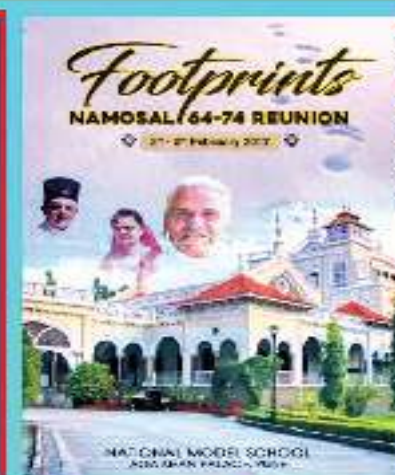
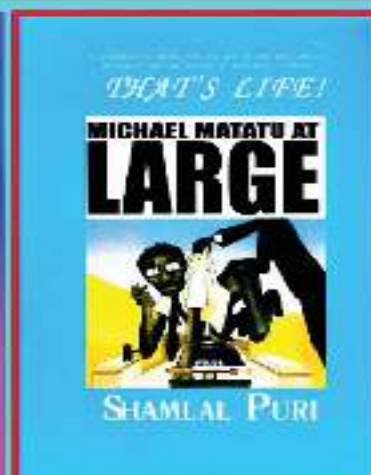
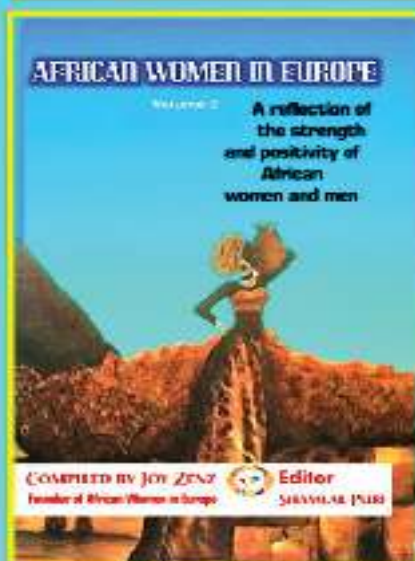
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African News

Trump and Takaichi: War, Trade, and the Fragile Future of the U.S.–Japan Alliance

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Contd from Page 1



President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in Washington

Worth Noting:

• To understand the summit, one must revisit the long arc of U.S.-Japan relations. From the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 to the signing of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960, the alliance has evolved from occupation to partnership. Japan's pacifist constitution, drafted under American oversight, has remained a defining feature. For decades, Japan relied on the U.S. security umbrella while focusing on economic growth. The Cold War cemented the alliance, with Japan serving as a key base for American forces in Asia. Yet, the constitutional prohibition on "war potential" has always limited Tokyo's military role.

• Today, as Iran threatens global energy routes, this historical legacy shapes Japan's cautious stance. Takaichi's refusal to commit combat forces is not a rejection of the alliance but a reaffirmation of Japan's constitutional identity. It is a reminder that Japan's role in the world is defined not by military might but by economic strength, technological innovation, and diplomatic engagement.

alliances must deliver tangible support in times of crisis. Takaichi, deliberate and measured, responded with caution: "Japan has brought specific proposals to calm down the global energy market. Iran must never be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon, but Japan cannot commit combat forces under our constitution." Her words were carefully chosen, reflecting both the constraints of Japan's pacifist constitution and the expectations of a domestic audience deeply wary of military entanglements abroad. This exchange captured the essence of the summit: America demanding military solidarity, Japan offering economic and diplomatic support.

Historical Shadows

To understand the summit, one must revisit the long arc of U.S.-Japan relations. From the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 to the signing of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960, the alliance has evolved from occupation to partnership. Japan's pacifist constitution, drafted under American oversight, has remained a defining feature. For decades, Japan relied on the U.S. security umbrella while focusing on economic growth. The Cold War cemented the alliance, with Japan serving as a key base

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Energy and Commerce

Beyond the battlefield, the summit was dominated by trade and energy. Japan, heavily dependent on Middle Eastern oil, fears disruption in the Strait of Hormuz. Takaichi arrived in Washington with proposals to stabilize energy markets. Trump welcomed these, saying: "Our economic partnership with Japan is stronger than ever. Together, we will ensure fair trade and secure supply chains." Reports suggest Japan is considering new investments in U.S. infrastructure and technology projects, a move designed to offset tensions over military commitments. Both leaders agreed on the importance of stabilizing oil routes, with Japan offering

logistical and financial support rather than direct military involvement. Trump emphasized that trade is as vital as defense: "Our partnership with Japan is about more than war—it's about building a future together." His words underscored the reality that in the modern world, economic power is as critical as military strength.

The State of the Iran War and Middle East Impact

The Iran war of 2026 has reshaped the Middle East, destabilizing energy markets, intensifying sectarian divides, and forcing global powers to recalibrate their alliances. The conflict, triggered by joint U.S.-Israeli strikes and Iran's fierce retaliation, has entered a dangerous phase with no clear resolution in sight. The war erupted in late February 2026 when the United States and Israel launched coordinated strikes against Iranian military and political targets. The Israeli operation, codenamed Roaring Lion, and the American Epic Fury campaign devastated several Iranian cities. Within hours, Iran retaliated with Operation Honest Promise 4, unleashing missile barrages across the Gulf. In the chaos, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed, marking the first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that Iran faced a leadership

vacuum at the height of open war.

Despite leadership losses, Iran's decentralized security apparatus and ideological cohesion have allowed its forces to continue fighting. Analysts note that assassinations of senior figures have not weakened Iran's resolve. Instead, the war has widened geographically, drawing in proxy militias from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, and threatening to engulf the entire region.

Iran's conventional military capabilities have been severely degraded, but its asymmetric warfare strategy remains potent. The Revolutionary Guard and affiliated militias have targeted U.S. bases, Israeli cities, and Gulf oil infrastructure. The Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 percent of the world's oil passes, has become a flashpoint. Repeated skirmishes between Iranian naval units and U.S. warships have raised fears of a global energy crisis.

The Pentagon has requested an additional \$200 billion to sustain operations, underscoring the scale of U.S. involvement. Israel, meanwhile, has intensified its missile defense deployments, while Gulf states have quietly supported American efforts, fearing Iran's reach but wary of domestic backlash. The war has fractured the Middle East further. Saudi

Arabia and the UAE, already hostile to Iran, have welcomed U.S. pressure but remain cautious about direct involvement. Iraq and Syria have seen Iranian-backed militias expand operations, targeting U.S. and allied forces. Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis have stepped up attacks, linking their struggles to Iran's survival. This has created a multi-front war that stretches beyond Iran's borders.

The broader Middle East, already weakened by years of accumulated tensions, has entered a new era of uncertainty. Analysts warn that the war could redraw alliances, with Turkey, Russia, and China watching closely for opportunities to expand influence. Globally, oil prices have surged, rattling markets. Asian economies, particularly Japan and South Korea, are deeply concerned about energy security. Europe faces renewed refugee flows as instability spreads. The United Nations has called for restraint, but diplomatic efforts have so far failed to produce a ceasefire. For Washington, the war is both a military and political gamble. Trump has framed it as a necessary confrontation to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

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Trump and Takaichi: War, Trade, and the Fragile Future of the U.S.–Japan Alliance

By:
xxxxxxxxxxxx

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Worth Noting:

• The war erupted in late February 2026 when the United States and Israel launched coordinated strikes against Iranian military and political targets. The Israeli operation, codenamed Roaring Lion, and the American Epic Fury campaign devastated several Iranian cities. Within hours, Iran retaliated with Operation Honest Promise 4, unleashing missile barrages across the Gulf. In the chaos, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed, marking the first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that Iran faced a leadership vacuum at the height of open war.

• Despite leadership losses, Iran's decentralized security apparatus and ideological cohesion have allowed its forces to continue fighting. Analysts note that assassinations of senior figures have not weakened Iran's resolve. Instead, the war has widened geographically, drawing in proxy militias from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, and threatening to engulf the entire region.



President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and their deputies in Washington

Yet critics argue that the war risks entangling the U.S. in another protracted Middle Eastern conflict, draining resources and undermining alliances.

The Iran war is not merely a bilateral conflict; it is a regional conflagration with global reverberations. It has exposed the fragility of Middle Eastern stability, the volatility of energy markets, and the limits of military power in resolving ideological struggles. Iran's resilience, despite leadership

losses, demonstrates that wars against decentralized, ideologically driven states rarely end quickly.

For Japan, as highlighted in the Trump-Takaichi summit, the war underscores the importance of economic diplomacy. Unable to commit troops, Tokyo seeks to stabilize energy markets and support global trade. This reflects a broader truth: in the 21st century, alliances are defined not only by military commitments but also by economic resilience and

diplomatic engagement.

Editorial Analysis

The Trump-Takaichi summit revealed both the strength and fragility of the U.S.-Japan alliance. While Trump pressed for military solidarity, Japan's pacifist constitution and public opinion forced Takaichi to offer economic and diplomatic alternatives. Yet, the meeting also showcased the adaptability of both nations: America's willingness to accept non-military support,

and Japan's readiness to deepen economic ties.

This editorial underscores a broader truth: alliances in the 21st century are no longer defined solely by military commitments. They are shaped by trade, technology, and shared values. The U.S.-Japan alliance is a case study in this evolution, demonstrating that power in the modern world is multidimensional, encompassing not only military strength but also economic resilience, technological innovation,

and diplomatic engagement.

