

Numerous European Countries have been discussing the imminent implementation of a Digital Services Tax on American Companies

US-Europe

The conflict has long since moved beyond rhetoric into commercial reality:



Trump turns Big Tech into a trade weapon — and Europe is in the crosshairs:

Days before a landmark US-EU trade deadline, President Donald Trump threatens to double the price of every European export reaching American shores if any country dares to tax Silicon Valley. The warning is bold, the legal basis is murky, and the consequences for global commerce could not be higher.

On a Friday afternoon in late June, Donald Trump President of the United States reached for his smartphone, opened Truth Social, and fired a broadside at Europe that sent trade officials scrambling on both sides of the Atlantic. In a post that dispensed with diplomatic niceties entirely, Donald Trump threatened to impose a 100 per cent tariff on every good imported from any country that levies a digital services tax on American technology companies — a threat sweeping enough to affect dozens of nations and brazen enough to override any trade agreement already in force.



Donald Trump President of the United States

American Companies. Some of these Countries are close to actually doing this," Trump wrote. "Please let this statement serve to represent that any Country that imposes such a Tax will immediately be met with a 100% TARIFF on any and all Goods sent to the United States of America. This TARIFF will supersede Trade Deals made with the Country, whether implemented, signed, or not. Additionally, the 100% TARIFF will be immediately imposed, if they proceed."

The message was unambiguous and the target unmistakable: America's biggest technology companies — Apple,

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Banning screens is not enough UNESCO hands parents a manual for the digital age

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Amazon bets \$48 billion on India's AI future as Silicon Valley's great eastern pivot accelerates

Asia

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Where forests rise again: Kaptagat's decades of hope and the conservation story inspiring the world

Conservationist

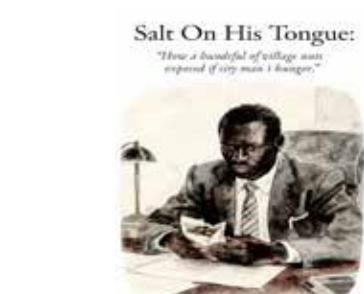
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Salt on his tongue

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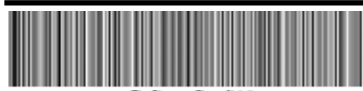


By Norman Mwale

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News Backpage The importance of a healthy lifestyle in maintaining human health



The Diaspora Times Global

THE TRIBE AS WEAPON: Ethnicity, Power, and the Long Shadow of Political Manipulation in Kenya

A Critical Essay By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

Who killed Kenya before the bullets were ever fired? The honest answer implicates no foreign power, no colonial ghost still rattling its chains, no abstract force of history — it

implicates the politician standing at the rally, microphone in hand, lips curled around the oldest instrument of mass mobilisation the African political class has ever wielded: the tribe. Not the tribe as lived culture, as language and song, as the warmth of shared cosmology — but the tribe

as weapon, as electoral arithmetic, as the mechanism by which the ordinary Kenyan is made to fear his neighbour, distrust the state, and vote against his own economic interest in order to protect a communal identity that a stranger in a suit has defined for him. The weaponisation

of ethnicity in Kenya is not an accident of history. It is a technology — perfected across six decades of independence, refined with each election

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"ALL BUSINESSES ONE PLATFORM"

Clean cooking drive reaches Siaya as indoor smoke kills thousands of Kenyans yearly

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), working alongside the Siaya County Government, Kenya Medical Training College Siaya campus, and the Chronic Diseases Society, used the camp to urge households across the county and the broader country to shift away from traditional cooking fuels and adopt cleaner alternatives. Residents who attended received free consultations, respiratory screening, diagnosis and treatment, alongside practical sessions on clean energy options including electric cooking, liquefied petroleum gas and biogas.

The numbers behind the campaign are sobering. Household air pollution caused by the widespread use of firewood, charcoal and other biomass fuels kills an estimated 27,000 people in Kenya every year, with women and children bearing the heaviest burden as the members of the household most exposed to cooking smoke. Nationally, more than 65 per cent of Kenyan households still rely on traditional cooking fuels that harm health and limit opportunities for women and children.

A two-day free medical camp in Siaya County yesterday brought together government regulators, health practitioners and local residents in a rare convergence of energy policy and public health — one that put a human face on a crisis that most Kenyans encounter daily but rarely name: the slow, silent damage of cooking smoke. The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), working alongside the Siaya County Government, Kenya Medical Training College Siaya campus, and the Chronic Diseases Society, used the camp to urge households across the county and the broader country to shift away from traditional cooking fuels and adopt cleaner alternatives. Residents who attended received free consultations, respiratory screening, diagnosis and treatment, alongside practical sessions on clean energy options including electric cooking, liquefied petroleum gas and biogas. The numbers behind the campaign are sobering. Household air pollution caused by the widespread use of firewood, charcoal and other biomass fuels kills an estimated 27,000 people in Kenya every year, with women and children bearing the heaviest burden as the members of the household most exposed to cooking smoke. Nationally, more than 65 per cent of Kenyan households still rely on traditional cooking fuels that harm health and limit opportunities for women and children. According to EPRA, approximately 9.1 million people — representing 68.5 per cent of all Kenyan households — depend on such fuels as their primary source of energy for cooking, heating and lighting, encompassing 1.7 million urban households and 7.4 million rural ones. Speaking at the camp,

EPRA Acting Director General Joseph Oketch said the authority had worked deliberately to create the conditions necessary for Kenyans to make the transition. “EPRA has worked closely with stakeholders to create a safe and enabling regulatory environment for the adoption of clean cooking solutions such as electric cooking, LPG and biogas,” Oketch said. “Through licensing and oversight of the energy sector, we have supported the expansion of safe and reliable infrastructure nationwide, developed regulations and standards that encourage investment and innovation, and implemented consumer awareness initiatives to promote the safe use of clean cooking technologies.” The health risks that the camp sought to address are well documented. When wood, charcoal, kerosene and other biomass fuels burn, they release smoke and particulate matter that penetrate deep into the lungs. Researchers say the smoke produced from burning biomass fuels penetrates deep into the lungs and bloodstream, increasing the risk of respiratory diseases, stroke, cardiovascular complications, lung cancer and mental health disorders. Asthma, bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are among the most common consequences, conditions that impose significant costs on households and the public health system alike. Siaya County is approaching the problem with both urgency and structure. Its Climate Change Action Plan for 2023 to 2028 sets reducing demand for biomass energy as an explicit goal, supported by ongoing education programmes to help residents understand the transition to cleaner alternatives. Yesterday’s medical camp formed part of that broader country



Dr. Eng. Joseph Oketch, Acting Director General, EPRA, addressing the media while touring the Clean Cooking Exhibition Booth during the Siaya Medical Camp.

strategy, embedding health screening within an energy-awareness agenda in a way that makes both more accessible to ordinary residents. The traditional three-stone fire and charcoal stove remain widely used across Kenya, despite the serious health issues they cause, and the barriers to change — cost, habit, and limited access to cleaner fuels in rural areas — remain real. Advocates argue, however,

that the medical and economic case for transitioning has never been stronger. Cooking with charcoal and firewood emits over 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent yearly in Kenya, more than the entire transport sector, placing clean cooking at the centre of both the country’s public health agenda and its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement. For the residents of Siaya who queued for screening

yesterday, the message was immediate and personal: the smoke rising from the kitchen hearth is not a fact of life. It is a risk — and one that policy, medicine and technology are now aligning to reduce.



James Opiyo Wandayi, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, and Dr. Eng. Joseph Oketch, Acting Director General of EPRA, participates in a health screening at the opening ceremony of the two-day free medical camp in Siaya County.

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AI training to Kenya's counties

Stanbic Foundation and Microsoft take AI training to Kenya's counties as digital skills gap narrows

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

The programme, delivered in partnership with Pathways Technologies and Konza Technopolis, targets trainers and institutions rather than individual learners alone — a train-the-trainer model designed to multiply impact. By equipping instructors at technical and vocational institutions with both foundational and practical AI skills, the initiative aims to generate a cascade effect, reaching far more Kenyans than a single cohort of direct trainees could.

The ambitions behind it are national in scale. Microsoft's AI National Skilling Initiative for Kenya aims to train one million people in AI and cybersecurity by 2027, aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030 and the Digital Masterplan, and targeting a Kenya that is firmly positioned as a global leader in AI talent. The Stanbic Foundation's participation gives the programme direct reach into the networks that formal technology partnerships often miss: small and medium enterprises, youth organisations, and county-level communities that lie beyond the pull of the capital's tech ecosystem.

When Stanbic Kenya Foundation and Microsoft sat down to plan the rollout of the Microsoft Elevate AI National Skilling Initiative, they made a deliberate choice: start not in Nairobi's technology corridors, but in the counties. Yesterday's announcement that 152 participants have completed training across Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa, Taita Taveta and Embu signals that the initiative is moving beyond aspiration and into action.

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L-R Winnie Karanu, AI National Skills Initiative Director at Microsoft, Constantine Obuya, African Centre for Women, Information and Communication Technology (ACWICT) and Dr. Ehud Gachugu, Ag. Deputy Chief Executive officer and Global Director Youth and Jobs Kenya Private Sector Alliance during the Microsoft AI National Skilling Initiative (AINSI) Launch. This initiative is part of Microsoft's commitment to democratise AI and empower individuals with the skills needed to thrive in the digital economy, aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030 and Digital Masterplan [Photo: Handout]

isations, and county-level communities that lie beyond the pull of the capital's tech ecosystem.

Mercy Githanji, head of Stanbic Kenya Foundation, said digital literacy sits at the heart of the foundation's work and shapes how it selects and structures its partnerships. "Through this pillar, we partner with TVETs and Vocational Training Centres to build the capacity of instructors to deliver digital skills training that supports employability, entrepreneurship and participation in the digital economy," she said. The foundation has been building toward this moment since 2021, working with partners to equip women, youth and micro, small and medium enterprises with 21st-century digital skills.

Through its Future ni Digital platform, more than 250,000 Kenyans have accessed training across basic, intermediate and advanced skills since 2019.

Winnie Karanu, skills elevate director at Microsoft Africa, said the partnership model had proved critical to making AI training relevant beyond major urban centres. "Through partners like Stanbic Foundation, we have been able to deliver training via county-level engagements and community-based platforms, expanding access beyond major cities," Karanu said. "Content has also been tailored to include key sectors such as agriculture, entrepreneurship and small business operations, ensuring practical relevance." That last point matters enormously in a

country where the majority of the workforce operates in agriculture and the informal economy, sectors that stand to gain substantially from AI tools if the skills to use them are accessible.

Kenya's expanded AI and digital skills partnership is also underpinned by a government target to equip 20 million citizens with digital skills by 2032, supported by the Digital Superhighway Agenda and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda. The programme leverages Jitume digital hubs, which serve as centres for digital skills training and innovation, providing access to technology, online learning platforms, and mentorship opportunities that enable participants to gain hands-on experience in AI and other digital tools. With

more than 200 Digital Hubs and Jitume Centres spread across Kenya's 47 counties, the infrastructure to scale already exists. What the Stanbic and Microsoft partnership is now providing is the content, the instructors and the institutional relationships to fill those hubs with purpose.

For the 152 participants who completed training across the five counties, the immediate benefit is practical: skills that can be applied in classrooms, workshops and small businesses from the coast to the central highlands. For Kenya, the longer-term return is the foundation of an AI-ready workforce built not in a single city but across the country — one trainer, one county, one cohort at a time.

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Ruto tells Kenya's banks to open the vault — or explain why they won't

At the ninth annual World MSME Day, President William Ruto launched a revised national policy and drew a straight line between locked credit and a locked economy, challenging commercial lenders to serve the millions of Kenyans currently invisible to the financial system.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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NAIROBI — There was a moment yesterday at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre when President William Ruto stopped being diplomatic about Kenya's banking sector. Speaking to a room that included commercial lenders, cabinet secretaries, development partners and hundreds of small business owners who had travelled from across the country, the President posed a question that was really an accusation.

"I put it to my friends in finance plainly," he said. "How can we possibly grow our economy while locking most of our people off the balance sheet? How do we create jobs for our youth while refusing to bank them?"

