

Burkina Faso's military ruler Captain Ibrahim Traoré has publicly declared that democracy "kills" and that his people must "forget" it

## Burkina Faso

"People need to forget about the issue of democracy. Democracy is not for us," Traoré .:



# 'Forget democracy — it kills': Burkina Faso's military ruler rejects the ballot and bets on Russia:

Captain Ibrahim Traoré, who seized power three years ago, has told his people to abandon democratic rule entirely — as a new report counts more than 1,800 civilians killed on his watch

Burkina Faso's military ruler Captain Ibrahim Traoré has publicly declared that democracy "kills" and that his people must "forget" it, cementing the West African nation's sharpest turn yet away from constitutional governance and toward an indefinite military order backed by Russia. Speaking in an interview broadcast on state television on Thursday, Traoré — who seized power in a coup in September 2022 — made his most explicit rejection yet of multi-party democracy, offering no alternative framework while vowing that Burkina Faso would "completely change the



Captain Ibrahim Traoré

way things are done." The remarks come as a damning report by Human Rights Watch documents more than 1,800 civilian deaths in the country since he took power, deepening international alarm over the trajectory of one of Africa's most volatile states. "People need to forget about the issue of democracy. Democracy is not for us," Traoré told state broadcasters. "Wherever they — Western powers — try to establish democracy in the world, it's

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Gulf tensions batter Kenya's tea and meat exports — but diversification softens the blow

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That's why many people are now looking back at Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) for a more balanced way of living. One of the most important parts of IKS is Ayurveda. It doesn't just treat diseases but also helps to stay healthy.

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It is also useful for managing long-

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# Collaboration is not an option in the management of safety in the petroleum sector



By: Eng. Edward Kinyua  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

• Accidents involving petroleum create heavy financial losses arising from damaged infrastructure, lost product, business interruptions and legal liabilities. Further, the environment suffers serious degradation due to soil, surface and ground water contamination. Most tragically, lives are lost and families permanently altered through life threatening injuries, fatalities and long-term disabilities. These human costs translate into broader economic burdens of disrupted supply chains, job losses, increased insurance premiums, and a strain on healthcare facilities.

• Safety is a shared responsibility by the petroleum transport company, the driver, the consignee, regulatory entities and the public in general. Accidents will more often result from unsafe incidences ignored over time and ultimately progressing to actual occurrences.

Reported accidents and incidents in the petroleum sector cost the Country's economy more than Kenya Shillings 197 million in direct losses between July and December 2025. According to statistics analysed by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), 83% of these accidents occurred during transportation of petroleum products. These losses translate to severe consequences that extend far beyond the consignor and the consignee. They ripple across communities and public systems, revealing a shared vulnerability that demands collective responsibility. Accidents involving petroleum create heavy financial losses arising from damaged infrastructure, lost product, business interruptions and legal liabilities. Further, the environment suffers serious degradation due to soil, surface and ground water contamination. Most tragically, lives are lost and families permanently altered through life threatening injuries, fatalities and long-term disabilities. These human costs translate into broader economic burdens of disrupted supply chains, job losses, increased insurance premiums, and a strain on healthcare facilities. Safety is a shared responsibility by the petroleum transport company, the driver, the consignee, regulatory entities and the public in general. Accidents will more often result from unsafe incidences ignored over time and ultimately progressing to actual occurrences. These incidences are technically classified as near misses. It is a regulatory requirement for licensees in the sector to keep record of near misses, the main objective being the development and implementation of robust mitigation measures aimed at preventing real occurrences. Human factors remain one



of the leading causes of accidents involving petroleum transportation. To this end petroleum transport companies are required by the Petroleum (Licensing of Petroleum Road Transportation Business) Regulations, 2025 to implement structured journey management plans for petroleum deliveries. The plans outline safe routes based on risk assessment, designated rest points, communication protocols, and contingency measures in the event of an accident. Route planning and documentation to a great extent reduces the likelihood of accidents and poor response during emergencies. Monitoring driver behaviour is a key emphasis in the Regulations and hence petroleum transporters are required to put in place resilient Transport Safety Management Systems (TSMS). These systems require companies engaged in petroleum road transportation to institutionalise safety across their operations including use of tracking systems which are GPS enabled for their fleets. Drivers are expected to adhere to approved routes, comply

with speed limits and rest requirements, and follow operational safety procedures at loading, transit and offloading points. This moves the sector away from informal, ad-hoc driving practices to a disciplined, accountable transport system where safety decisions are deliberate, documented, and auditable. A TSMS typically includes policies on risk assessment, incident reporting, preventive maintenance, driver training, fatigue management, emergency preparedness, and continuous improvement. By embedding safety into corporate governance structures, the Regulations shift responsibility from the driver alone to the company, ensuring that safety is managed systematically rather than reactively. Transport Safety Management Systems also strengthen regulatory oversight. Operators must demonstrate compliance through documentation, audits and reporting, enabling EPRA and other regulators to identify systemic risks, enforce corrective actions and benchmark industry performance. This data-driven approach allows safety in-

terventions to be proactive, reducing the probability and severity of incidents before they escalate into disasters. Journey management requirements and safety management systems represent a paradigm shift in derisking petroleum transportation by road. The two enable recognition that accidents are rarely isolated events but often the result of cumulative failures across several components spanning from planning, behaviour, equipment, and organisational culture. Investigations conducted on the various accidents involving petroleum transportation reveal the need for stakeholder collaboration to implement safety practices throughout the value chain. Such collaboration can be achieved through capacity building for individual petroleum transport companies and sector players to achieve enhanced surveillance. The consignees often Oil Marketing Companies, must also demand compliance from their logistics partners while insurance companies should incentivise safe practices through strict policies.

The Petroleum (Licensing of Petroleum Road Transportation Business) Regulations, 2025 provide a structured approach to enhancing safety in petroleum road transportation setting clear requirements for licensing, vehicle standards, driver competence including requirements for defensive driving, operational procedures, and compliance monitoring. The Regulations formalise accountability across transporters, marketers, and other operators, while empowering the regulator to enforce standards that reduce systemic risk. The duty of care is upon all of us; Policy makers, Regulators, Oil Marketing Companies, petroleum transportation companies, other road users and members of the public to ensure effectiveness in the implementation of the Regulations. Bottom line; Do not ignore any unsafe practice on the road, it may affect you directly or indirectly.

*The writer is the Director, Petroleum and Gas at the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority*

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## Privacy

# Privacy vs Payments: Decoding Safaricom's New Data Minimization Protocol

By: David Nyaga  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

The change is immediate and striking. Under the new protocol, a recipient no longer sees a sender's full mobile number. Instead, the digits are partially obfuscated formatted as 0722\*\*\*000. Furthermore, sender identification has been trimmed from the traditional three names to just two.

While core transaction details, the amount, date, time, and the unique alphanumeric ID remain transparent for accounting purposes, the third-party visibility that once fueled a shadow industry of data harvesting has been cut off.

For nearly two decades, the familiar chime of an M-Pesa confirmation message has been the heartbeat of Kenya's economy. But that notification always carried a hidden cost: a wealth of personal data. Every time a Kenyan "sent money," they unknowingly broadcasted their full three names and ten-digit mobile number to a stranger.

As of March 24, 2026, that era of open data exchange has officially ended. Following a landmark approval by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), Safaricom has fundamentally altered the DNA of its peer-to-person (P2P) transactions. By introducing a "Data Minimization" feature that masks sender details, East Africa's largest telco is drawing a firm line in the sand, setting a new digital gold standard for the region.

### The Mechanics of the Mask

The change is immediate and striking. Under the new protocol, a recipient no longer sees a sender's full mobile number. Instead, the digits are partially obfuscated formatted as 0722\*\*\*000. Furthermore, sender identification has been trimmed from the traditional three names to just two.

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### The Catalyst: Combatting the 'Spam Epidemic'

This overhaul is not merely a technical update; it is a defensive maneuver. For years, the unrestricted sharing of phone numbers created a massive, unregulated directory. Unscrupulous merchants and "data brokers" frequently harvested these numbers to bombard users with unsolicited marketing texts and predatory lending offers.

More dangerously, the exposure of full identities fueled sophisticated social engineering schemes. Fraudsters used the "three names" provided by M-Pesa to pose as bank agents or government officials, gaining a veneer of legitimacy that cost Kenyans

billions in lost savings.

By limiting the dataset, Safaricom is finally aligning with the strict "Privacy by Design" principles of Kenya's Data Protection Act (2019), which dictates that only data strictly necessary for a transaction should be processed.

### The '334' Compromise: Consent as a Currency

A significant concern during the rollout was the impact on informal traders and "Mama Mbogas" who rely on phone numbers to verify payments or resolve disputes. To address this, Safaricom engineered a clever workaround rooted in explicit consent.

If a recipient requires full details, they can forward

the transaction message to the shortcode 334. This triggers a system prompt to the sender, asking if they are willing to share their full name and number.

•The Power Shift: The sender has a two-hour window to approve or decline.

•The Time Limit: Requests must be made within 24 hours of the transaction. This mechanism transforms what was once an automatic data leak into a conscious, consensual handshake.

### A Strategy of Silence

This move is the culmination of a multi-year strategy. Safaricom began this journey in 2020 with Pochi la Bishara, followed by number masking for Lipa na M-Pesa (Buy Goods and PayBill) in

2022. Extending this shield to millions of daily P2P transfers was the logical, albeit most complex, final frontier.

### The Bottom Line

As digital ecosystems in Africa mature, the metric for success is no longer just "inclusion," it is "integrity." Safaricom's decision to hide personal information is a bold acknowledgment that the convenience of mobile money cannot come at the expense of the user's right to be left alone. By putting the power of data sharing back into the hands of the consumer, M-Pesa is proving that a financial system can be both frictionless and fiercely protective.

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# KSh20bn Road Boost as Ruto Flexes Development Agenda

By: James Kabotia  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

President William Ruto has moved to inject freKSh momentum into the country's road network, announcing the release of KSh20 billion to contractors from next week to fast-track stalled and ongoing projects. The funding, he said, will ensure seamless continuation of road works across the country, reinforcing the government's infrastructure drive amid efforts to unlock economic growth.

His latest pledge comes barely a month after the State cleared KSh177 billion in pending road bills—some dating back to 2020—a move that enabled contractors to return to sites after years of delays.

"The tarmacking of Mau Mau roads, which had stalled, is now going on, while several others are being improved to ease movement of goods and services," Ruto said.

Addressing a congregation on Thursday at AIPCA Mahiga in Othaya, Nyeri County, the President revealed that KSh8 billion has been set aside for road expansion across all constituencies in the county.

He highlighted progress on the key Kenol-Marua dual carriageway, now 90 per cent complete compared to 30 per cent in 2022, and announced plans to extend it to Nyeri



President William Ruto

town and Nanyuki.

"When completed, the dual carriageway will be extended to Nyeri town and Nanyuki," he said.

Ruto used the platform to defend his administration against claims of skewed development, insisting that all regions are benefiting from government programmes.

"I want to assure Kenyans that my administration is implementing the promises it made to Kenyans without bias," he said.

The President outlined a broader development package for Nyeri, including KSh13 billion for 5,700 af-

fordable housing units and KSh1.8 billion for the construction of 18 modern markets in Othaya, Kagi-cha and Ndunyu, with an additional facility planned for Witima townK-Ship.

In the health sector, he said the government has allocated KSh500 million to upgrade Mwai Kibaki National Referral Hospital after its elevation to national status, while Nyeri County Referral Hospital will receive KSh1 billion for expansion and modern equipment.

Ruto also praised Nyeri residents for their strong uptake of the Social

Health Authority (KSHA), noting the county is among the top performers nationally.