Conclusion

In Washington, Trump and Takaichi demonstrated that even amid war, diplomacy and commerce remain the lifeblood of international alliances. Their summit was less about confrontation and more about crafting a fragile but vital balance between power and principle.



President Donald Trump's meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, their deputies and delegations in Washington

Global

Shadows of Wealth: How Financial Secrecy Jurisdictions Shape Global Flows and Namibia's Scandals



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themkenyatimes

Introduction: The Hidden Architecture of Global Finance

In today's interconnected world, money moves across borders with unprecedented speed. Yet, beneath the legitimate flows of trade and investment lies a shadowy infrastructure - jurisdictions that thrive on secrecy. These places, often referred to as secrecy jurisdictions or tax havens, allow corporations, elites, and sometimes criminals to hide wealth from regulators and the public.

The **Financial Secrecy Index (FSI)**, published by the Tax Justice Network, ranks countries based on their contribution to global financial secrecy. It combines two measures: the Secrecy Score, which reflects how opaque a jurisdiction's laws are, and the Global Scale Weight, which measures how much financial activity it provides to non-residents. The results are startling: the biggest secrecy providers are not just small islands but major economies like the United States, Singapore, Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

As the Tax Justice Network warns, "Financial secrecy is not a victimless crime. It robs societies of the revenues they need to function and fuels corruption and inequality worldwide."

Global Leaders in Secrecy

The 2024 Financial Secrecy Index revealed that the United States tops the list, largely due to its weak beneficial ownership transparency and limited cooperation with international tax information exchange. Singapore follows as a wealth management hub with strong banking secrecy, while Hong Kong remains a magnet for cross-border flows despite corporate opacity. Luxembourg continues to attract investment funds with secrecy-friendly structures, and Japan ranks high due to its limited transparency in ownership. The United Kingdom, through its complex web of territories such as the Cayman Islands, British Virgin Islands, Jersey, and Guernsey, plays a massive role in enabling secrecy. The United Arab Emirates offers free zones with lax regulation, while Guernsey specializes in offshore trusts and foundations. The Netherlands acts as a conduit for multinational tax avoidance, and China is increasingly influential in global finance despite limited transparency.

These jurisdictions collectively enable trillions of dollars in hidden wealth, shaping the global financial order in ways that undermine transparency and accountability.

Why Secrecy Matters

The consequences of secrecy are profound. Corporations exploit secrecy jurisdictions to shift profits and avoid taxes, depriving governments of billions in revenue. For developing countries, this loss is devastating - funds that could build schools, hospitals, and infrastructure vanish offshore.

Secrecy also facilitates corruption. Officials can stash stolen wealth in offshore accounts, shielded from scrutiny. It enables money laundering, organized crime, and even the financing of terrorism. The result is a widening gap between rich and poor, as the wealthy exploit secrecy disproportionately while ordinary citizens bear the tax burden.

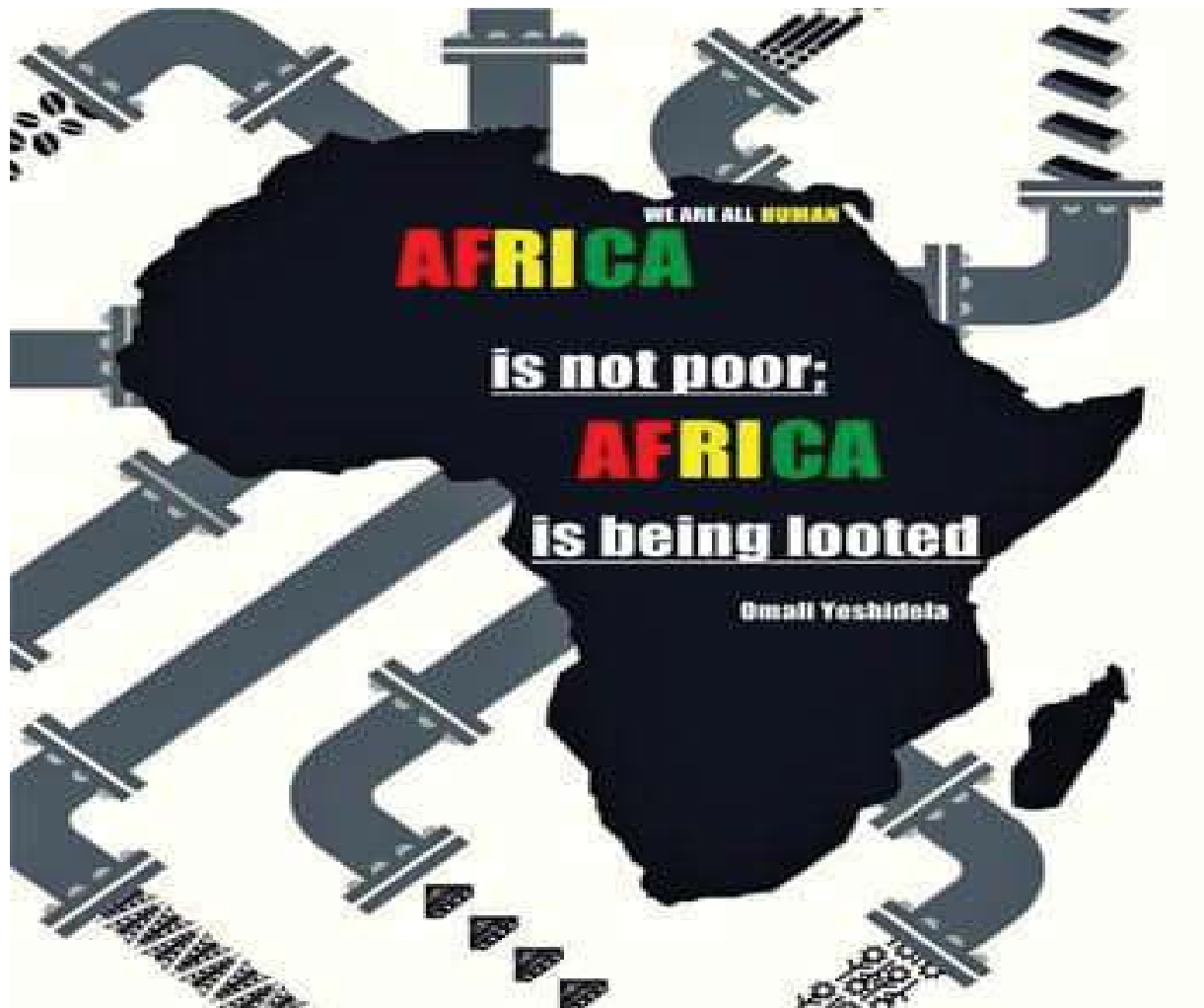
Africa's Position in the Index

Africa is not immune to these dynamics. Countries like Nigeria, South Africa, and Mauritius play significant roles in secrecy, while smaller jurisdictions like Seychelles attract offshore wealth far beyond their size.

Nigeria suffers from weak transparency and large illicit flows, while Mauritius has become a hub for offshore investment, often serving as a conduit for multinational tax avoidance. South Africa, despite its strong financial sector, struggles with loopholes in trusts and ownership disclosure. Namibia, by contrast, ranks low globally but remains vulnerable to secrecy risks. The African Union estimates that the continent loses \$88 billion annually to illicit financial flows, much of it facilitated by secrecy jurisdictions. This loss undermines development, erodes trust in governance, and perpetuates dependency.

Namibia's Scandals: Fishrot and Oilrot

Namibia's experience illustrates how secrecy practices translate into real harm, not as abstract theories but through scandals that have shaken the nation's governance and financial integrity. The Fishrot scandal, for instance, revealed how offshore accounts and shell companies were used to conceal bribes paid by foreign corporations in exchange for fishing quotas, draining resources that should have supported national development. Similarly, the emerging Oilrot scandal has raised concerns about opaque contracts and undisclosed beneficial ownership in Namibia's oil sector, echoing the same secrecy-driven vulnerabilities. These cases show that when transparency is absent, secrecy jurisdictions and hidden financial flows become fertile ground for corruption,



eroding public trust, weakening institutions, and diverting wealth away from citizens. What might appear as distant practices in Washington, Luxembourg, or Singapore manifests locally in Namibia as lost opportunities, compromised governance, and scandals that undermine both democracy and economic progress.

The Fishrot Scandal

In 2019, the Fishrot scandal erupted when senior officials were accused of accepting bribes from Icelandic fishing company Samherji to secure lucrative quotas. Funds were funneled through offshore structures, trusts, and shell companies - classic secrecy tools. As The Namibian newspaper reported, "The Fishrot files revealed a sophisticated web of offshore accounts and shell companies designed to conceal the flow of bribes and profits." Offshore accounts concealed the flow of money, shell companies obscured the true beneficiaries, and weak transparency laws in Namibia allowed the scheme to flourish.

The Oilrot Scandal

Namibia's emerging oil sector has also faced allegations of opaque deals and hidden interests. While less globally publicized than Fishrot, the Oilrot scandal highlights the same risks: secrecy in contracts, undisclosed beneficial ownership, and offshore structures.

Both scandals demonstrate how secrecy undermines governance, erodes trust, and diverts resources from national development.