The occasion was Kenya's 2026 World MSME Day celebrations, the ninth such event since the United Nations designated 27 June as the global day of recognition for micro, small and medium enterprises. This year's gathering took on sharper political and economic weight than usual, culminating in the launch of the Revised MSMEs Policy 2026 — a framework the government says will dismantle the regulatory and financial barriers that have constrained the sector for decades. But it was Ruto's challenge to the banking industry that cut through the ceremony and set the day's tone.

MSMEs account for 98 per cent of businesses in Kenya, create more than 90 per cent of non-farm employment, and contribute over 40 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. That is not a marginal sector. It is the architecture of the economy. And yet, as the President made clear, the formal financial system has largely treated it as one. Although commercial banks have extended about Ksh.1 trillion in credit to the sector over the last three years, the President said the amount remains insufficient to support the growth potential of MSMEs. Against a financing gap that currently stands at about Ksh.3 trillion, the implication was unambiguous: the private sector has neither matched the need nor the moment.

"The uncomfortable truth remains," Ruto said. "The vast majority of micro and small enterprises, the very backbone of our economy, have remained outside that



President William Ruto speaks during this year's World MSME Day celebrations at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi on Saturday, June 27, 2026. PHOTO | PCS

flow of capital."

The government's own interventions, by contrast, were presented as evidence that lending to the excluded is neither charity nor imprudence — it is policy, and it is working. Through the Hustler Fund, the government has disbursed close to Ksh.90 billion to more than 27 million Kenyans over the past three years, while mobilising over Ksh.6 billion in savings from citizens the banking system had long written off. The figure is significant not only for its scale but for what it demonstrates: that millions of Kenyans previously deemed uncreditworthy have borrowed, repaid and saved when given the chance to do so.

Ruto was explicit about what that track record should mean for the banking sector. "The institution that learns to reach them through behavioural credit scoring, mobile technology and the data we already have generated will not only transform our economy but also secure its own future," he said. The appeal to commercial self-interest was deliberate. Rather than merely moralising about financial inclusion, Ruto reframed the unbanked as a business opportunity that lenders have so far failed to identify — or chosen to ignore.

The credit exclusion problem has a second dimension beyond the financing gap itself: the shadow of the Credit Reference Bureau, which for years trapped millions of Kenyans in a cycle of negative listing that effectively

shut them out of formal financial services. The government has delisted more than eight million Kenyans who had been blacklisted by the CRB, with two million already rebuilding their credit standing and rejoining the formal financial system. Ruto announced that the next step would convert that rehabilitated credit history into something more powerful. "We are now turning that credit history into a National Credit Score so that character and behaviour, not just a title deed or a logbook, can unlock financing," he said — a shift that, if implemented effectively, could reshape the collateral logic that has long favoured asset-owning Kenyans over entrepreneurial ones.

To underline the point, the President reached across continents for a precedent. He urged local banks to study Bangladesh's Grameen Bank, founded by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus — an institution that has extended billions of dollars in unsecured microloans to some of the world's poorest borrowers and, in doing so, built a lending model that conventional banking theory once said was impossible. "The unbanked are not a risk to be kept at arm's length," Ruto said. "They are a market waiting to be served."

The structural reforms announced alongside the credit push were equally telling. "We began by clearing the path, creating a State Department for MSMEs to give the sector a permanent

home and taking government to the phone," Ruto said, noting that over 25,800 public services are now available through the eCitizen platform. The cost of registering a company has dropped from Ksh.50,000 to around Ksh.11,000 — a reduction that removes a concrete barrier to formalisation for entrepreneurs who have operated in the informal economy not by preference but because the cost of legality was prohibitive. The government has also committed to making all public tenders accessible online, which if delivered would open procurement markets that have historically been opaque to small businesses without political connections.

The Revised MSMEs Policy 2026, launched by Ruto during the event, is intended to anchor these reforms in a durable regulatory framework rather than leaving them to shift with political winds. Co-operatives and MSMEs Development Cabinet Secretary Wycliffe Oparanya said the policy would help remove the systemic barriers that have for too long held the sector back and give entrepreneurs the regulatory certainty they need to invest, hire and grow.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator, Garry Conille, offered a framing for what the day's commitments represented at a level beyond economics. "This is not charity," he said. "This is a nation deciding that no Kenyan with ambition

should be invisible to the economy." Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja added a county dimension, noting that the capital's Unified Business Permit had already cut through layers of bureaucratic duplication that had made operating in Nairobi more costly and complicated than it needed to be. Through NYOTA, the government is building a pipeline of more than 800 young people in every ward in the country, equipped with skills, mentorship and start-up capital — a programme that, at full scale, would touch nearly every constituency in Kenya and create a generation of entrepreneurs with structured support rather than good intentions and an empty bank account. For the small business owners who filled KICC's exhibition halls yesterday — displaying products, pitching innovations and navigating an economic environment that has grown harder, not easier, over the past several years — the question is whether the speeches will be followed by structural change. Ruto's government has now passed the policy, launched the fund, cleared the CRB rolls and digitised the licensing. The bank lending figures for next year will be the most honest measure of whether the conversion has moved from the convention centre floor into the financial system's balance sheets.

Worth Noting:

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Motivation

We groomed future wives and husbands in the name of house maids and failed to train our own children to keep their future families



By: Mukama Phillip Kahgiriza mukphix@gmail.com

Worth Noting:

- Then we looked at that girl and said, "Never again." We swore our daughters would not scrub basins and our sons would not carry firewood from the shamba in Kakamega. So we planned our children and cushioned them. We never taught them to carry. In Nairobi's Westlands, a twenty-seven-year-old wife calls her mother in tears because she burned the rice; the househelp had always cooked.
- In Kampala's Ntinda, a twenty-nine-year-old husband argues when his wife asks him to take out the trash, because no one ever told him it was his job too. We never taught them to feed others first.
- In Arusha, a young couple panics when salaries delay. They grew up with food delivered and groceries ordered, and neither knows how to stretch 5,000 shillings into three meals, because they were never taught to stretch anything except data bundles.

There was a time across East Africa when a housemaid did not clock in. She was clocked into the family. She was thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. She came from Busia on the Uganda-Kenya border, from the hills of Rukungiri in Western Uganda, or from Kiambu outside Nairobi. Her name rarely appeared on any document in the house, yet her fingerprints were on everything that kept it alive.

In Kampala, she woke at 5:30 a.m. in a single room behind a house in Nansana. With two yellow jerrycans on her shoulders, she walked to the communal tap in Kasubi before the city stirred. Her back burned, but she did not complain, because the children had to bathe before school.

By mid-morning in Dar es Salaam's Mbagala, she was pounding matooke until her arms shook, peeling potatoes for Sunday lunch, and standing over charcoal smoke in Temeke until her eyes turned red. She served the family first and ate the leftovers last. When there was no meat, she made beans taste like a feast. In the afternoon in Bujumbura's Buyenzi, she scrubbed toilets with a rag tied to a stick, washed school uniforms in a tin basin until her knuckles bled, swept the compound, mopped the tiles, and lined shoes by the door. The fridge could be empty, but the house looked orderly. At night in Kigali's Nyamirambo, she bathed a feverish baby, sang lullabies in Lu-

ganda to a child who only knew Kinyarwanda, walked the toddler to the clinic, told the nurse she was the mother, and carried the medicine home tucked in her kitenge. And every week in Juba's Gudele, she stretched 10,000 shillings like dough into sukuma, onions, salt, charcoal, and soap, mended a torn uniform with needle and thread, and kept the house quiet during blackouts because she had learned to keep peace without light. She was not paid enough. She was not loved enough. Some of her childhood was stolen. Yet when she married, she carried that same mop, that same firewood logic, and that same resolve of "I will do it before it breaks us" into her own home.

Her husband might drink in Eldoret, her children might rebel in Mbale, and money might delay in Morogoro, but the house had a woman who knew how to hold it when the wind came. Meals happened. School fees were found. Children knew how to wash their own plates. The marriage bent, but it did not collapse. We called her "the previous housemaid," and under her wings, homes in Kampala, Nairobi, Dar, Kigali, Bujumbura, and Juba lasted.

Then we looked at that girl and said, "Never again." We swore our daughters would not scrub basins and our sons would not carry firewood from the shamba in Kakamega. So we planned our children and cushioned them. We never taught them

to carry. In Nairobi's Westlands, a twenty-seven-year-old wife calls her mother in tears because she burned the rice; the househelp had always cooked.

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In Arusha, a young couple panics when salaries delay. They grew up with food delivered and groceries ordered, and neither knows how to stretch 5,000 shillings into three meals, because they were never taught to stretch anything except data bundles.

We never taught them to clean the mess. In Dodoma, the dishes pile up and become divorce papers. "I am tired from work," she says. "I am tired too," he says. No one sweeps, and the house becomes a battlefield of dust and resentment.

We never taught them to mother or father when it is hard. In Kigali, a twenty-eight-year-old wife resents the 3 a.m. cries because she never changed a diaper at fifteen. In Juba, a husband sleeps in the living room when the baby keeps him up and calls it "self-care," because he never herded goats and learned to stay awake for others.

We never taught them that marriage is work. In Bujumbura, they were told marriage is love, trips, and matching outfits. No one

told them it is also firewood on a Monday when you are angry, mopping in Gitega when you did not cause the spill, and choosing to stay when leaving looks cleaner.

Today East Africa has two kinds of homes and two kinds of endings. Under the housemaid's hands, a woman in Rongai who once slept on a mattress on the floor in Kawangware now runs a house where the rent is late and the salary is small, but the children pray before food in Swahili and the husband comes home because the house is peace.

She is tired, but her family is standing, because she learned early that you keep a home by doing the thing you do not feel like doing. Under the planned kids' hands, a couple in Kampala, both Makerere graduates who were soft-spoken and in love at their Kololo wedding, are separated three years later. They did not cheat. They fought over who should cook, who should wash, and who should wake up with the baby.

They were never taught that love is a verb you perform when you are exhausted. Now their children pack bags every Friday and know the Entebbe routes better than they know their parents' peace.

This is not a call for cruelty. It is a call for hands. I am not saying we should return twelve-year-olds to charcoal stoves in Mbale or to the shamba in Gulu.

That broke backs and broke childhoods. I am saying we

removed the wrong thing. We threw away responsibility with the abuse, and we confused gentleness with doing nothing. A child in Kisumu can be loved and still wash a plate. A child in Dar can be protected and still know how to cook.

A child in Kigali can be cherished and still hear, "This is your home. Your hands too." Because when you raise a child without chores, you are not raising a child. You are raising a future adult who will drown the moment life asks them to carry weight.

To the women who were once housemaids across East Africa, I see the scars on your hands and how you turned pain into a home. You built families that did not break easily. To the parents raising planned kids today, love them fiercely, but do not make them guests. Give them the mop. Give them the shamba. Give them the lesson that a family is not kept by feelings. It is kept by firewood, water, dishes, and showing up when you do not feel like it. Because the families that last are not built by planned kids.

They are built by hands that learned early how to hold a home together. And if we do not teach those hands again, we will keep burying marriages while the children are still breathing.

