

Drivers are to get new rights to challenge unfair private parking charges, alongside a crackdown on car dealers winding back mileage.

British Parking Mafia

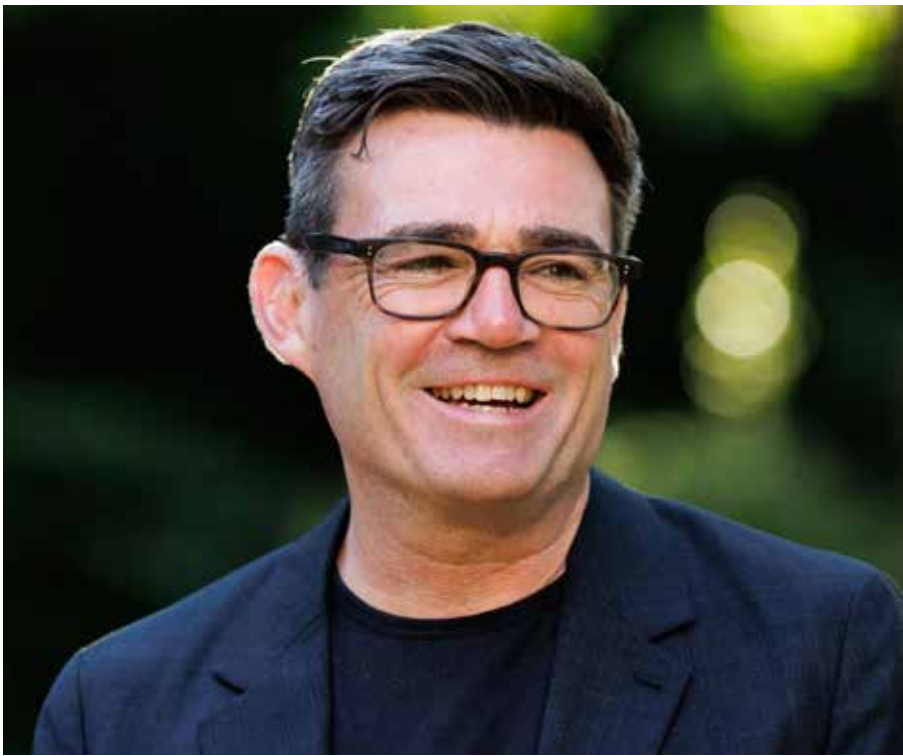
Under the new Private Parking Code of Practice laid in Parliament on Tuesday, 20 October, charges will be scrapped on appeal for honest mistakes:



Prime Minister slams brakes on rip-off charges and car scams: BURNHAM’S BLITZ ON BRITISH PARKING MAFIA AND DODGY SECONDHAND CAR SALES

By: Shamlal Puri
Associate Publisher
& Senior Editor – UK
shamlalpur14@gmail.com

Britain’s powerful car parking mafia and the second-hand car industry are under the Government’s microscope, with Prime Minister Andy Burnham vowing to slam the brakes on unfair fines and dodgy car sales. Burnham has put the uncontrolled parking mafia in Britain under the lens, vowing on Monday to crack down on rip-off charges and car scams that have caused untold problems for drivers and car owners as the mafiosi in the parking industry continue to cash in on drivers’ misery. Drivers are to get new rights to challenge unfair private



No nonsense. British Prime Minister Andy Burnham wants to ease the plight of motorists caught in the parking-charge trap.

parking charges, alongside a crackdown on car dealers winding back mileage. They will now get new rights to challenge unfair private parking charges under new rules announced this week. This includes a guaranteed five minutes to decide whether to park and ten minutes to leave once their session ends, and the right to have charges cancelled on appeal for issues they can’t control. Under the new Private Parking Code of Practice laid in Parliament on Tuesday, 20 October, charges will be scrapped on appeal for honest mistakes, like stopping briefly to check directions, and for situations like a med-

Contd Page 10

UK and Germany strengthen defence ties in London talks

European NATO allies Europe



Page 6

America’s baby bust: U.S. birth rate hits record low as women choose later motherhood

America



Page 16

From job seekers to job creators Africa needs a new bargain between universities, governments and business

Africa



Page 18

Education is the key to success

Education is one of the most powerful tools for transforming human life

Asia



Page 21

A girl’s dream is the future of society P 4

Motivation Page 8
Why starting school too early is failing our children

News Backpage
Who defines Africa’s destiny? The western lens, African compliance and the struggle



BALLOTS, BULLETS AND THE PRICE OF A WARD

Political assassinations are rising in South Africa before the local elections of 4 November 2026. Members of the African National Congress have suffered the heaviest toll. The motive is rarely ideology. It is access to power, money and patronage, a pattern shared with Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and the Philippines.

By Silas Mwaudasheni Nande

On the evening of 13 October 2026, mourners walked through Katlehong, east of Johannesburg, singing in tribute to a slain local leader. Jeanette Magugu, a figure in the African National Congress (ANC) and its youth league in Ekurhuleni, had been shot dead earlier that month.

As the procession moved along the street, a gunman opened fire. Four people died. According to Daily Maverick, the first two victims were ANC Youth League members aged 21 and 23. Two days later, gunmen in a vehicle ambushed ANC canvassers in Umgababa, about 35 kilometres south of Durban. Police reported

that a man and a woman died at the scene. A week before that, Samora Ndlovu, a former mayor of Richmond, survived a shooting on the R56 near Pietermaritzburg. Ndlovu sits on the ANC regional task team

Contd Page 14

NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"

www.businessavaibale.com

Green graduates: 351 entrepreneurs complete Western Kenya's landmark women-led programme

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- Michael Mutiga, Chief Executive of Stanbic Bank Kenya and South Sudan, said the results demonstrated how entrepreneurship, when properly supported, could serve as a practical engine for sustainable development. "By helping women- and youth-led businesses raise productivity, adopt climate-conscious practices, and become investment-ready, we are supporting decent jobs, stronger local value chains, and more resilient county economies," he said. "As these enterprises grow and access wider markets, their impact will extend beyond their communities and contribute to Kenya's long-term economic transformation."
- Agriculture and agro-processing accounted for the largest share of enterprises in the graduating cohort, reflecting the dominant economic reality across Western Kenya's counties.



When 351 entrepreneurs gathered to mark the completion of a business development programme spanning ten counties across Western Kenya, the occasion carried a weight that went well beyond the usual graduation ceremony. These were not students finishing a course. They were business owners — the majority of them women — who had spent months learning to formalise their operations, access new markets, adopt climate-conscious practices, and build enterprises capable of surviving in an increasingly competitive economy. Their graduation from the Women Employment for the Green Transformation programme, known as WE4D, signalled something larger: a working proof of concept that enterprise-led green growth is not just possible in Kenya's counties — it is already happening. The programme, implemented through a partnership between the Stanbic Kenya Foundation and the Deutsche Gesellschaft

für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, the German development agency known as GIZ, drew participants from Kisumu, Kericho, Kisii, Nyamira, Homa Bay, Uasin Gishu, Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, and Vihiga. Beyond the 351 graduating entrepreneurs, the programme's wider enterprise support has reached 706 business owners in total, and the businesses it has strengthened now collectively support 2,378 jobs — among them, 1,591 held by young people and 32 by persons with disabilities. Of all participants, 85 per cent were women. Michael Mutiga, Chief Executive of Stanbic Bank Kenya and South Sudan, said the results demonstrated how entrepreneurship, when properly supported, could serve as a practical engine for sustainable development. "By helping women- and youth-led businesses raise productivity, adopt climate-conscious practices, and become investment-ready, we are supporting decent jobs,

stronger local value chains, and more resilient county economies," he said. "As these enterprises grow and access wider markets, their impact will extend beyond their communities and contribute to Kenya's long-term economic transformation." Agriculture and agro-processing accounted for the largest share of enterprises in the graduating cohort, reflecting the dominant economic reality across Western Kenya's counties. But the programme's reach extended considerably beyond the farm gate, drawing in ventures in aquaculture, circular economy models, manufacturing, sustainable tourism, and natural health solutions — sectors that are increasingly central to the green economy agenda but have historically struggled to attract structured support. Mercy Githanji, Executive Director and Head of the Stanbic Kenya Foundation, said the graduation marked the beginning of a new phase rather than the end of a journey. "Our focus now is

on helping small and medium-sized enterprises access markets, financing, technical expertise, and growth opportunities," she said. "By working with partners, county governments, and Stanbic Bank teams, we aim to help businesses scale sustainably, create jobs, and contribute to stronger communities." Across the cohort, entrepreneurs reported measurable progress in areas that often determine whether small businesses survive or stagnate. These included stronger record-keeping and governance, better financial management, improved staff structures, and greater confidence in pursuing larger commercial opportunities. Several enterprises expanded their operations and created jobs during the programme period, while others moved into export markets, secured new supply contracts, and established linkages with industry stakeholders that were previously out of reach. The programme is commissioned by the German Fed-

eral Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and co-funded by the European Union and the Norwegian Government. In design and ambition, it reflects a growing international consensus that the path to a greener economy runs directly through small business — and that women and young people are among the most consequential actors in that transition, provided they receive targeted, sustained support. Kenya's counties have long been described as the country's engine rooms of economic potential. What the WE4D graduation makes plain is that unlocking that potential requires more than policy intent. It requires the kind of patient, structured, on-the-ground investment in people and enterprises that this programme has delivered — and that Western Kenya's 351 newest green graduates are now ready to build on.

Reach Editorial Team on:

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Diaspora Times Global



Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson
Shashi Court, Ring Rd, Westlands
P.O Box 101 675-00101 Nairobi,
Kenya.
Tel/WhatsApp: +254720 918 828
Email: dan@mtkenyatimes.co.ke
Adverts: ads@moutkenyatimes.co.ke



Associate Publisher & Senior Editor UK & G. Britain
Shamlal Puri, London
E: media@adlinkinternational.com
(advertising inquiries only)
shamlalpuril4@gmail.com
(editorial)
Phone 0044 330 606 1438.
WhatsApp 00447432220184



Senior Editor Botswana & S. Africa.O.M Otukile
Africa Plot 15215, Tshikinyega,
Mahalapye, Botswana
P.O Box 20392 Mahalapye, Botswana
Tel/WhatsApp:
+267 77 458 029
Email: paula200500293@gmail.com



Senior Editor India & Asia
Sakshi Agrawal
10, Balughat Main Road,
Near Shubham Poultry Farm,
Muzaffarpur, Bihar, India. Pin
Code: 842001
Tel/WhatsApp: +91 74882 30902
Email: agrawalsakshi684@gmail.com



Senior Editor India & Asia
Nilanjana Sarkar
Red Carpet Vogue
Tel/WhatsApp:
+91 95936 49888
Email: thequidditchink@gmail.com

NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"



"ALL BUSINESSES
ONE PLATFORM"



LOCAL
BUSINESS
DIRECTORY
NEAR ME

SCAN TO REGISTER

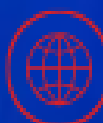
Contact Us:



+254 720 918 828



business@exponentialinternational.com



www.businessavaibale.com

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Instagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

Women

A girl's dream is the future of society

By: Kurtklicheva Sabrona Umarovna
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- Why should a girl's dreams be small? Why should the fears of others place limits on her wings?
- The progress of society is measured not only by towering buildings, modern technologies, or economic achievements. Its true advancement is reflected in how it values human intellect, spirituality, and the potential of every young person. Placing a book in a girl's hands means opening the door not merely to one individual's future, but to the future of society as a whole. Listening to her thoughts means listening to the voice of tomorrow.