Global Parallels: Other Scandals

Namibia is not alone. Around the

world, secrecy jurisdictions have enabled similar scandals. Secrecy is not a local inconvenience - it is a global epidemic that transcends borders and undermines governance in every region of the world. The revelations of the Panama Papers (2016) and Paradise Papers (2017) exposed how politicians, corporations, and elites systematically exploited offshore structures to conceal wealth and evade accountability. In Latin America, Brazil's Petrobras scandal, known as Operation Car Wash, demonstrated how billions were siphoned through offshore accounts, destabilizing the country's political and economic landscape. Africa has not been spared, with Kenya's Goldenberg scandal and South Africa's Gupta state capture showing how secrecy structures enable fraud and corruption at the highest levels of government. Even advanced economies are deeply implicated: multinational giants such as Apple and Nike have been revealed to shift profits through Luxembourg and Ireland to minimize tax obligations. These examples underscore that secrecy is woven into the fabric of global finance, creating a parallel system where rules are bent or broken to serve narrow interests. Far from being confined to small islands or developing nations, secrecy is entrenched in the world's largest economies, making it a systemic challenge that demands collective international action.

The Ethical Dilemma

Supporters of secrecy argue it protects privacy and attracts investment. Yet the ethical cost is high. Secrecy jurisdictions profit while ordinary citizens suffer. Should privacy outweigh accountability? Should jurisdictions profit from enabling corruption? These are questions

lawmakers must confront.

Lessons for Namibia and Africa

Namibia's relatively low ranking on the FSI offers an opportunity. By adopting transparency reforms early, Namibia can avoid becoming a secrecy hub and instead model accountability. Key reforms include establishing beneficial ownership registries, implementing automatic exchange of tax information, and strengthening anti-money laundering enforcement. At the community level, schools, churches, and cooperatives must also embrace transparency. Just as secrecy undermines nations, lack of accountability erodes trust locally.

Conclusion: From Shadows to Light

The Financial Secrecy Index exposes the hidden architecture of global finance. Secrecy jurisdictions benefit a few but destabilize the global order for everyone else.

For Namibia, the lesson is urgent. The Fishrot and Oilrot scandals show how secrecy translates into corruption and lost opportunity. By rejecting secrecy and embracing transparency, Namibia can reclaim resources, strengthen governance, and build a fairer society. As the Tax Justice Network cautions, "Financial secrecy is the dark side of globalization. Unless tackled, it will continue to rob societies of justice and prosperity."

The shadows of wealth must be confronted - not only in Washington, Singapore, or Luxembourg, but in Windhoek, Eenhana, and every community where accountability matters.

NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS

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WORLD

From Ghats to K-Dramas: How India's Youth Is Embracing Korean and Japanese Culture

By: **Pragati Gupta**
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Contd from Page 1

BTS and BLACKPINK aren't distant stars - they are part of daily conversations, fashion choices, and emotional play-lists. Anime characters inspire creativity, while Korean and Japanese cafés have become spaces where tradition meets trend.

What's unfolding in Kashi isn't cultural imitation; it's cultural adaptation.

A generation rooted in ancient wisdom is embracing global pop culture without losing its identity.

In this sacred city, youth are rewriting modern stories with subtitles, soundtracks, and soulful connections that travel far beyond India.

For the youth of Kashi, Korean and Japanese culture is not just entertainment but a lifestyle.

The small romantic gestures in Korean dramas — like boys expressing love by tying shoelaces, making hand-heart gestures, or performing little acts of care have redefined the expectations and standards of love life among the city's young generation. Today's boys and girls have become more thoughtful, caring, and expressive in their relationships, much like K-drama characters. The influence of BTS, BLACKPINK, EXO, and PSY is evident in youth playlists, fashion choices, and social media interactions, reflecting a touch of global pop culture. Korean and Japanese cafés, street food joints, and themed events have become rapidly growing trends in Kashi, where ramen, tteok-bokki, kimchi, and sushi are not just food but a cultural experience.

Anime posters, collectables, cosplay events, and fan meet-ups provide a creative and expressive platform for the youth to showcase their hobbies and passions.

Even today, Korean and Japanese fan communities remain active in Kashi, whether discussing BTS's latest comeback or following BLACKPINK's fashion trends, and are becoming a vital part of youth identity and sense of belonging. The culture of respect and admiration is so deeply embedded that even first-love moments and small romantic gestures carry a Korean-style influence, adding a fresh flavour to the city's urban ro-

mance and social dynamics.

This craze intensified even more during COVID-19, when lockdowns confined youth to their homes and streaming K-dramas and K-Pop became a vital connection to the global culture.

Online platforms, apps, and streaming services made this experience easy and accessible. During this period, live concerts, online fan meets, and digital content from BTS, BLACKPINK, and EXO deepened the engagement. Even from home, youth were immersing themselves in K-dramas, anime, and Korean/Japanese food culture, strengthening the craze and creating a new wave of digital pop culture in Kashi.

I first learned about the opening of a Korean restaurant in Kashi in 2024. A few months later, on 30 March 2024, I visited TaoBao, a Korean restaurant located in the Ravindrapuri area of Kashi.

Situated on the top floor of the building, TaoBao begins its storytelling even before you enter. As I climbed the stairs, a scene straight out of a K-drama unfolded before my eyes — a bench featuring characters inspired by the iconic drama GUARDIAN (goblin), sitting a girl (Ji Eun Tak) with cake and Kim Shin (goblin) with a signature umbrella. At that moment, it felt less like entering a restaurant and more like stepping into a Korean drama itself.

As I opened the door, one wall greeted me with artistic paintings of BTS members, while another showcased a Korean girl in a traditional welcome pose.

Korean quotes and handwritten notes adorned the walls, and the soft, warm lighting created an unmistakable K-drama café ambience.

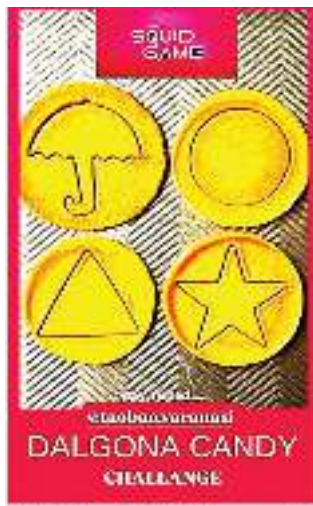
TaoBao felt less like a dining space and more like a living expression of Korean culture in the heart of Kashi.

We ordered a variety of dishes, including ramen, gyoza, kimbap, and corn dogs. Every dish was bursting with spicy, authentic flavours that were truly delightful in every sense.

What made the experience even more special was the cultural warmth extended by the staff.

They patiently taught customers how to eat using chopsticks in the traditional Korean way.

This experience was more than just a food review; it was an emotional connection that only a true Korean culture en-



TaoBao Café brings a slice of Korean culture to Kashi



Tao Bao Cafe offers fascinating cuisine and culinary adventures for the city's youth.



Award-winning Chef Amar Xavier of World Cuisines says Kashi's growing appetite for cuisines from the Far East is a hit at his restaurant.

thusiast can understand. For those who admire Korea and its traditions, TaoBao offers more than cuisine — it offers a glimpse into Korean

etiquette, respect, and lifestyle.

From food to manners, every detail reflected an honest and heartfelt tribute to Korean



Student Aneeqa, a young artist, believes Korean and Japanese cuisine offers tantalising tastes for the youth looking for a spicy change.



Youngsters Nitika and Anshika Yadav, athletes, unwind with Korean food and K-Dramas.

culture.

I also interacted with several visitors at the restaurant to understand how deeply Ko-

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WORLD

From Ghats to K-Dramas: How India's Youth Is Embracing Korean and Japanese Culture

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Our trendy young writer, Pragati Gupta, is a fan of Korean cuisine and fashion. The iconic red scarf isn't a fashion ... it's a silent promise of love.

rean and Japanese food culture has connected with Kashi's youth. I met Aneeqa, a student and passionate K-pop and food culture enthusiast. When asked about her favourite dish at TaoBao, she replied ramen, describing it as a spicy, steamy comfort food that feels perfect even on a lazy evening. She said ramen's customised nature, with eggs, vegetables, and extra chilli, makes it feel like "comfort food with drama," adding that a single sip enhances the joy. Aneeqa also described how K dramas and K Pop have directly influenced her food preferences. She spoke about the joy of sharing teok-bokki with friends on rainy streets, enjoying ramen straight from the pot, and finding comfort in simple combinations like kimchi and rice. Having already tried dishes such as ramen and Japanese udon noodles, she strongly believes that more Korean and Japanese restaurants should open in Kashi. As Kashi's appetite for global flavours continues to evolve, one café stands out for its vision that goes beyond trends, "World Cuisines Cafe" led by renowned Chef Amar Ronald Xavier. Serving a thoughtfully curated mix of Korean, Japanese, and Spanish cuisines, the café reflects a growing confidence among Kashi's youth in exploring the world through taste without leaving their cultural roots behind. When asked what inspired him to introduce a Korean-Japanese food café in a city like Kashi, Chef Amar spoke of food as a powerful medium of travel and connection.



World Cuisine's mouth-watering dishes are a hit with Kashi's youngsters



A collection of South Korean fashion items on sale in Kashi.