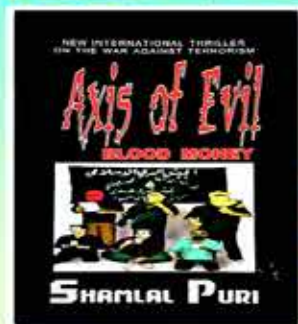
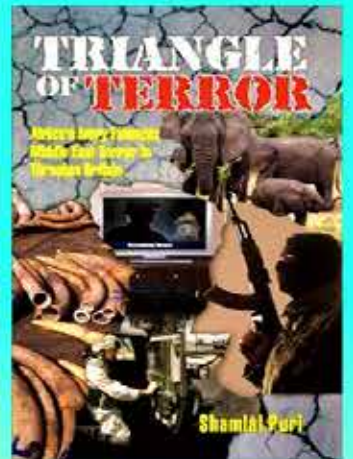
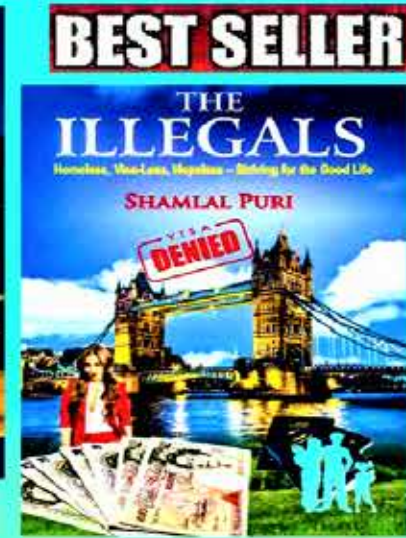
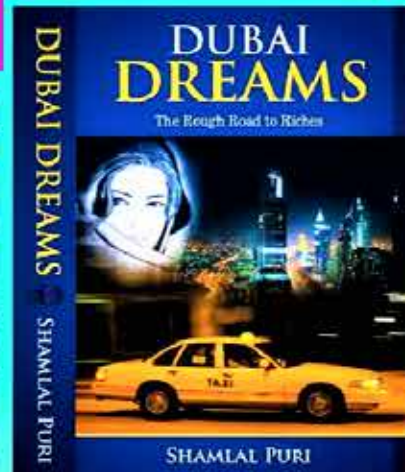
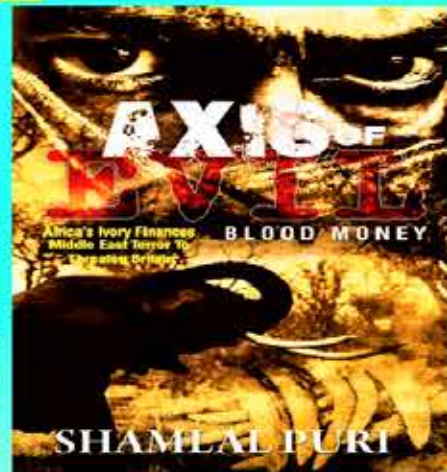
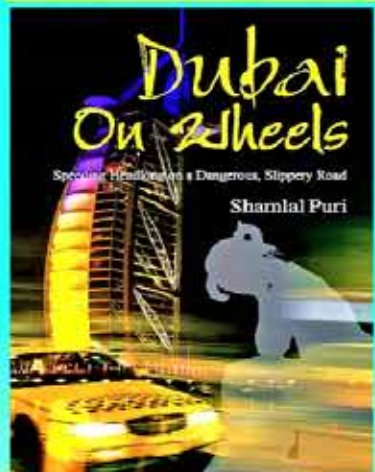
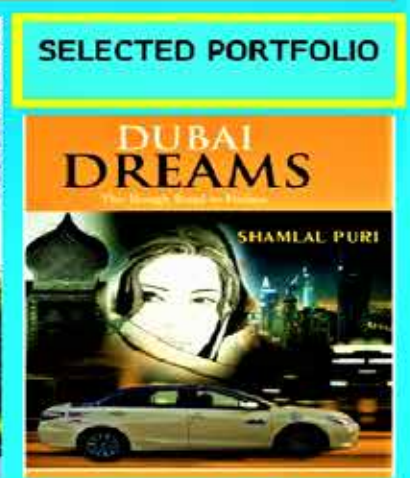
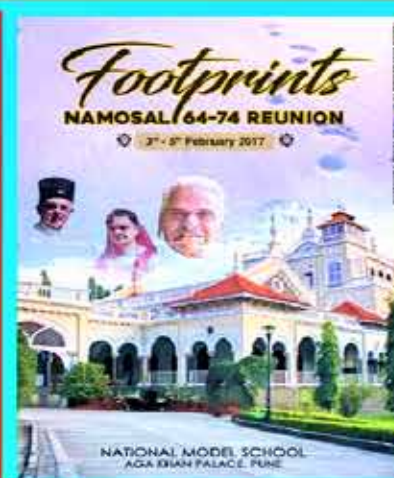
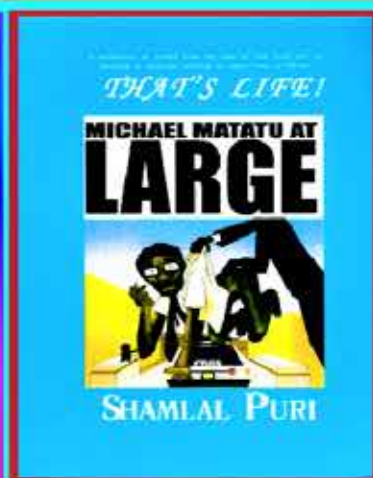
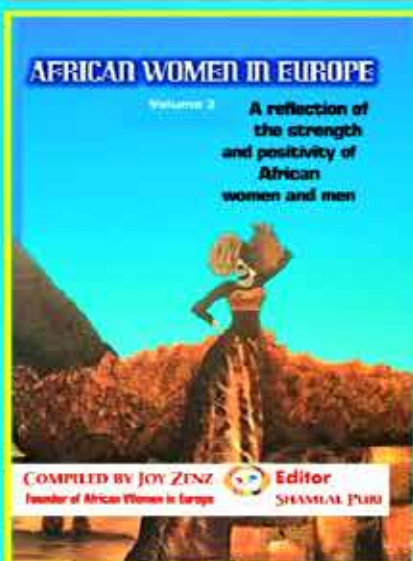
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US News

Trump turns Big Tech into a trade weapon — and Europe is in the crosshairs:

Days before a landmark US-EU trade deadline, President Donald Trump threatens to double the price of every European export reaching American shores if any country dares to tax Silicon Valley. The warning is bold, the legal basis is murky, and the consequences for global commerce could not be higher.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Donald Trump President of the United States

Worth Noting:

- Trump's hostility to digital taxes is neither new nor idle, and the record shows he has already achieved at least one notable scalp. Canada rescinded its digital services tax literally one day before the first tax payments were due, announcing the move in anticipation of a mutually beneficial comprehensive trade arrangement with the United States, after Trump threatened to break off trade negotiations entirely.

- The repeal was subsequently formalised through Canada's Fiscal Budget Law 2026, with the Revenue Agency required to refund all digital services tax payments already collected and pay interest to affected technology companies. The episode was widely read as a template — proof that Trump's tariff threats, however legally uncertain, carry real political weight and that governments facing sufficient trade exposure would eventually blink.

Google, Meta and Amazon — and the governments that have chosen to tax them. What was considerably less clear was how, or whether, Trump could actually carry out the threat. The legal landscape beneath his feet has shifted dramatically since he returned to the White House, and a president who once commanded virtually unlimited tariff authority has spent the first half of 2026 reassembling his arsenal piece by piece after the Supreme Court tore it apart.

The timing of the post was far from accidental. The threat arrived just ahead of Trump's 4 July deadline for the European Union and the United States to begin implementing a trade agreement that caps most EU exports to America at 15 per cent. That deal, which EU Trade Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič described as "the best we could get under very difficult circumstances," explicitly excludes digital services taxes, which some EU members have imposed or are considering imposing. In other words, the ink on a sweeping transatlantic agreement had barely dried when Trump moved

to reopen one of its most contentious omissions. The message to Brussels, Paris, Rome and Madrid was pointed: the trade deal buys you a reprieve on goods tariffs, not immunity on tech taxes.

Roughly half of all European members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development have proposed, announced or already implemented a digital services tax, according to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, which notes that such levies would mostly affect US companies. France, Italy and Spain each impose a 3 per cent levy on large companies operating in their markets. Britain, which departed the EU and is not covered by the new transatlantic framework, has maintained its own 2 per cent digital services tax since 2020 — a measure that raised more than £800 million in the 2024–25 fiscal year, up from £678 million the year before. The revenue is not incidental: for governments managing squeezed public finances, the digital levy is a meaningful and growing fiscal instrument, and the political resistance to abandoning it at Wash-

ington's demand is considerable.

The British position introduced one of the more delicate ambiguities in Trump's post. His warning targeted nations discussing the "imminent implementation" of new levies, a formulation that left the status of existing taxes — including London's — technically unresolved. Yet Trump had already signalled his intentions towards Britain. Speaking from the Oval Office in April, he made the threat explicit and personal. "We have been looking at it, and we can meet that very easily by just putting a big tariff on the UK, so they better be careful," Trump said, criticising those he said were seeking to make an "easy buck" by targeting American companies. Britain's ruling Labour government has consistently defended the tax as a vital fiscal measure, and the measure went unchanged when Washington and London reached their own bilateral trade deal last year — though Trump noted at the time that its terms "can always be changed."

The conflict has long since moved beyond rhetoric into commercial reality. Amazon

increased its Digital Services Fee across its UK, France, Italy and Spain stores from 20 March 2026, in a move that represented another margin squeeze for sellers operating across European markets. Under the updated structure, UK-established sellers now face a 3 per cent digital services fee on selling and fulfilment fees for sales in France, Italy and Spain, while sellers established in Italy or Spain face equivalent charges on UK and France store sales. The practical result is that the cost of European digital services taxes is being passed directly down the supply chain to third-party sellers — many of them small businesses — who had no role in the political dispute that created the levies in the first place. For thousands of SMEs trading cross-border on Amazon's European platforms, the geopolitical standoff between Washington and European capitals is showing up as a line item on their monthly statements.

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Analysts took note. Gary Hufbauer, a nonresident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said Canada's retreat would embolden further pressure. "Going forward, I think the fact that Trump managed to bully or cajole Canada into

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US News

Trump turns Big Tech into a trade weapon — and Europe is in the crosshairs:

Days before a landmark US-EU trade deadline, President Donald Trump threatens to double the price of every European export reaching American shores if any country dares to tax Silicon Valley. The warning is bold, the legal basis is murky, and the consequences for global commerce could not be higher.

Contd from Page 10
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Worth Noting:

• The force of that distinction matters because the legal architecture available to Trump is considerably weaker than it was when he began his second term. On 20 February 2026, in *Learning Resources Inc. v. Trump*, the Supreme Court ruled that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act does not authorise the president to impose sweeping, open-ended tariffs, striking down the legal foundation for what had been the central pillar of his trade strategy.

• The decision removed the fastest tool for imposing broad country-level duties and set the stage for companies that had paid them to seek refunds. Trump called the ruling “deeply disappointing” and said he was “ashamed” of some of the justices, describing their decision as “an embarrassment to their families.” He immediately pivoted to a temporary 10 per cent global tariff imposed under the Trade Act of 1974 — a different statute the court had not yet addressed — while his officials raced to reconstruct the tariff architecture the ruling had dismantled.

dropping its digital services tax means that this will be a big item that he insists on in talks with Europe and any countries in all these trade negotiations. I see this as a harbinger of a more general repeal of digital services taxes,” he said, calling it “a real victory for Trump.” Others were less convinced the same playbook would work in Europe. Edward Alden, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, argued that the Europeans occupy fundamentally different ground. “The Europeans are in a much stronger position. They have a market that’s collectively roughly the size of the US market. Their retaliation has some significant effects on US companies. The Canadians are just in a much weaker position because 75 per cent of their exports go to the United States,” he said.

The force of that distinction matters because the legal architecture available to Trump is considerably weaker than it was when he began his second term. On 20 February 2026, in *Learning Resources Inc. v. Trump*, the Supreme Court ruled that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act does not authorise the president to impose sweeping, open-ended tariffs, striking down the legal foundation for what had been the central pillar of his trade strategy. The decision removed the fastest tool for imposing broad country-level duties and set the stage for companies that had paid them to seek refunds. Trump called the ruling “deeply disappointing” and said he was “ashamed” of some of the justices, describing their decision as “an embarrassment to their families.” He immediately pivoted to a temporary 10 per cent global tariff imposed under the Trade Act of 1974 — a different statute the court had not yet addressed — while his officials raced to reconstruct the tariff architecture the ruling had dismantled.

The most significant tool to emerge from that reconstruction effort has been Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, a provision allowing the executive to impose tariffs in response to foreign trade practices deemed unfair or discriminatory. The administration proposed tariffs of up to 12.5 per cent on imports from 60 econ-



Donald Trump President of the United States

omies, following a Section 301 investigation concluding that those countries had failed to curb trade in goods made with forced labour — an assertion flatly rejected by most of the targeted nations. Bernd Lange, chair of the European Parliament’s trade committee, called the forced labour framing “absurd”, writing: “Accusing the EU of insufficient action against forced labour, even though we have adopted the world’s strictest rules against products made with forced labour, looks very much like trying to make the facts fit a legal justification for tariffs that has already been decided.”