By: Kurtklicheva Sabrona Umarovna

Sometimes, an entire future begins with a tiny dream born in a girl's heart. She may not yet be known to the world, her voice may not have echoed from public platforms, and her name may not have been written in the pages of history. Yet, there is a flame within her soul — a thirst for knowledge, a love for creativity, and a desire to change the world. Some may try to extinguish this flame, but wherever there is the courage to protect and nurture it, the future awakens.

Why should a girl's dreams be small? Why should the fears of others place limits on her wings?

The progress of society is measured not only by towering buildings, modern technologies, or economic achievements. Its true advancement is reflected in how it values human intellect, spirituality, and the potential of every young person. Placing a book in a girl's hands means opening the door not merely to one individual's future, but to the future of society as a whole. Listening to her thoughts means listening to the voice of tomorrow.

Sometimes, hidden within the silence of a girl whose dreams have gone unheard lies a truth that the entire society needs to hear. Every girl carries a unique world within her heart. One dreams of becoming a scientist, another hopes to heal the suffering of others, while someone else wishes to reach people's hearts through the power of words. Yet, dreams cannot survive

on imagination alone. They require knowledge, hard work, patience, and, above all, belief in oneself.

Sometimes, a single word of encouragement can change the course of a person's life. A teacher's belief can awaken talent, a book can reveal a new world, and an opportunity can bring to light an ability that has remained hidden for years. Therefore, supporting girls does not mean choosing their paths for them; it means creating opportunities for them to discover their own.

To give wings is not to hold a bird in one's hands, but to believe in its ability to fly. In an age when information moves at an extraordinary pace and popularity sometimes takes precedence over talent, young girls face another important challenge: remaining true to themselves while keeping pace with the changing world. A person's worth is not determined solely by the recognition of others. True wealth lies in one's intellect, conscience, knowledge, and ability to contribute to the well-being of others.

Literature is an invaluable bridge that carries these values into human hearts. The works of Zulfija remind us that the tenderness of a woman's heart is not a weakness, and that love and resilience, sincerity and courage can coexist within the same soul. The task of today's young writers is not merely to repeat this legacy, but to seek answers to the questions of their time, understand human suffering, and awaken thought through the power of words.

I believe that genuine talent



Kurtklicheva Sabrona Umarovna

flourishes not only beneath the applause of an audience, but also through the quiet work done when no one is watching. Every line written, every book read, and every new piece of knowledge acquired is a step toward the future. To shatter a girl's dream is to close the door to possibilities that have not yet had the chance to unfold. To give her wings through trust is to empower her to soar toward the future.

Tomorrow does not create itself. It is built by the young people who learn, explore, create, and take responsibility for their own destinies today. That is why we must never remain indifferent to the dreams of girls. Perhaps the girl who confidently takes her first steps today will one day share knowledge with her people, make a groundbreaking discovery, or awaken thousands of hearts through a single liter-

ary work.

After all, a girl's dream is the hope of an individual; the opportunity given to her is a foundation laid for the future of an entire society.

Author: Kurtklicheva Sabrona Umarovna
Third-Year Student,
Karakalpak State University

The Diaspora Times Global

To advertise in Diaspora Times Global, read by the diaspora worldwide contact our exclusive **UK & Europe** Advertising and Marketing representatives.
Special introductory incentives available to new advertisers



ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF
Phone: 0330 606 1438 (44 330 606 1438)
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com
Contact: Mr Shamlal Puri

Digital **MARKETING** **EXPERTS.**

SKYVIEW
Smart Solutions

Grow your business
with us



OUR SERVICES:

- Digital Marketing
- SEO Campaign Strategies
- Web Design & Development
- Brand Build Business Strategies



Call us on

+91 811 576 6421 +966 53 879 2285



Visit our website

www.skyviewads.com

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Instagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

UK-Germany

UK and Germany strengthen defence ties in London talks



By: Shamlal Puri
Associate Publisher
& Senior Editor - UK
shamlalpuri4@gmail.com

The importance of building defence ties between European NATO allies was underscored last week when the UK's Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard, and his German counterpart, State Secretary Jens Plötner joined industry leaders to discuss industrial priorities for collaboration.

The growing threat of never-ending conflict over Europe and the continued attempts of Russia over Ukraine and threats from Vladimir Putin to escalate the war to fit his and Donald Trump's agenda are forcing many European leaders to think widely about taking steps to maintain their national and regional safety. The United Kingdom and Germany held a crucial meeting in London last week to strengthen industrial collaboration and advance new technology.

The United Kingdom's Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard, and his German counterpart, State Secretary for Armament and Innovation Jens Plötner, held critical talks at Lancaster House in London.

The latest UK-Germany Ministerial Group on Equipment and Capability Cooperation (MECC) meeting brought together senior officials and military leaders from both nations to review progress on joint defence capability programmes and to deepen the industrial partnership between the UK and Germany, two of NATO's leading defence powers. Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry Luke Pollard MP said last Friday: "Germany is one of our closest and most valued defence partners, and today's talks demonstrate our determination to turn that ambition into real capability for our armed forces and real opportunity for our defence industries."

"As threats to our shared security evolve, the UK and Germany are standing together, strengthening our forces, our industrial bases and our resilience in lockstep."

Discussions are built on the Trinity House Agreement, signed in October 2024, which sets out an ambitious programme of bilateral cooperation across the air, land, maritime, cyber and space domains. The agreement sits under the wider Kensington Treaty, signed in July 2025, which provides the strategic framework for the UK-Germany relationship.

Among the flagship programmes on the agenda was Deep Precision



Left to right: National Armaments Director Rupert Pearce; Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry Luke Pollard; German State Secretary for Armament, Innovation and Cyber Jens Plötner; and German National Director for Armaments Vice Admiral Carsten Stawitzki.

Strike, a joint UK-Germany initiative to develop long-range strike capability, reflecting both nations' shared ambition to address critical capability gaps and strengthen NATO's deterrence.

The talks follow Prime Minister Andy Burnham's visit to Berlin on 8 October, during which the UK and Germany agreed to deepen cooperation in space and establish a new UK-Germany Counter-Hybrid Partnership to strengthen joint resilience against grey-zone threats. After the MECC meeting, Minister Pollard joined State Secretary Plötner at the German Embassy in London for a panel discussion in which senior policymakers and industry leaders reviewed defence-industrial progress and identified practical priorities for deepening cooperation. Minister Pollard was joined on the panel by State Secretary Plötner, Dr Philipp Kerth, co-founder and chief executive of German defence technology company Hypersonica, and Alex Zino, Director Business Development & Future Programmes at Rolls-Royce.

The MECC is part of a wider programme of UK-German engagement ahead of the EU-UK summit. The UK-Germany defence relationship continues to grow as both nations work towards a more resilient Euro-Atlantic security architecture, underpinned by a modern, innovative and competitive defence industrial base at the heart of NATO's deterrence and readiness.

In another development, Scottish Secretary Douglas Alexander today welcomed the Scottish Government's decision to match fund the UK Government's £10 commitment to create two Defence Technical Excellence Colleges (DTECs) in Scotland, as part of a £50 million Scottish Defence Growth Deal.

The DTECs will help provide young people with new specialist pathways

into high-skilled, well-paid careers in defence engineering, advanced manufacturing and maritime technology that are coming to Scotland. The colleges will be located to support Scotland's defence clusters in the East and West of the country. They will benefit from the engineering and innovation centres previously announced as part of the Scottish Defence Growth Deal.

Scottish Secretary Douglas Alexander said: "In March we announced a £10 million commitment to develop two Defence Technical Excellence Colleges in Scotland. I'm pleased the Scottish Government has now agreed to match-fund these colleges, giving our young people the skills they need to secure high-skilled, well-paid careers in Scotland's defence sector in the years to come."

"Scotland is a defence industrial powerhouse and is already benefit-

ing from increased UK Government investment as we deliver a defence dividend for Scotland, creating new skilled jobs, new training places and new opportunities for communities while keeping us and our allies secure. We must continue to develop the skilled workforce needed to support this growing sector.

Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard MP, said: "Finally matching DTEC funding is welcome news for Scottish careers. The colleges will provide routes into high-skilled, well-paid roles in the defence sector, which is crucial to keeping the UK safe around the clock."

This is an important part of our £50 million Defence Growth Deal - announced back in March - to boost growth opportunities for Scotland that supports our Armed Forces."

Industry analysis suggests there

could be demand for up to 50,000 additional defence jobs across the UK by 2034/35.

Scotland already benefits from over £2.5 billion a year in Ministry of Defence spending, which directly supports 12,200 jobs.

The Scottish Secretary launched the UK Government's Defence Growth Deal on 12 March, committing £10 million towards the creation of two DTECs — one in the East and one in the West of Scotland — as part of a wider £50 million deal.

The offer remained conditional on the Scottish Government providing match funding.

Scottish Government Innovation Minister Alyn Smith on October 15 confirmed that Holyrood ministers would "partner with the UK Government" on the project.



The UK's Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard, and the German State Secretary for Armament, Innovation and Cyber, Jens Plötner, in free and frank discussion.

The Africa Largest eCOMMERCE



[www. gotyou.co.ke](http://www.gotyou.co.ke)

**NOW
OPEN**

Call/Text/WhatsApp: +254 714 090 155

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

FacebookK: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Instagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

Motivation

Why starting school too early is failing our children

The evidence is clear: pushing four-year-olds into formal classrooms does not accelerate learning — it distorts it

By: Ashford Kimani
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- At four years old, a child is still in a critical phase of neurological, emotional, and social development. This is the age of curiosity, of movement, of imagination, of wide-eyed exploration of a world that is still wonderfully new. Yet formal schooling environments routinely demand the opposite: stillness, structured attention, early literacy benchmarks, and compliance with routines that even older learners find difficult to sustain. The result is a fundamental mismatch — not between the child and learning, but between the child and the system.
- And when that mismatch occurs, the system typically misreads it. A child who cannot sit still gets labelled disruptive. One who struggles to write is considered slow. Another who would rather play than fill in a worksheet is seen as unfocused. But none of these are signs of deficiency. They are signs of normal, healthy development. The tragedy is that the system begins classifying children as “behind” before they have even had a fair developmental start.