"Nyeri is number five nationally with 543,000 people registered with KSHA, translating to 70 per cent of the total population in the county. This is impressive," he said.

He added that hospitals in the county have already received KSh3.2 billion from KSHA for services rendered.

On agriculture, the President said reforms in the coffee sector had begun to bear fruit following the removal of cartels, with prices of cof-

fee cherry rising from an average of KSh60 in 2022 to KSh160.

Responding to concerns from church leaders, Ruto pledged intensified action against drug and alcohol abuse, directing relevant agencies to act firmly against traffickers. "To defeat drugs and alcohol abuse, what is required is a whole-of-society approach," he said.

He further called on parents to take greater responsibility in guiding their children, even as he reiterated his commitment to fostering national unity.

"We will unite all Kenyans and eradicate the politics of tribalism, seclusion, hatred and division," the President said.

He urged political leaders to focus on development-driven agendas, warning against propaganda and divisive rhetoric.

"I have no doubt that when the right time comes, Kenyans will elect leaders with a clear record," he added.

Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga welcomed the national government's interventions, particularly in the health sector, and pledged continued collaboration.

"I will continue to work closely with the National Government to address the challenges facing my county," he said.

Public Service Cabinet Secretary Geoffrey Ruku and local MPs accompanied the President during the event.

## Language

# English Language: Through the Lens of Universal and Life Laws



By: Ikromova Oynura  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Learning a language is not merely about expanding one's vocabulary; it is about interpreting the laws of the universe and society in a new way. The process of acquiring English is deeply connected to natural principles like evolution and energetic balance.

### 1. Small Steps and the Compound Effect

In life, any great success is built from small, consistent actions. In the context of English, memorizing just five new words a day results in over 1,800 words a year. This mirrors the

natural law of a water droplet eventually carving through stone. Success is not a sudden leap; it is the law of consistency in action.

### 2. The Law of Adaptability

The world is in a state of constant flux. In today's era of globalization, English serves as a tool for human adaptation to these changes. As Charles Darwin suggested, it is not the strongest who survive, but those most responsive to change. Learning a new language increases neuroplasticity, teaching us to remain resilient and flexible in the face of life's challenges.

### 3. Communication and Energy Exchange

In the universe, nothing exists in isolation. Language is a medium for the exchange of energy and information. By mastering English, youth enter into a direct "resonance" with global science, culture, and innovation. This expands their circle of opportunity and empowers them to take a confident "Step toward the future."



### Conclusion

English is not just a key that opens the doors to the world; it is the "spectacles" through which we understand the world behind those doors. In educating the youth, our

primary goal is to teach them not just grammar, but how to perceive the laws of the world through that knowledge.

### About the Author:

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## Motivation

# The chains of patriarchy: Africa's men in crisis

*A Legacy of Toxic Masculinity Is Exacting a Deadly Toll — and the Continent Can No Longer Look Away*



By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

• According to the World Health Organization, men in sub-Saharan Africa are nearly four times more likely to die by suicide than women — a statistic that sits in grim counterpoint to the continent's reputation for communal resilience. Depression and anxiety rates among African men are rising sharply, yet mental health services remain woefully underfunded and culturally stigmatised. In Kenya, government data shows that fewer than one in ten men who experience mental health crises ever seek formal help.

• Dr. Violet Naanyu, a public health researcher at Moi University in Eldoret, has spent over a decade studying gender and wellbeing in East Africa. "The tragedy," she has noted, "is that we have built societies where a man will sooner drink himself to death than admit he is struggling. That is not strength. That is a slow, collective suicide."



KAMPALA — In the rolling highlands of Ankore, southwestern Uganda, there is a proverb that elders have whispered across generations: "Kyokufa nobwe ohe-muka" — it is better to be ashamed than to lose a life. It is a saying born of hard wisdom. Yet across Africa today, millions of men are choosing death over shame, silence over survival, and the continent is only beginning to reckon with the consequences.

The crisis of masculinity in Africa is not a whisper. It is a roar that no one wants to hear. From the townships of Johannesburg to the slums of Nairobi, from the markets of Lagos to the villages of Kampala, a quiet catastrophe is unfolding. Men — young and old, educated and not — are collapsing under the weight of a system they did not entirely choose but have been compelled to uphold: patriarchy. And the price, researchers and mental health practitioners warn, is being paid in blood, broken homes, and broken minds. "Men are people with a body, emotions, and blood running in their veins," the author writes, drawing on years of research into African gender dynamics. "They deserve to be listened to and to be supported emotionally."

It is a statement that should not need saying. Yet in much of Africa, it remains radical.

### A System Built on Silence

The architecture of African

patriarchy, scholars argue, was never designed with men's wellbeing in mind — only their dominance. Boys are taught from infancy to suppress tears, to project strength, to provide without complaint. The cultural expectation is totalising: be the rock, never the river. Show no cracks.

### But cracks are appearing everywhere.

According to the World Health Organization, men in sub-Saharan Africa are nearly four times more likely to die by suicide than women — a statistic that sits in grim counterpoint to the continent's reputation for communal resilience. Depression and anxiety rates among African men are rising sharply, yet mental health services remain woefully underfunded and culturally stigmatised. In Kenya, government data shows that fewer than one in ten men who experience mental health crises ever seek formal help.

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The numbers bear this out. Substance abuse rates among African men have climbed steadily across

the continent's urban centres. In South Africa, the South African Depression and Anxiety Group reports that alcohol dependency disproportionately affects men, frequently masking untreated depression and post-traumatic stress. In Nigeria, a 2023 study published in the African Journal of Psychiatry found that men accounted for nearly 70 percent of substance abuse admissions — yet less than a third had ever discussed their mental health with a family member.

### Colonialism, Capitalism and the Constructed Man

The roots of this crisis stretch deeper than culture alone. Historians and gender scholars point to the compounding legacy of colonialism, which disrupted traditional African social structures while simultaneously hardening rigid European models of masculinity onto the continent's men. "Colonialism didn't just steal land," argues Professor Amina Mama, a leading African feminist scholar. "It stole the emotional vocabularies of African men. It told them that vulnerability was weakness, that feeling was feminine, that their value lay only in labour and control." Capitalism, which followed colonialism's blueprint, added its own pressures. The expectation that a man must be a provider — a breadwinner in economies that routinely fail millions — has created a generation of men trapped between aspiration

and despair. When they cannot provide, many do not seek help. They disappear. Into bottles. Into violence. Into graves.

Domestic violence, long framed in African public discourse almost exclusively as a women's issue, also has a less-examined shadow: men, too, are victims. While women bear the overwhelming burden of gender-based violence, organisations working across East and Central Africa report a consistent and largely undocumented pattern of men experiencing abuse — physical, emotional and economic — with virtually no infrastructure to support them.

### Breaking the Silence

The conversation is shifting, however slowly. Across the continent, a new generation of men is pushing back against inherited scripts of masculinity. In Rwanda, government-sponsored male engagement programmes have worked to reframe fatherhood and emotional responsibility as strengths. In Ghana, grassroots mental health collectives led by young men are using social media to destigmatise therapy and emotional openness. In Kenya, organisations such as Men for Gender Equality Now are training community leaders to recognise and respond to male vulnerability. Nobel laureate and celebrated author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, whose work on gender has reshaped

global discourse, has argued powerfully that the cage of patriarchy imprisons men as surely as it does women. "The problem with gender," she has written, "is that it prescribes how we should be rather than recognising how we are." For African men, that prescription has been both suffocating and deadly. Kahigiriza's prescription is clear: "We must work together to create a culture that values emotional expression, vulnerability, and empathy. We must support men in their struggles, and encourage them to seek help when they need it. The time for change is now."

### A Continent at a Crossroads

Africa's demographic story is one of extraordinary youth. More than 60 percent of the continent's population is under 25. The men among them are inheriting a blueprint for masculinity that is killing their fathers and brothers. Whether they choose to redraw that blueprint — or simply reproduce it — may be the most consequential gender question of the coming generation.

The proverb from Ankore endures because it contains a truth that transcends tribe and time: shame can be survived. Death cannot.

It is time for Africa's men to be ashamed enough to ask for help — and for their societies to be brave enough to answer.

— Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza, *Consolata International University*

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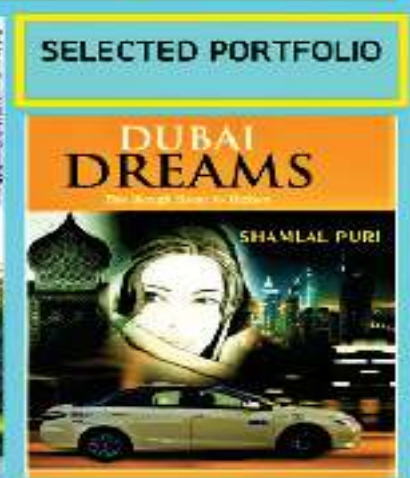
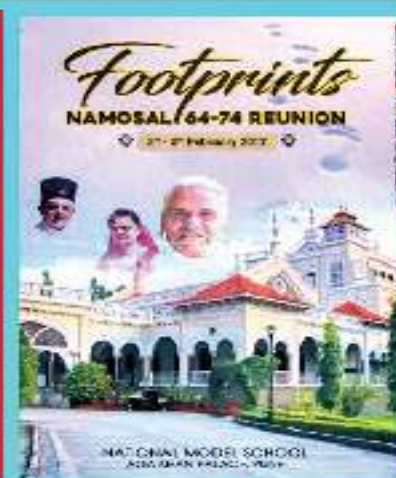
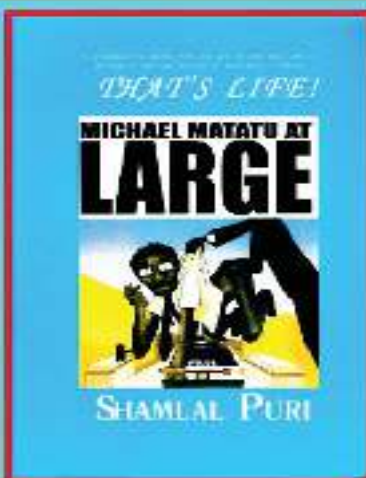
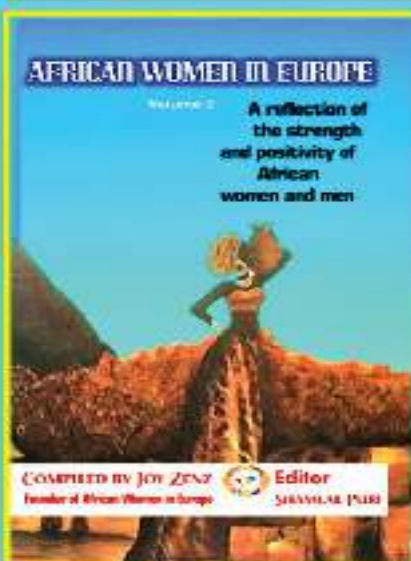
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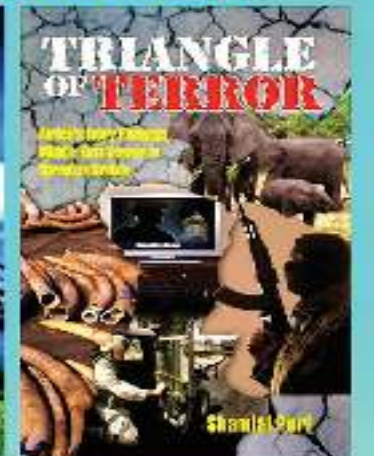
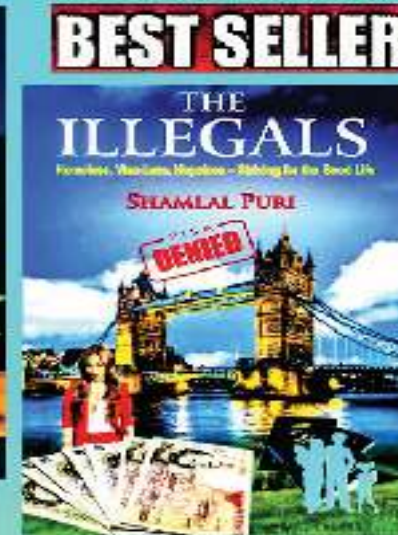
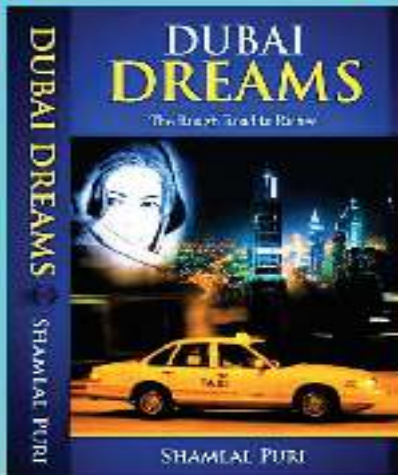
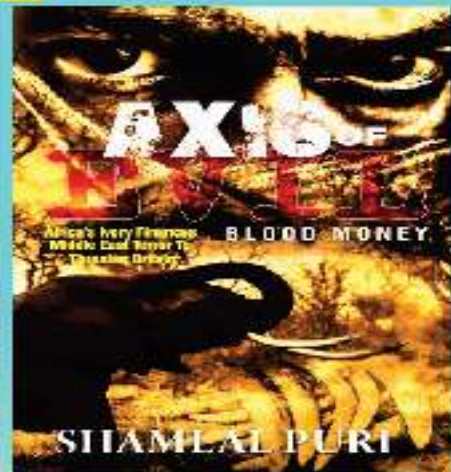
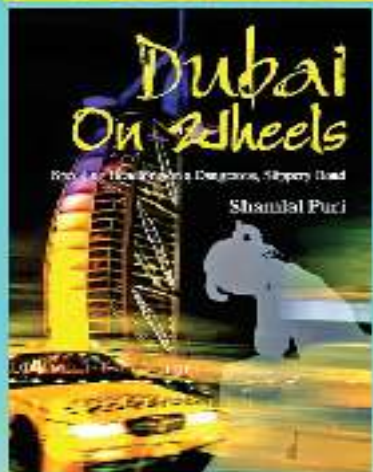
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## African News