Trade analysts have identified the pattern clearly. Ajay Srivastava, founder of the India-based Global Trade Research Initiative, observed: “After the US Supreme Court’s February 2026 ruling struck down the reciprocal tariffs, Washington lost much of its leverage in trade negotiations. Section 301 investigations now appear to be the new pressure tool — using the threat of additional tariffs to discourage countries from abandoning existing deals and to push others to conclude negotiations quickly.” It is against this turbulent backdrop that Trump’s digital tax ultimatum must be understood — not as a

stand-alone act of hostility but as the latest move in a sustained, multi-front campaign to use market access as leverage over any government that taxes or regulates American technology on its own terms.

Trump framed the issue in precisely those terms last August, writing that digital taxes and regulation “are all designed to harm, or discriminate against, American Technology,” and warning that America and its technology companies were “neither the ‘piggy bank’ nor the ‘doormat’ of the World any longer.” The language reveals the underlying worldview: Silicon Valley’s dominance of global digital markets is not a commercial outcome to be taxed by sovereign governments but an American achievement to be defended by American trade policy. Any attempt by a foreign government to capture revenue from that dominance is, in Trump’s framing, an act of economic aggression.

For Europe, the dilemma is real and immediate. Digital services taxes are not vanity policies. They represent billions of euros in public revenue collected from companies that book profits in low-tax jurisdictions while serving tens of millions of European customers. The EU’s own digital tax frame-

work reflects the judgement, shared across governments of left and right, that corporate tax rules for digital businesses “led to a misalignment between the place where profits are taxed and the place where value is created” — a misalignment that national digital levies were specifically designed to correct. Abandoning those taxes under American pressure would mean surrendering both revenue and regulatory principle, and handing Trump a domestic political victory that would only encourage the next round of demands.

European officials have shown few signs of capitulation. Cyprus’s minister of energy, commerce and industry, Michael Damianos, said at the time of the EU-US trade deal’s conclusion that “the EU can respond swiftly and proportionately when the deal is not respected or its interests are at stake.” The measured language masked a pointed warning: Europe can and will retaliate if pushed, and a bloc whose collective economy rivals America’s in scale is not Canada.

What happens next depends on a question no one in Washington or Brussels has yet answered definitively: whether a 100 per cent tariff threat posted on a social media platform, by a president

whose last attempt at sweeping tariffs was struck down by his own country’s highest court, carries sufficient legal and political weight to force the world’s largest trading bloc to abandon a tax policy it has spent years developing. The Tax Foundation estimated that the tariffs Trump has already imposed added around \$1,300 to the average American household’s annual costs in 2026, with nearly 90 per cent of those costs borne by American firms and consumers rather than the foreign exporters they were supposedly punishing. A 100 per cent tariff on all European exports would not merely be the largest such levy in modern US history — it would represent an economic self-wound of historic proportions.

For now, the post on Truth Social stands as both a threat and a test. The question Europe’s capitals are asking is not whether Trump is serious. The question is whether, this time, there are enough courts, trade agreements and collective political will left to call his bluff — or whether, as with Canada, the arithmetic of dependence eventually writes the answer for them.

UNESCO

Banning screens is not enough: UNESCO hands parents a manual for the digital age

With social media legislation spreading across 25 countries and one in three internet users now a child, the United Nations culture agency says governments cannot legislate their way out of an education problem — and has published a 120-page guide to prove it.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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On a Monday morning at UNESCO headquarters, with around 700 participants gathered in person and online from across the world, the United Nations culture and education agency did something rather unfashionable: instead of announcing a ban, it published a book.

The guide, titled *Growing Up in a Connected World: A Family Guide for the Digital Age*, was released on 22 June and developed with France's Centre for Media and Information Literacy, CLEMI, drawing on contributions from 37 experts and practitioners across the globe. Available in English, French and Spanish, it runs to 120 pages and is aimed squarely at parents who, as one UNESCO official put it during the launch press briefing, are navigating "a fairly overwhelming situation."

The timing was deliberate. At least 25 countries are currently considering bans on social media access for children under 15 or 16, with Australia having enacted such a ban last December — yet its own regulator reports that around 70 per cent of children who held accounts before the ban came into effect were still using them six months later. The United Arab Emirates last week became the first Arab country to prohibit children under 15 from holding social media accounts. The United Kingdom and Sweden have both introduced fresh legislation proposing to lower minimum age thresholds for platform access. The legislative wave, in other words, is rising — and UNESCO's message to it is measured but firm: legislation alone will not be enough.

Mariya Gabriel, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, told journalists that social media restrictions "may offer a sense of action, but bans alone cannot address deeper issues such as engagement-driven algorithms and platforms designed for adults rather than children." Her point was not that restrictions are useless, but that they are incomplete. A child blocked from one platform remains a child in a digital world — one full of AI tools, online gaming, misinformation



Child on digital pad /Illustration

and influencer culture that no single legislative threshold can address in full. The scale of the challenge behind the guide is striking. One in three internet users worldwide is a child. Eighty-three per cent of parents worry about their children's screen time, and two-thirds admit they struggle with their own. In the United States, a majority of children have used AI companions without their parents' knowledge. In the United Kingdom, around 40 per cent of children already hold social media profiles operating with minimal supervision from parents. Meanwhile, research from the Reuters Institute shows that 15 per cent of young adults aged 18 to 24 now use artificial intelligence weekly to access news, compared with just three per cent of older users — a figure that underscores how rapidly AI is reshaping not just entertainment but the information environment in which young people form their understanding of the world. Against that backdrop, UNESCO's survey findings reveal a troubling policy gap. Director-General Khaled El-Enany told the launch event that while progress on policy commitment is real, its translation into classroom practice remains deeply uneven. "There is progress: UNESCO's 2025

global survey shows that 171 countries now have a Media and Information Literacy policy framework. However, implementation remains uneven, with fewer than half of countries integrating media and information literacy into school curricula. As a result, too many children still receive no structured support at all. And when schools cannot fill this gap, the responsibility falls on families," El-Enany said. It is precisely that gap — between policy on paper and practice in the classroom — that the guide is designed to bridge, not by replacing school curricula but by placing practical tools directly in the hands of parents and caregivers who cannot wait for governments to act. The resource covers the full landscape of a child's digital life: social media platforms and their algorithms, artificial intelligence tools and companions, online gaming, cyberbullying, misinformation, and the subtler but equally significant risks of sleep deprivation and cognitive overload that come with unrestricted screen time. Rather than offering a prescriptive rulebook, it encourages families to open conversations — about expectations, responsibilities, shared values, and the kind of online environments children actually want to inhabit.

Samuel Vitel, Director-General of Réseau Canopé, which co-developed the guide with CLEMI, said the approach reflects a fundamental truth about how critical thinking actually develops in young people. "It is often through dialogue with parents that children learn to question information, compare different perspectives, and develop their critical thinking skills. This is why parents need support, just as we already provide it to teachers and to all education stakeholders," he said. The guide also addresses what UNESCO describes as the "safety by design" imperative — the argument that technology platforms must be built from the outset to protect children, with strong default settings, no infinite scroll, no targeted advertising, and transparent recommendation systems, rather than placing the entire burden of protection on individual families or parents. UNESCO officials said that while tech companies did not directly contribute to the guide's content, they engage with platforms regularly through their work on media information literacy and platform governance. Critics may note the gap between that engagement and binding obligations, but the guide makes clear that UNESCO sees its role as building the demand side

— informed, questioning families — while regulators and legislators address the supply side.

Mariya Gabriel framed the launch not as a conclusion but as a beginning. "This new guide serves as a common foundation of knowledge that every parent should be able to access. Its publication today is, therefore, not the end of our work, but the beginning," she said.

Adeline Hulin, UNESCO's chief of Media and Information Literacy, offered parents a concrete starting point. "Every day, families face questions about screen time, online information, social media, AI, privacy and digital wellbeing. The guide offers practical tools, activities and conversation starters that families can use together. It is designed to help build critical thinking, encourage healthy digital habits, and foster dialogue and trust between children, young people and caregivers," she said.

For the millions of parents around the world who have watched their children disappear into a phone screen and felt unsure what to say or do next, UNESCO is now saying: here is where you start — and the conversation is the point.

Worth Noting:

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WORLD

THE TRIBE AS WEAPON: Ethnicity, Power, and the Long Shadow of Political Manipulation in Kenya



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor
Odhiambo

@themkenyatimes

Contd from Page 1

Worth Noting:

• Kenya entered independence in 1963 already structured for ethnic tension. The British colonial administration had, with characteristic administrative ingenuity, governed through a policy of divide and classify — cataloguing African peoples into fixed “tribes,” mapping administrative units along ethnic lines, and establishing patterns of differential resource allocation that made ethnicity the primary language of grievance and aspiration alike.

• The Kenya African National Union (KANU) and Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) split of the early 1960s was itself substantially an ethnic cleavage — KANU dominated by Kikuyu and Luo elites, KADU a coalition of “minority” communities fearful of majoritarianism. Jomo Kenyatta’s consolidation of power after 1963 fused ethnic patronage with state machinery.

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cycle, and deployed with a coldness that would have made Machiavelli reach for his notebook.

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Chinua Achebe, writing from the Nigerian experience but with a diagnostic precision that cuts across the continent, observed in *The Trouble with Nigeria* that “the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership.” He was careful, however, to distinguish the organic existence of ethnicity from its political manipulation: “Tribalism is a problem because its Nigerian champions are so blind to its evil that they cannot see that they harm themselves as well as their victims.” Achebe’s indictment applies to Kenya with surgical exactness. The ethnic communities of Kenya — Kikuyu, Luo, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, Somali, Meru, and the many others — exist as



Illustration of Ethnicity, Power, and the Long Shadow of Political Manipulation in Kenya

living cultures with distinct epistemologies, social systems, and histories of coexistence, trade, and intermarriage. What does not exist in nature is the politically constructed animosity between them — the choreographed hatred that spikes precisely during election season and subsides, with suspicious convenience, once the votes are counted and the cabinet positions distributed. The tribe, in Kenyan politics, is not a sociological fact. It is a seasonal product.

The mechanics of ethnic weaponisation became most nakedly visible under Daniel arap Moi’s twenty-four-year presidency (1978–2002). Moi, himself from the numerically smaller Kalenjin community, could not replicate Kenyatta’s strategy of Kikuyu consolidation. He invented instead a politics of managed ethnic anxiety — elevating the Kalenjin into a security and patronage apparatus, systematically marginalising Kikuyu from state power to punish what he perceived as their structural dominance, and deploying what scholars have termed “sons of the soil” rhetoric to mobilise communities against perceived “settlers” in the Rift Valley. The ethnic violence of 1991 to 1993, now documented in meticulous detail by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and by Human Rights Watch, was not spontaneous inter-communal combustion. It was organised. State security forces looked away. Local administrators facilitated displacement. Politicians distributed money and weapons. Thou-

sands were killed, hundreds of thousands displaced, and the Rift Valley was redrawn in blood — all to manufacture a Kalenjin voting bloc and punish multiparty democracy’s most articulate advocates. Moi understood, with terrifying clarity, what Achebe’s fictional Chief Nanga in *A Man of the People* also understood: that the African masses could be made to cheer for the very man who was robbing them, provided he spoke their language and invoked their fears.

Achebe’s *A Man of the People* remains the most devastating fictional autopsy of this political pathology. Chief Nanga — corrupt, charming, ethnically calculating, and electorally unbeatable — is not a caricature but a composite portrait of the African politician who discovers that ethnic solidarity is more durable political currency than policy achievement. “Tell them that this man has eaten,” Achebe’s narrator Odili observes, capturing the cynicism of an electorate that has been taught to measure politics not in public goods but in communal recognition and personal patronage. The Kenyan equivalent has been enacted with faithful repetition: the politician who builds no school but attends every funeral, who delivers no water but arrives at every tender but emerges at the campaign podium draped in the ethnic symbolism of the community he has systematically impoverished. Nguigi wa Thiong’o, Kenya’s most globally recognised literary

voice, extended this diagnosis in *Devil on the Cross*, depicting an elite class that transforms even culture into an instrument of exploitation — where ethnic belonging is instrumentalised not to protect communities but to insulate the powerful from accountability.