There is a quiet assumption running through many education systems around the world — one that sounds perfectly reasonable on the surface. The earlier a child starts formal schooling, the better their academic outcomes will be. More years in school, the thinking goes, should translate into more learning. It is a logical enough idea. But what the emerging evidence shows, and what classroom realities confirm every day, is that starting school too early — particularly at the age of four — is not giving children a head start. In many cases, it is setting them back. At four years old, a child is still in a critical phase of neurological, emotional, and social development. This is the age of curiosity, of movement, of imagination, of wide-eyed exploration of a world that is still wonderfully new. Yet formal schooling environments routinely demand the opposite: stillness, structured attention, early literacy benchmarks, and compliance with routines that even older learners find difficult to sustain. The result is a fundamental mismatch — not between the child and learning, but between the child and the system. And when that mismatch occurs, the system typically misreads it. A child who cannot sit still gets labelled disruptive. One who struggles to write is considered slow. Another who would

rather play than fill in a worksheet is seen as unfocused. But none of these are signs of deficiency. They are signs of normal, healthy development. The tragedy is that the system begins classifying children as “behind” before they have even had a fair developmental start. This early labelling carries consequences that linger long after the classroom. Once a child internalises the idea that they are not good at school, it reshapes their entire academic identity. Confidence erodes. Participation declines. Learning, which should feel like discovery, begins to feel like a source of anxiety. By the time that same learner reaches upper primary, the gap is no longer just academic. It has become psychological — and far harder to close. There is also the largely overlooked issue of relative age within a classroom. In systems where school entry is tied to a calendar year, some children can be nearly a full year younger than their peers. At four or five years old, that gap is enormous in developmental terms. The youngest children in the class are significantly more likely to struggle with language, attention, and social interaction — not because they lack ability, but simply because they are younger. Yet assessments rarely account for this reality. Instead, these children are compared against older classmates and routinely

appear less capable — when the real variable is age, not intelligence. Ironically, countries that delay formal schooling until age six or seven frequently outperform early-start systems in the long run. The difference lies not in when formal learning begins, but in what happens before it does. These systems invest heavily in play-based early childhood education, built on a clear and evidence-backed understanding: play is not the opposite of learning. It is the very foundation of it. Through play, children develop language and problem-solving skills. They learn emotional regulation and social competence. They discover how to negotiate, imagine, persist through frustration, and adapt when things do not go to plan. These are not peripheral skills. They are the cognitive infrastructure upon which all future academic learning is built. When children eventually transition into formal schooling, they arrive not just ready to read and write, but ready to think and engage. Early academic push, by contrast, tends to produce gains that are more superficial than they appear. A four-year-old may memorise letters or recite numbers with impressive fluency. But without the underlying cognitive maturity to support that learning, it is fragile. It does not endure, and it does not transfer well when high-

er-order thinking is eventually required. Kenya presents a particularly relevant case. Under the Competency-Based Curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on learner-centred approaches, creativity, and holistic development. On paper, this aligns closely with developmentally appropriate practice. In reality, however, implementation often drifts toward premature academic rigour. Pre-primary classrooms can begin to resemble miniature primary schools, with a heavy emphasis on worksheets, assessment tasks, and performance indicators that have no business being applied to a four-year-old. This creates pressure not just for learners, but for teachers and parents too. Teachers feel compelled to demonstrate progress — and in a system that values visible academic output, that pressure is real. Parents, anxious about their children falling behind in a competitive environment, push hard for early reading and writing milestones. In the process, the child’s actual developmental needs get quietly sidelined. What is needed is a deliberate recalibration of priorities. Early childhood education should not be a race to academic proficiency. It should be the foundation for a lifetime of learning — and that means protecting space for play, exploration, storytelling, music, and social

interaction. It means training teachers to understand developmental stages deeply, not just to deliver curriculum content. And it means helping parents understand that readiness is not about how early a child can read. It is about how well they can think, relate, and adapt. Delaying formal schooling does not mean delaying learning. It means aligning learning with the child’s natural developmental trajectory. It means accepting that forcing a four-year-old into a rigid academic structure may produce short-term compliance — but at the cost of long-term engagement, curiosity, and resilience. The real question is not whether children can cope with early schooling. Many will manage, in varying degrees. The more important question is whether they should have to. Education systems exist to serve the learner — not the other way around. When that alignment is right, learning becomes not just effective, but genuinely meaningful. Starting school too early does not fix educational challenges. It simply moves the burden onto the child — often unfairly and prematurely. If we are serious about improving learning outcomes, we must begin by honouring the most fundamental principle of good education: teach the child in front of you, not the system behind you.

DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?

ARE YOU A WRITER OR CORPORATE?

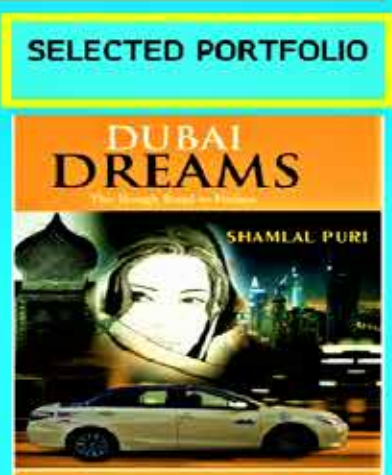
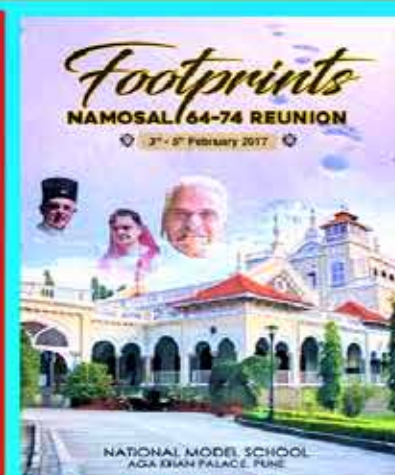
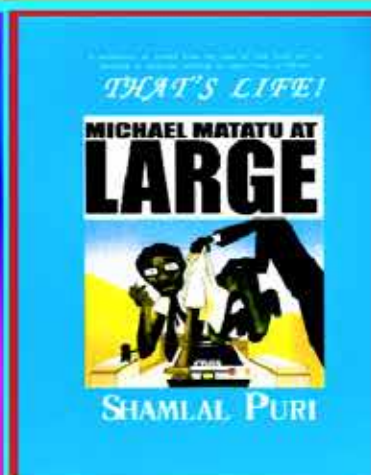
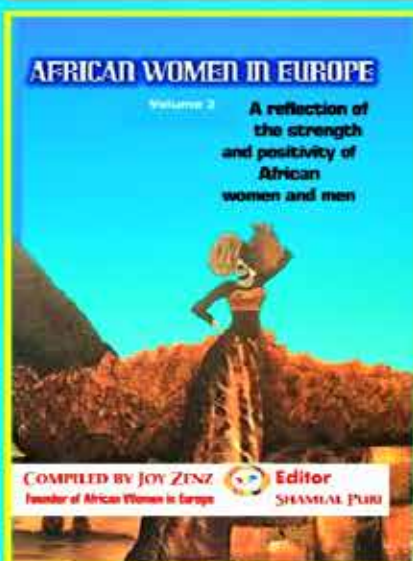
Let Professional Editors and Authors turn your story into a Dream Book.

THRILLERS - FICTION - FICTION - BIOGRAPHIES - TRAVELOGUES - HUMOUR- COFFEE TABLE - BROCHURES

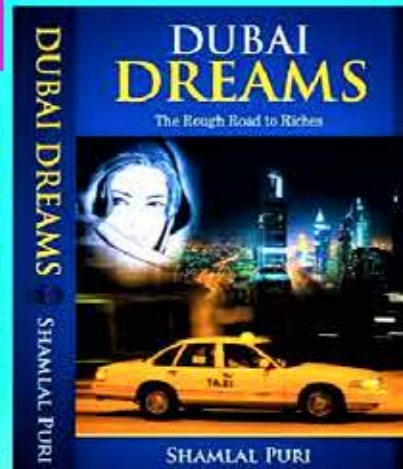
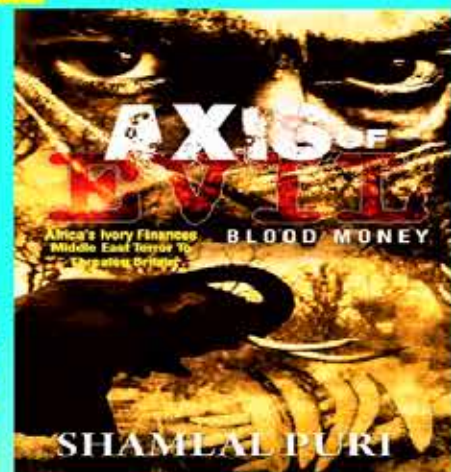
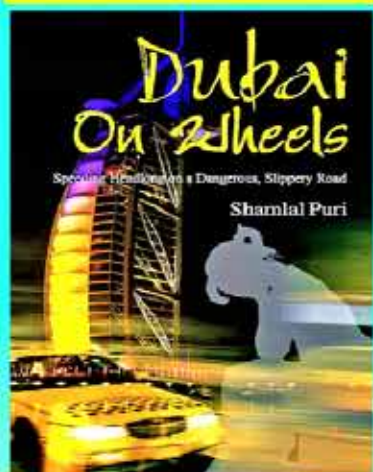
London-based contract Publishers for independent and self-publish authors.

We offer one-stop top notch Editing, Expert Design, Proof Reading, Book Covers, Artwork, Digital, Litho Printing, E-Books, Corporate Brochures and UK ISBN number. Reasonable costs.

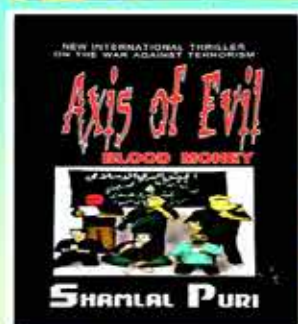
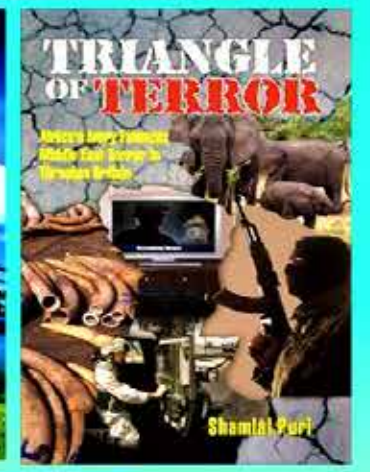
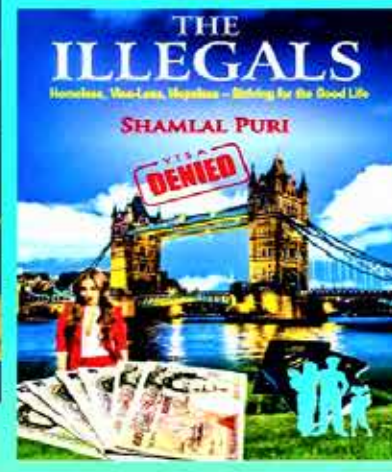
We print and deliver books. Authors retain 100% sales profits.