"Introducing international flavours can transport people to new destinations through food," he explained. For him, the idea was never just about serving dishes, but about sharing cultures, stories, and experiences on a single plate. Talking about customer favourites, Chef Amar noted that ramen, with its bold, spicy broth and comforting warmth, has quickly become a crowd favourite. However, what keeps diners coming back is the café's dynamic approach to food. By curating dishes from different cultures on different days, World Cuisines keeps the menu exciting, encouraging customers to constantly explore something new while staying rooted in quality and authenticity. Chef Amar also believes that Varanasi is witnessing a clear shift in food preferences, especially among the younger generation. He says the rising interest in Korean and Japanese cuisine stems from their bold flavours and rich umami profiles, which resonate surprisingly well with the local palate. "People here are curious and open to new tastes." The influence of global pop culture, digital exposure, and travel-inspired aspirations has made international cuisines feel less foreign and more familiar to the city's evolving food culture. Beyond food, World Cuisines represents a larger cultural dialogue unfolding in Kashi- where ancient spirituality coexists with modern global influences. Through his café, Chef Amar is not

only serving meals but also nurturing curiosity, openness, and cultural exchange. In a city known for timeless traditions, his work reflects how Kashi continues to reinvent itself, gracefully embracing the world while staying deeply connected to its soul. Chef Amar said Japanese and Spanish dishes are receiving remarkable appreciation, especially among Kashi's youth. "Dishes like sushi rolls, tempura, Japanese udon noodles, yakisoba, and teriyaki-based preparations have found a growing audience, while Spanish plates such as paella-inspired rice dishes and tapas-style servings are gaining popularity for their rich flavours and visual appeal." He said that today's youth enjoys food that is not only flavourful but also experiential — something that tells a story and feels global. Chef Amar said Indians are becoming increasingly curious and experimental with food. "Japanese and Spanish cuisines are no longer unfamiliar," he explained. "The balance of flavours, the focus on fresh ingredients, and the artistic presentation appeal strongly to young customers." He emphasised that such global food experiences contribute significantly to Kashi's evolving tourism culture. Kashi attracts visitors from India and abroad, and international cafés and multicultural menus add a modern layer to the traditional travel experience. Tourists who come for spirituality and heritage are now also discover-



K Cake offers BTS and K-Drama-inspired cakes that are a hit with young crowds in Kashi.



The winning K-Cakes team, led by Vikas, notes a rising trend of BTS and K-Drama cakes.

colour palettes, the fashion seen on screen quickly travels from drama episodes to Indian wardrobes. Each new release sparks trends that spread rapidly

Our writer, Pragati Gupta, is an award-winning Indian journalist.



Pramod Verma has trending Korean accessories at his shop in Kashi. He believes there is a strong market not only for the cuisine but also for accessories from Korea and Japan.

Kenya–Canada

Kenya–Canada Energy Partnership: A Strategic Milestone for Bilateral Growth

By: James Bwire
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Worth Noting:

- This engagement marks a significant milestone in bilateral relations, as both nations align their national priorities to pursue opportunities in the global energy landscape. Such meetings underscore the value of direct dialogue between energy leaders, enabling Kenya and Canada to address shared challenges while exploring avenues for collaboration. By convening at this level, the two countries demonstrate a commitment to practical partnerships that extend beyond formal diplomacy into actionable energy initiatives.
- For Kenya, the talks come at a critical moment. The country is seeking to expand and diversify its energy infrastructure, ensuring reliable access for its citizens while positioning itself as a regional hub for sustainable energy. Canada, with its established expertise in renewable energy practices and resource management, offers valuable insights and support. Wandayi's participation ensured that Kenya's priorities—enhancing energy access, reliability, and resilience—were placed firmly on the table. The Canadian delegation's involvement, led by senior officials, signaled Canada's interest in deepening ties with Kenya as part of its broader international energy strategy.

In a world where energy security and sustainability increasingly define the trajectory of nations, Kenya and Canada have taken a decisive step toward deepening their ties. Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum, Opiyo Wandayi, recently held high level bilateral talks with a distinguished Canadian delegation led by High Commissioner Joshua Tabah and the Honourable Randeep Sarai, Canada's Minister for Energy. The discussions, held in Nairobi, centered on strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries, with a particular emphasis on fostering mutual growth within the energy sector.

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The alignment between the two nations creates fertile ground for knowledge exchange in energy policy development and implementation. Kenya's growing market potential meets Canada's established capabilities in technology and



Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum Opiyo Wandayi (C) held high level bilateral talks with a Canadian delegation led by High Commissioner to Kenya, His Excellency Joshua Tabah, and Canada's Minister for Energy, the Honourable Randeep Sarai.

investment, forming a foundation for joint projects. The talks provided a platform to identify complementary strengths, where Kenya's ambitions for infrastructure growth intersect with Canada's experience in managing diverse energy portfolios. Through this engagement, both sides worked toward a partnership that supports long term stability in their respective energy sectors.

Strengthening the strategic partnership extends to practical areas of cooperation, including technology transfer and capacity building. Wandayi's leadership positions Kenya to benefit from Canada's experience in managing complex energy systems, while Canada gains opportunities to expand its influence in East Africa's energy market. The dialogue opened doors for collaborative ventures addressing supply chains and infrastructure development, moving beyond rhetoric to outline pathways for shared initiatives. Kenya gains insights into advanced governance models, while Canada secures a foothold in one of Africa's most dynamic energy markets.

This milestone reflects a deliberate effort to integrate energy cooperation into the broader framework of Kenya–Canada relations. Wandayi's role in steering the conversations emphasized

Kenya's proactive stance in international partnerships. Energy, as the core focus, serves as a natural entry point for deeper economic collaboration. Both countries recognize that aligned national priorities can lead to transformative outcomes, such as improved energy security and expanded market access. The talks highlighted how diplomacy in energy matters can yield tangible benefits, encouraging ongoing dialogue to refine partnership terms. Canada's delegation leadership underscored its dedication to fostering these relations, complementing Kenya's ambitions for sector advancement.

Fostering mutual growth requires sustained follow through on the commitments discussed. Wandayi's direct involvement ensures that Kenya's energy agen-

da remains at the forefront, guiding the partnership's direction. The bilateral talks created momentum for initiatives that benefit both economies through sector integration. Kenya stands to enhance its capabilities by leveraging Canadian support, while Canada expands its global footprint. This approach prioritizes practical alignment over isolated efforts, promoting resilience in the energy landscape. The significance of this meeting lies in its potential to evolve into a robust framework for ongoing collaboration.

The global energy landscape demands such partnerships, and this engagement between Kenya and Canada exemplifies effective bilateral strategy. Wandayi's leadership reinforced Kenya's role as a key player in regional energy development. The emphasis on mutual growth

ensures that benefits accrue to both sides, strengthening their positions internationally. The presence of High Commissioner Tabah and Minister Sarai elevated the discussions, linking them to broader diplomatic goals. This milestone not only advances immediate priorities but also lays the groundwork for enduring cooperation.

In conclusion, these high level talks mark a pivotal step in aligning Kenya's and Canada's energy priorities for mutual advancement. Wandayi's engagement with the Canadian delegation paves the way for deeper strategic ties, centered firmly on the energy sector. The focus on fostering growth through bilateral cooperation promises sustained benefits, reinforcing the value of such diplomatic efforts.



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Diaspora

Women in Law: Strengthening Justice, Empowering Nations



By: Maya Madkoria
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Worth Noting:

- I first learned about the opening of a Korean restaurant in Kashi in 2024. A few months later, on 30 March 2024, I visited TaoBao, a Korean restaurant located in the Ravindrapuri area of Kashi.
- Situated on the top floor of the building, TaoBao begins its storytelling even before you enter. As I climbed the stairs, a scene straight out of a K-drama unfolded before my eyes — a bench featuring characters inspired by the iconic drama GUARDIAN (goblin), sitting a girl (Ji Eun Tak) with cake and Kim Shin (goblin) with a signature umbrella. At that moment, it felt less like entering a restaurant and more like stepping into a Korean drama itself.
- As I opened the door, one wall greeted me with artistic paintings of BTS members, while another showcased a Korean girl in a traditional welcome pose.

In the 21st century, the true progress of any nation is measured not merely by economic indicators but by the strength, dignity, and empowerment of its women.

Across the globe, women are no longer confined to the margins of leadership—they are shaping institutions, influencing policy, and upholding justice in courtrooms with resilience and determination.

When strong legal frameworks are created for women and, more importantly, implemented with firmness and integrity, societies evolve into more balanced, equitable, and progressive systems.

Internationally, it has been observed that nations enforcing gender-protective legislation witness measurable growth in social harmony, economic participation, political representation, and psychological security for women.

Legal empowerment transforms women into active architects of development rather than passive beneficiaries of reform.

India, as the world's largest democracy, has steadily strengthened its legal architecture to safeguard women's rights across social, economic, and political spheres. The guarantees of equality and dignity enshrined in the Constitution of India have laid the foundation for progressive statutes aimed at protecting women.

Landmark legislations such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act reflect the nation's commitment to ensuring safety, fairness, and justice.

However, laws written on paper achieve meaning only when dedicated legal professionals translate them into real-world justice.

In the capital city of Bhopal, in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, Advocate Rachana Singh Chauhan stands as a compelling example of this commitment.