The transition to multiparty democracy in 1991, rather than dissolving ethnic politics, intensified it. With KANU’s monopoly broken, political entrepreneurs discovered that ethnic arithmetic — the calculation of which communities could be assembled into a winning coalition — was now the central discipline of electoral competition. The 1992 and 1997 elections were fought substantially on ethnic lines, with the opposition’s fatal weakness being its inability to forge a supra-ethnic coalition while Moi’s machine expertly divided potential challengers along communal fractures. Political scientist Makau Mutua, in his landmark study *Kenya’s Quest for Democracy*, argues that the transition to multipartyism created not a civic public but an amplified ethnic marketplace — where each election cycle commodified identity, and where the political class extracted rents from communal loyalty without ever being accountable for communal welfare. The democratisation of Kenya, in its first decade, democratised ethnic competition without democratising governance. The 2007–2008 post-election violence stands as the most catastrophic expression of weaponised ethnicity

in Kenya’s post-independence history. More than 1,300 people were killed, over 600,000 were displaced, and the Rift Valley, Central Kenya, and Nairobi’s informal settlements became theatres of organised communal violence. The International Criminal Court’s investigations — truncated though they ultimately were — established that the violence on both sides was not spontaneous. It was planned. It was funded. It was coordinated. The Waki Commission Report, produced by the Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence, documented with chilling precision how political networks mobilised youth along ethnic lines, how inflammatory radio broadcasts in the vernacular — echoing Rwanda’s *Radio Mille Collines* — directed violence, and how the state’s coercive apparatus was selectively deployed. Yet what the Waki Report could not fully capture was the deeper structural truth: that the violence of 2008 was the harvest of forty years of deliberate ethnic cultivation. The politicians who incited it had spent years teaching communities to see each other not as fellow Kenyans but as competitors for a zero-sum resource — the state itself.

Grace Ogot, one of Kenya’s pioneering literary voices, wrote in *The Promised Land* of the Luo community’s deep sense of connection to land and belonging — a con-

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WORLD

THE TRIBE AS WEAPON: Ethnicity, Power, and the Long Shadow of Political Manipulation in Kenya

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Worth Noting:

• Chinua Achebe, writing from the Nigerian experience but with a diagnostic precision that cuts across the continent, observed in *The Trouble with Nigeria* that “the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership.” He was careful, however, to distinguish the organic existence of ethnicity from its political manipulation: “Tribalism is a problem because its Nigerian champions are so blind to its evil that they cannot see that they harm themselves as well as their victims.” Achebe’s indictment applies to Kenya with surgical exactness.

• The ethnic communities of Kenya — Kikuyu, Luo, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, Somali, Meru, and the many others — exist as living cultures with distinct epistemologies, social systems, and histories of coexistence, trade, and intermarriage. What does not exist in nature is the politically constructed animosity between them — the choreographed hatred that spikes precisely during election season and subsides, with suspicious convenience, once the votes are counted and the cabinet positions distributed. The tribe, in Kenyan politics, is not a sociological fact. It is a seasonal product.

nection that political leaders have consistently exploited to animate displacement anxieties and territorial grievances. Across the East African literary tradition, from Ogot to Ngugi to Meja Mwangi, the recurring motif is of communities whose organic solidarities — genuine, historically rooted, culturally meaningful — are captured and distorted by political elites who speak the language of communal protection while practicing the politics of personal accumulation. This distortion is the essential mechanism of ethnic weaponisation: taking what is real — culture, memory, shared experience, historical grievance — and retrofitting it to serve the electoral ambitions of individuals who share nothing of the community’s material condition. The Kikuyu peasant evicted from the Rift Valley and the Kalenjin herder who evicted him are both casualties of a political class that owns land in Karen and sends its children to school in Surrey. The Kibaki and Odinga era (2002–2013) demonstrated how ethnic mobilisation could be repackaged in the language of reform. The National Rainbow Coalition’s 2002 victory was, genuinely, a moment of supra-ethnic aspiration — a coalition of communities and civic movements that briefly transcended the ethnic calculus to retire KANU’s twenty-four-year incumbency. Yet within four years, the same coalition had fractured along the Kikuyu-Luo fault line that has structured Kenyan politics since the founding rupture between Kenyatta and Odinga in 1966. The historical grievance of the Luo community — systematically marginalised since Tom Mboya’s assassination in 1969 and J.M. Kariuki’s murder in 1975 — is real and legitimate. But it was also, crucially, available for political capture. Raila Odinga’s political identity fused genuine Luo historical grievance with a pan-Kenyan reformist programme, a combination that made him simultaneously the most nationally ambitious politician of his generation and the most ethnically specific electoral vehicle the Luo community had ever produced. His repeated pursuit of the presidency became inseparable from the Luo community’s collective



Illustration of Ethnicity, Power, and the Long Shadow of Political Manipulation in Kenya

quest for national belonging — a conflation that served his political interests but also constrained the very supra-ethnic politics his rhetoric proclaimed. The Jubilee era under Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto (2013–2022) perfected what might be called the ethnic alliance franchise model. The “Uhuruto” coalition assembled Kikuyu and Kalenjin — two communities with fresh memories of mutual violence in 2008 — into an electorally dominant bloc, demonstrating that ethnic animosities are not fixed but are entirely malleable when political entrepreneurs find sufficient incentive to redirect them. That the same Ruto who faced ICC charges for organising Kalenjin violence against Kikuyu in 2008 could campaign as Uhuru Kenyatta’s deputy and be embraced by the Kikuyu political establishment is not a paradox — it is the logic of ethnic instrumentalism made transparent. Ethnicity, in Kenya’s political marketplace, is not about community welfare. It is about power-sharing among elites, with communities mobilised as voting armies and rewarded, if at all, with the symbolic satisfaction of “their person” in office. As the political scientist Gabrielle Lynch documents in *I Say to You: Ethnic Politics and the Kalenjin in Kenya*, the Kalenjin’s political identity was not primordial but was actively constructed and continuously reconstructed by political elites — with Daniel Moi as its principal architect — to serve shifting electoral coalitions. The administration of Pres-

ident William Ruto, which came to power in 2022 on the ostensibly post-ethnic platform of “hustler nation” — a class-based rather than community-based political appeal — has itself reverted to ethnic management as the primary technology of political survival. The cabinet and senior public service appointments of the Kenya Kwanza administration have, by the assessment of civil society monitors including the Kenya Human Rights Commission, reproduced the familiar pattern of ethnic concentration in key security and economic docket. The “hustler” narrative, whatever its mobilising appeal among Kenya’s substantial underclass, proved in practice to be a new label on old arithmetic. This should not surprise the serious observer. The structural incentives that reward ethnic mobilisation — a patronage state whose resources are extracted and distributed along communal lines, a judiciary and electoral commission whose independence is contested, a media landscape that ampli-

fies ethnic sentiment — have not been reformed. Until those structures change, the language of politics will change while the substance remains constant. Kenya will continue to produce what Achebe called “the household word” politician: the one who speaks to your stomach through your identity. The antidote to weaponised ethnicity is not the denial of ethnic identity — that is the error of an earlier generation of African nationalism that sought to dissolve the tribe by decree and succeeded only in driving it underground. The antidote, as scholars like Mahmood Mamdani have argued, lies in the transformation of the citizen’s relationship to the state — from subject of ethnic patronage to holder of enforceable rights. Kenya’s Constitution of 2010 represents, in its architecture, precisely such a transformation: devolving power to forty-seven counties, embedding a Bill of Rights with justiciable socioeconomic entitlements, establishing independent commissions

to discipline the executive. The tragedy is that the Constitution has been administered by the very political class whose survival depends on maintaining the ethnic patronage system the Constitution was designed to dismantle. Yet the generation that composed the poetry of the 2010 constitutional moment — the activists, the lawyers, the young civic organisers — represents a constituency for a different politics. If Kenya’s future is to diverge from its past, it will be because Kenyans finally refuse to be tribes first and citizens second, because they remember that the politician who comes to them in the ethnic garb of protection is wearing a costume whose primary function is concealment — concealment of the looted public school, the unfilled bursary, the stolen medical supply, and the career built not on service to country but on the managed exploitation of the very community whose name he carries like a shield and whose trust he spends like currency.



India

Amazon bets \$48 billion on India's AI future as Silicon Valley's great eastern pivot accelerates

In a single afternoon meeting between Jeff Bezos's successor and Narendra Modi, Amazon added \$13 billion to the largest technology investment programme in Indian history — and signalled that the race to own Asia's digital infrastructure has entered a new and irreversible phase.

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxx

When Amazon chief executive Andy Jassy arrived at the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi on Thursday morning, he came bearing numbers that would have seemed fanciful a decade ago. By the time his meeting with Narendra Modi had concluded, he had committed his company to investing \$48 billion in India between 2026 and 2030 — an addition of \$13 billion to the \$35 billion pledge made only six months earlier — in what now stands as one of the largest corporate investment commitments ever made to a single emerging market economy.

The fresh capital is earmarked principally for artificial intelligence and cloud infrastructure. More than \$21 billion of Amazon's total planned investment, including the newly announced \$13 billion, will go toward expanding Amazon Web Services data centre capacity, with facilities in Mumbai and Hyderabad identified as the primary expansion sites. When combined with investments made since Amazon first entered India in 2010, the company's cumulative commitment to the country will exceed \$88 billion by 2030. That figure places Amazon in a class of its own among foreign corporations operating in India and underscores just how fundamentally the country has shifted from a market to be served to a platform to be built.

Jassy framed the announcement in language carefully calibrated to align with Modi's own domestic narrative. "We came to India over a decade ago and have since been serving customers, sellers, developers, startups and enterprises through our different businesses," he said. "As we grow Amazon in India, our business priorities continue to align with India's priorities of democratising access to AI, digitising small businesses, creating jobs, and enabling exports. We are investing over \$48 billion in the coming five years to meet the strong demand across our business in India and to help the country achieve these priorities. We are inspired by Prime Minister Modi's vision of a Viksit and Atmanirbhar Bharat."

BREAKING NEWS

AMAZON BOOSTS INVESTMENT IN INDIA

ADDITIONAL \$13 BILLION INVESTMENT ANNOUNCED

TOTAL INVESTMENT TO REACH \$48 BILLION BETWEEN 2026 AND 2030

- EXPANDS AWS DATA CENTERS IN MUMBAI & HYDERABAD
- FOCUS ON AI, CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATION
- CREATING JOBS, SUPPORTING STARTUPS & ENABLING EXPORTS

“We are committed to being a long-term partner in India's growth story.”

— ANDY JASSY
CEO, AMAZON

AMAZON'S TOTAL INVESTMENT IN INDIA (2010-2030): \$88 BILLION | **INDIA'S DATA CENTER CAPACITY GROWS TO 1.6GW IN 2025** | **INDIA: ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING DATA CENTER MARKETS GLOBALLY**

Narendra Modi

The commitments attached to that investment were specific and measurable. Amazon pledged to support 3.8 million jobs and enable \$80 billion in e-commerce exports by 2030, alongside providing AI benefits to 15 million small businesses. Since its Indian launch, the company has digitised 12 million small businesses, enabled over \$20 billion in cumulative e-commerce exports, and trained more than 10 million Indians on cloud skills. Thursday's announcement was presented not as a departure from that track record but as its logical and dramatic acceleration, driven by the explosion in demand for AI compute capacity that has reshaped the technology industry's priorities globally.

"Still early days for what we can build," Jassy wrote on X after the meeting — a phrase that carried more weight than its brevity suggested, given that this is Amazon's third major India commitment in as many years. The rhythm of those commitments reflects a competitive dynamic that has gripped every major technology company in the world: the race to lay down cloud and AI infrastructure in high-growth markets before rivals establish a dominant position. India, with over a billion internet users, a government that has made AI a

stated national priority, and a technology sector of proven global competence, has become the most contested prize in that race.

The scale of the competition is extraordinary. Microsoft announced \$17.5 billion in investment in India over four years at the end of 2025 — described by the company as its largest investment ever in Asia — directed at expanding hyperscale infrastructure, embedding AI into national platforms, and advancing workforce readiness. Microsoft chairman and chief executive Satya Nadella met Modi ahead of the announcement, striking the same note of alignment with national priorities that Jassy would echo months later. Google, meanwhile, broke ground in April on a \$15 billion AI hub in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, comprising three data centre campuses and described as the largest investment in India's digital future the company has yet made. At the groundbreaking, India's IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the facility "reflects Prime Minister Modi's vision of making India a global leader in technology."