SELECTED PORTFOLIO



BEST SELLER NOVELS



The Crownbird Publishers logo and imprint owned by Adlink International (1989) Media Group London

Copies of some books available for sale: hard copy/ digital. Contact us: media@adlinkinternational.com
Email Subject: Crownbird Books



ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP

Books Division

16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF (UK)

Tel: 44 330 606 1438

Email: media@adlinkinternational.com

www.adlinkinternational.com

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyentimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

FacebookK: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Instagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

UK News

Prime Minister slams brakes on rip-off charges and car scams: BURNHAM'S BLITZ ON BRITISH PARKING MAFIA AND DODGY SECONDHAND CAR SALES



By: Sham Lal Puri
Associate Publisher
& Senior Editor – UK
shamlalpur14@gmail.com

Contd from Page 1

ical emergency, breakdown or broken ticket machine.

For smaller slip-ups, like forgetting a parking permit, entering the wrong vehicle's registration or forgetting to confirm it in the machine when parking, drivers will face a maximum charge of £20 on appeal.

The Code also freezes the maximum parking charge at £100. Operators that don't comply risk losing access to DVLA data, meaning that even if they issue a charge, it will be much harder to identify the registered owner and pursue payment.

In addition, unscrupulous second-hand car dealers who wind back odometers to disguise a vehicle's true mileage will also face tougher action.

Known as car clocking, fraudulently selling a clocked car is already illegal, but adding it to the official list of banned practices will make it easier for enforcers to crack down, protecting buyers and backing honest businesses.

These changes are the latest in the Prime Minister's series of everyday fixes, tackling frustrations that cost people time and money and giving families more room to breathe.

Today's action follows moves to stop unfair airline charges, tackle subscription traps, rogue traders, and rip-off school uniform costs.

Prime Minister Burnham said: "Being a few minutes late back to your car or typing one digit of your number plate wrong shouldn't end with a hefty fine landing on your doormat. "These charges leave people feeling ripped off and out of pocket, so I'm putting a stop to them."

"We are introducing clearer rules, longer grace periods and lower charges for genuine mistakes, while going after the deliberate scams that rip drivers off."

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Angela Rayner said:

"Parking should be straightforward, not another everyday hassle. These changes mean drivers get a fairer deal, protected time to park and leave without fear of unfair charges, and confidence that private parking providers are held to a higher standard."

"It's yet another step forward in this government's plan to take the stress out of everyday life and ease the pressure on people's pockets."



A senior citizen takes his partner in a wheelchair to a distant parking area at a London hospital.



Not all parking tickets are genuine. This driver got three.



An officer on duty checks a car for any parking breach. Photo Courtesy

Minister for Consumer Action, Kate Dearden, said: "Nobody works hard for their money just to be deceived by a dodgy trader, and this is exactly the kind of everyday rip-off this government is going after."

"By making it easier to take action against car clocking, we are protecting consumers' hard-earned money and supporting businesses that play by the rules."

The change applies to businesses selling cars to consumers. Car clocking will be added to the banned practices list (Schedule 20) under the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024.

The government has also promised to go further this week, consulting as soon as possible next year on private parking debt recovery fees, including whether to cut an existing £70 cap or scrap the fees altogether. Data shows just under 17 million private parking charges were is-

sued in the UK last year. In 2025, the government set out proposals to improve standards by consulting on a new Private Parking Code of Practice.

This week's response sets out the measures being brought in to protect motorists. The British Parliament now has time to scrutinise the new Code before ministers bring it into force as soon as possible.

This Code introduces, for the first time, a fully independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board and requires operators to share more information with government, giving drivers stronger protections than ever.

Since taking office, the government has also launched a review of airport drop-off charges, cut VAT on electricity bills this winter, frozen fuel duty and rail fares, and raised the Minimum Wage, as it continues to take action to ease the cost of living. The Private Parking Code of Prac-



All drivers, including those with a disabled blue badge, have to pay for parking, with no concessions or respect for an official disability badge.



An irate driver trampled this parking penalty ticket on a London pavement.



Privileged parking for disabled motorists



The privileged Blue Badge issued to disabled motorists in the UK.

tice in Britain, Scotland and Wales is aimed at protecting vulnerable car owners and drivers.

Motorists can have their parking charge cancelled if they provide evidence that one of the scenarios set out in the Appeals Charter applies to them.

Operators will have to report data on the charges they issue and how

appeals are handled, to help raise standards across the industry.

A new independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board will scrutinise this, giving drivers confidence that the Code is working as intended. The

UK News

Prime Minister slams brakes on rip-off charges and car scams: BURNHAM'S BLITZ ON BRITISH PARKING MAFIA AND DODGY SECONDHAND CAR SALES

Contd from Page 10
xxxxxxxxxxxx

process to set up the board will begin once the Code comes into force. The changes follow a public consultation that ran from July to September 2025 and received 4,526 responses from the public and industry.

Motorists made it clear they wanted fairer appeals and independent oversight of the private parking industry.

The government intends to consult further on the remaining CMA recommendations after the Code is published.

While the Government is seen to be siding with the consumers on important issues, critics believe not enough is being done to protect the rights and interests of disabled drivers.

Disabled drivers have been issued with special parking permits by borough councils or the local government, entitling them to park their vehicles in designated disabled parking bays and on single yellow lines without paying for parking or fear of being fined up to £100.

Called a Blue Badge because of its colour, this complimentary parking ticket is issued to people with several kinds of disabilities who are unable to walk or suffer from age-related issues.

Some parking lots in places such as hospitals, shopping centres, and private parking lots shamelessly charge these drivers for parking despite having a blue badge, effectively insulting the very facility for which they have been issued these parking permits.

Large private companies with lucrative contracts to manage parking spaces in hospitals and shopping centres will not allow disabled drivers with blue badges to park without paying, which is grossly unfair.

If they fail to pay the charge and drive off believing they have a blue badge, the parking contractors have access to the details of the registration from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) of the car owners and receive, through the post, a penalty notice to pay anything up to £100 to evade paying the parking charge.

Bailiffs are used if these fines still remain unpaid.

While the Government is genuinely trying to help disabled people, there are rotten apples in society who abuse the system and make fraudulent use of disabled badges by using disabled relatives, modified or stolen badges to evade parking charges where the general public has to pay to use these car parks.

In the country's main diaspora areas, there is a market for stolen or modified badges used to hoodwink



: Fraudulent QR code... Fylde Council urges anyone who has used them to contact the police and their bank. Photo Courtesy



A parking officer on duty in the UK. Photo courtesy

parking attendants.

Parking attendants recently went out in full force in the London Borough of Islington to track down Blue Badge fraud. They visited places like Whittington Hospital, where drivers could have parked vehicles using fraudulently obtained badges.

Once they track a vehicle, officials remove it as part of their crackdown. An official said, "Blue Badges make a real difference to disabled people who rely on them to get around and park where they need to. They are vital for people unable to walk distances

"That's why we take Blue Badge fraud seriously. We're working all year round to protect the scheme for the people who genuinely need it and will keep taking action against fraud and misuse across Islington." Members of the public are encouraged to report those using these badges illegally. Those found are fined heavily, up to £1,000, and prosecuted.

Another scam operating in the UK, which has hit normal drivers below the belt, is yet to be tackled effectively.

Fraudsters are exploiting new technology and finding unique ways to fleece motorists.

In the past, it was simple: find a

space, find spare change, and stick a ticket on your dashboard. These days, finding a parking space means using a smartphone and downloading another app. It's a hassle. From fake QR codes and bogus parking attendants demanding cash at busy events to text messages about parking fines, the traps are getting even more sophisticated. These scams can also lead to bank accounts being drained, Saga, the insurance company, gives a shocking description of how these scams work.

According to Action Fraud, there were 784 reports of QR code scams through April 2025, a 20% increase, with almost £3.5 million lost. That's an average of £45,000 per person.

Action Fraud says car parks are where they happen most often.

QR codes are codes that you scan with your phone that then take you to a specific website.

In QR code scams, the website asks for your card details to make a payment, then harvests them and uses them to spend money from your account. Some websites will also download malicious software onto your phone.

Claire Webb, acting director of Action Fraud, says cybercriminals increasingly use fake QR codes to trick the public into giving up personal



Parking wardens in north London outside Whittington Hospital to track misuse of the Blue Badge.



A traffic inspector on patrol duty in London. Photo Courtesy BBC

and financial information.

"We're urging people to stop and check before scanning QR codes, to avoid becoming a victim of 'quishing' [QR code 'phishing', which means using fake codes to direct to malicious websites]. Look out for QR codes that may have been tampered with in open spaces, or emails and texts that might include rogue codes," she says.

Scanning these with a smartphone camera should take motorists to a legitimate payment website when paying for parking. But now identical-looking stickers are being placed over the genuine QR code, redirecting to scam sites.

Kate Hobson, senior consumer expert at Citizens Advice, says, "If you do scan a fake code and provide the information asked for, you're at risk of handing over personal details and losing money.

"And because you won't have paid the real company, you could also end up with a parking ticket. Or you may have downloaded malware (software designed to gain access to your smartphone) that scammers can use to steal your personal information."

Football club AFC Telford United recently warned fans about a potential fraud involving fake QR codes attached to parking notices at the SEAH Stadium in Shropshire.

A member of the public attending a game had spotted that regular Avalon parking payment information signs had been tampered with, and stickers bearing QR codes directing users to a fake website had been

placed over the legitimate QR codes.

"It seems likely that the intention was to harvest payment card details from users," a spokesperson for AFC Telford United said. They advised people who had already used the QR codes to contact their bank or payment card issuer.

Another scam to watch out for is someone posing as a fake parking steward. This can also happen at football matches or any other busy event.

Scams like this have been reported near Manchester United, Aston Villa and Tottenham Hotspur grounds. Victims are directed to park by someone wearing a hi-vis jacket that may say 'Official match day parking'. They ask for payment in cash. The unsuspecting driver may later be fined for parking on private property or for not paying the actual fee.

The Trafford Council warns of this scam on its website and says the council, parking operators and Manchester United are aware of it. The council advises that if someone approaches you to park on the public highway for payment, even if they are dressed to look like a Trafford Council employee, it is a parking scam.

"If you receive a text saying you owe a parking fine, be on the alert. Local councils and parking companies don't issue penalty charge notices (PCNs) by text message," the spokesman added.

SA News

Literary Outreach Incubation Program Instills The Culture From Book Adaption To Spoken Words

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Kwetso consulting services on literary outreach incubation program took centre stage in South Africa at Mpumalanga in KwaNdebele on National book month. The event took place at Makerana Tribal Office at Vezubuhle.

“Changing the boring narrative around reading and writing clubs by doing activities that are fun and educational as well as provide alternative exposure to Literature not just sitting in a class room” – by Katlego Lengwasa from Kwetso consulting services. She continues... “ If it’s Literature we will find a way to make it fun”. Students and individual people were on numbers on this National book month to celebrate written stories from poetry to drama, novel to stage play. Students adapted number of poems from the poetry book title: “IsiDonodono” authored by Themba Emanuel Mashobane.

“What excited me is that all the the participants managed to master and recite, perform poems, short stories and drama within short space of time preparing. They gave my written poems a beautiful voice with great echoes on my ears. They gave my poems life and wings to fly in an audio world” author said as he smiles. He continues “ I felt small when see these kids reciting my poems better than me, they took ownership on my poems and that was heart touching and for that I take out my hat just for you future leaders and please do not be shy to tell and write your stories in your African Indigenous languages which is in isiNdebele “.