# ‘Forget democracy — it kills’: Burkina Faso’s military ruler rejects the ballot and bets on Russia:

*Captain Ibrahim Traoré, who seized power three years ago, has told his people to abandon democratic rule entirely — as a new report counts more than 1,800 civilians killed on his watch*

By: Diaspora Times Team  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

## Contd from Page 1

always accompanied by bloodshed.” The 38-year-old captain pointed to Libya as his cautionary example. “Look at Libya — this is an example close to us,” he said, invoking the north African country’s turbulent post-Gaddafi collapse as evidence of what Western-backed democratic transitions produce. It was a pointed and calculated choice of reference: Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, who ruled Libya autocratically for four decades, was killed during a Western-assisted rebellion in 2011, after which the country fractured into rival administrations and has never recovered a unified government. For Traoré and his growing base of pan-Africanist followers, Libya is not a story of liberation — it is a warning.

*“We have our own approach. We’re not even trying to copy anyone else. We’re here to completely change the way things are done.” — Capt Ibrahim Traoré*

## A deadline broken, a ban imposed

The remarks represent a dramatic escalation in tone from a leader who, upon seizing power, pledged to restore democratic rule by July 2024. Two months before that self-imposed deadline, the junta quietly announced a five-year extension of military governance. Then, just two months ago, all political parties were banned outright as part of what authorities described as a plan to “rebuild the state.” Thursday’s interview removed any remaining ambiguity: there is no democratic roadmap. There may never be one.

The junta’s consolidation of power has been accompanied by a systematic suppression of dissent. Independent media organisations have been shuttered. Civil society groups have been harassed and silenced. Opposition figures have been detained. Perhaps most troublingly, Traoré’s government has been accused of sending vocal critics to the front lines of its war against Islamist militants — a punishment that in Burkina Faso’s current security environment is tantamount to a death sentence. The jihadist insurgency, which has raged across the Sahel for over a decade, has cost tens of thousands of lives across Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger and displaced millions more.

## Russia in, France out

Like its junta-led neighbours Mali and Niger, Burkina Faso has severed its security partnerships with Western nations — most consequentially with France, which had maintained



Captain Ibrahim Traoré

a significant counter-terrorism presence across the Sahel through its Barkhane operation. French troops were expelled. Western ambassadors were marginalised. In their place, Russian military advisers and Wagner Group — now operating under the rebranded Africa Corps — have moved in, bringing weapons, training, and the Kremlin’s geopolitical ambitions with them.

The results on the ground, however, have not matched the rhetoric. Violence has continued unabated. The Human Rights Watch report released this week is stark: more than 1,800 civilians killed since Traoré took power in 2023. The organisation documents atrocities committed not only by jihadist groups but also by Burkinabè security forces and their Russian-aligned allies, including mass killings in villages suspected of harbouring militants. Richard Pearhouse, crisis and conflict director at Human Rights Watch, said the findings demand urgent international attention. “The civilian population of Burkina Faso is being caught in a vice — between jihadist terror and security force abuses that are themselves fuelling radicalisation,” he said. “The absence of accountability is making everything worse.”

## The continent watches — and divides

Despite — or perhaps because of — his authoritarian consolidation, Traoré has amassed a remarkable

continental following. Across social media from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, he is celebrated as a defiant voice against Western neo-colonialism, a young African leader unafraid to name imperialism and reject its prescriptions. His image — beret, fatigues, clenched rhetoric — has become iconographic for a generation of Africans who feel that liberal democracy, as exported by the West, has delivered poverty and instability rather than prosperity and peace.

Professor Eboe Hutchful, a governance scholar at Wayne State University who has studied West African military regimes for three decades, urges caution about conflating anti-Western sentiment with effective governance. “Traoré’s popularity is real, and the grievances that fuel it are real,” he told the Diaspora Times. “But popularity is not the same as legitimacy, and rejecting democracy does not automatically produce something better. History shows us that military rulers who refuse to articulate an alternative framework tend to entrench themselves indefinitely — at enormous cost to their people.”

That tension is visible across the broader Sahel junta bloc. In Gabon and Guinea, military leaders who initially suspended elections have since organised polls — polls they went on to win under conditions criticised by international observers. In Mali and Niger, timelines for civilian transition have been repeatedly postponed. Burkina Faso under

Traoré now appears to be moving in an even more definitive direction: not delay, but outright rejection.

## What comes after democracy?

Traoré offered no answer to that question on Thursday. “We have our own approach,” he said, without elaboration. No constitution, no council, no civic framework was proposed. His government’s only articulated principle appears to be the negation of what came before — elections, parties, pluralism, Western partnership.

For ordinary Burkinabè, the stakes of this ideological experiment could not be higher. The country ranks among the world’s most food-insecure nations. Nearly two million people are internally displaced. Humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas has been severely restricted, with aid organisations reporting that military authorities have blocked convoys and expelled foreign NGO workers. The jihadist insurgency that Traoré promised to defeat has, by most independent assessments, expanded its territorial reach since he took power.

The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States have condemned the successive coups across the Sahel but have struggled to apply meaningful pressure. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have withdrawn from ECOWAS entirely, forming their own Alliance of Sahel States and daring the regional body to act. So far, it has not.

Dr. Aïssata Tall Sall, Senegal’s foreign minister and a prominent voice on Sahelian affairs, has called for renewed continental dialogue. “We cannot simply watch as our neighbours burn,” she said at a recent African Union summit. “The question is not whether we prefer democracy or military rule in the abstract — the question is whether the people of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger are safe, fed and free. Right now, the answer to all three is no.”

## A verdict from history

History offers few examples of military rulers who rejected democracy, offered no alternative, suppressed dissent, and delivered lasting peace or prosperity. It offers many examples of the opposite. Whether Traoré is a revolutionary in the mould he imagines — or simply the latest in a long line of African strongmen who confused power with purpose — will ultimately be judged not by his speeches but by what happens to his people.

For now, those people are dying. The militants have not been beaten. The food has not arrived. The parties have been banned. And democracy, the captain says, must be forgotten. Burkina Faso is not forgetting democracy. It is being told to. There is a difference — and it is the difference that history will remember.

# Methodological foundations for the effective use of multimedia tools in literature lessons



By: **Abduhamidova Nihola**  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Abstract

This article examines the methodological and organizational foundations for the effective integration of multimedia tools in literature education. It highlights the pedagogical potential of multimedia technologies in developing students' literary and aesthetic worldview, fostering critical thinking, and increasing learning motivation. Based on theoretical analysis and practical teaching experience, the study offers methodological recommendations for literature teachers on the purposeful use of modern digital resources in classroom instruction.

**Keywords:** literature education, multimedia technologies, interactive lessons, teaching methodology, instructional effectiveness, digital learning tools

## Introduction

In recent years, the rapid digital transformation of education has necessitated the adoption of innovative teaching strategies. In literature education, the effective use of multimedia tools plays a crucial role in developing students' artistic thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, and interpretive skills. Traditional teaching methods are increasingly being enriched with digital technologies that transform learners from passive recipients into active participants.

Multimedia tools such as audio, video, images, animations, and interactive texts create a multisensory learning environment that enhances comprehension and long-term retention. They help students visualize historical and cultural contexts, analyze literary texts more deeply, and establish emotional connections with literary works.

## Main Part

The effective use of multimedia tools in literature lessons requires systematic methodological planning. The following stages are recommended: Preparation Stage: introducing background information about the author, historical period, or literary context through videos, presentations, or infographics; Presentation Stage: combining text reading with multimedia materials such as video clips, audio record-



ings, and visual illustrations; Consolidation Stage: reinforcing knowledge through interactive tasks, discussions, and digital activities;

Assessment Stage: evaluating students' learning outcomes through online tests, presentations, and project work.

Multimedia technologies support multimodal learning by engaging multiple senses, which increases student activity and motivation. According to constructivist learning theory, students actively construct knowledge, and multimedia tools facilitate this process. Additionally, the principles of cog-

nitive load theory should be considered when designing multimedia content. Teachers should avoid excessive information and present materials in a clear and structured way. Practical experience shows that multimedia tools significantly increase students' interest in literature and develop their analytical and creative thinking skills.

## Conclusion

The integration of multimedia tools into literature lessons creates an effective, engaging, and student-centered learning environment. When applied with proper methodological planning, multimedia technologies

enhance students' comprehension, motivation, and overall academic performance.

Therefore, teachers should develop their digital and pedagogical competencies and use multimedia tools purposefully in combination with traditional teaching methods. Such an approach ensures high-quality and effective literature education in the modern digital era.

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Master's Student, Uzbek Language and Literature  
Namangan State Pedagogical Institute

## Medicine

# The importance and application of innovative technologies in medicine

By: **Diaspora Times Team**  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Introduction

In the context of globalization, the field of medicine is developing at a rapid pace. Scientific and technological progress, the widespread implementation of digital technologies, and modern innovative approaches are taking healthcare services to a new level. In particular, innovative technologies play a crucial role in protecting public health, early diagnosis of diseases, and effective treatment.

Today, such areas as digitalization, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and telemedicine are becoming increasingly important in modern medicine. These advancements contribute not only to accurate diagnosis but also to improved treatment and prevention strategies.

## Main Part

The introduction of innovative technologies in medicine is being carried out in several key directions.