The combined force of these commitments was visible most dramatically in December 2025, when Microsoft and Amazon together pledged more than \$50 bil-

lion toward India's cloud and AI infrastructure within a single 24-hour window — a figure that illustrated the competitive urgency now driving investment decisions that would ordinarily unfold over years. Thursday's announcement from Amazon raises the stakes again and signals that the initial commitments, large as they were, represented opening positions rather than final offers.

The infrastructure numbers behind these investments tell a story of their own. According to brokerage firm Nomura, India's data centre capacity has grown from 350 megawatts in 2019 to approximately 1.6 gigawatts in 2025, a compound annual growth rate of 29 per cent against a global average of 20 per cent. The Indian government has supported that expansion through long-term tax incentives designed to attract cloud and technology investment, and the country's data centre pipeline is now projected to extend well beyond 2,700 megawatts by the end of 2026. For AWS, Google Cloud and Microsoft Azure, the question is not whether to build in India but how quickly, and whether their footprint will be large enough to capture the enterprise, government and startup demand that is accelerating in parallel. India's position in this race

is not without its complications. The country does not yet manufacture advanced semiconductors domestically, and it lacks a frontier-scale AI model comparable to leading US or Chinese systems. Stanford University ranks India among the top four countries globally in AI vibrancy, alongside the United States, China and the United Kingdom, but Indian officials and analysts have been candid that the country's AI advantage lies in application rather than foundational model development. What India possesses in abundance is scale — of users, of engineering talent, of small business demand for digitalisation — and it is that scale that has turned the country into the most valuable territory in global technology's next chapter.

For Amazon, the \$48 billion commitment is both a business calculation and a statement of intent. The company that began selling books online in Seattle now sees its future in data centres rising from the plains of Hyderabad and the waterfront of Mumbai, serving a billion Indians with cloud services, AI tools and e-commerce infrastructure that did not exist a generation ago. Jassy's parting words on X — "excited about what's ahead" — may have understated the case entirely.

Worth Noting:

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Diaspora

Where forests rise again: Kaptagat's decades of hope and the conservation story inspiring the world

Over the past decade, KICP has shown that conservation is not only about planting trees, but about restoring hope, rebuilding ecosystems, strengthening communities and creating opportunities that allow people and nature to flourish together.



BY Fredrick Chelimo

@themkenyatimes

On Saturday, 11th July 2026, conservationists, community leaders, government leaders and agencies, development partners, corporate organizations, researchers, schools, and thousands of residents will gather in Kaptagat Forest to celebrate an extraordinary milestone – the 10th Anniversary of the Kaptagat Integrated Conservation Programme (KICP). It will be a celebration of what becomes possible when people choose stewardship over exploitation, partnership over division, and long-term vision over short-term gains.

Around the world, conservation has entered a defining era. Climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation have become global concerns demanding solutions that extend beyond legislation and scientific research. Increasingly, most successful restoration initiatives are proving that forests are not saved by governments alone, nor by conservation organizations acting in isolation. They are restored when communities become their most passionate custodians. The future of conservation belongs to people who see forests not as obstacles to development, but as the foundation upon which sustainable development is built.

Across continents, remarkable examples continue to emerge with indigenous communities conserving thousands of hectares of the tropical forests in the Amazon Basin. Nepal's celebrated community forestry programme has restored degraded landscapes while lifting rural livelihoods. Namibia's community conservancies have transformed wildlife conservation into a source of local prosperity. These examples demonstrate some truths; where communities have ownership, forests recover; where communities benefit, conservation endures.

Kenya has embraced this philosophy with remarkable success. The restoration of the Mau Forest Complex, protection of Mount Kenya ecosystem, rehabilitation of Chepalungu Forest, community restoration projects in central highlands and sustainable management of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest have each demonstrated that ecological restoration and economic development can advance together. Community Forests Associations, supported by Kenya Forest Services, County



Kaptagat's decades of hope and the conservation story inspiring the world.

Governments, conservation organizations and development partners, have transformed local residents from perceived encroachers into respected environmental stewards. Despite these inspiring stories, the Kaptagat Integrated Conservation Programme has distinguished itself through an approach that is both comprehensive and deeply human. Over the past decade, KICP has shown that conservation is not only about planting trees, but about restoring hope, rebuilding ecosystems, strengthening communities and creating opportunities that allow people and nature to flourish together. The programme has steadily evolved into one of Kenya's most compelling examples of integrated conservation, bringing together best global practices and a uniquely community input, producing a hybrid concept that converges otherwise divergent standpoints into a synergized formidable force towards a common goal. The shared vision of protecting one of the most important water towers Today the evidence of that vision is visible across Kaptagat landscape, a hillside that once bore the scars of degradation are increasingly becoming clothed in thriving indigenous forest cover. Thousands of young trees planted over the past decade now stand as flourishing woodlands, stabilizing fragile soils, protecting biodiversity and strengthening the resilience of rivers and streams that sustain communities downstream. Wildlife habitats are gradually recovering, while the forest ecological integrity continues

to improve through sustained restoration efforts.

Equally significant are the lives that have been transformed alongside the landscapes. Communities living around the forest understand that conservation and prosperity are inseparable. Uniquely designed livelihood programs have expanded economic opportunities while reducing pressure on natural resources. Tree nurseries, improved dairy cows, modern feeds are new pathways to income, creating a mutually beneficial synergy between conservation and stewardship.

Today, restoration, conservation and stewardship are becoming a shared social responsibility and a recognition that every healthy forest translates into clean water, reliable rainfall, productive agriculture, healthier communities and stronger local economies. This transformation has not occurred by chance, it has been nurtured through visionary leadership, unwavering commitment and an enduring belief that environmental restoration is more successful when people themselves become its custodians.

As KICP commemorates its first decade, the launch of the inaugural Hifadhi Magazine provides a befitting tribute to this impactful journey. The magazine serves as a permanent historical record of an idea that matured into a nationally respected conservation movement. Within its pages are stories of dedication, innovation and collaboration from communities who believed, partners who invested, institutions that

provided leadership and people who provided knowledge and passion for a cause greater than themselves.

The tenth anniversary also provides an opportunity for reflection. While remarkable progress has been achieved, the work of restoration is never truly complete. Climate change continues to present new challenges. Population growth will increase demand for natural resources. Biodiversity conservation requires continuous vigilance, innovation and investment.

The next decade therefore calls for even greater ambition. KICP is uniquely positioned to become a continental centre of excellence in integrated conservation. It can deepen scientific research, expand climate-smart restoration, strengthen biodiversity monitoring, embrace digital technologies for forest management, promote carbon financing opportunities and support green enterprises that create sustainable livelihoods for surrounding communities.

The programme must continue investing in young people, ensuring that today's school children planting seedlings become tomorrow's environmental scientists, policymakers, foresters, entrepreneurs and conservation leaders. Community enterprises, ecotourism, sustainable agriculture, nature-based education and green innovation must become central pillars of the programmer's future growth.

Above all, KICP must preserve the spirit that has defined its first decade- the belief that conservation

succeeds when every stakeholder has both a voice and a shared responsibility. As the celebrations unfold on Saturday, 11 July 2026, they will mark far more than ten years of environmental restoration. They will honor a movement that has demonstrated how a shared vision can reshape the destiny of an entire ecosystem.

The forests standing taller today are living monuments to patience, partnership and perseverance. Every thriving seedling tells the story of hands that planted in faith, nurtured with determination and believed that greatest rewards would be enjoyed by generations yet to come. Kaptagat reminds the world that conservation is not about planting trees, it is about protecting its life itself, securing water for future generations, preserving biodiversity, sustaining livelihoods, strengthening resilience against climate change and leaving a legacy worthy of those who will inherit the Earth after us.

"Great forests are not built by a single generation. They are accumulated concerted efforts and gift of visionary leaders, committed communities and faithful partners who choose to plant hope where others see only uncertainty. Their greatest achievement is not the trees they leave behind, but the future they make possible"

YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

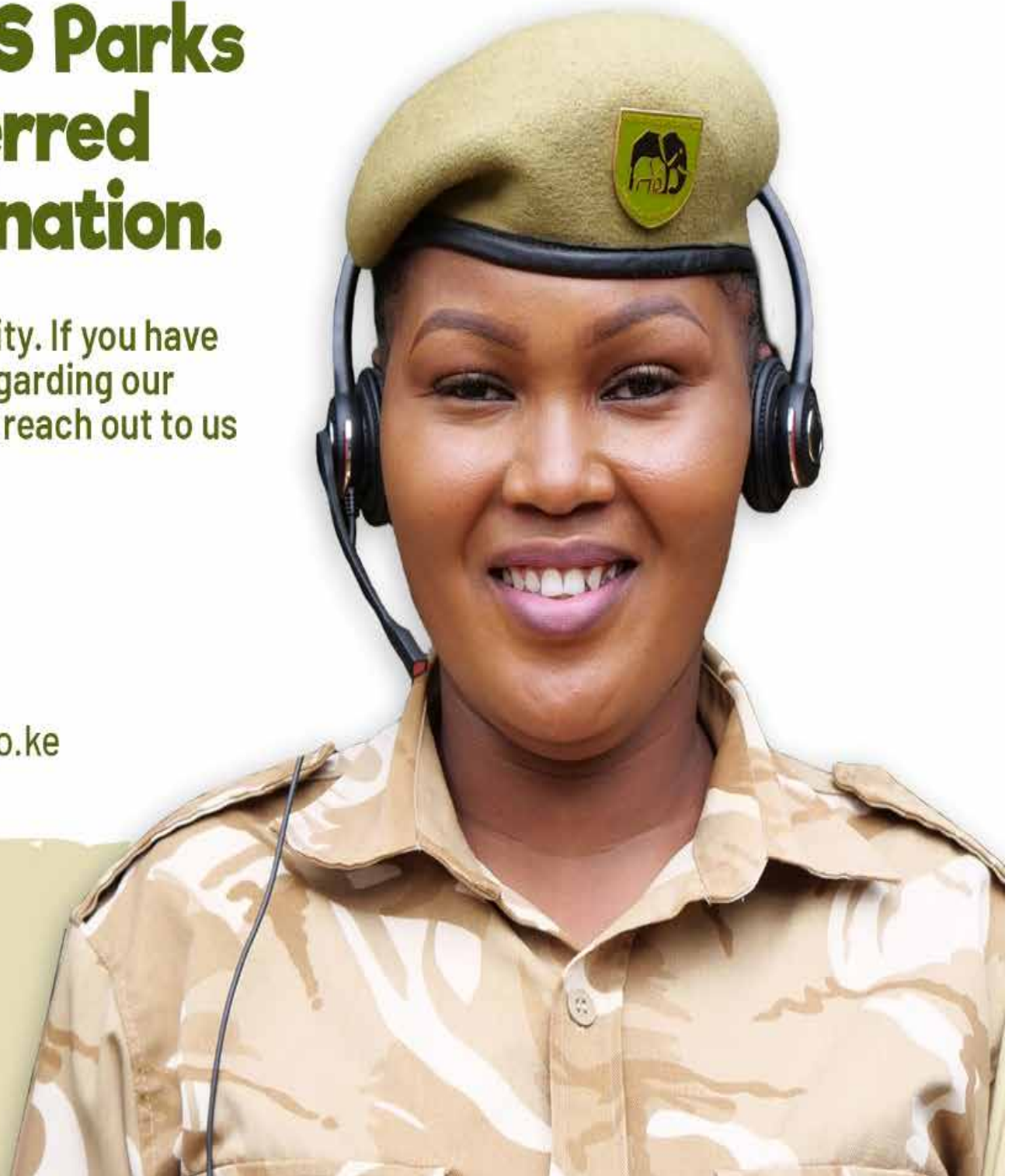
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Diaspora

Salt on his tongue

A city manager steals his village aunt's gift of roasted groundnuts — and finds the cost of forgetting where you come from.