This is the very good initiative towards isiNdebele language since is the one that still lack of new and current books that can be accessible by the community at large.

Reading books for pleasure in KwaNdebele is not the culture especially with vernacular language, so this Literary Outreach Program are enforcing such cultural activities to the community so that it can be instill in daily basis. Books festivals or reading events it is scares compare to other provinces where Indigenous languages rooted South Africa.

The author also expresses his happiness that he received from the participants “I like the transition and combination of the poem they have performed as group, title of the poem is: “Gudu Gudu” which talks about guilty conscious and regrets”.



NEWS PAPER



IN BUSINESS

The Mount Kenya Times

+254 724 439 949, +254 720 918 828, +254 721 103 040, +254 713 318 438

website: <https://mountkenyatimes.co.ke>

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Intagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

WORLD

BALLOTS, BULLETS AND THE PRICE OF A
WARD

By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themkenyatimes

Contd from Page 1

in KwaZulu-Natal. He was driving alone when another vehicle blocked his path and a gunman fired several shots. These attacks did not occur in isolation. They are the latest entries in a ledger of political murder that has grown steadily before the local government elections of 4 November 2026. On 17 October, The Witness, a Pietermaritzburg daily, reported that politically motivated killings were surging, with KwaZulu-Natal again at the centre.

This article examines that surge. It asks three questions. Who is dying? Why are members of the ANC, the largest party in the national coalition government, so heavily represented among the dead? And is South Africa unique, or part of a wider pattern in which local office has become a prize worth killing for?

The Scale of the Problem

The most detailed public data come from the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), a research organisation based in Geneva. Its October 2026 report, Ballots and Bullets, written by Julian Rademeyer, records 45 political attacks between 1 January and 30 September 2026. At least 43 people were killed.

The 45 attacks comprise 37 incidents in which people died and six attempted assassinations in which the target survived. Two further plots were stopped before any shot was fired.

The figures are stark when placed against history. The GI-TOC recorded 23 political killings in the same nine months of 2025. Within three quarters, 2026 has already surpassed the full year political totals for 2021 (30), 2024 (33) and 2025 (31). It also exceeds the previous annual peaks since 2015, namely 2019 (42) and 2022 (40). The report warns that the most dangerous months still lie ahead.

Geography matters. KwaZulu-Natal recorded 16 of the 45 political attacks. Gauteng followed with 10. The Eastern Cape, North West and the Western Cape recorded five each, Mpumalanga two and Limpopo one. The spread into the Western Cape, North West and Limpopo is new. Political killings have historically been rare in those provinces.

Timing matters too. The GI-TOC found that killings clustered around key moments of electoral mobilisation: branch meetings, candidate

selection and voter registration. The deadliest point was the registration weekend of 20 and 21 June 2026, when five people linked to political parties were killed in four provinces. The victims that weekend included Sicelo Mleve, an ANC ward councillor shot inside his ward office in Gqeberha. Leon Ngcikwe, a Build One South Africa candidate, was killed in Cape Town. Two uMkhonto we-Sizwe (MK) Party members died in Bekkersdal. Vukani Majozi, an ANC branch executive member, was shot outside his home near Durban.

There is a paradox in these numbers. The GI-TOC notes that political killings are rising in a year when the national murder rate has fallen. Political assassination therefore appears to follow its own logic. It is not simply a reflection of general crime. A note of caution on the data is necessary. The GI-TOC relies largely on open sources, including media reports, court records and official statements. It acknowledges that its database almost certainly undercounts. Some killings occur where media coverage is thin. Others are disguised as robberies. All totals in this article should therefore be read as minimum estimates that will change as investigations progress.

A Party Under Fire

Of the 42 people killed in fatal attacks on party officials, councillors, activists and traditional leaders, the GI-TOC attributes 13 to the ANC. The MK Party, founded by former President Jacob Zuma in 2023, lost eight. Civic movements lost seven and traditional leadership six. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) lost three. The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the Democratic Alliance (DA) lost two each, and Build One South Africa one.

Two points follow. First, ANC members form the largest single group of victims. Second, they do not form a majority. Roughly seven in ten victims came from other parties, movements or traditional structures. The popular perception that the violence targets the ruling party is therefore partly accurate but incomplete. It is further complicated by the fact that the ANC no longer governs alone. It lost its national parliamentary majority in 2024 and now leads a coalition government.

Why, then, does the ANC dominate the casualty list? The evidence points to three overlapping explanations. The first is exposure. The ANC retains the largest network of branches, councillors and local office holders in the country. Where more positions exist to be contested, more people are at risk.

The second is history. The GI-TOC observes that, for most of the past 26 years, political assassination in South Africa was primarily a problem internal to the ANC. Other parties averaged about two cases a year. Many killings were not attacks by rival parties. They were contests among comrades for the same ward,



Samora Ndlovu, a former mayor of Richmond

the same list position or the same municipal post.

The third is fragmentation. Since around 2022, the violence has spread to other parties, notably the MK Party. The rise of the MK Party in KwaZulu-Natal has turned former ANC strongholds into contested ground. Umgababa, where two ANC canvassers died on 15 October, was once such a stronghold. According to AFP, support there has shifted towards the MK Party. Where control of a ward or council becomes uncertain, the incentive to remove a rival grows.

Care is required here. Exposure, history and fragmentation explain a pattern. They do not establish who ordered any particular killing. In most cases, that remains unknown.

The Motive: A Political Economy of Murder

The question most often asked is simple. Why kill a ward councillor? The answer is rarely ideology. The research consensus points to material interest.

The ward as a livelihood

A ward councillor in South Africa earns more than 25,000 rand a month before allowances, according to government figures cited by AFP. That is about four times the national minimum wage of nearly 6,000 rand. The official unemployment rate stands at about 33 per cent.

In such an economy, a council seat is more than public service. It is a secure income, often for an extended family. Zakhele Ndlovu, a political analyst at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, told AFP that many people regard becoming a councillor as an escape from poverty.

The seat also brings influence. The GI-TOC notes that a ward councillor shapes housing lists, local jobs and access to municipal contracts. Each of these is a valuable resource in communities where formal work is scarce.

Procurement and the Moerane diagnosis

The deeper driver is public procurement. In October 2016, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal appointed a commission of inquiry, chaired by advocate Marumo Moerane, into the murders of politicians in the province. Its report, released in September 2018, found overwhelming evidence that access to resources through the tender system was a primary cause of political killings.

According to the GI-TOC summary of its findings, the commission described a procurement system manipulated "by politicians and public officials in collusion with business-people". It also found that politicians recruited criminals to achieve political ends. State security institutions had been manipulated for political purposes. Weaknesses in Crime Intelligence had undermined both prevention and investigation.

The recommendations of the commission were wide. Parties were told to take responsibility for violent competition among their members and to report those implicated to the police. The state was told to professionalise the public service, end the deployment of unqualified political appointees and prosecute tender corruption vigorously. A peace and dispute resolution panel was proposed. The GI-TOC reports that the panel was never established and that the recommendations were largely ignored.

Crispin Hemson, who documented the political wars of KwaZulu-Natal in the final years of apartheid, has summarised the shift succinctly. He told AFP that, with ideology gone, "the motive is a tender, a ward, a job".

Candidate selection and the contest within

The calendar of killings supports this reading. Wonele Gontshi, an ANC branch elections coordinator in Qumbu in the Eastern Cape, was shot on 13 June. According to the GI-TOC, the shooting came a day

after a branch meeting endorsed the man wounded beside him. In such cases, the threat does not necessarily come from another party. It may come from within.

Municipal elections carry particular risk. Between 2000 and 2023, the GI-TOC recorded 191 political assassination cases in election years. Municipal election years accounted for 110 of them, or about 58 per cent. The pattern is logical. Local elections determine who controls municipal budgets, and therefore contracts.

A ready market for killers

Motive alone does not produce murder. Capability is also required. South Africa has a functioning market for contract killing. GI-TOC research published in 2021 estimated the price of a hit at between about 145 and 8,700 United States dollars. In the case of Nhlayenza Ndlovu, a DA councillor in uMngeni killed in December 2023, court evidence put the fee at 75,000 rand. According to AFP, the court heard that a traditional chief ordered the killing over disputed land sales and electricity connections. Two men were sentenced to life imprisonment in September 2026.

The minibus taxi industry plays a particular role. The GI-TOC has repeatedly found that parts of the industry supply firearms and experienced shooters for political and organised crime killings. Some political figures also hold taxi interests, which blurs the line between categories of motive.

Silencing the watchdogs

Some victims appear to have been targeted because they stood in the way of corruption. Mbuso Mthimkhulu, an IFP councillor shot during a community meeting in Bekkersdal in May, served on the municipal public

a c -
counts
c o m -

Contd Page 15

WORLD

BALLOTS, BULLETS AND THE PRICE OF A WARD

Contd from Page 14

xxxxxxxxxxxx

mittee of Rand West City. He was known for opposing corruption. Martha Rantsofu, an Emfuleni municipal finance official described as a whistleblower in a bribery case, was shot dead in Vanderbijlpark in March. The GI-TOC describes this wider pattern as criminal governance. Networks of politicians, officials and criminal actors use violence to control councils, contracts and appointments.

Not Every Killing Is Political

Responsible analysis requires restraint. Not every killing of a politician is a political assassination, and not every attack on a party member is ordered by a rival.

The Katlehong shooting illustrates the difficulty. A suspect surnamed Sibeko handed himself over to the police shortly after the attack. The broadcaster eNCA reported that he is a former Katlehong councillor, reportedly linked to the Afrika Mayibuye Movement. That party said it would investigate and end his membership if any link were confirmed. The ANC Youth League has said that the suspect is not a member of the ANC or its alliance partners. Daily Maverick reported that, on the night of the attack, it remained unclear what had prompted the shooting. No motive has been established in court. The suspect has not been convicted and is presumed innocent. Other cases show similar complexity. Sinovuyo Dyokwe, a DA ward candidate, was killed in Dunoon, Cape Town, on 20 June. The GI-TOC classifies her death as organised crime rather than politics, because she had reported threats from extortionists. In Klerksdorp, the state alleges that ANC councillor Molefi Sello was killed over a tender he had not awarded. The defence claims that the accused acted to defend himself. Such disputes must be resolved by the courts, not by commentators.

Impunity and an Embattled Task Team

If motive and capability explain why killings happen, impunity explains why they continue. The GI-TOC reports that arrests or charges have been recorded in at least 12 of the 45 political incidents this year. In most cases, no arrest has been reported. Even when gunmen are caught, those who ordered the killings are rarely identified. The report cites an estimate by the Institute for Security Studies that only about 15 per cent of murders in South Africa are solved. The main state response is the Political Killings Task Team (PKTT), established in 2018. Its recent history is troubled. On 31 December



KwaZulu-Natal police commissioner, Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi

2024, the then Minister of Police, Senzo Mchunu, instructed that the team be disbanded immediately. In July 2025, the KwaZulu-Natal police commissioner, Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi, publicly alleged political interference. Those allegations led to the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry. In February 2026, the deputy national commissioner, Lieutenant General Shadrack Sibiyi, conceded before the commission that the team had not been reviewed before the order to disband it. The team survived. It was confirmed as fully funded for the 2025/26 financial year. It now leads several of the most prominent investigations of 2026, including the registration weekend killings. The GI-TOC nonetheless warns that arrests after the fact are necessary but insufficient. Prevention, and not only investigation, must become the priority.