Firstly, artificial intelligence (AI) significantly improves the diagnostic process. Machine learning algorithms analyze large volumes of medical data, enabling early detection of diseases. For example, in radiology, AI systems can analyze X-ray and MRI images to provide fast and accurate results.

Secondly, telemedicine allows healthcare professionals to provide medical services remotely. This is especially important for people living in rural and remote areas. Through telemedicine, doctors can monitor patients, provide consultations, and manage treatment processes from a distance.

Thirdly, robot-assisted surgery enhances precision and safety in medical procedures. Robotic systems reduce the risk of human error and improve surgical outcomes, leading to faster patient recovery.

Fourthly, modern diagnostic equipment and laboratory technologies enable early detection of diseases. Genetic testing, biomarkers, and high-precision diagnostic tools significantly increase the effectiveness of medical care.

At the same time, the implementation of innovative technologies requires healthcare professionals to possess high qualifications, digital literacy, and a commitment to continuous professional development. Therefore, the integration of modern pedagogical approaches in medical education is essential for training competent specialists.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, innovative technologies are a key factor in the development of modern medicine. They improve the accuracy of diagnosis, enhance treatment effectiveness, and raise the overall quality of healthcare services.

In the future, it is essential to further expand the use of innovative technologies, improve the qualifications of medical professionals, and develop digital infrastructure in the healthcare system.

*Normurodova Salima Saitkulovna*  
Affiliation: Abu Ali Ibn Sino Public Health Technical School, Yangiyyer City, Sirdarya Region, Uzbekistan



Iran war

# Kenya's tea and meat exports — but diversification softens the blow

*With more than Ksh3 billion in tea stranded at Mombasa port and meat shipments halted by freight chaos, Kenya is racing to reroute its trade as Middle East conflict reshapes the arteries of global commerce*

By: Diaspora Times Team  
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Escalating conflict in the Gulf has disrupted Kenya's export trade, stranding billions of shillings worth of tea at Mombasa port, halting meat shipments, and driving up energy and logistics costs — though early market diversification is preventing the crisis from becoming a collapse. The Middle East, long one of Kenya's most vital trading partners, has become a zone of economic turbulence. Airspace restrictions across Iran, Iraq, and parts of the Gulf have grounded cargo flights. Shipping lines have suspended services on key Red Sea corridors, citing safety risks and soaring insurance premiums. For an economy that sends between 20 and 25 percent of its tea exports to Gulf markets alone, the consequences are immediate and severe. George Omuga, managing director of the East African Tea Trade Association, did not mince words. "We export about 20 to 25 percent of our teas to the Middle East, and we have lost the market due to the ongoing conflict," he said. "Some 8 to 10 million kilos of tea worth more than Ksh3 billion are held in warehouses and at the port of Mombasa since the conflict began." That figure — equivalent to more than US\$23 million — represents not just a trade disruption but a cash-flow crisis for thousands of smallholder farmers and processors along Kenya's tea supply chain.

"The first mistake is to treat the Gulf conflict as geographically distant and economically marginal to Kenya. It is not." — Global Digest analyst, Capital FM

**Ruto's response: reroute, diversify, hold the line**

President William Ruto moved swiftly to project calm. In a statement issued after receiving a comprehensive briefing from the ministries of energy, agriculture, trade, and the National Treasury — alongside the Central Bank and private sector leaders — he acknowledged the gravity of the situation while insisting Kenya's fundamentals remain intact.

"The ongoing conflict in the Middle East is having a significant impact on the global economy," Ruto said. "Africa, including Kenya, is not immune to these effects." Yet he struck a determinedly forward-looking tone, pointing to tea auction data as evidence of resilience. "The latest data indicates that we exported 81 percent of tea offered for auction this month, compared to 75 percent in March 2025," the president noted — a figure that suggests market diversification efforts are bearing fruit



French-linked container ship exits Strait of Hormuz | Photo Courtesy of Mossad Commentary on X

even as Gulf routes close.

On petroleum, the government has drawn on its government-to-government procurement arrangement to cushion consumers from the worst of the global oil price surge. Ruto described it as a "prudent and forward-looking" measure. Fertiliser stocks, he added, remain sufficient to sustain the current planting season through September, providing some relief to a farming sector already under pressure. "While the impact on pricing is still being assessed, measures are being put in place to moderate any adverse effects and ensure that Kenya maintains adequate supplies," he said.

**Mombasa and Lamu: a silver lining in the chaos**

Not every consequence of the Gulf crisis has been negative for Kenya. As traditional Gulf-to-Asia shipping routes are disrupted, global logistics companies are hunting for alternative transshipment hubs — and Kenya's ports are benefiting. The Port of Lamu has recorded a surge in throughput, including more than 4,000 high-value motor vehicles bound for Gulf markets rerouted through its facilities. Mombasa, East Africa's largest port, is also seeing increased activity.

Ruto said his government would move aggressively to capitalise on this unexpected opportunity, announcing plans to engage international logistics firms to formalise Kenya's role as a regional transshipment hub. Cabinet Secretary for Trade and Industry Lee Kinyanjui

confirmed that some fresh produce shipments are already being rerouted through alternative corridors, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia. "These adjustments have so far prevented a major disruption," Kinyanjui said.

The strategic pivot has been months in the making. Over the past year, Nairobi has deepened its engagement with the UAE, formalising ties through a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The partnership was underpinned by the UAE's US\$1 billion "AI for Development" initiative, positioning Kenya not merely as an agricultural exporter but as a potential regional node in the digital economy. That longer-term vision now looks even more prescient as commodity-dependent trade routes come under strain.

**The structural vulnerability beneath the headlines**

For all the official reassurance, independent analysts warn that Kenya's exposure runs deeper than any single disruption. Fresh industry data from the Tea Board of Kenya reveals that the top ten destinations accounted for 81.5 percent of Kenya's tea exports in 2025 — a concentration that leaves the sector structurally vulnerable to precisely the kind of regional shock now unfolding. The Red Sea crisis, the regulator noted, has "amplified an existing structural risk of Kenya's heavy reliance on specific corridors and markets, while increasing the cost of diversification."

The numbers illustrate the paradox. Kenya shipped 652.8 million kilograms of tea in 2025, up 9.8 percent on the prior year. Yet earnings rose by only 2.87 percent, to Sh186.91 billion. Logistics costs ate the difference. The average export unit price fell from US\$2.27 per kilogram in 2024 to US\$2.21 — a seemingly marginal decline that, across hundreds of millions of kilograms, represents hundreds of millions of shillings in lost revenue.

One analyst writing for Capital FM's Global Digest framed the macro picture with blunt precision: "The first mistake is to treat the Gulf conflict as geographically distant and economically marginal to Kenya. It is not. As of March 2026, the shock is being transmitted through energy, shipping, aviation, trade routes, and digital infrastructure." His prescription: "The appropriate response is to accelerate local and regional capacity in cloud, energy-secure data centres, redundant connectivity, cybersecurity, and supply-chain diversification. In that sense, the crisis reinforces rather than weakens the case for Kenya to build more sovereign and resilient digital infrastructure at home."

**The bigger picture: Africa's trade geography is shifting**

Kenya's predicament is not unique. Across the continent, African nations that built their export architectures around Gulf and European markets are discovering that geopolitical instability thousands of kilometres away can reach directly

into their farming communities, factory floors, and port terminals. Sudan — once a key transit and consumption market for Kenyan goods — recorded a 13.56 percent drop in imports in 2025, according to Tea Board data, as its own internal conflict deepened. The ripple effects of multiple simultaneous crises are compounding.

The broader lesson, trade economists argue, is that Africa's economic integration agenda — long discussed in the corridors of the African Union and given institutional form by the African Continental Free Trade Area — is not merely an aspirational project. It is a strategic imperative. Every billion shillings diverted from a blocked Gulf route that finds a home in an African market is a step toward the kind of structural resilience that no government statement can manufacture overnight.

For Kenya specifically, the crisis has compressed what might have been a decade-long strategic debate into an urgent present-tense decision. The country has the ports, the digital ambitions, the agricultural base, and the diplomatic relationships. What it has lacked, critics argue, is the political will to truly diversify before a shock forces the issue. That shock has now arrived.

Kenya will weather this storm. The real question is whether Nairobi will use it to build a trade architecture strong enough to weather the next one — because in an era of permanent geopolitical turbulence, there will always be a next one.

# NEWS PAPER



## IN BUSINESS

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WORLD

# Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems and Timeless Wisdom Fuel the Global Future



By: Dr Sarita Bhardwaj  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Contd from Page 1

## Worth Noting:

- Yoga is not just any form of exercise; rather, it connects the body and mind. It reduces stress, improves focus, and gives inner peace.
- Today, people all over the world practice Yoga, and its importance is recognised through the celebration of International Day of Yoga every year. Yoga turns chaos into calm and effort into ease with its regular practice in daily life.
- One of the best-known yoga practitioners was Baba Sivananda, a resident of the Indian city of Varanasi, who died on 3 May 2025, at the ripe old age of 128.
- People have not forgotten his contribution to Yoga, notwithstanding his age.
- The spiritual Guru dedicated his life to Yoga. He was a strict disciplinarian with a daily morning Yoga routine in his humble ashram in Varanasi – a lesson that continues to inspire every generation, not only in India but also across the oceans. Millions of people still draw inspiration from the late Baba.



Daring Baba...Yoga Guru Sivananda had a rigorous daily routine practising his lifelong love of exercising until his death aged 128. Photo Courtesy

term problems such as stress, digestive issues, and other lifestyle diseases because it addresses the root cause.

Another major contribution from IKS is Yoga, which is an ancient practice. Yoga is not just any form of exercise; rather, it connects the body and mind. It reduces stress, improves focus, and gives inner peace.

Today, people all over the world practice Yoga, and its importance is recognised through the celebration of International Day of Yoga every year. Yoga turns chaos into calm and effort into ease with its regular practice in daily life.

One of the best-known yoga practitioners was Baba Sivananda, a resident of the Indian city of Varanasi, who died on 3 May 2025, at the ripe old age of 128.

People have not forgotten his contribution to Yoga, notwithstanding his age. The spiritual Guru dedicated his life to Yoga. He was a strict disciplinarian with a daily morning Yoga routine in his humble ashram in Varanasi – a lesson that continues to inspire every generation, not only in India but also across the oceans. Millions of people still draw inspiration from the late Baba.

His followers still remember Baba Sivananda's sprightly walk, even at the age of 124, and his global travels. They recall a normal day at Abu Dhabi International Airport, when passengers from all over the world were mingling, either waiting for connecting flights or making a beeline for arrivals at the immigration desks.

The daily flight from India had just landed. Among the scores of newly disembarked passengers was a short, slim, rather alert man, just five-foot-two inches tall, who walked with the gusto of a 'recycled teenager' to reach the immigration desk at the arrivals.

Looking remarkably unlined for his age, anyone looking at him may have guessed him to be around 60 to 70 at the very most. After standing in the queue, he approached the bored young Arab immigration officer, who greeted him and handed him his Indian passport. The immigration officer smiled vaguely, returned his greeting and opened his passport in his usual business-like manner, flipping through the pages. He asked him the purpose of

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Chand Baori, in Abhaneri near Jaipur, Rajasthan India, is one of the world's deepest and largest stepwells, built in the 9th century by King Chanda. Photo Courtesy



Rani ki vav, a stepwell in Patan. Gujarat is an 11th-century UNESCO World Heritage site built by Queen Udayamati. Photo Courtesy.



Yoga was a lifesaver as Baba Sivananda religiously followed his daily routine of exercises until his death in May 2025. Photo Courtesy



The evidence, Baba's passport, proved he was born in August 1896 and died aged 128 in May 2025. Photo Courtesy.