A Senior Executive Member of the Bhopal Bar and enrolled with the Bar Council of Madhya Pradesh since 2009, she represents the modern face of Indian women in law— independent, disciplined, and ethically grounded.

With over a decade of legal experience, Advocate Chauhan has built a strong professional reputation for her dedication, precision, and unwavering adherence to ethical practice.

Her career reflects not only longevity but consistency in delivering practical, strategic, and legally sound solutions tailored to the unique circumstances of each client.

Her dedication to her profession is ample testimony to the hard work of women in this field, where the delivery of justice is paramount, irrespective of her client's status.

Her practice spans diverse areas, including matters relating to dishonoured cheques – a crime which can



Advocate Rachana Singh Chauhan enjoys her job as a lawyer and believes in fighting for justice on many issues.

attract jail sentences in some countries, criminal litigation, divorce and family disputes, domestic violence cases, civil proceedings, anticipatory bail, and matters under financial recovery laws.

In addition to litigation, she is highly regarded for drafting and vetting agreements and legal documents, ensuring enforceability and long-term legal security for individuals and organisations alike.

What distinguishes her work is not merely legal competence, but a deep sense of responsibility toward women seeking justice. In cases concerning domestic rights, family disputes, or personal security, she approaches the law as both a shield and a structured instrument of fairness. Her clarity of communication enables clients to fully understand their rights, empowering them to make informed decisions in emotionally complex situations.

In modern India's developmental

era, women are advancing across every professional domain.

Within courtrooms, female advocates play a particularly significant role—not only in understanding the intricacies of statutory protections but also in ensuring their effective implementation at the grassroots level.

Their presence strengthens public confidence in judicial institutions and reinforces the principle that justice must be accessible, inclusive, and humane.

Advocate Rachana Singh Chauhan's contribution to social development and women's upliftment is deeply commendable.

Through firm advocacy and principled representation, she ensures that justice is pursued with dignity and determination. Her professional philosophy reflects a universal humanitarian ethos:

"We are human beings first. To preserve humanity and uphold fun-

damental rights, I will continue to serve through the law and ensure that every individual receives justice with respect and fairness," she said. As the world celebrated International Women's Day recently, her journey symbolises a broader global movement—one in which women in law stand as pillars of democratic strength.

When women are supported by strong legislation and empowered to enforce it, societies flourish economically, socially, politically, and morally.

This feature is dedicated to women across the world—especially those in the legal profession—who transform statutes into justice, rights into reality, and resilience into progress.

Our writer, Advocate Maya Madkoria, practices law at the Bhopal District Court, Madhya Pradesh, India. She is also a social activist and a published author.

YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

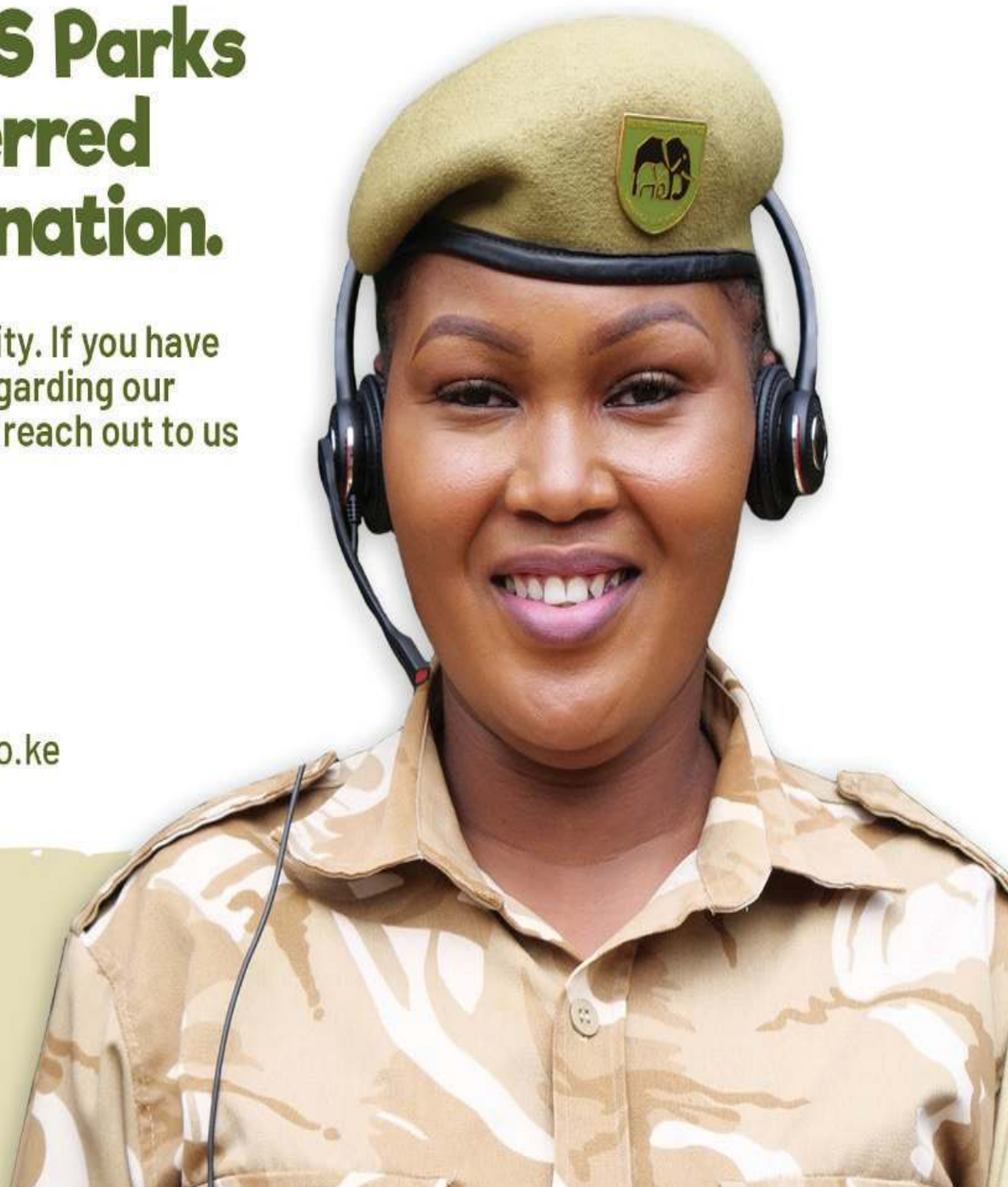
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Diaspora

UBA and BII chart new course for Africa’s trade finance future

The timing of this collaboration is no accident. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which came into force in 2021, represents one of the most ambitious trade integration initiatives in modern history.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

- For decades, African businesses—particularly small and medium sized enterprises—have faced a persistent barrier: the inability to access affordable trade finance. Letters of credit, guarantees, and supply chain finance remain elusive for many, limiting their ability to import competitively or export to global markets. The African Development Bank estimates this gap at more than USD 80 billion annually. It is a figure that represents not just lost opportunities but stalled dreams, as entrepreneurs and enterprises are unable to scale beyond local markets.
- UBA UK, the London arm of Africa’s Global Bank, brings to the table a network spanning 20 African countries. Its reach across the continent positions it to originate and structure transactions that connect African businesses to international systems. British International Investment, the UK’s development finance institution, complements this by supporting ventures that might otherwise fall outside conventional commercial appetite.



In London this week, a significant step was taken toward reshaping Africa’s economic trajectory. United Bank for Africa (UK) Limited and British International Investment plc signed a letter of intent to explore trade finance collaboration across the continent. While the announcement may sound technical, its implications are profound: it speaks to Africa’s struggle with access to finance, the promise of continental integration, and the growing role of international partnerships in unlocking opportunity. For decades, African businesses—particularly small and medium sized enterprises—have faced a persistent barrier: the inability to access affordable trade finance. Letters of credit, guarantees, and supply chain finance remain elusive for many, limiting their ability to import competitively or export to global markets. The African Development Bank estimates this gap at more than USD 80 billion annually. It is a figure that represents not just lost opportunities but stalled dreams, as entrepreneurs and enterprises are unable to scale beyond local markets. UBA UK, the London arm of Africa’s Global Bank,

brings to the table a network spanning 20 African countries. Its reach across the continent positions it to originate and structure transactions that connect African businesses to international systems. British International Investment, the UK’s development finance institution, complements this by supporting ventures that might otherwise fall outside conventional commercial appetite. Together, the two institutions are attempting to bridge a gap that has long constrained Africa’s economic potential. The timing of this collaboration is no accident. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which came into force in 2021, represents one of the most ambitious trade integration initiatives in modern history. By creating a single continental market, AfCFTA aims to lower barriers, harmonise regulations, and expand opportunities for intra African trade. Yet policy ambition alone cannot drive commerce. Businesses need financial tools to navigate the complexities of cross border trade. This is where UBA and BII’s initiative becomes critical. By aligning their efforts with AfCFTA’s operational-