A Global Pattern

South Africa is not alone. In several democracies, local elections have become the most dangerous point in the political cycle. The common thread is the fusion of local office, public money and organised crime.

Mexico

Mexico offers the closest parallel. Its general election of 2 June 2024, the largest in its history, was also among the most violent. The security consultancy Integralia counted 37 assassinated candidates during the 2024 electoral season, one more than in the 2021 midterm elections. The federal government reported a lower figure of 22 by late May. Integralia also recorded 828 attacks on candidates that did not result in death. According to Integralia, nine in ten murdered candidates were seeking municipal office. Its

researchers interpreted this as evidence that political violence is a tool of criminal intervention in elections. The parallel with the ANC is instructive. Data Cívica, a Mexican civil society group, found that more than a third of victims of political aggression belonged to the governing Morena party. Integralia, however, found that most murdered candidates opposed the local government in their areas. The lesson is that violence follows control of local territory rather than national labels. A party that dominates nationally may be the incumbent target in one municipality and the challenger in another. Mexico also shows the limits of protection. Before the 2024 vote, the Mexican navy reported that more than 3,400 members of the armed forces were protecting 553 candidates. Some candidates were nonetheless killed while under escort.

Brazil

Brazil illustrates the same link between municipal contests and violence. The organisations Justiça Global and Terra de Direitos recorded 558 cases of political violence in 2024, a municipal election year. These included 27 murders and 129 attacks. Their series shows 46 cases in the 2016 municipal year and 214 in 2020. The researchers state that violence rises in municipal election periods, driven mainly by local disputes. They also identify the involvement of organised crime, both in financing campaigns and in intimidating political actors.

Colombia

In Colombia, armed groups and criminal organisations shape local politics in many rural areas. Before the regional elections of 29 Octo-

ber 2023, the Electoral Observation Mission (MOE) recorded 179 acts of violence against candidates. These included 22 attacks and eight killings, most of them against candidates for municipal councils. This represented an increase of 37.7 per cent compared with 2019. The MOE linked the violence partly to the failure of the state to secure territories vacated by the FARC after the peace agreement. The parties most affected were those in the governing coalition of President Gustavo Petro. The MOE director stressed, however, that candidates across the political spectrum were targeted.

The Philippines

In the Philippines, village elections are the flashpoint. The election period for the 2023 barangay and youth council elections ran from 28 August to 29 November. During that period, the Philippine National Police reported 29 people killed in incidents linked to the polls. Most incidents occurred in the Bangsamoro region of Mindanao. As in South Africa, the violence concentrated at the most local tier of government.

What the comparison teaches

Three lessons emerge. First, local office is more dangerous than national office, because it controls tangible resources at close range. Second, the parties most affected are usually those holding the most local posts, whether or not they govern nationally. The ANC experience mirrors that of Morena in Mexico and of the governing coalition in Colombia. Third, violence flourishes where organised crime, weak investigation and patronage meet. The four countries differ in culture and history. The underlying economics are strikingly similar.

What Must Change

The policy agenda is not new. Much of it was set out by the Moerane Commission in 2018. The challenge is implementation. First, the PKTT should retain its authority, funding and political backing beyond the election period, and be shielded from interference. The GI-TOC makes this recommendation explicitly. Second, prosecutors must pursue those who order and finance killings, not only the gunmen. Without this, the market for murder remains profitable. Third, witness protection requires urgent attention. The GI-TOC records that eight people listed as witnesses have been killed in 2026. Fourth, political parties must treat violent candidate selection as a failure of public governance, not a private disciplinary matter. They should discipline members implicated in violence and report them to the police, as the Moerane Commission recommended. Fifth, procurement must be depoliticised. As long as a council seat offers a route to contracts, it will remain worth killing for. Professional municipal administration and firm enforcement of procurement law would lower the stakes of local office. Sixth, South Africa needs an official dataset that separates targeted killings from general murder statistics. Brazil and Mexico show the value of independent monitoring. Civil society, however, cannot replace the state.

Conclusion

The surge in political killings before the 2026 local elections is not a sudden eruption of hatred. It is the predictable result of a political economy in which local office offers income, patronage and contracts. That system also offers weak deterrence, a ready supply of hired guns and parties reluctant to police themselves. ANC members are dying in larger numbers than members of any other party. The reason lies less in hostility towards the governing party than in its scale, its internal contests and its weakening hold on contested territory. The experience of Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and the Philippines offers a warning. Where such violence becomes normal, it begins to decide who may stand for office and who may safely vote. The GI-TOC concludes that unchecked assassination will narrow democratic choice and allow criminal governance to decide who can safely hold power. South Africa still has institutions capable of resisting that outcome. The question before 4 November, and after it, is whether they will be allowed to work.

America

America's baby bust: U.S. birth rate hits record low as women choose later motherhood

New CDC data reveals a generational shift in reproductive choices, with younger women stepping back from parenthood while those in their 30s and 40s are having more babies than ever

By: Jane James
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Sarah Harris was 36 years old when she brought her daughter Bridget home for the first time. She describes the experience of late motherhood with the kind of candour that comes from living it: equal parts joy and exhaustion, wisdom gained and energy lost. "When you have a baby in your mid-30s, what you gain in wisdom and experience you also lose in terms of energy," she says, with a laugh that carries more than a little truth. Harris, who lives in the state of Vermont in the northeastern United States, was laid off from her job just four months after Bridget was born. She is still, by her own account, working out what her career and her life now look like with a child in the picture.

She also knows, with quiet certainty, that Bridget will be her only child. The cost of raising children in America today made that decision for her as much as anything else. "I think in another era, or another life, or another scenario, I might have had more children," she says. "I think we're in a difficult societal moment, and that is absolutely affecting people's reproductive choices."

Harris is not alone. She is, in fact, one face of a slow but unmistakable revolution reshaping what parenthood looks like in the United States — and the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirms just how far that revolution has advanced. The general fertility rate for American women fell by one per cent in 2025 to a new record low, extending a two-decade trend of declining births that has steadily and fundamentally altered the country's demographic landscape.

The sharpest declines were among the youngest women. Brady Hamilton, a demographer at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics and co-author of the report, described the six per cent drop in the birth rate for women aged 20 to 24 as particularly striking. Women in their late teens recorded an even steeper fall of seven per cent. These are not marginal statistical movements. They represent a generational withdrawal from parenthood that is now drawing serious atten-



America's baby bust: U.S. birth rate hits record low as women choose later motherhood



**U.S. BIRTH RATE
HITS RECORD LOW**
Fewer babies, a changing America.



**MORE EDUCATION
& CAREER GOALS**
Women are building brighter futures — on their own terms.



LATER MOTHERHOOD
More women are choosing to have children later in life.



A CHANGING SOCIETY
Smaller families, new priorities, different dreams.

Worth Noting:

- Harris is not alone. She is, in fact, one face of a slow but unmistakable revolution reshaping what parenthood looks like in the United States — and the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirms just how far that revolution has advanced. The general fertility rate for American women fell by one per cent in 2025 to a new record low, extending a two-decade trend of declining births that has steadily and fundamentally altered the country's demographic landscape.

- The sharpest declines were among the youngest women. Brady Hamilton, a demographer at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics and co-author of the report, described the six per cent drop in the birth rate for women aged 20 to 24 as particularly striking. Women in their late teens recorded an even steeper fall of seven per cent. These are not marginal statistical movements. They represent a generational withdrawal from parenthood that is now drawing serious attention from researchers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals alike.

tion from researchers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals alike.

A separate study released last month by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta added further texture to the picture. It found that women from Generation Z — broadly those in their late teens and twenties — are dramatically less likely to want children than women of previous generations at the same stage of life. The study identified several contributing factors: expanded labour market opportunities and greater personal agency among women, rising financial costs, shifting priorities, and growing concerns about maternal mortality. Taken together, these factors are producing a cohort of young women who are not simply postponing parenthood — many are reconsidering it altogether.

Dr. Tanise Branche, medical director of labour and delivery at Temple Health, a health research and training network based in Philadelphia, sees this shift clearly in her patients. More of her younger women patients, she says, are following a different life script from the one their mothers and grandmothers followed. "They're starting to focus not necessarily just on what they can bring to kids, but what's going to be best for

them," she says. It is a subtle but significant change in orientation — from obligation toward deliberate, self-directed choice.

Branche is herself part of the countervailing trend that the CDC data also captures. While birth rates among younger women are falling, women aged 30 to 45 are recording a small but statistically significant increase in pregnancies. Branche is currently pregnant with her fourth child. "I will be 43 with my last delivery, and I started this reproductive journey at 37," she says. "I see the net positive being that we have a choice." That word — choice — sits at the heart of what this demographic shift is really about. For many women, having children later is not a compromise. It is a considered decision made from a position of greater financial stability, professional grounding, and personal readiness. Anna Louie Sussman, author of a new book on parenting choices titled *Inconceivable*, is candid about the forces driving the trend. She points to a tension that many young Americans are living with daily: they want families, but cannot see a realistic path to affording them. "The fact that there are a lot of people who still say they want families, but don't feel like they're able

to have them, is a concern," she says. "Young people say, I can barely take care of myself — I can't imagine taking care of someone else." Sussman herself froze her eggs because of her own concerns about affordability and career timing, eventually having her child in her early 40s. "I do feel lucky that I'm a little further along professionally than I would have been in my 20s or even 30s," she says.

The experts are clear on what would make a difference. Many women, they argue, would choose to have more children if the structural conditions existed to support them — affordable housing, accessible childcare, and comprehensive health insurance. In their absence, the decision to delay or forgo parenthood is not simply a matter of changing values. It is a rational economic response to a system that has not kept pace with the realities of modern life.