WORLD

# Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems and Timeless Wisdom Fuel the Global Future

By: .....  
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Contd from Page 14

## Worth Noting:

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- He asked him the purpose of his visit to the United Arab Emirates. The man replied that he would conduct Yoga sessions and meet Indians living in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

his visit to the United Arab Emirates. The man replied that he would conduct Yoga sessions and meet Indians living in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The officer looked at the passenger's details and suddenly did a double take, as if he had touched a live wire. He gawped, rubbing his eyes in disbelief. He looked at the smiling passenger waiting in anticipation of his passport being stamped with the oval-shaped arrival stamp, and then looked again at his passport. His year of birth read 8 August 1896. That made him 124 at that time.

The officer stared at him, craned his head forward to take a closer look, and returned his gaze to the passport. In disbelief, he jumped from his seat and walked to his senior, thinking the passport might have been forged or that there might have been an error. He had never seen anyone of that age travelling before.

The immigration officer's senior looked at the passport in disbelief and said the next course of action was to use his training manual—when in doubt, check out. He called the Indian authorities to confirm. Indeed, the passport was genuine, and so was the passport holder! Baba was promptly given the arrival visa stamp! Baba was a seasoned traveller. Not only did the UAE, but his foreign trips also took him to the United Kingdom and France. Spain, Germany, and Switzerland before returning to India. He normally travelled with a group of devotees.

He was known for his disciplined lifestyle centred around meditation and spiritual practice. His work in holistic wellness and traditional Indian values earned him national recognition when he was awarded India's fourth-highest civilian honour, the Padma Shri, in 2022 for his exceptional contribution to society through Yoga.

IKS also includes knowledge about farming and horticulture.

In the Indian Knowledge System, agriculture is seen as a sacred harmony between the human race and nature, in which the earth is reverently personified as 'Mother'. Hence, farming becomes an act of balance, gratitude, and committed sustainability.

In earlier times, people used natural methods such as crop rotation, seasonal farming, and organic fertilisers. These methods pro-

ected the soil and environment. Today, these ideas are getting popular again as the world looks for sustainable farming.

Indian states like Punjab and Haryana have their economies so deeply entrenched in agriculture that, rightly so, they are called the granary baskets of India, contributing to the national economy.

Indian architecture demonstrates a deep understanding of nature.

The ideas of Vastu Shastra focus on building homes and spaces in harmony with nature.

A great example is Chand Baori in Rajasthan, built during the time of King Chanda. It was made to store water and keep the place cool.

Such a legacy of Indian knowledge can never be underrated due to the lack of information among the people. The importance of magnifying these outstanding contributions cannot be ignored.

Another example is Rani ki Vav in Gujarat. It is not only useful for storing water but also beautifully designed, showing how art and function can come together.

These structures also show how people managed water wisely in the past. Stepwells, tanks, and canals helped store and manage water, especially in dry areas. These ideas are still very useful today.

India has also contributed important ideas, such as zero and the decimal system. But the real strength of IKS is how everything is connected through health, nature, science, and daily life.

At the same time, we should use this knowledge carefully. We should respect it, but



A Herbals Ayurvedic Medicine Store in India. Photo Courtesy



A mustard farm in the Punjab, a state in known as the granary of India. Photo Courtesy

also study it properly so it fits into modern life.

In the end, it reminds us that "from heritage to humanity it is a reviving wisdom for a sustainable world."

Sometimes, the solutions to our problems already exist; we need to understand and use them rightly and progressively, for the global benefit of all, irrespective of their caste, creed or colour.

In the years to come, there will be a lot more interest

in building on this ancient knowledge.

Knowledge has no limits, and Indian professionals will ensure they immerse themselves in it, keeping pace with modern living standards and knowledge. After all, AKS remains timeless.

*Our writer, Dr Sarita Bhardwaj, has over a decade of experience in teaching and research in India.*

*She is a proficient writer, contributing insightful articles to newspapers and academic forums. Committed to education, she mentors students, promotes critical thinking, supports innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to learning, and regularly engages in community outreach.*

Editing by Shamlal Puri, Senior Editor in London



Sugar cane farm in Haryana state in northern India, known for its agricultural revolution. Photo Courtesy

## Politics &amp; Governance

# Kenya's top three energy officials resign hours after arrest over substandard fuel scandal worth KSh4 billion

*Petroleum PS Mohamed Liban, KPC managing director Joe Sang, and EPRA director general Daniel Kiptoo quit on Saturday after being detained by the DCI — but investigators warn that resignation is no shield from prosecution*

By: Diaspora Times Team  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Three of Kenya's most senior energy officials — Petroleum Principal Secretary Mohamed Liban, Kenya Pipeline Company managing director Joe Sang, and Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority director general Daniel Kiptoo Bargaroria — resigned on Saturday, April 4, 2026, hours after their arrest by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations over allegations of manipulating national fuel stock data to engineer a false shortage and trigger an irregular, overpriced shipment of substandard fuel worth an estimated Ksh4 billion.

The resignations, confirmed by State House Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Felix Koskei in a formal communiqué signed the same day, came after the three were detained on Thursday, April 2, alongside Deputy Director of Petroleum Joseph Wafula at the DCI headquarters along Nairobi's Kiambu Road. Liban was subsequently released on medical grounds; Kiptoo, Sang, and Wafula remained in police custody as of Saturday evening.

"His Excellency the President has received the resignation of Mr Mohamed Liban, Principal Secretary, State Department for Petroleum," Koskei's statement read. "The Board of the Kenya Pipeline Company PLC has received the resignation of Mr Joe Sang as Managing Director. The Board of the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority has received the resignation of Mr Daniel Kiptoo Bargaroria." Within hours of the announcement, the KPC board appointed General Manager Finance Pius Mwendwa as acting managing director to ensure operational continuity.

**"Resignation from office does not in any way exonerate or absolve the suspects and persons of interest from criminal culpability." — Directorate of Criminal Investigations, April 4, 2026**

## The vessel, the data, and the manufactured crisis

At the centre of the investigation is a 60,000-metric-tonne fuel consignment carried aboard the vessel MV Paloma — a shipment initially destined for Angola that was diverted to the Port of Mombasa under circumstances investigators describe as deeply irregular. The vessel is believed to have docked at Mombasa between March 27 and March 29,



A photo collage of Petroleum PS Liban Mohamed, EPRA CEO Daniel Kiptoo and Kenya Pipeline MD Joe Sang. Photo/Courtesy

2026, at the height of public anxiety over global oil price volatility linked to the ongoing Middle East conflict. According to Koskei, preliminary findings indicate that the arrested officials are suspected of falsifying in-country fuel stock data — deliberately understating national reserves to manufacture the impression of an impending supply shortfall. The fabricated scarcity was then used to justify bypassing Kenya's established Government-to-Government procurement framework and triggering an emergency purchase through an entirely different channel. "The President notes with grave concern that primary duty bearers responsible for administering the petroleum supply chain may have manipulated data on in-country fuel stocks," Koskei stated. "This appears to have been done to exploit rising global prices and public anxiety, thereby creating a false impression of an impending supply shortfall." The fuel procured through this alleged scheme came at a staggering premium. Business Daily Africa reported that one of the shipments was sold at US\$290 per tonne — more than three times the US\$84 per tonne rate contracted under the G2G framework. The consignment also reportedly failed Kenya's fuel quality standards due to excessive sulphur content. A quality assurance manager at KPC is said to have initially rejected the consignment after laboratory tests, reportedly under sustained pressure to approve its off-loading before eventually escalating the matter — a decision that triggered the DCI crackdown.

## A framework designed precisely to

### prevent this

The irony of the scandal is sharp. Kenya's Government-to-Government fuel supply framework was introduced in 2023 precisely in response to a previous crisis: the severe fuel shortages of 2022 that produced long queues at filling stations and dangerous practices among desperate motorists. Under the G2G arrangement, Kenya secured long-term supply agreements with three major Gulf energy firms — Aramco Trading Fujairah, ADNOC Global Trading Ltd, and Emirates National Oil Company Singapore Pte Limited — at predictable, contracted rates designed to insulate consumers from global price shocks.

The framework, which has since been extended to 2027 and 2028, succeeded in stabilising pump prices through successive bouts of global turbulence, including the current Middle East crisis. Koskei confirmed that supplies through the contracted G2G partners have continued uninterrupted throughout the current period of instability. The alleged breach, investigators say, was not a response to any genuine supply emergency — it was, in the government's own language, a manufactured one.

"The shipment in question was procured in blatant breach of the G2G framework, at a price significantly above the contracted rates, in complete disregard of established emergency procurement procedures, and was of substandard quality," Koskei stated, describing the actions as constituting "serious breaches of public trust" that may amount to economic crimes under both the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act

and the Penal Code.

### Resignation is not absolution

Within hours of the resignations being announced, the DCI moved to close what it evidently anticipated would be a misreading of the situation. In a blunt statement issued Saturday, the agency made clear that stepping down from office provides no legal protection whatsoever. "Resignation from office does not in any way exonerate or absolve the suspects and persons of interest from criminal culpability," the DCI said, adding that all those found culpable in the ongoing probe will face prosecution regardless of their current employment status.

Administrative action has also been initiated against two further officials below the rank of the three who resigned. The State Department for Petroleum commenced proceedings against Deputy Director Joseph Wafula, while KPC initiated disciplinary action against Supply and Logistics Manager Joel Mburu. Both are implicated in the alleged scheme at an operational level.

Pressure is also mounting on Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi, whose ministerial oversight of the sector has drawn scrutiny from opposition politicians and civil society figures demanding to know how a Ksh4 billion irregular procurement could have proceeded without ministerial knowledge or intervention. Wandayi has not publicly commented on the scandal as of press time. President Ruto's office has directed all governance actors within the energy sector to cooperate fully with investigative agencies and provide unrestricted access to relevant re-

cords.

### A test of institutional accountability

For analysts watching Kenya's governance trajectory, the episode is as much a test of institutional accountability as it is a criminal matter. The G2G framework was sold to Kenyans as a structural fix — a system designed to remove the discretion and opacity that had historically made fuel procurement a vector for corruption. That the very officials entrusted with administering that system allegedly subverted it from within, and did so at a moment of maximum public vulnerability, makes the alleged offence particularly egregious in the eyes of governance watchdogs.

Koskei's statement offered the sharpest language yet from the executive on the matter. "Any act of economic sabotage will be fully investigated and met with firm and decisive action against any individual or entity found culpable," he wrote. The government added that further measures will follow as investigations progress, including the reversal of the irregular shipment requisitions and their formal realignment with the G2G framework.

Three officials have resigned. Three remain under investigation. One vessel sits at Mombasa. The real question for Kenya now is not just who authorised the MV Paloma — but how deep the rot runs, and whether the institutions meant to prevent exactly this kind of theft from the public were themselves part of the scheme.

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## Diaspora

# South African army arrive in crime hotspots to help tackle gangs

*President Cyril Ramaphosa earlier this year announced the deployment of 2,200 soldiers to five of the country's nine provinces hardest hit by criminal activities.*

By: BBC  
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South Africa's army has officially been deployed to several parts of the country to help overwhelmed police clamp down on violent crimes, including illicit mining and gangs.

President Cyril Ramaphosa earlier this year announced the deployment of 2,200 soldiers to five of the country's nine provinces hardest hit by criminal activities.

Authorities say the deployment, set to run for a year, is aimed at restoring order to crime-ridden areas, but critics warn that using the military in civilian policing rarely delivers lasting results.

Illicit mining and gang violence are major problems in South Africa, which has one of the world's highest murder rates.

According to the latest crime statistics, covering the period between October and December 2025, around 71 people were killed each day.