By: Norman Mwale
xxxxxxxxxxxx

The bus from Macheke wheezed into Harare at first light, its sides dusted the colour of dried clay. Gogo Maidei stepped down with both hands gripping a plastic carrier bag smaller than a loaf of bread. Inside, tied with a strip of brown twine, was a parcel of roasted groundnuts. The skins were still warm with the memory of her clay stove. They smelled of smoke, salt, and the farmland behind her rondavel.

Her nephew, Tafadzwa Mlambo, was a company manager now. Glass tower, seventh floor, name on a door. That was what the neighbour's son had said on WhatsApp. "Uncle Tafadzwa is big, Gogo. You cannot just walk in." So she did what people from the village had done for a hundred years when the city grew teeth: she left the thing at the gate. The security guard was young, his uniform starched to a knife edge. He took the parcel without looking at it. "Name?" She told him. He wrote it in a dog-eared book, slid the parcel into a cardboard box with other deliveries, and nodded toward the lift. "Deputy Manager will take it up."

The deputy manager's name was Lunga. He was thirty-two, with a watch that caught light and a calendar that never had empty squares. At 10:17 he remembered the box at reception. He lifted the parcel, felt the oil seeping through the paper, and caught the scent. Roasted. Nutty. It made his mouth water in a way that felt almost indecent at work. He carried it to his office, meaning to deliver it before lunch.

But his phone rang. A supplier. Then a meeting ran over. Then Tafadzwa was called out to a site visit in Msasa. By the time Lunga looked up, the parcel sat on the corner of his desk like a small, guilty animal. He told himself he would give it to Tafadzwa first thing in the morning. He placed it in the top drawer, shut it, and the day swallowed him.

Morning came with emails. The drawer stayed closed. Tafadzwa returned the next day to a desk stacked with reports and a mind full of figures. He did not ask about parcels. He did not ask about Gogo Maidei. The city

had taught him that family was something you phoned on Sundays, if you remembered.

Forty-eight hours later, he needed a contract file he was certain Lunga had signed. Lunga was at lunch. The deputy's office smelled faintly of polish and aftershave, and beneath that, something else. Warm. Earthy. Tafadzwa's nose twitched. He had not eaten since seven. Stress did that to him. It hollowed him out.

He opened the drawer looking for the file. His hand found paper instead. The parcel. The twine was loose. The scent rose like a small fire. He told himself he was only checking what it was. He lifted the paper edge. The groundnuts were amber, blistered from the pan, each one holding a little crater of salt. Without deciding to, he took a handful. They were still warm from the city's heat. He closed the drawer, slid the nuts into his jacket pocket, and walked back to his own office as if he had only gone to fetch a pen.

He ate them one by one over his keyboard. The crunch was louder than it should have been. The salt sat on his tongue and then disappeared. He told himself he would mention it to Lunga later. "Some snacks in your drawer, my man." But the emails came, and the thought slid away.

The next afternoon he did it again. The drawer was unlocked. The parcel was still there, lighter now. He took another handful. This time he did not pause at the door. He went straight to his chair, sat down, and let the nuts dissolve. The taste was specific. It was not supermarket. It was village. It was his childhood. It was his mother's hands. For ten minutes he was nine years old again, sitting on a sack in a granary, cracking shells between his teeth while the hens scratched outside.

He began to time it. He would wait until Lunga was in a meeting. He would walk past the open-plan desks with his phone to his ear, turn into the deputy's office, and open the drawer as if it were his own. The parcel shrank. The paper grew translucent with oil. He did not count how many times. He only knew that when the work was bad, the nuts were

Salt On His Tongue:

"How a handful of village nuts exposed if city man's hunger."



By Norman Mwale

good. Lunga never remembered. His days were a blur of targets and traffic. If he noticed the parcel was lighter, he assumed he had eaten more than he thought on that first day. He was tired. He was human.

Three weeks passed. The parcel died quietly. The last handful Tafadzwa ate standing up, with the drawer open and the city roaring below. He folded the empty paper, put it back, and shut the drawer. He felt nothing. Or rather, he felt only the absence of hunger.

On Thursday, Gogo Maidei came back. She wore the same cloth on her head. The bus had taken her money again. She stood at the gate with her hands empty this time. The young guard remembered her.

"You're back for the parcel," he said.

"Yes, my child," she said. "I wanted to ask the manager if it reached him. It was from the village. Roasted nuts. For his tea."

The guard called upstairs. Lunga took the call, frowned, and walked to Tafadzwa's office. He stood in the doorway, uncertain. "Gogo Maidei is at reception. She left a parcel weeks ago. Roasted groundnuts. Did you get it?"

Tafadzwa looked up from his screen. The question did not make sense at first. Parcel. Groundnuts. Gogo. The words moved slowly, like furniture being dragged across a polished floor.

"No," he said. Then, because the guard was still on the line, he said it louder. "No. I haven't seen any parcel."

The lie was automatic. It came out clean.

Gogo Maidei was brought up in the lift. She stood before his desk with the same straight back she used when carrying water. Her eyes were not angry. They were just open. She looked at his desk, at his hands, at the faint sheen on his lips that could have been coffee or could have been oil.

"You don't remember me, Mwana," she said softly. "I am your father's sister. I sat with you when you were learning to walk. I roasted those nuts myself. I saved the best ones for you, because you used to say they tasted like home."

Tafadzwa's throat closed.

Contd Page 21

Worth Noting:

• The security guard was young, his uniform starched to a knife edge. He took the parcel without looking at it. "Name?" She told him. He wrote it in a dog-eared book, slid the parcel into a cardboard box with other deliveries, and nodded toward the lift. "Deputy Manager will take it up."

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Diaspora

Salt on his tongue

A city manager steals his village aunt's gift of roasted groundnuts — and finds the cost of forgetting where you come from.

Contd from Page 20
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The office air, which was always cold, turned heavy. He could still taste salt. He could still hear the crunch. The memory of his hand in the drawer was sudden and physical, as if someone had pulled the drawer open inside his chest.

He wanted to say something clever. Something managerial. He wanted to ask her to sit, to offer water, to make it a process. But the room would not let him.

"I... I'm sorry," he said. "There was no parcel on my desk."

The words hung there, thin and bright as glass.

Gogo Maidei nodded once. She did not argue. She did not cry. She reached into her cloth and took out a small piece of folded paper. It was the end of the twine from the parcel, tied in a neat knot. She placed it on his desk.

"I kept this," she said. "In case the bag broke. So I would know it was mine."

She turned and walked out. The guard held the lift for her. The city took her back.

Lunga stayed in the doorway a second too long. Then he left too, closing the door without a sound.

Tafadzwa sat. The office was the same size it had been five minutes ago, but it felt smaller. The glass looked harder. He opened his drawer. There was nothing inside except pens and a charger. He opened Lunga's drawer in his mind and saw the empty paper, translucent, with a ghost of oil. He put his hand to his mouth. His fingers smelled of nothing. He scrubbed them on his trousers anyway.

Shame came late, and all at once. It was not the shame of being caught. No one had seen him. It was the shame of recognition. He had stolen from his own blood, and he had done it with the manners of a thief who tells himself he is only borrowing. He had eaten his childhood in handfuls and called it a snack.

He thought of the groundnuts. How they had looked. How they had tasted. How they had been meant for tea on a Sunday, with his aunt watching him eat and saying: Eat, Mwana. You are working hard in the city. He had taken that love and chewed it.

He stood up. He walked to the window. Harare was below him, bright and indifferent. Taxis hooted. Vendors called. The tower was full of people moving parcels from one desk to another, signing things, forgetting things.

He pressed his forehead to the cool glass. The cold did not help.

At half past five he left early. He did not take the lift to the basement

car park. He walked down the seven flights. Each landing smelled of paint and cleaning fluid. On the ground floor he bought a packet of roasted nuts from a woman outside the gate. They were pale and dusty compared to Gogo's. He paid too much. He carried them in his hand all the way to the bus rank.

He found her at Mbare, waiting under a tree with other women from the buses. She was sitting on her carrier bag, her feet dusty. When she saw him, she did not stand.

"Gogo," he said. He knelt on the concrete without thinking about his trousers. He held out the new packet. "I'm sorry. I ate your nuts."

People turned to look. A child stopped sucking a sweet.

Gogo Maidei looked at the packet. Then at him. Her face did not soften immediately. It was not a film scene. It was a woman who had travelled four hours for nothing.

"You ate them," she said. It was not a question.

"Yes." His voice broke on the word. "Every time I opened that drawer I told myself I would stop. I didn't. I stole from you. From myself."

She took the packet. She did not open it. She held it as if it were light. "Why?" she asked.

He had no answer that would fit on a street corner. "Because I was hungry," he said finally. "Not for food. For something that tasted like home."

She studied him. The sun was going down behind the buildings, turning the dust gold. "Home is not in a drawer, Mwana," she said. "Home is when you remember who sent it." He nodded. He could not speak again.

She stood slowly, her knees clicking. She tucked the packet into her bag. "Come," she said. "I will buy you tea. And I will roast you more nuts. But this time you will sit with me while you eat them."

They walked to a small stall. She ordered two cups of tea and sat on a bench that wobbled. She broke the seal on the new packet, took a nut, and put it in his palm. It was warm from her hand.

"Eat," she said.

He did. It tasted different. It tasted like apology. It tasted like being seen.

He sat there until the buses started to leave, until the sky went the colour of a bruise. He told her about the office, about the drawer, about the way the city makes you forget your own name. She listened without advice. She only nodded, as if she had heard the story before, in a different voice.

When it was time, she boarded her bus back to Macheke. He stood at the window and watched her go. She did not wave. She just looked at him, once, and then the bus moved.

He walked back to his car alone.

Salt On His Tongue:

"How a handful of village nuts exposed if city man's hunger."



By Norman Mwale

The tower was lit up behind him, all those windows full of light and no one in them. He thought about the drawer. He thought about the twine. He thought about the way a handful of nuts can carry the weight of a life. That night he did not eat dinner. He sat at his kitchen counter with a glass of water and looked at his hands. They were clean. They were also the hands that had taken. The next morning he went to work early. He asked Lunga to come to his office. He told him the truth, without names, without blame. "There was a parcel. I took it. It belonged to family. I am going to make it right." Lunga listened. He did not smile. He did not frown. He just nodded,

as men do when they have seen enough to know that confession is not performance.

Tafadzwa wrote a memo to himself and pinned it inside his drawer. It said only one word: Remember. In the weeks that followed, he changed small things. He left his door open after lunch. He walked to reception himself when deliveries came. He phoned Gogo Maidei on Sundays, and when she laughed, the sound was not polite. It was real. A month later, another parcel arrived. Bigger this time. Dried fish, beans, and a smaller bag of roasted groundnuts, tied with new twine. He carried it to his office himself. He did not open it at his desk. He

took it home. He sat on his balcony with the city noise below and ate slowly, one nut at a time, with a cup of tea cooling beside him.

He thought of Gogo on her bench. He thought of the drawer. He thought of the boy he had been, cracking shells in a granary, believing that the world would always send you what you needed, and that you would always know how to receive it.

The nuts were salted. They were smoky. They were his. And for the first time in a long time, he did not feel hungry.



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Washington Brokered: Lebanon, Israel and US Sign Historic Peace Framework as Hezbollah Stands Defiant

A landmark trilateral accord signed in Washington charts a path toward ending decades of enmity between Beirut and Jerusalem — but deep divisions and a militia unwilling to disarm cast long shadows over the deal.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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In a moment that would have seemed unimaginable just months ago, representatives of Lebanon, Israel and the United States signed a trilateral framework agreement in Washington on Friday, setting in motion what diplomats described as the first concrete steps toward a formal peace between two nations that have existed in a state of conflict and mutual hostility for generations.

The signing caps five rounds of talks held in the American capital and represents the most significant diplomatic breakthrough in the Middle East since the Abraham Accords — though officials on all sides were at pains to temper expectations, describing it as the opening chapter of a longer and far more fraught story.

“It’s the beginning of the beginning. There’s a lot of work ahead.”

— US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, at the signing ceremony

Rubio’s measured phrasing was deliberate. The agreement, whose full text was released by the State Department late Friday, declares the intent of Israel and Lebanon to “conclusively end the conflict, address its underlying causes, and to therewith formally conclude any state of war between them.” That is the ambition. The mechanics of achieving it remain fiercely contested.