The demographic consequences of these choices are already visible and accelerating. The population of Americans under 18 is falling steadily, having dropped by more than one million between 2010 and 2020, according to the US Census Bureau. The median age of the American population reached 39.4 years

in 2025 — a figure that, a generation ago, would have seemed remarkable. Several states, including Vermont, are already experiencing outright population decline. For Harris, that is not an abstraction. It is the elementary school down the road, and the quiet, persistent question of whether it will still be open in ten years' time. "I think about it a lot," she says, "because I live in a very small place where we're hoping to keep the doors of our elementary school open for as long as we can." America is growing older, having fewer children, and doing so later. The data makes that plain. What it does not yet answer is whether the country's institutions — its schools, its housing markets, its healthcare system, its workplace policies — will adapt quickly enough to meet the generation that is choosing to build families on its own terms, in its own time.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

LEADERSHIP AS A CALL TO PURPOSE

Transforming Communities
Through Visionary Leadership



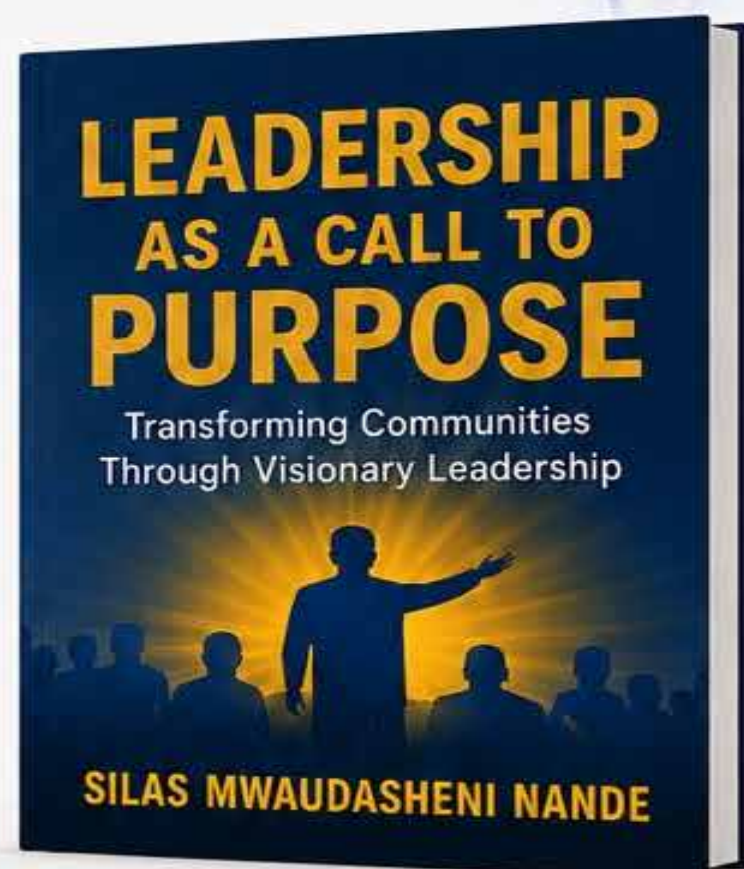
NOW AVAILABLE FOR
PRE-ORDERS!



AVAILABLE FROM
**END OF
AUGUST 2026**



PRICE
N\$350



VISION.



IMPACT.



LEGACY.



+264 81 260 3654



Nande Silas



Silas Nande

For All your Advertisement needs

Email: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

diasporaglobalnews@yahoo.com / diasporaglobalnews@gmail.com

FacebookK: <https://www.facebook.com/DiasporaGlobal>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DiasporaGlobal1>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/diaspora-global-1a15ab210/>

Instagram: @DiasporaGlobal1, TikTok: @DiasporaGlobal

YouTube: Diaspora Global

Diaspora

From job seekers to job creators: Africa needs a new bargain between universities, governments and business

Every graduation season, thousands of young Africans leave university with a certificate and one plan: to wait for a job. That waiting must end. Ending it requires universities that teach students to build enterprises, governments that clear the road for them, and a private sector that shares the load.



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themkenyatimes

The long wait after the gown

Graduation day in Africa is a day of ululation, photographs and pride. Families who sold cattle or borrowed money to pay fees finally see a son or daughter in a gown. Yet for many graduates, the celebration ends at the gate. What follows is a long wait. The routine is familiar across the continent. The graduate prints copies of a curriculum vitae. Applications go to ministries, regional councils, banks and mines. Weeks become months, and months become years. Meanwhile, the graduate sits at home, often in a village where few formal jobs exist or do not exist at all.

Over time, frustration turns into blame. The graduate blames the government that funded the studies through a loan or bursary, yet had no post to offer. Some ask what the point was of spending public money on training that leads nowhere. Governments, in turn, point to tight budgets and a public service already stretched beyond its means.

This article argues that both sides are asking an incomplete question. The question is not only who will give graduates jobs. It is also who will prepare graduates to create jobs, and who will make it possible for them to do so. The answer involves three actors: the university, the state and the private sector. Each has fallen short in part. Each can do far better.

The arithmetic of a youthful continent

The scale of the problem is not in dispute. In October 2025, World Bank Group President Ajay Banga addressed the Annual Meetings in Washington. He said that 1.2 billion young people will enter the global workforce within the next 10 to 15 years. Only about 400 million jobs, he estimated, will be available to them. He added that Africa will be home to one in four people on Earth by 2050.

The African Development Bank raised the same alarm a decade ago. It adopted its Jobs for Youth in Africa strategy in 2016. At the time, it noted that 10 to 12 million young Africans enter the workforce each year. Only about three million formal jobs were being cre-



**From job seekers to job creators:
Africa needs a new bargain between universities,
governments and business.**

ated annually. That gap has not closed.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) adds an important detail. Its 2024 regional brief covered youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2023, 21.9 per cent of young people there were not in employment, education or training. In Southern Africa, the share was 34 per cent, the highest of any subregion. The ILO also found that about 72 per cent of young adult workers in the region held insecure jobs.

Southern Africa shows the crisis in its sharpest form. Statistics South Africa reported that the official unemployment rate reached 33.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2026. Among people aged 15 to 34, unemployment rose to 47.4 per cent. Graduates fared better, at 12.4 per cent, but their rate also increased during that quarter.

Namibia, my own country, faces a similar picture. The Namibia Statistics Agency released its 2023 census labour force report in January 2025. It placed national unemployment at 36.9 per cent and youth unemployment at about 44 per cent. In Ohangwena Region, unemployment rose from 33.3 per cent in 2018 to 47.2 per cent in 2023.

These numbers carry a clear message. No African government can employ its way out of this crisis. The public service cannot absorb more

than a fraction of new entrants each year. Formal private employers are not growing fast enough either. If young people are to work, many will have to create work for themselves, and then for others.

The loan, the bursary and the blame

Public funding of higher education has opened university doors to millions of young Africans. That is a real achievement. It has also produced a quiet crisis of expectation and debt.

The Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) illustrates the problem. In October 2026, The Namibian reported on the latest audit of the Fund by the Auditor General. Former beneficiaries owe the Fund about N\$11.7 billion. The Fund recovered N\$21.5 million in the 2024/25 financial year, which is less than one per cent of the total owed. Expected credit losses on student loans were put at N\$5.34 billion.

Part of this failure is administrative. The same audit found that repayments of N\$20.3 million had not been credited to individual accounts. However, much of it reflects a simple reality. NSFAF rules allow repayment to be suspended while a graduate is unemployed or earns below the tax threshold. A graduate who never finds work never repays. Student organisations have

responded by calling for loans to be converted into grants. Their frustration is understandable. Yet the debate misses a deeper point. A loan system built on the assumption of formal employment will keep failing in an economy that does not produce enough formal jobs. A graduate who builds a viable business can repay. A graduate who waits cannot.

The blame placed on governments is therefore only partly fair. Governments did invest in training. What many did not do is ensure that the training prepared graduates for the economy that actually exists.

Universities built for a world of vacancies

Many African universities were shaped by the needs of the state after independence. New governments needed teachers, nurses, accountants, engineers and administrators. Universities supplied them, and the public service absorbed them. The unwritten contract was clear: study hard, graduate and receive a post.

That contract has quietly expired, but the curriculum has not fully adjusted. In many programmes, the assumed destination is still a salaried position. Students learn a discipline in depth. Far fewer learn how to identify a market need, test an idea, keep books, price a product, register a company,

raise capital or manage staff. ILO evidence confirms that the fit between education and work is poor. Its 2024 youth report examined low income and lower middle income countries. There, a tertiary qualification does not protect young adults from underutilisation as it does in richer economies. In those poorer economies, about two thirds of young adult workers hold qualifications that do not match their jobs well. Many are overqualified for the work they find.

Student attitudes reflect this conditioning. The Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students Survey (GUESSS) of 2023 gathered more than 226,000 responses from 1,300 universities in 57 countries. Globally, only 15.7 per cent of students intended to found a business immediately after graduation. Five years after graduation, the figure rose to 30 per cent. The survey also found that 58.8 per cent of students had never taken an entrepreneurship course. The pattern is telling. Many students regard enterprise as something for later, after a spell of employment. In an economy without enough employment, that later moment may never arrive. Universities therefore have a duty to bring it forward.

Worth Noting:

- The scale of the problem is not in dispute. In October 2025, World Bank Group President Ajay Banga addressed the Annual Meetings in Washington. He said that 1.2 billion young people will enter the global workforce within the next 10 to 15 years. Only about 400 million jobs, he estimated, will be available to them. He added that Africa will be home to one in four people on Earth by 2050.

- The African Development Bank raised the same alarm a decade ago. It adopted its Jobs for Youth in Africa strategy in 2016. At the time, it noted that 10 to 12 million young Africans enter the workforce each year. Only about three million formal jobs were being created annually. That gap has not closed.

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) adds an important detail. Its 2024 regional brief covered youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2023, 21.9 per cent of young people there were not in employment, education or training. In Southern Africa, the share was 34 per cent, the highest of any subregion. The ILO also found that about 72 per cent of young adult workers in the region held insecure jobs.

Diaspora

From job seekers to job creators: Africa needs a new bargain between universities, governments and business

Every graduation season, thousands of young Africans leave university with a certificate and one plan: to wait for a job. That waiting must end. Ending it requires universities that teach students to build enterprises, governments that clear the road for them, and a private sector that shares the load.

By: **Diaspora Times Team**
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Can a curriculum create entrepreneurs?

Sceptics will ask whether entrepreneurship can be taught at all. The evidence suggests that education makes a real difference, although it is no magic solution.

In 2022, Zhang and colleagues published a review in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. They combined the results of 36 earlier studies covering nearly 30,000 students. They found a clear positive link between entrepreneurship education and the intention to start a business. The strength of that link varied with national context.

The authors also noted an important limitation. Every study they reviewed measured students at a single point in time. Intention, moreover, is not the same as action. A student who wishes to start a business may never do so.

This caution matters for policy. It tells us that a single elective in business planning is not enough. What is needed is sustained, practical exposure across a programme of study, followed by real support after graduation. The curriculum must move from teaching about enterprise to teaching through enterprise.

African leaders are beginning to accept this. In February 2026, President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah presented a review of the Namibian youth employment programme to the African Peer Review Forum in Addis Ababa. Among its recommendations was reform of the education system, with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurial development. The task now is to turn that recommendation into concrete curriculum change.

What a job creation curriculum should look like

Six practical shifts would transform the outlook of African graduates.

First, entrepreneurship should run as a compulsory thread through every degree, not sit as an elective in the business faculty. An agriculture student should graduate with a costed plan for a poultry, horticulture or processing enterprise. A nursing student should



understand how a private clinic or home care service is financed. An education graduate should know how to run an early childhood centre or a tutoring service. A computing student should have built and tested a digital product with real users. Second, final year projects should include a venture option. Alongside the traditional dissertation, a student could submit a working business with customers, accounts and a reflective report. Assessment would reward evidence of market testing, not theory alone. Third, every university should host an incubator with real space, mentors and seed funding. Students should be able to register a company, open a business account and trade while still enrolled. Their ventures would then have two or three years of practice before graduation. Fourth, work placements should include small businesses, not only ministries and large corporations. A student who spends six months beside a small business owner learns cash flow, customer care and resilience in a way no lecture can teach.