isation, they are positioning themselves as enablers of the new continental market. UBA’s presence in major AfCFTA economies provides a natural platform for supporting businesses, while BII’s investment capacity ensures that capital can be mobilised where it is most needed. Africa’s trade finance challenge is not new. Historically, African businesses have been viewed as high risk by international lenders, leading to restrictive terms and limited access. This has perpetuated a cycle where only the largest corporations or state backed enterprises could secure financing, leaving smaller players excluded. The result has been a fragmented trade landscape, where potential remains untapped. The collaboration between UBA and BII reflects a shift in thinking. It acknowledges that Africa’s growth cannot be driven solely by large corporations. Small and medium sized enterprises, which account for the majority of employment, must be empowered. Trade finance is not just about paperwork—it is about enabling these businesses to grow, create jobs, and compete globally. The UK Government has

consistently emphasised its commitment to African economic development. Initiatives such as the UK Africa Investment Summit have highlighted the importance of mobilising capital for Africa focused ventures. The City of London, as a global financial hub, continues to play a central role in connecting African businesses to international finance. The UBA BII collaboration reinforces this role, linking African enterprises more directly to global systems. This partnership also reflects a broader trend: the recognition that Africa’s economic future is intertwined with global cooperation. As the continent seeks to define its place in the world economy, partnerships that combine local networks with international capital will be essential. Future cooperation between UBA and BII will depend on further assessment, due diligence, and internal approvals. Yet the intent itself is significant. It signals recognition of Africa’s potential and a willingness to invest in solutions that address structural barriers to growth. It sets a precedent for how African institutions and international partners can collaborate to tackle challenges

that have long constrained the continent’s trajectory. For Africa, the stakes are high. Closing the trade finance gap means empowering entrepreneurs, strengthening supply chains, and ensuring that the promise of AfCFTA translates into tangible benefits. It means creating an environment where businesses can thrive without being held back by financial constraints. The signing of this letter of intent may appear procedural, but it represents something larger: a vision of Africa where survival is not hindered by lack of access, and where opportunity is not stifled by financial barriers. It is a reminder that trade finance is not a technical detail—it is a lifeline for businesses, communities, and economies. As Africa continues to define its place in the global economy, initiatives like this offer a glimpse of what is possible: a continent not limited by constraints, but empowered by partnerships that unlock opportunity.

Diaspora

The status of the language is the status of the nation

The relationship between language and society, language development, granting the Uzbek language the status of the state language, reforms being implemented to widely promote the Uzbek language.



By: Bo'riyeva Muyassar
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ABSTRACT The relationship between language and society, language development, granting the Uzbek language the status of the state language, reforms being implemented to widely promote the Uzbek language.

Keywords: Uzbek language, state language, national language, language development, society, decision

Language is the mirror of a nation, the expression of a people's spiritual wealth and culture. Every nation's attention to and respect for its mother tongue is considered a measure of its national pride. For this reason, the profound phrase 'The status of language is the status of the nation' is widely used among the people. Paying attention to language means preserving the identity, history, and culture of the nation. Language is used as a means of realizing national identity. The mother tongue is a tool for preserving each nation's history and traditions and transmitting them to future generations. Realising national identity and safeguarding history and culture is achieved through language. Therefore, respect for a nation's language is the preservation of its identity and values. At the same time, on 21 October 2019, the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan concerning measures to enhance the prestige and status of the Uzbek language as the state language was approved. According to him, it was necessary to take measures to enhance the prestige and status of the Uzbek language as a state language, and the main measures were defined.

The Uzbek language, as one of the important symbols of independence, holds the status of the state language of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Today, it is widely used in documents and the educational process in the activities of state and public institutions. At the same time, numerous measures are needed to enhance the prestige of the language, to introduce it into all spheres of state and public life, and to promote it internationally. Below are the main measures among these initiatives.

It is necessary to strengthen the significance of the Uzbek language

in legislation and ensure the practical implementation of the laws on the State language. For this purpose, all document work in state institutions and organisations must be conducted only in Uzbek. The law "On the State Language" adopted in 1989 and the decrees on the development of the state language in 1993 were the initial steps to strengthen the status of the Uzbek language. At present, it is necessary to introduce control mechanisms to enforce the implementation of laws.

Giving special attention to the Uzbek language in the education system can strengthen its status at the state level by teaching it thoroughly in schools and higher education institutions. For this: it is important to update language teaching methodology, expand scientific and technical literature in Uzbek, and create resources on modern sciences and technologies.

Promoting the Uzbek language internationally. To secure a place for the Uzbek language on the international stage, it is necessary to expand teaching programmes in foreign countries. Establish programmes to teach Uzbek abroad through Uzbekistan's embassies and cultural centres. Additionally, it is possible to assist in opening Uzbek language faculties in foreign higher education institutions.

Enriching scientific, literary and cultural resources in the Uzbek language. The Uzbek language should be developed as a language with a wealth of scientific, literary and cultural resources. For this: Digitising literature, placing scientific works, textbooks, oral heritage and national epics in online databases, creating and translating films, series and TV shows in Uzbek to expand the use of the language among young people and adults, and developing content in Uzbek through modern applications and websites, I believe this is necessary.

The legal foundations for the use of the Uzbek language as the state language in our country are defined by law. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the State Language" is based on three principles: universality, obligatoriness and legal guarantee. Indeed, establishing a solid legal status for the state language has created sufficient grounds for the extensive use of the rich possibilities of our language, while ensuring respect for the languages, customs and traditions of all nations and peoples living in our country, and has provided the necessary conditions for the free circulation of the Uzbek language. To become a well-known country in the world, we must achieve the enhancement of the status of the state language.

In recent years, significant changes have occurred in the development of our language, as in all other



spheres of our country. The prestige of the Uzbek language internationally is increasing, and it is becoming an active means of communication. The widespread use of our language in various levels of official meetings and negotiations, the establishment of Uzbek language centres in several educational institutions and scientific organisations in our republic, and the growing number of people interested in learning our native language are clear evidence of this.

This landmark decision, announced in Uzbekistan on 21 October 1989, was the first bold step in preserving the country's sovereignty and independence. Based on this historic document, the Uzbek language gained a solid legal foundation and high status.

Today, our Uzbekistan is advancing to a new, higher stage of development under the main principle of "From national revival to national prosperity." In the course of the extensive reforms being carried out in our country, the role and prestige of the state language in our lives are steadily increasing.

In accordance with the Decree PF-5850 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 21 October 2019, the Department for the Development of the State Language under the Cabinet of Ministers was established. On 20 October 2020, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 'Measures to Further Develop the Uzbek Language and Improve Language Policy in Our Country' was adopted, and based on this Decree, the 'Concept

for the Development of the Uzbek Language and the Improvement of Language Policy for 2020-2030' was developed. The main directions in the concept envisage the following: By 2025, to increase the coverage of Uzbek language groups in the state general secondary education system to 72%, and by 2030 to 80%; by 2030, to increase the teaching of the mother tongue in the foundational curricula for lower years in vocational schools across the republic from the current 84 hours per week to 110 hours; Increasing the number of Uzbek language departments in higher education institutions to 120 by 2025 and to 140 by 2030; Expanding the implementation of the "Guide to Conducting Business Documents in the State Language in Uzbekistan" in all agencies for conducting business in the state language;

In 2020, to create 15 linguistic, specialised terminological, explanatory dictionaries to enrich the vocabulary of the Uzbek language; To implement the system of training radio and television announcers through retraining courses that enhance their speech culture in the Uzbek literary language and to achieve 100 percent coverage by 2030; By 2025, develop unified electronic templates of sectoral documents in the state language and 14 online applications for their use, and increase this number to 25 by 2030; Creating Uzbek applications and electronic dictionary programmes for software products

to create programmes that teach Uzbek for communities

By 2030, increase the number of centres teaching the Uzbek language in foreign higher education institutions from the current 17 to 60; Increase the number of clubs for friends of reading books in Uzbek to 30 by 2025 and to 40 by 2030.

Moreover, today, saying that our mother tongue has truly become the state language and has emerged as an unparalleled force that inspires our people to pursue great goals in building a free, independent, and prosperous life in our country is not an exaggeration. Each of us should regard our attention to the state language as attention to independence, respect and loyalty to the state language as respect and loyalty to our motherland, and adopt this perspective as a rule of our life.

Attention to the status of our language is an important foundation of our concern for the future of the next generation. From this perspective, extensive reforms are being implemented in our country to enhance the status and prestige of the Uzbek language as the state language, ensure its active use in all spheres of society, and educate the younger generation in the spirit of respect and loyalty to our mother tongue.

Bo'riyeva Muyassar is a second-year student at Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoi. Uzbekistan

Biological advantages of cereals and their role in a healthy diet

Cereal grains, such as wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), maize (*Zea mays*), rice (*Oryza sativa*), and oats (*Avena sativa*), are vital components of human diets and key contributors to global food security.



By: **Shomirzayeva Madinabonu**
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Abstract. Cereal grains, such as wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), maize (*Zea mays*), rice (*Oryza sativa*), and oats (*Avena sativa*), are vital components of human diets and key contributors to global food security. These grains provide essential macronutrients and micronutrients, as well as bioactive molecules including polyphenols, lignans, and beta-glucans. Soluble dietary fibers act as prebiotics, enhancing gut microbial balance and gastrointestinal function, while cereal proteins supply necessary amino acids and unsaturated fatty acids support cardiovascular health. Antioxidant compounds counteract oxidative damage, and fibers help regulate blood glucose and insulin responses. Regular consumption of cereals has been linked to lower risks of obesity, heart disease, and some cancers. Due to their ecological adaptability and nutrient density, cereals represent biologically active foods that promote metabolic regulation and long-term health.