Lebanon’s ambassador to Washington, Nada Hamadeh Moawad, framed the accord as a matter of national survival and sovereignty rather than abstract diplomacy. It was, she told the assembled signatories, “a first step on the road to restoring Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity, securing a permanent and final cessation of hostilities and enabling our people to go back to their land.” For hundreds of thousands of Lebanese displaced by months of Israeli airstrikes and a continuing ground offensive in the south, those words carried immediate and painful resonance.

Israel’s ambassador to the United States, Yechiel Leiter, was blunter. “Iran is out, Hezbollah is out, and the road to peace between Israel and Lebanon is in,” he declared — a formulation that drew applause in Tel Aviv but scorn from Hezbollah’s



Hezbollah supporters block the old airport road in the southern suburbs of Beirut, with burning tires to protest against the trilateral agreement that was signed between the US, Israel and Lebanon on June 27, 2026. (Photo by Ibrahim AMRO / AFP)

leadership in Beirut.

“Israel has no option but to withdraw completely from every inch of our Lebanese land. Its forces must leave unconditionally.”

— Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem, hours before the signing

The agreement rests on a sequenced logic that sceptics say depends on Hezbollah’s cooperation — a proposition the militia showed no signs of accepting on Friday. Under the framework, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) would progressively restore “sovereign authority over all Lebanese territory,” contingent on the “verified disarmament of non-state armed groups,” a formulation that refers principally to Hezbollah’s vast and battle-hardened military wing. Only once that process is underway would Israeli Defence Forces “progressively redeploy out of Lebanese territory.”

As a first confidence-building measure, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that his military would allow the Lebanese army to take control of territory in “two pilot areas” — one south of Lebanon’s Litani River and one

to its north. The agreement states that “the LAF will assume full and effective security responsibility in these zones, internationally supported reconstruction efforts will begin, and Lebanese civilians will be able to safely return to these areas.” Yet in a pre-recorded video shared with Israeli media shortly after the framework was announced, Netanyahu appeared to pre-emptively limit the deal’s scope, making clear that Israeli forces have no plans to leave Lebanon until Hezbollah surrenders its weapons entirely. That condition, which Hezbollah has categorically rejected, underscores the chasm that diplomacy must still bridge.

The conflict was triggered in early March, when Hezbollah launched rocket fire at Israel following the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in strikes attributed to US and Israeli forces. Israel responded with a sustained aerial campaign and a ground invasion that has since seen its troops occupy large portions of southern Lebanon, where extensive demolition of homes and civilian infrastructure has provoked international condemnation.

Lebanese authorities report more than 4,200 dead and over one million people displaced.

An earlier truce announced on April 17 collapsed without halting the fighting. The latest ceasefire, declared earlier this month and described by officials as “very fragile,” was made possible in part by Iranian insistence that Lebanon be included in a broader Tehran-Washington understanding.

To help operationalise Friday’s agreement, Rubio announced that the United States would commit \$100 million in humanitarian assistance in coordination with the United Nations, and would reimburse the Lebanese army \$30 million as it works to expand its capability to control southern territory. Washington would also establish a US-facilitated military working group to support implementation of the disarmament and redeployment process.

“A moment of hope and opportunity.”

— Tom Fletcher, UN Chief of Humanitarian Affairs

Tom Fletcher, the United Nations chief of humanitarian affairs, welcomed the de-

velopment warmly, calling the Washington ceremony “a moment of hope and opportunity” for a country that has endured successive cycles of war and reconstruction since the 1970s. Aid organisations echoed his appeal, urging the international community to back the deal with urgent resources.

Whether that hope can survive contact with the realities on the ground — Israeli troops still occupying Lebanese soil, Hezbollah’s weapons still in place, and the mutual mistrust of decades — will be the defining test of the weeks and months ahead. The framework signed on Friday is not a peace treaty. It is, at best, an architecture for building one. What happens inside that architecture now depends on actors who have spent a lifetime learning not to trust each other.

As Secretary Rubio acknowledged with rare candour, this is only the beginning of the beginning.

Worth Noting:

• Rubio’s measured phrasing was deliberate. The agreement, whose full text was released by the State Department late Friday, declares the intent of Israel and Lebanon to “conclusively end the conflict, address its underlying causes, and to therewith formally conclude any state of war between them.” That is the ambition. The mechanics of achieving it remain fiercely contested.

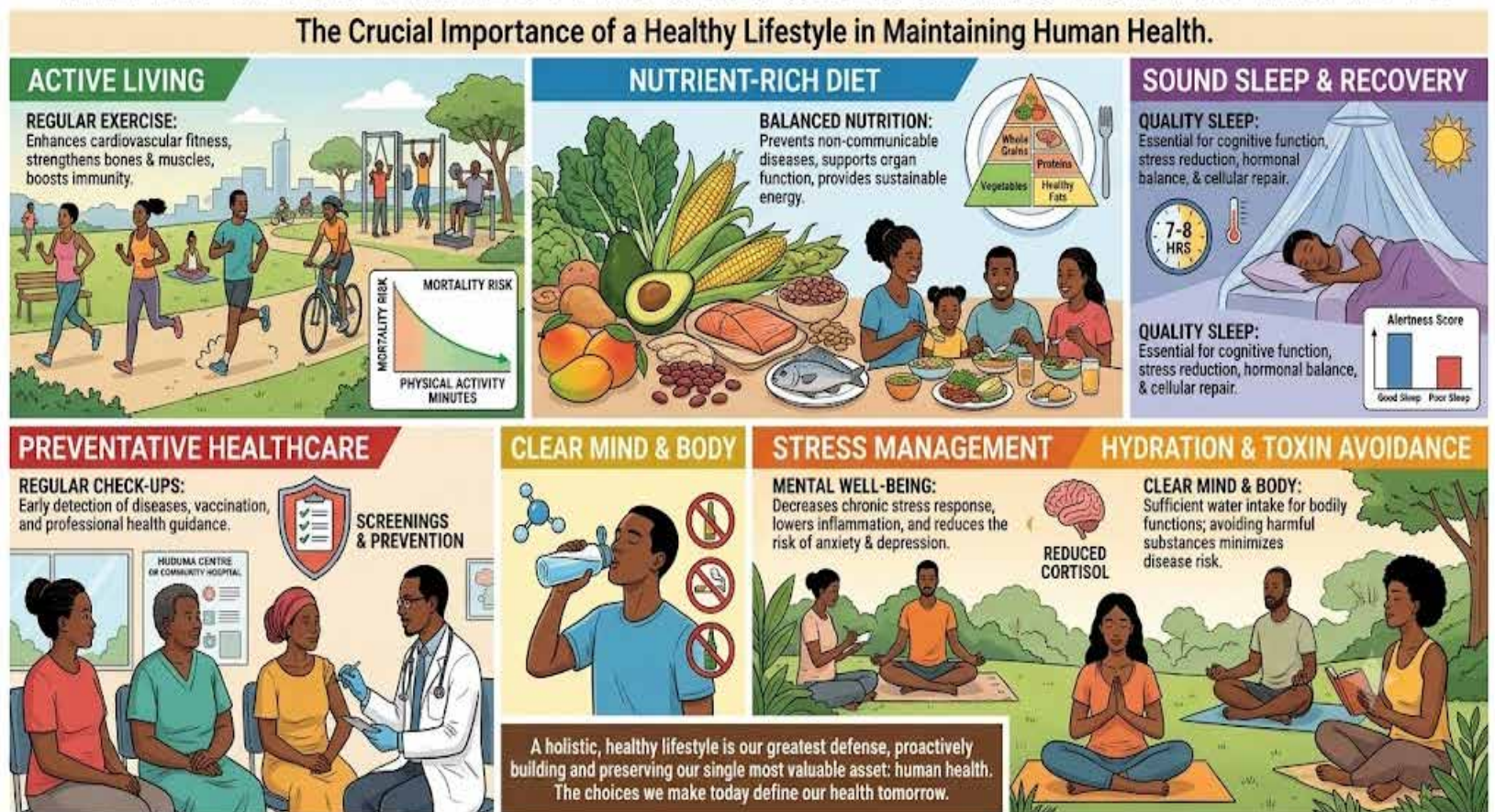
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The importance of a healthy lifestyle in maintaining human health

This article discusses the importance of a healthy lifestyle in maintaining and strengthening human health.



By: Ahmadjonova Hayotxon
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Worth Noting:

- Proper nutrition is one of the fundamental components of a healthy lifestyle. The human body requires proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals for normal functioning. A deficiency of these essential nutrients may lead to various health problems and disorders.
- A balanced diet strengthens the immune system, improves the body's ability to fight diseases, and enhances work productivity. Therefore, it is recommended that daily meals include sufficient amounts of vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat, and grain products. Fast food and foods with high sugar content should be consumed in moderation.
- Regular physical activity has a positive effect on all systems of the human body. Sports and exercise strengthen the cardiovascular system, improve blood circulation, and promote the development of muscles and bones. Moreover, physical activity helps prevent excessive weight gain and obesity.

Abstract

This article discusses the importance of a healthy lifestyle in maintaining and strengthening human health. The issues of proper nutrition, physical activity, avoiding harmful habits, and preserving mental health are analyzed from a scientific perspective. In addition, the role of a healthy lifestyle in the prevention of various diseases is examined.

Keywords: healthy lifestyle, health, prevention, physical activity, proper nutrition, mental health.

Introduction

Human health is one of the most important factors in the development of society. A healthy individual can make a significant contribution not only to personal well-being but also to social progress. In recent years, there has been a worldwide increase in chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, obesity, and other health disorders. According to experts, one of the main causes of these diseases is an unhealthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle is a set of habits and behaviors aimed

at maintaining physical and mental well-being. It includes proper nutrition, regular physical exercise, adherence to hygiene rules, avoidance of harmful habits, and maintaining psychological balance.

Main Part

The Importance of Proper Nutrition

Proper nutrition is one of the fundamental components of a healthy lifestyle. The human body requires proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals for normal functioning. A deficiency of these essential nutrients may lead to various health problems and disorders. A balanced diet strengthens the immune system, improves the body's ability to fight diseases, and enhances work productivity. Therefore, it is recommended that daily meals include sufficient amounts of vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat, and grain products. Fast food and foods with high sugar content should be consumed in moderation.

The Impact of Physical Activity on Health

Regular physical activity has a positive effect on all systems of the human body. Sports and exercise strengthen the cardiovascular system, improve blood circulation, and promote the development of muscles and bones. Moreover, physical activity helps prevent excessive weight gain and obesity. Health professionals recommend engaging in at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day. Simple activities such as walking, running, swimming, or cycling can significantly improve overall health. Promoting a culture of sports and physical fitness among young people is particularly important for raising a healthy generation.

Negative Consequences of Harmful Habits

Smoking and alcohol consumption cause serious harm to human health. Tobacco smoke contains numerous toxic substances that negatively affect the lungs, heart, and blood vessels. Smoking can lead to chronic bronchitis, lung cancer, and many other diseases. Regular alcohol consumption may result in liver damage, nervous system

disorders, and psychological problems. Therefore, eliminating harmful habits is an essential aspect of developing a healthy lifestyle.

Mental Health and Its Importance

Mental health is a crucial component of overall well-being. Modern lifestyles often expose individuals to stress and psychological pressure. Prolonged stress may contribute to heart diseases, sleep disorders, depression, and other health problems. To maintain mental health, it is important to follow a proper balance between work and rest, ensure adequate sleep, maintain positive thinking, and communicate with family and friends. Participation in sports and cultural activities can also improve emotional well-being and reduce stress.

The Preventive Role of a Healthy Lifestyle

Preventing diseases is more effective and economical than treating them. Individuals who follow a healthy lifestyle have a significantly lower risk of developing chronic diseases.

The primary goal of preventive medicine is to reduce the prevalence of diseases by promoting healthy lifestyle practices among the population.

Healthcare professionals should regularly educate the public about proper nutrition, physical activity, and personal hygiene. Such efforts contribute to improving public health and enhancing quality of life.

Conclusion

A healthy lifestyle is one of the most important factors in maintaining and improving human health. Proper nutrition, regular physical activity, avoidance of harmful habits, and attention to mental health can prevent many diseases. Following a healthy lifestyle not only helps individuals live longer and more productive lives but also contributes positively to the development and prosperity of society.

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