An initial group of soldiers was deployed to several parts of Gauteng province, which includes Johannesburg, in March.

The second, and main cohort, will help with operations in the Eastern Cape, Free State, North West and Western Cape provinces from 1 April for a year.

The BBC spoke to several residents in a Johannesburg suburb, Eldorado Park, a few weeks after soldiers arrived in the area. It is one of the three Johannesburg suburbs targeted in the initial

military deployment due to the high levels of gang violence there.

Some of those interviewed expressed scepticism about the soldiers' presence in their neighbourhood.

Leola Davies, a 74-year-old pensioner, described Eldorado Park as a "hell-hole to live in".

"Sodom and Gomorra have nothing on this place. I stay indoors all day because I just don't want to be the next victim. Things are getting worse," she said.

Elviena le Roux, a mother of three, told the BBC she doesn't believe having the military in the area will help, saying it will only "make the violence worse".

Ronald Rabie, 56, said that while seeing the army patrolling the streets makes some difference, as it creates a safer environment for families, this peace is short-lived.

"Once they leave, things return to chaos - they need to be here permanently," the father of three said.

This is not the first time Ramaphosa has deployed troops to help bring down the country's high crime levels.

In 2023, over 3,000 soldiers were roped in to help tackle illicit mining across the country for six months.

In July 2021, the army was also deployed to help quell the deadly riots that had hit the country after the arrest of former South African



President Cyril Ramaphosa

President Jacob Zuma. Under South Africa law, soldiers can only arrest civilians under rare circumstances and must then hand the suspect over to the police as soon as possible.

Security experts have repeatedly warned that the military is trained for combat - not for the kind of community-based policing needed to build trust.

And there is also history to contend with. The racist apartheid regime used the military to enforce their rule - a legacy that still shapes how some South Africans view soldiers on their streets today.

Criminologist Guy Lamb

told the BBC he was not convinced the deployment would deliver lasting results, saying soldiers are "not designed to engage in policing" but rather to engage in combat and use maximum force.

"There's danger that they will escalate situations or respond very aggressively in... tense situations," he said.

He cited their conduct during the Covid-19 pandemic as an example. The army's deployment during that period, meant to help enforce the curfew and other restrictions, drew sharp criticism as reports came out of soldiers using excessive force, unlawfully detaining

and harassing civilians.

Authorities have expressed optimism that the soldiers' presence will make a difference this time around but Lamb is not completely convinced.

He said that without "a dedicated plan... to try and address why crime is so violent in these sort of places", there was a strong likelihood it would flare up again once the soldiers leave.

"So we're likely to see this happening into the foreseeable future, because this plan of addressing what are the root causes of crime [in these] areas is not in place."



BBC NEWS

## Worth Noting:

- According to the latest crime statistics, covering the period between October and December 2025, around 71 people were killed each day.

- An initial group of soldiers was deployed to several parts of Gauteng province, which includes Johannesburg, in March.

- The second, and main cohort, will help with operations in the Eastern Cape, Free State, North West and Western Cape provinces from 1 April for a year.

- The BBC spoke to several residents in a Johannesburg suburb, Eldorado Park, a few weeks after soldiers arrived in the area. It is one of the three Johannesburg suburbs targeted in the initial military deployment due to the high levels of gang violence there.

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- Leola Davies, a 74-year-old pensioner, described Eldorado Park as a "hell-hole to live in".

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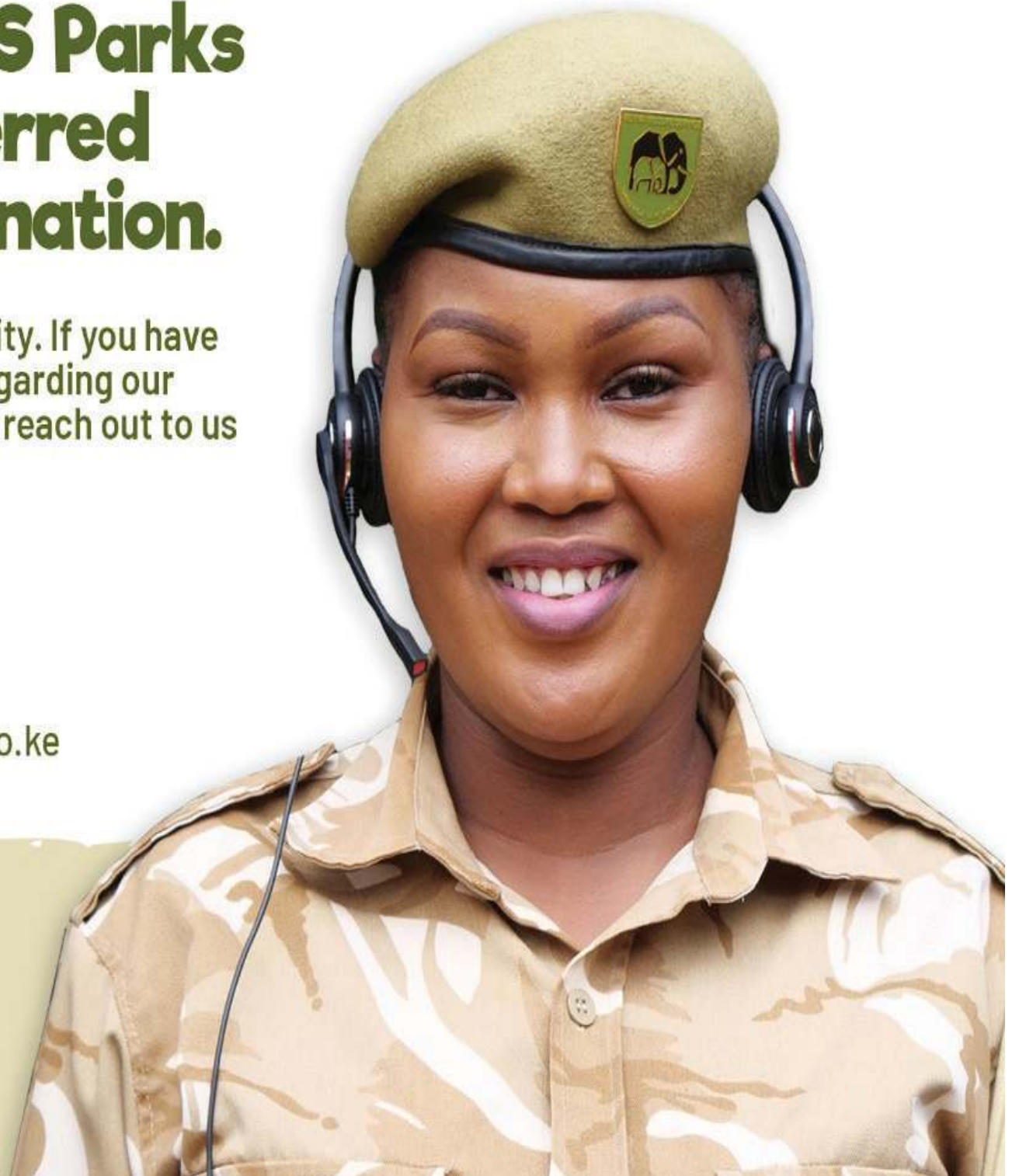
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## Literature

# The Ontological Semantics Of Space In The Context Of Chronotope And Social Memory In Seyran Sakhavat's Novel "Stone Houses"



By: Prof. Dr. Tarana Turan  
RAHIMLI

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## Worth Noting:

In this context, Seyran Sakhavat's novel "Stone Houses" stands out as a significant example that systematically reflects the philosophical and aesthetic function of space in Azerbaijani prose. In the novel, space is not merely a descriptive element but also appears as a bearer of social memory, a symbolic field in which collective traumas and historical experiences are encoded. In "Stone Houses," the image of space—particularly through stone constructions—creates a dual semantic structure that simultaneously embodies the ideas of continuity and memory, as well as rigidity and immutability.

Seyran Sakhavat was born on March 23, 1946, in the village of Yaghlivand in the Fuzuli district. The writer's childhood and adolescence were shaped within a rural environment, which laid the foundation for the deep and multilayered depiction of the relationship between human beings and space in his artistic worldview.

In Azerbaijani literature, the concept of space has never been limited to a mere system of physical coordinates in which events take place; rather, it has functioned as an ontological and semantic structure that participates in shaping human destiny, social relations, and collective consciousness. Especially in prose works written in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, space ceases to be a passive background and is instead presented as a dynamic, multilayered system that incorporates ideological, psychological, and philosophical dimensions. In this regard, the chronotopic qualities of space—that is, the artistic reality formed through the interrelation of time and space—become one of the principal carriers of the work's semantic load. In this context, Seyran Sakhavat's novel "Stone Houses" stands out as a significant example that systematically reflects the philosophical and aesthetic function of space in Azerbaijani prose. In the novel, space is not merely a descriptive element but also appears as a bearer of social memory, a symbolic field in which collective traumas and historical experiences are encoded. In "Stone Houses," the image of space—particularly through stone constructions—creates a dual semantic structure that simultaneously embodies the ideas of continuity and memory, as well as rigidity and immutability. Seyran Sakhavat was born on March 23, 1946, in the village of Yaghlivand in the Fuzuli district. The writer's childhood and adolescence were shaped within a rural environment, which laid the foundation for the deep and multilayered depiction of the relationship between human beings and space in his artistic worldview. The socio-cultural realities of Azerbaijani village life, everyday relations, and forms of collective memory emerge as leading motifs in his творчество. After completing his secondary education, his work as a deputy director at the Khurshidbanu Natavan School in the city of Fuzuli enabled him to engage more closely with the social environment and further develop his ability to



Seyran Sakhavat

observe and analyze human relationships.

During the years 1964–1970, he studied at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Baku State University, specializing as a translator of the Persian language. The broad cultural and linguistic knowledge he acquired during his university years, along with his engagement with both classical and modern literature, contributed to the enrichment of Sakhavat's artistic thinking and enabled him to explore both the historical and philosophical dimensions of space in his novels. His service in the Soviet Army between 1970 and 1972, where he worked as a Persian-language translator at the USSR Ministry of Defense, provided him not only with opportunities to refine his language skills but also to observe diverse social and ideological environments. In the following years, Seyran Sakhavat carried out extensive literary activity within the press organs of the Azerbaijan Writers' Union—particularly in publications such as "Literature and Art" and "Ulduz." This experience enriched his background in publicistic writing and, at the same time, influenced the social and psychological depth of his novels, as well as the

realism of events within the framework of space and time (Sakhavat biography, 2025).

All of this life experience and intellectual background made it possible for space in the novel "Stone Houses" to be presented not merely as a physical coordinate where events occur, but also as an ontological field reflecting human destiny and collective memory. Alongside revealing the philosophical and aesthetic function of space, the novel creates a foundation for a systematic analysis of the dialogue between chronotope and social memory in Azerbaijani prose.

In Seyran Sakhavat's novel "Stone Houses," space is not perceived merely as a physical environment in which events take place; rather, it is presented as a carrier of time, collective memory, and human destiny. At the beginning of the work, the depiction of the neighborhood may appear to the reader as a simple panorama of everyday life. However, closer analysis reveals that this space is not just a geographical coordinate or an ordinary urban background, but also a materialized and artistically concretized form of collective memory and social relations. The neigh-

borhood thus functions as a structural unit where historical, psychological, and social experiences converge. The author presents this aspect to the reader as follows: "Multi-storey buildings had surrounded the stone houses like a ring setting" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 6). This description not only reflects urban transformation but also symbolizes the dialogue of time—the interaction between historicity and modernity, and the tension between past and present. The stone houses, while being physical objects, simultaneously serve as symbols of social and moral stability, collective memory, and existence itself. Here, houses are not merely dwellings or constructions, but metaphors for human destiny and collective experience.