Keywords: Cereal grains; Nutritional composition; Bioactive compounds; Dietary fiber; Prebiotics; Antioxidants; Metabolic health; Gut microbiota; Functional foods; Chronic disease prevention.

Introduction. Cereal grains constitute one of the primary foundations of human nutrition, providing a diverse array of macro- and micronutrients essential for physiological function and overall health[1,2]. Globally, crops such as wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), maize (*Zea mays*), rice (*Oryza sativa*), and oats (*Avena sativa*) dominate staple food systems due to their adaptability to various agroecological zones and their high yield potential[3]. These grains are characterized by complex biochemical compositions, including carbohydrates, high-quality proteins with essential amino acids, lipids, vitamins, minerals, and non-starch polysaccharides[1,4]. Such diversity in nutrient content underpins their crucial role in energy supply, maintenance of metabolic balance, and prevention of nutrient deficiencies across populations[2,5]. The dietary significance of cereals extends beyond basic macronutri-

ent provision. Soluble and insoluble fibers present in whole grains act as prebiotics, modulating gut microbiota composition and enhancing intestinal barrier function. This interaction promotes optimal digestive health and has been linked to reduced risk of gastrointestinal disorders and metabolic syndrome[6]. Moreover, cereals contain bioactive phytochemicals such as polyphenols, flavonoids, and lignans, which exhibit potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. These compounds contribute to the mitigation of oxidative stress and regulation of chronic inflammatory pathways, factors strongly associated with cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers[4,7]. In addition to their biochemical and functional attributes, cereals play a pivotal role in food security and sustainable agricultural practices. Their cultivation supports stable caloric intake for large populations while providing raw materials for a range of processed foods. For instance, wheat and barley are integral to bread and pasta production, whereas rice and maize serve as primary energy sources in many regions of Asia and Africa. Research in Uzbekistan and Central Asia highlights that agroclimatic conditions, particularly temperature and soil fertility, significantly influence grain protein content and gluten quality, directly affecting both nutritional value and technological properties for food processing[8]. Emerging studies also emphasize the importance of whole-grain consumption compared to refined cereal products. Whole grains retain the bran, germ, and endosperm fractions, preserving dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals[7]. Epidemiological evidence indicates that diets rich in whole grains are associated with improved cardiovascular health, better glycemic control, and lower incidence of obesity-related conditions. These findings underscore the need for integrating cereals strategically into dietary guidelines to maximize public health benefits while minimizing chronic disease risks. In summary, cereals are more than staple crops; they are complex nutritional matrices with multifaceted health-promoting effects. Understanding their biochemical composition, functional properties, and interaction with human physiology is essential for developing dietary strategies that enhance health outcomes. This study aims to explore the nutritional characteristics of major cereal grains, emphasizing their role in promoting gastrointestinal integrity, energy regulation, and chronic disease prevention, with a particular focus on recent advances in Central Asian research.

Comparison of Whole Grains and Refined Grains

table 1

Characteristic	Whole Grains	Refined Grains
Grain structure	Contain bran, germ, and endosperm	Mostly endosperm remains
Dietary fiber	High fiber content	Significantly reduced fiber
Vitamin content	Rich in B-group vitamins and vitamin E	Many vitamins lost during processing
Mineral content	High levels of iron, magnesium, and zinc	Reduced mineral concentration
Glycemic index	Lower glycemic impact	Higher glycemic index
Health effects	Supports digestive health and metabolic balance	Excessive intake may contribute to metabolic disorders

Research materials. The study utilized a diverse set of academic and professional resources to ensure comprehensive coverage of cereal grains and their nutritional implications. Key materials included:

Peer-reviewed journals in nutrition and food science: These provided up-to-date findings on biochemical composition, health benefits, and dietetic applications of cereals.

Specialized textbooks on dietetics and public health: These served as foundational references for understanding macronutrient and micronutrient contributions of cereals to human health.

Locally published Uzbek research articles and educational textbooks: These resources offered contextual insights into cereal cultivation, processing, and consumption patterns specific to Uzbekistan. Notable works include:

M. Akhmedov et al., “Qishloq xo‘jaligi mahsulotlarini qayta ishlash va oziqlantirish” (Processing of Agricultural Products and Nutrition) - detailing agricultural processing methods and nutrient preservation strategies.

S. Normurodov, “Oziqlanish fanining asoslari” (Fundamentals of Nutritional Science) - pro-

viding foundational knowledge on nutrient requirements and dietary planning.

Official dietary guidelines and reports from Uzbek health authorities: These documents informed local nutritional recommendations and public health strategies. The inclusion of both international and local literature ensured a balanced perspective, capturing global scientific standards while remaining relevant to the Uzbek context.

Research methodology. A multi-step methodological approach was applied to synthesize and analyze the information effectively:

Systematic literature review: Academic databases including PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Scopus were searched for relevant studies on cereal grains, nutrient composition, and health outcomes. Studies were screened for relevance, recency, and scientific rigor.

Comparative nutritional analysis: Nutrient profiles of principal cereal grains (wheat, rice, maize, barley, rye, and oats) were extracted and compared to identify patterns in macronutrient and micronutrient distribution, fiber content, and bioactive compounds.

Contextual integration of Uzbek research: Findings from local

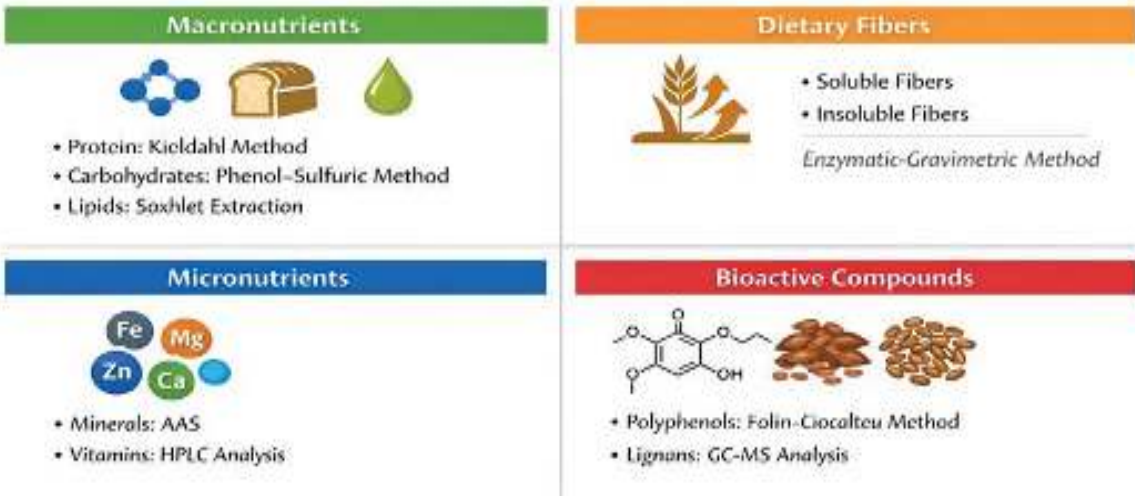
studies and textbooks were incorporated to highlight region-specific agricultural practices, dietary habits, and nutrient intake trends among the Uzbek population.

Synthesis with official dietary recommendations: National dietary guidelines from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and nutrition institutes were considered to contextualize global data within the local health framework.

This integrative method allowed for a comprehensive assessment of cereals as dietary staples, balancing international scientific evidence with national dietary contexts and priorities.

Literature Review. Nutrient Composition of Cereals. Cereals constitute a primary dietary component worldwide due to their rich and diverse nutrient profile. They are predominantly a source of carbohydrates, which serve as the main fuel for metabolic and cellular energy processes. In addition to providing energy, cereals are an important source of dietary fiber, which plays a crucial role in maintaining intestinal health and regular bowel function. Whole grains, in particular, supply proteins containing essential amino acids, necessary for tissue growth and re-

Biochemical Analyses



Biological advantages of cereals and their role in a healthy diet

*Cereal grains, such as wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), maize (*Zea mays*), rice (*Oryza sativa*), and oats (*Avena sativa*), are vital components of human diets and key contributors to global food security.*

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Health Benefits of Cereal Consumption



Contd from Page 22

pair, with higher concentrations than in refined counterparts. Cereals also contribute vital vitamins, notably B-group vitamins such as niacin, thiamine, and riboflavin, which are essential for enzymatic reactions in energy metabolism. They provide key minerals, including iron, magnesium, and zinc, which support hematopoiesis, bone health, and enzymatic activity. Moreover, cereals contain phytonutrients, particularly antioxidants like phenolic acids and flavonoids, which help neutralize free radicals and protect cells from oxidative damage. The distinction between whole grains and refined cereals is significant. Whole grains retain the bran and germ, where most fiber, micronutrients, and bioactive compounds reside. Refined cereals, however, lose these critical components during processing, which reduces their nutritional density. Consequently, the consumption of unprocessed cereals is strongly recommended for maximizing nutrient intake.

Biological Benefits of Cereal Consumption. Energy Metabolism. The high carbohydrate content of cereals makes them an efficient source of energy for both physical activity and cognitive function. Complex carbohydrates are gradually digested, providing a sustained release of glucose into the bloodstream, which fuels cellular respiration and supports prolonged mental and physical performance.

Digestive Health. Dietary fiber present in cereals has multiple beneficial effects on gastrointestinal function: Increases stool bulk, facilitating smoother bowel movements. Prevents constipation and related digestive discomforts. Promotes growth of beneficial gut microbiota, which contributes to improved nutrient absorption and immune modulation. These effects collectively enhance overall digestive efficiency and reduce the risk of gastrointestinal disorders.

Prevention of Chronic Diseases. A substantial body of research demonstrates that consistent consumption of whole grains is associated with reduced incidence of chronic conditions such as: Cardiovascular diseases, by improving lipid profiles and reducing systemic inflammation. Type 2 diabetes, through modulation of postprandial glucose levels and insulin sensitivity. Certain types of cancer, particularly colorectal cancer, due to the protective role of dietary fiber and antioxidants. The synergy of dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients in whole grains underpins these preventive effects, highlighting their

importance in a balanced diet. Uzbek Research on Cereal Consumption. In Uzbekistan, cereals remain a cornerstone of traditional diets and nutritional practices. Local studies emphasize the health-promoting potential of these grains in everyday diets. For instance, Akhmedov (2018) demonstrated that regular intake of whole-grain wheat and barley can reduce postprandial glucose fluctuations, contributing to better metabolic regulation. Similarly, Normurodov (2020) highlighted that cereal consumption is instrumental in addressing micronutrient deficiencies in rural populations, particularly for iron and zinc. These findings underscore that cereals not only serve as an energy source but also as functional foods, offering protective benefits against metabolic disorders and supporting long-term health outcomes. The Uzbek scientific community continues to explore region-specific cereal varieties to optimize their nutritional and therapeutic potential[9,10].

Discussion

Importance in Public Health. Cereal crops represent one of the most significant components of population nutrition and food security in many regions of the world, particularly in Central Asian countries. In Uzbekistan, cereal-based foods are deeply embedded in daily dietary patterns and constitute a major source of caloric intake for a large proportion of the population. Due to their relatively low cost, long storage life, and wide availability, cereals provide an accessible nutritional resource for households across different socio-economic groups. From a public health perspective, cereals contribute substantially to the daily energy

requirements of individuals because they contain high concentrations of complex carbohydrates, which serve as the primary fuel for human metabolic processes. In addition to carbohydrates, cereal grains also supply moderate amounts of plant-based proteins, dietary fiber, and several essential micronutrients including B-group vitamins, iron, magnesium, and zinc. These nutrients play important physiological roles in supporting nervous system function, red blood cell formation, enzymatic activity, and overall metabolic regulation. For economically vulnerable populations, cereal products often represent the most reliable and affordable dietary staple. In such contexts, the nutritional contribution of cereals becomes particularly important because they help prevent energy deficiency and reduce the risk of certain micronutrient insufficiencies. Consequently, many public health nutrition strategies emphasize the promotion of nutritionally enriched or whole-grain cereal products as part of balanced dietary guidelines. Furthermore, cereal consumption patterns can influence long-term health outcomes. Diets that include adequate amounts of whole grains are associated with a reduced risk of chronic non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disorders, metabolic syndrome, and type 2 diabetes. For this reason, improving the nutritional quality of cereal-based diets has become an important objective in preventive nutrition and public health policy.

Whole Grains versus Refined Grains. The biological and nutritional value of cereals depends significantly on the degree of processing applied to

the grain. Whole-grain cereals retain all structural components of the grain kernel, including the bran layer, germ, and endosperm. These components collectively contain a wide range of nutrients and biologically active compounds that contribute to human health. The bran fraction is particularly rich in dietary fiber, antioxidants, and several micronutrients, while the germ contains essential fatty acids, vitamin E, and additional vitamins and minerals. Because whole grains maintain these components intact, they provide a more comprehensive nutritional profile compared with refined grains. Dietary fiber from whole grains supports normal gastrointestinal function, enhances satiety, and helps regulate blood glucose levels by slowing carbohydrate absorption. In contrast, refined cereals undergo industrial processing that removes the bran and germ layers, leaving primarily the starchy endosperm. Although this process improves texture, shelf life, and consumer acceptability, it also leads to a considerable reduction in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. As a result, refined cereal products often have a higher glycemic index, which may contribute to more rapid fluctuations in blood glucose levels when consumed frequently. To compensate for nutrient losses during processing, many refined grain products are enriched or fortified with selected vitamins and minerals such as thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and iron. While enrichment partially restores nutritional value, it does not fully replicate the complex combination of bioactive compounds present in whole grains. Consequently, nutrition scientists generally consider whole-grain cereals to be biological-

ly and nutritionally superior to their refined counterparts.

Conclusion. Cereal grains play an important role in human nutrition due to their valuable biological properties and wide availability. They serve as the main sources of complex carbohydrates and provide sustained energy necessary for daily physical and mental activity. In addition, cereal products contain dietary fiber, which supports digestive health and contributes to the proper functioning of the gastrointestinal tract. Regular consumption of cereal products is also associated with a reduced risk of a number of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and metabolic conditions. This protective effect is mainly due to the presence of fiber, antioxidants and other bioactive compounds naturally found in cereal products. In addition, cereal products provide essential micronutrients such as B vitamins and essential minerals, which support metabolic processes, immune function and overall physiological balance. Therefore, including cereal products in the daily diet is an effective way to improve nutritional quality and promote long-term health. In this article, we have highlighted how strengthening national dietary recommendations and encouraging the consumption of grain products, especially in grain-based food cultures like Uzbekistan, can contribute to improving population health and sustainable dietary practices.

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Youth and Social Media: Opportunities and Risks in the Digital Age

Today, social networks have become an integral part of the lives of young people. For them, social networks are not just a means of communication, but a place that has become a way of life.



By: Karimova Muhayyo
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Worth Noting:

- If we look at the statistics, we see that young people spend 3-5 hours a day on social networks.
- This often leads to ineffective use of young people's time. Unfortunately, this leads to less time being devoted to reading, reading books, and other useful activities. In addition, being constantly attached to your phone leads to a decrease in attention, disruption of sleep patterns.
- As a result, young people are likely to be distracted from important tasks and seriously harm their health, namely, insomnia and eye diseases. Recently, a survey was conducted entitled "What role do social networks play in the lives of young people?" Over the course of a week, more than 110 young people participated in the survey and expressed their opinions.

Today, social networks have become an integral part of the lives of young people. For them, social networks are not just a means of communication, but a place that has become a way of life. Unfortunately, it is difficult to imagine the life of young people without the Internet and virtual communication. At this point, it is natural to ask: do social networks serve the development of young people or vice versa? This question is currently worrying many experts, parents and representatives of all societies.

Nowadays, not only young people, but also adults "live" on social networks, although the negative aspects of this are obvious. Forgetting about their real life, they become attached to this network and unconsciously try to draw conclusions from the events taking place there. They follow various bloggers, follow their opinions, and want to be like them. Moreover, they compare their lives with theirs, and, as you can see, there are several differences. This, of course, is a natural situation, because bloggers also post on social networks, especially on the now popular Instagram network, situations that they like, events that they want to show people. Naturally, most of them do not show their stress, misfortunes, and similar sad days in their lives. However, people may not see this side of the situation and complain about their lives, fall into mental pressure and de-

pression.

If we look at the statistics, we see that young people spend 3-5 hours a day on social networks. This often leads to ineffective use of young people's time. Unfortunately, this leads to less time being devoted to reading, reading books, and other useful activities. In addition, being constantly attached to your phone leads to a decrease in attention, disruption of sleep patterns. As a result, young people are likely to be distracted from important tasks and seriously harm their health, namely, insomnia and eye diseases. Recently, a survey was conducted entitled "What role do social networks play in the lives of young people?" Over the course of a week, more than 110 young people participated in the survey and expressed their opinions. While 32 percent of them agreed that these networks are useful for making friends and making interesting acquaintances, the same number of users admitted that these networks have a negative impact on the upbringing and morality of young people. Some young people said that these networks are nothing more than idleness, a tool for malicious people to use for their own benefit, and some said that they provide an opportunity to freely express their opinions.

On the other hand, the Internet provides a number of opportunities for the younger generation. First of all, these networks serve their

education. Through various pages, online lessons and useful videos, young people can increase their knowledge and acquire new skills. Social networks also expand the circle of communication. Regardless of their region, young people have the opportunity to get to know each other and exchange ideas. This creates the basis for expanding their worldview. In addition, it is noticeable that social networks are currently helping young people to demonstrate their creative potential. They recite various poems, sing songs or draw pictures, upload them to Instagram or Tiktok social networks, and

gain public attention and support. The good news is that young people who become known through such social networks later achieve success in art, media or other creative fields. At the same time, these networks serve as a source of income for the younger generation. For example, many young people are blogging on YouTube and Instagram, creating useful content, and gaining subscribers. As their subscribers increase, they have the opportunity to earn money by placing advertisements or collaborating. We can see that social networks are becoming not only a means of communication

for the future generation, but also a field of new professions and opportunities. In conclusion, it is worth saying that Internet networks open up great opportunities for future owners, but it is advisable to use them wisely and in moderation. Understanding their benefits and risks, young people should be able to maintain a balance between the virtual world and real life.

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