According to M. Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, the chronotope is "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 84). Within this theoretical framework, time and space in "Stone Houses" are inseparably interconnected. The structuring role of space manifests itself on two levels: on the one hand, as the physical setting of events, and on the other, as a medi-

ator of social and psychological influence. The neighborhood is not only the place where events occur but also a structural unit in which time is frozen and collective trauma is preserved. This is particularly significant in terms of the preservation of social memory; traces of the past, repetitions of events, and social norms are concretized within the visual and psychological layers of space.

Various episodes in the novel confirm the ontological function of the chronotope. For example, the punishment of Dadash by Abish, as well as the tense moments unfolding around the cherry plum tree, demonstrate that space is not merely a physical coordinate but also acts as a catalyst for social and psychological events. Here, space functions as a structuring force of both individual experience and collective pressure. The sequencing of events within space and their interaction with time, in accordance with chronotope theory, show that space is not simply a narrative background, but a philosophical and aesthetic unit that organizes the development of social and moral phenomena.

According to Bakhtin, the artistic unity of space and

## Literature

# The Ontological Semantics Of Space In The Context Of Chronotope And Social Memory In Seyran Sakhavat's Novel "Stone Houses"

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## Worth Noting:

• The socio-cultural realities of Azerbaijani village life, everyday relations, and forms of collective memory emerge as leading motifs in his творчество. After completing his secondary education, his work as a deputy director at the Khurshidbanu Natavan School in the city of Fuzuli enabled him to engage more closely with the social environment and further develop his ability to observe and analyze human relationships.

• During the years 1964–1970, he studied at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Baku State University, specializing as a translator of the Persian language. The broad cultural and linguistic knowledge he acquired during his university years, along with his engagement with both classical and modern literature, contributed to the enrichment of Sakhavat's artistic thinking and enabled him to explore both the historical and philosophical dimensions of space in his novels.

time serves as a unifying element of events, social relations, and collective memory (Bakhtin, 1981). In "Stone Houses," the depiction of the neighborhood and the stone houses forms this chronotope: events do not merely take place in a physical setting, but evolve into a structure where time and collective trauma are preserved.

This approach finds parallels in Russian literature, particularly in Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment," where the neighborhoods of Saint Petersburg function in a similar way. In both works, space acts as an intensifier of both individual and social psychology. Likewise, in Balzac's "The Human Comedy," the depiction of Parisian streets serves a comparable function, concretizing social stratification and ideological differences. Sakhavat, however, adapts this approach to the cultural and historical context of Azerbaijan.

Moreover, the chronotope of the novel presents to the reader both circular and static elements of time. Although space undergoes change and renewal, and the process of urbanization becomes visible through the proliferation of modern buildings, the stone houses themselves remain unchanged; they function as guardians of the past and of collective memory. This situation corresponds both to Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope and to Halbwachs's theory of social memory. Social memory here is not limited to individual recollections; it encompasses collective fears, affections, anxieties, and everyday life experiences. As the materialized form of this memory, space carries both the emotional atmosphere and the ideological weight of events.

One of the elements that further deepens the chronotopic function of space in the novel is the concretization of social relations within it. The internal ambivalence of Aunt Zakiyya—her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return—reveals the social pressure embedded in space. This aspect can be compared to Toni Morrison's "Beloved," where the collective traumas of the African American community are conveyed through



Seyran Sakhavat

space. In both works, space serves as a repository of both individual and collective memory.

Similarly, in Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse," the house and its surrounding environment function as carriers of both personal and collective memories, as well as emotional experiences. In a comparable manner, Sakhavat presents space as a structuring force of both individual psychological experience and collective memory.

Other female characters, such as Shukufa, are unable to express their impulses and desires within the boundaries of space; this demonstrates how the social and psychological influence of space operates on individual character. Space thus becomes the site where the dialogue between social and ideological norms, individual freedom, and fear unfolds. Thus, in the novel "Stone Houses," space functions, in accordance with the concept of the chronotope, as a multilayered artistic system: it serves as a carrier of time, collective memory, and human destiny. Space is not merely a backdrop for events, but an ontological field in which social relations, psychological states, and ideological processes are concretized. This quality makes the novel one of the most successful examples in

Azerbaijani prose demonstrating the philosophical and aesthetic function of space.

The concept of social memory, as developed in Halbwachs's theory, emphasizes that individual memories do not remain merely personal experiences but are instead shaped within social frameworks. Halbwachs (1992, p. 38) notes that individual memories function as structuring elements of collective memory, reflecting the interaction between individual and social relations. This aspect of social memory is clearly observable in Seyran Sakhavat's "Stone Houses." Events within the neighborhood, the behavior of characters, and their internal conflicts demonstrate how collective experience and social norms are encoded within space.

Despite the physical absence of the character Gadir, the central narrative line of the novel is shaped by the collective silence and behavioral codes preserved within the neighborhood, which serve as manifestations of social memory. Gadir's absence—and the collective emotions associated with it, such as fear, anxiety, and anticipation—reveals the interaction between individual and collective experience. This situation shows that space is not merely a physical setting; it is also a

domain where individual and collective memories are preserved, and where social relations and ideological pressures are materialized.

The internal contradictions of Aunt Zakiyya vividly illustrate the impact of this social pressure on the individual. Her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return reflects not only a personal psychological state but also the influence of the neighborhood's collective expectations and social norms on her behavior. Here, space functions as a mechanism that concretizes social pressure and directs individual choices.

Female characters—Aunt Zakiyya, Shukufa, and other residents of the neighborhood—act as carriers of the social and moral dynamics of space. Some characters, like Shukufa, are unable to express their impulses within the boundaries of space, restricting their emotions and desires; this indicates that space is closely tied to social pressure and collective expectations. In this context, space determines patterns of individual behavior and forms of emotional response.

In "Stone Houses" the houses themselves intensify the psychological states of the characters. Dark corridors and old walls materialize their feelings of fear, loneliness, and social pressure.

This approach parallels Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis," where the protagonist's room and the structure of his home reflect his inner experience.

Symbolically, the stone houses embody collective continuity and moral stability, while the proliferation of modern buildings and urbanization signify change and ideological pressure. This aspect can be compared to the houses of Istanbul in Orhan Pamuk's "The Black Book," where, similarly, space preserves historical memory and reflects social relations.

Bakhtin (1981), in his theory of the chronotope, emphasizes the interrelation of time and space as an artistic unity. In "Stone Houses," the spatial chronotope functions not merely as the physical environment where events unfold, but as a field in which social relations and collective memory are concretized. Here, social memory predominates over individual psychology; the neighborhood's rules, traditions, and fears engage in dialogue with, and shape, personal desires and needs.

One element that further deepens the relationship between space and social memory in the novel is the depiction of social stratification and gender roles. The differing behavioral norms, social expectations,

# The Ontological Semantics Of Space In The Context Of Chronotope And Social Memory In Seyran Sakhavat's Novel "Stone Houses"

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## Worth Noting:

• In the following years, Seyran Sakhavat carried out extensive literary activity within the press organs of the Azerbaijan Writers' Union—particularly in publications such as "Literature and Art" and "Ulduz." This experience enriched his background in publicistic writing and, at the same time, influenced the social and psychological depth of his novels, as well as the realism of events within the framework of space and time (Sakhavat biography, 2025).

• All of this life experience and intellectual background made it possible for space in the novel "Stone Houses" to be presented not merely as a physical coordinate where events occur, but also as an ontological field reflecting human destiny and collective memory. Alongside revealing the philosophical and aesthetic function of space, the novel creates a foundation for a systematic analysis of the dialogue between chronotope and social memory in Azerbaijani prose.

and cultural stereotypes between men and women in the neighborhood reinforce the ontological function of space. The behaviors of female characters such as Aunt Zakiyya and Shukufa, along with their social positions and status within the neighborhood, reveal the structuring role of collective memory and the social pressure embedded in space. Space here functions both protectively and coercively, framing events and individual choices.

Thus, in "Stone Houses," social memory and space are closely intertwined. Space is not merely a backdrop for events; it is an ontological and symbolic domain in which social relations, collective memories, and individual psychological states are concretized. This characteristic positions the novel as one of the most prominent works in Azerbaijani prose demonstrating the philosophical and aesthetic function of space, successfully integrating the concepts of chronotope and social memory.

Moreover, in Seyran Sakhavat's novel, space reflects not only physical and social experience but also ideological and cultural conflicts. The ideological spaces in the novel, particularly the "culture house," are presented as symbols of official ideological structures. Their function is not limited to hosting events; they also materialize the institutional and cultural pressures of society.

Traditional stone houses, in contrast, serve as carriers of collective memory and socio-moral stability. Throughout the novel, the author presents a constant confrontation between these two types of space: the official spaces representing modern urbanization and ideological pressure versus the stone houses, which act as protectors of historical and moral values. The author writes: "Multi-storey buildings had surrounded the stone houses like a ring setting. Yet the stone houses still stood resilient, proud, and calm, as if defying all the changes of time" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 6).

This quotation demonstrates that the stone houses are not merely physical entities but acquire ontological significance as symbols of collective memory, social norms, and moral principles. In contrast, the culture house and official ideological spaces are depicted as formal,



Seyran Sakhavat

institutional, and external sources of pressure. According to Lukács (1971), such ideological spaces are often characterized by formality and procedural limitations, incapable of reflecting the living manifestation of human experience and collective memory.

The circular model of time complements the chronotope of the novel and further emphasizes the ideological and cultural conflict within space. Events continue to unfold, yet the internal structure of the neighborhood remains unchanged; historical dynamics are frozen within the space. Sakhavat describes this relationship as follows:

"The stone houses stood as they had a hundred years ago; every stone, every wall, every narrow street carried the breath of the past, and time here was stable and absolute" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 6).

This description highlights that the stone houses act as guardians of historical memory and collective experience. Their stability confers ideological precedence over the temporary and formal character of official and institutional spaces.

In "Stone Houses," the confrontation between ideological and cultural spaces—the stone houses versus the official ideological structure—brings history and modernity, collective memory and institutional spaces into dia-

logue. This can be compared to Milan Kundera's "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," where historical and ideological spaces similarly influence individual destiny and experience.

The ideological and cultural conflict in the novel is not limited to physical space; it also impacts human destiny and psychology. The actions and behaviors of the characters are shaped by this confrontation. For example, the absence of the character Gadir and the events surrounding him demonstrate how collective and individual memory are concretized within space. Similarly, Aunt Zakiyya's internal ambivalence—her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return—reflects the influence of the contradiction between cultural and ideological spaces on individual psychology.

This dialogue between modernity and history, between collective memory and official structures, provides one of the clearest examples of the ontological and symbolic function of space in Azerbaijani prose. Here, the stone houses act as guardians of both the past and collective experience, while the ideological space functions merely as a source of formal pressure. This confrontation renders the chronotope of the novel more complex and multilayered, presenting the reader not only with the setting of events but also with

a structure in which time, ideas, and social relations interact and converse.

In Seyran Sakhavat's "Stone Houses," space does not merely serve as a backdrop for events; it also structures social, psychological, and ontological experience. Space functions as a crucial element that intensifies the inner world of the characters and shapes the moral framework of events. This feature enriches the philosophical and aesthetic layer of the work and provides a clear example of the multifaceted function of space in Azerbaijani prose.

On the psychological level, space acts as a means of reinforcing the characters' internal states. Dark corridors, narrow passages, and old stone walls are not only physical surroundings but also artistic devices that reflect the characters' fear, loneliness, and inner tension. The author writes:

"The old stone walls seemed to make a sound with every step, reading the fear hidden in the shadow of every corner" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 18). This description concretizes the psychological weight of space. The characters inhabit their inner worlds amid the cold of the stones and the narrow structure of the neighborhood, confronting social and individual fears at every turn. The psychological function of space not only strengthens individual experience but also reflects

the influence of collective memory and social norms. Aunt Zakiyya's ambivalence—her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return—further emphasizes the social and psychological pressures embedded in the space.

The stone houses also possess a symbolic function. They act as metaphors for collective continuity, historical memory, and moral stability, while the rise of modern urbanization and multi-storey buildings signifies social and ideological change and modernization. The author notes:

"The stone houses still stood resilient, and within each stone was hidden the memory of centuries, as if they were witnesses to an unchanging order" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 21).

This quotation shows that the stone houses gain ontological significance as carriers of historical and moral memory. Urbanization and the rise of new buildings, on the other hand, symbolize social and ideological transformations; the tension between them creates a dialogue between past and present, tradition and modernity.

In "Stone Houses," the chronotope, social memory, and psychological function

# The Ontological Semantics Of Space In The Context Of Chronotope And Social Memory In Seyran Sakhavat's Novel "Stone Houses"

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## Worth Noting:

In Seyran Sakhavat's novel "Stone Houses," space is not perceived merely as a physical environment in which events take place; rather, it is presented as a carrier of time, collective memory, and human destiny. At the beginning of the work, the depiction of the neighborhood may appear to the reader as a simple panorama of everyday life. However, closer analysis reveals that this space is not just a geographical coordinate or an ordinary urban background, but also a materialized and artistically concretized form of collective memory and social relations. The neighborhood thus functions as a structural unit where historical, psychological, and social experiences converge.

The author presents this aspect to the reader as follows: "Multi-storey buildings had surrounded the stone houses like a ring setting" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 6). This description not only reflects urban transformation but also symbolizes the dialogue of time—the interaction between historicity and modernity, and the tension between past and present.

of space engage in a dialogue with examples from world literature. Authors such as Dostoevsky, Balzac, Woolf, Kafka, Morrison, and Pamuk depict space as a carrier of both individual and collective experience. Sakhavat applies this concept to the Azerbaijani historical, cultural, and social context, enriching the work with local specificity.

Thus, "Stone Houses" not only demonstrates the philosophical-aesthetic and social function of space in Azerbaijani prose but also parallels similar traditions and artistic approaches in world literature. Here, space functions on ideological, historical, and psychological levels, presenting the reader with a multilayered chronotope.

Seyran Sakhavat's "Stone Houses" is one of the rare works in Azerbaijani prose that successfully presents the philosophical-aesthetic function of space, combining the concepts of chronotope, social memory, and ontological semantics. The artistic structure of the novel shows that space is not merely a physical backdrop for events but an ontological element that shapes human destiny, social relations, and collective memory.

One of the novel's strengths is the depiction of the characters' inner worlds and psychological states in connection with the structure of space. Aunt Zakiyya's ambivalence—her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return—is not merely a personal psychological conflict but a concrete example of the collective social pressure within the neighborhood. This approach parallels Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, in which the collective trauma of African Americans is explored through home and space; in both cases, space functions as a carrier of individual psychological states and collective memory.

Throughout the novel, the symbolic confrontation between the stone houses and urbanization presents a dialogue between past and present, tradition and modernity. The author writes: "Multi-storey buildings had surrounded the stone houses like a ring setting. Yet the stone houses still stood resilient, proud, and calm, as if defying all the changes of time" (Sakhavat, 2021, p. 6). This depiction demonstrates that the stone houses are



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not merely physical structures but acquire ontological significance as symbols of collective memory, social norms, and moral principles. Modern urbanization, in contrast, represents social and ideological change. A similar approach is observed in Orhan Pamuk's *The Black Book*, where the dialogue between Istanbul's old neighborhoods and modern cityscapes creates a central motif of confrontation between past and present, tradition and modernity.

According to Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, space and time are inseparable within the artistic system of the novel. The neighborhood functions both as the stage of events and as a preserver of social and psychological experience. The cyclical and repetitive structure of events, combined with the unchanging nature of the stone houses, manifests the ontological dialogue between past and present. Similarly, in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, the house and its surroundings carry both

temporal and individual memories; Sakhavat realizes this concept philosophically and aesthetically within the Azerbaijani context.

The novel also has its weaknesses. In some episodes, the narrative progression is slow and static; especially long descriptions of the neighborhood can impede the development of events and distract the reader's attention. The inner motivations of minor characters are sometimes underdeveloped, and their behavior and psychological states remain partly superficial against the backdrop of space and collective memory. Nevertheless, this approach serves the artistic purpose of emphasizing the chronotopic function of space and the concretization of social memory.

The concept of social memory, according to Halbwachs' theory, emphasizes that individual memories are formed within social frameworks. In *Stone Houses*, social memory is clearly observable; the events in the neighborhood, the behaviors of the characters,

and their internal struggles demonstrate how collective experience and social norms are encoded within space. Space functions not merely as a physical stage, but also as a domain in which individual and collective memories are preserved and where social relations and ideological pressures are materialized.

The ideological and cultural confrontation in the novel is not limited to physical space—it also impacts human destiny and psychology. The actions and behaviors of the characters are shaped by this confrontation. The absence of the character Gadir and the events surrounding him illustrate how collective and individual memory are concretized within space. Likewise, Aunt Zakiyya's internal ambivalence—her simultaneous desire for and fear of her brother's return—reflects the effect of the contradiction between cultural and ideological spaces on individual psychology. This dialogue between modernity and history, collective memory and official struc-

tures, offers one of the clearest examples of the ontological and symbolic function of space in Azerbaijani prose. Overall, *Stone Houses* is a work that successfully presents the multifaceted functions of space, the concept of the chronotope, and the role of social memory in Azerbaijani prose. Its strengths—deep psychological portraits, the dialogue between history and modernity, and the symbolic and ontological function of space—make it readable and relevant not only within the national context but also in world literature. Despite certain weaknesses—such as occasional slow pacing of events and the underdeveloped inner lives of minor characters—the novel's structural elements and the ontological function of space establish it as an exemplary work for the analysis of space in Azerbaijani prose. Here, space fulfills social, psychological, ideological, and symbolic roles; every stone, street, and house carries collective memory, time, and human destiny.

# Causes of stylistic errors in students' speech and ways to eliminate them



By: O'rinova Diyora  
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## Worth Noting:

In modern education, developing students' communication culture and ensuring stylistic accuracy in their speech has become one of the most pressing issues. In linguistics, stylistic errors are defined as the use of language units that are inappropriate for a given context or inconsistent with a particular speech style. Such errors negatively affect students' speech culture, weakening their ability to express ideas clearly, engage in communication, and adhere to literary language norms.

Speech culture plays a crucial role not only in education but also in an individual's social success. In the digital era, the rapid development of technology has introduced new tendencies in students' speech. For example, abbreviations, emojis, and informal expressions commonly used in social media are increasingly transferred into formal written language, leading to stylistic distortions. This phenomenon can influence not only students' academic writing but also their future professional communication.

### Abstract

This article examines stylistic errors found in students' oral and written speech, their underlying causes, and effective methods for eliminating them. The study employed content analysis, surveys, observation, experimental methods, focus group discussions, computational linguistic analysis, and psycholinguistic testing. The findings reveal that students frequently struggle with selecting appropriate speech styles according to text types. Based on the results, practical recommendations are proposed to improve students' speech culture and stylistic competence.

**Keywords:** speech culture, stylistic errors, communication, language norms, educational process, statistical analysis, content analysis

### INTRODUCTION

In modern education, developing students' communication culture and ensuring stylistic accuracy in their speech has become one of the most pressing issues. In linguistics, stylistic errors are defined as the use of language units that are inappropriate for a given context or inconsistent with a particular speech style. Such errors negatively affect students' speech culture, weakening their ability to express ideas clearly, engage in communication, and adhere to literary language norms. Speech culture plays a crucial role not only in education but also in an individual's social success. In the digital era, the rapid development of technology has introduced new tendencies in students' speech. For example, abbreviations, emojis, and informal expressions commonly used in social media are increasingly transferred into formal written language, leading to stylistic distortions. This phenomenon can influence not only students' academic writing but also their future professional communication.

Therefore, eliminating stylistic errors requires a comprehensive approach that considers not only grammatical but also pragmatic and discourse-related aspects. This article analyzes the main causes of stylistic errors in students' speech and explores effective ways to address them.

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### LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Numerous scholars have conducted research in the field of speech culture. For instance, G'afurov analyzed the theoretical aspects of speech culture, while Karimov systematized literary language styles. Qodirova provided practical examples of stylistic usage, and Xudoyberganova examined linguistic features from a psycholinguistic perspective. International researchers such as Smith, Ivanova, and Brown explored comparative, cognitive, and educational aspects of language norms. Recent studies by Yusupova, Petrov, Nurmatov, and Wilson highlight modern teaching methods and the impact of digital communication on speech. The study was conducted among 100 students from grades 8–9 in Tashkent city and region. Their written works (essays, summaries) and oral responses were analyzed.

### The following methods were used:

- Content analysis: identifying and classifying stylistic errors
- Survey: assessing students' knowledge of speech styles
- Observation: analyzing teaching approaches and classroom speech
- Additional methods included:
  1. Experimental Method  
Two groups (control and experimental) were selected. A "Teaching Speech Styles" program was implemented in the experimental group for three months. As a result, students' ability to choose appropriate styles improved by 35%.
  2. Focus Group Discussions  
Five groups (8 students each) discussed the influence of social media language. About 70% of participants preferred writing "as they do on Telegram."
  3. Computational Linguistics  
Using the AntConc program, 100 essays were analyzed. Words such as "very"



(143 times) and "amazing" (78 times) were overused, indicating excessive use of expressive vocabulary.

4. Psycholinguistic Testing  
Only 31% of students correctly identified appropriate stylistic choices in academic contexts.

Additional statistical findings showed that errors in formal letters were distributed as follows:

- Introduction – 23%
- Main body – 41%
- Conclusion – 36%

### RESULTS

The analysis revealed the following common stylistic errors in students' speech:

- Mixing formal and informal styles – 43%
- Using artistic expressions in scientific texts (and vice versa) – 29%
- Pronunciation and stress-related stylistic distortions – 15%
- Transfer of internet and colloquial language into writing – 13%
- Although 67% of students demonstrated general knowledge of speech styles, only 21% understood the importance of selecting an appropriate style according to the text type.

### DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the main causes of stylistic errors include:

- Insufficient theoretical knowledge of language styles
- Transfer of informal speech into written language

Inability to distinguish between text types

Strong influence of internet and social media language

To address these issues, the following strategies are recommended:

- Teaching speech styles through comparative practical exercises
- Conducting text-based analysis and discussions
- Developing exercises for appropriate stylistic selection
- Ensuring teachers model correct speech usage
- Limiting the use of informal internet language in academic contexts

One of the key reasons for stylistic errors is the lack of emphasis on stylistic aspects in textbooks and classroom instruction. Additionally, students' exposure to informal digital communication significantly shapes their language habits. Therefore, teachers should dedicate more time to text analysis and encourage students to practice writing in various genres such as academic articles, formal letters, and essays.

### CONCLUSION

Reducing stylistic errors and improving students' speech culture requires systematic teaching of language styles in both theoretical and practical ways. This not only promotes adherence to literary language norms but also enhances students' ability to communicate clearly, accurately, and effectively in social and professional contexts.

texts.

### The following measures are recommended:

- For teachers: organize seminars and training sessions on stylistics; expand textbook content
- For students: engage in text analysis, speech exercises, and projects (e.g., "Correct Speech" clubs)
- For parents: encourage reading and monitor children's speech habits
- For educational policy: develop national programs aimed at improving speech culture

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