Fifth, lecturers need support. Many academics have never run an enterprise. Universities should bring practising entrepreneurs into the classroom as part time lecturers and mentors. They should also reward staff who build strong links with industry. Sixth, the curriculum must speak to rural realities. The

ILO found that agriculture accounted for about 60 per cent of youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa in 2021. A curriculum that prepares graduates only for city offices ignores where many opportunities in production, processing and services actually lie.

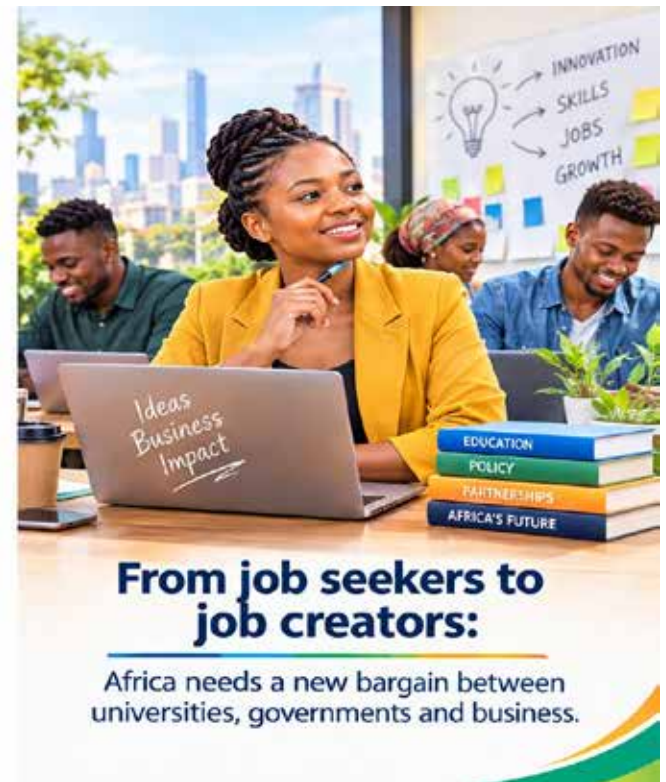
None of this means abandoning academic depth. A good engineer still needs mathematics, and a good teacher still needs pedagogy. The point is to add the capability to turn knowledge into enterprise. Graduates should leave able to seek a job, and able to create one when no job exists.

The other half of the problem: a blocked road

Changing the curriculum is necessary but not sufficient. Many young people already want to start businesses. Their complaint is that the road is blocked.

The barriers are well known. Banks demand collateral that young people do not have. Registration, licensing and tax compliance can be slow and costly. Municipal trading permits are hard to obtain. Public tenders often require years of experience and audited statements that a new firm cannot produce. Affordable workspace near markets is scarce.

International evidence supports these complaints. The World Bank launched its Business Ready (B-READY) report in 2024, covering 50 economies. It found that most economies, particularly developing ones, are not



business ready. On average, the economies assessed were only about two thirds ready in the quality of their regulations. They were only half ready in the public services that firms rely on. Only half allowed electronic signatures or electronic identification for online company registration. On average, a business waited 25 days for a decision on a loan application. For a young founder with one customer order and no savings, such delays can be fatal.

Collateral deserves special mention. President Nandi-Ndaitwah reported on the Namibian youth fund in February 2026. She described its removal of the collateral requirement as the end of a longstanding barrier for young entrepreneurs. That statement is significant. It confirms that the old rules of credit kept many young people out of business. South Africa offers a similar admission. The National Youth Development Agency responded to the latest labour data in August 2026. It listed barriers to entry for smaller firms among the deeper constraints on job creation. It also warned that youth programmes alone will not solve youth unemployment.

What governments must do

Governments cannot create every job, but they write the rules under which jobs are created. Five reforms would make a large difference.

First, simplify business entry for young people.

Company registration, tax numbers, social security registration and municipal permits should be completed online, in one place and within days. Young founders should pay reduced fees, or none, during their first years of trading.

Second, reform public procurement. Governments are among the largest buyers in most African economies. A fixed share of suitable contracts, such as school feeding, cleaning, maintenance and minor works, could be reserved for youth enterprises. Experience requirements for small contracts should be relaxed. Payment must be made on time, because late payment destroys small firms.

Third, finance must match the risk profile of young founders. Namibia has begun this journey. Its youth fund was launched in 2025 with N\$257 million for its first financial year. The money flows through the Development Bank of Namibia, AgriBank, NamPost and the Environmental Investment Fund. A guarantee facility from the Namibia Special Risks Insurance Association supports lending without collateral. By February 2026, the President reported that N\$62.3 million had reached 140 projects, creating about 722 jobs.

These early results are encouraging. They also reveal the scale of the challenge. Seven hundred jobs are wel-

Contd Page 20

Worth Noting:

- The Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) illustrates the problem. In October 2026, The Namibian reported on the latest audit of the Fund by the Auditor General. Former beneficiaries owe the Fund about N\$11.7 billion. The Fund recovered N\$21.5 million in the 2024/25 financial year, which is less than one per cent of the total owed. Expected credit losses on student loans were put at N\$5.34 billion.

- Part of this failure is administrative. The same audit found that repayments of N\$20.3 million had not been credited to individual accounts. However, much of it reflects a simple reality. NSFAF rules allow repayment to be suspended while a graduate is unemployed or earns below the tax threshold. A graduate who never finds work never repays.

- Student organisations have responded by calling for loans to be converted into grants. Their frustration is understandable. Yet the debate misses a deeper point. A loan system built on the assumption of formal employment will keep failing in an economy that does not produce enough formal jobs. A graduate who builds a viable business can repay. A graduate who waits cannot.

From job seekers to job creators: Africa needs a new bargain between universities, governments and business

Every graduation season, thousands of young Africans leave university with a certificate and one plan: to wait for a job. That waiting must end. Ending it requires universities that teach students to build enterprises, governments that clear the road for them, and a private sector that shares the load.

Contd from Page 19

xxxxxxxxxxxxx

.....

Worth Noting:

- Many African universities were shaped by the needs of the state after independence. New governments needed teachers, nurses, accountants, engineers and administrators. Universities supplied them, and the public service absorbed them. The unwritten contract was clear: study hard, graduate and receive a post.
- That contract has quietly expired, but the curriculum has not fully adjusted. In many programmes, the assumed destination is still a salaried position. Students learn a discipline in depth. Far fewer learn how to identify a market need, test an idea, keep books, price a product, register a company, raise capital or manage staff.
- ILO evidence confirms that the fit between education and work is poor. Its 2024 youth report examined low income and lower middle income countries. There, a tertiary qualification does not protect young adults from underutilisation as it does in richer economies. In those poorer economies, about two thirds of young adult workers hold qualifications that do not match their jobs well. Many are overqualified for the work they find.

come, yet Namibia counts its unemployed young people in the tens of thousands. Such funds must grow, disburse faster and track the survival of the businesses they support. Public reporting should show how many funded firms are still trading after two and five years. Without such data, no one can tell whether the money builds lasting enterprises or short projects. Mentorship must also continue after the loan is paid out, because most new firms fail in their first years.

Fourth, link student finance to enterprise. Loan rules could offer a defined grace period to graduates who register and operate a business. Part of a loan could even be converted into a grant when a graduate builds a firm that employs others. Such an approach would reward job creation rather than simply tolerate unemployment. Fifth, invest in the foundations. No business can grow without electricity, roads, internet access and water. In his 2025 address, Banga stressed that governments must first build this physical and human infrastructure. Rural graduates in particular need connectivity and transport if they are to reach markets.

The private sector: partner, not spectator

Banga also told the 2025 Annual Meetings that nearly 90 per cent of jobs ultimately come from the private sector. If that is so, business cannot stand aside and complain about the quality of graduates. It must help to shape them, finance them and absorb them.

South Africa offers an instructive model. The Youth Employment Service (YES) was launched in 2018 as a joint initiative of business, government and organised labour. Companies create or sponsor twelve month work experiences for unemployed young people. By the end of 2025, YES reported more than 209,000 work experiences created, with over 1,930 corporate partners. It also reported that 15 per cent of its participants were engaged in entrepreneurial activity. About 45 per cent of its alumni were in employment. These figures come from the programme itself and deserve independent evaluation. Even so, they show what organised business can achieve when it



treats youth unemployment as its own problem.

The model works because incentives are aligned. Participating firms gain recognition under the national empowerment framework against which they already report. Young people gain paid experience, skills and networks. Government provides the policy framework without carrying the full cost.

Namibia already has a legal foundation for deeper collaboration. The Public Private Partnership Act of 2017 established a dedicated committee and a directorate within the Ministry of Finance to manage such projects. The Act was designed mainly with infrastructure and public services in mind. Its discipline of shared risk, clear contracts and transparent approval could also serve youth enterprise. In practice, four forms of co-operation stand out.

The first is supplier development. Large firms in mining, energy, retail and logistics can commit to buying a share of goods and services from youth enterprises. They can also mentor those suppliers on quality and delivery. This is a market relationship, not charity. The second is jointly funded incubators. Government can provide land, buildings and tax incentives. Universities can provide students, research and staff. Companies can provide mentors, equipment and first contracts. Each partner contributes what it does best.

The third is blended finance. Public guarantees can reduce the risk to commercial banks that lend to young founders. Development finance can absorb the first loss, so that private capital

follows. The Namibian guarantee facility is an early example of this approach.

The fourth is curriculum partnership. Industry councils should sit with university senates to review programmes regularly. Employers know which skills are scarce. Entrepreneurs know which markets are underserved. Their insight belongs inside the lecture hall.

The graduate also has a part to play

A fair analysis must also speak to graduates themselves. Policy can open doors, but someone must walk through them. Many young people have more room to act than the culture of waiting suggests.

A graduate in agriculture can begin with a small vegetable garden, sell to the local school and clinic, and grow from there. A graduate in education can offer weekend lessons to learners preparing for examinations. A graduate in accounting can keep books for the many small shops and taverns in rural towns that have never had proper records. A graduate in information technology can repair phones, build simple websites for local businesses or train villagers in digital skills.

None of these ventures will make a graduate rich in the first year. Each, however, builds a record of trading, a set of customers and a reputation. Those are exactly the assets that lenders, partners and public funds look for. A graduate who has kept accounts for two years has something to show when the youth fund or the bank asks for evidence.

Graduates can also work together. A cooperative of



five graduates with different skills can do what no single person can. One produces, another markets, a third keeps the accounts. Pooled savings and shared equipment reduce the risk that each would carry alone. This is not a call to blame the young for structural failures. It is a call to combine structural reform with personal initiative. Waiting for a letter of appointment is a strategy that the numbers no longer support.

A necessary caution

Not every graduate will, or should, become an entrepreneur. Many new businesses fail. Some young people start enterprises only because they have no alternative. The ILO warns that insecure and informal work remains the norm for young Africans. Encouraging every graduate to sell airtime on a street corner is not a development strategy. The goal, therefore, is not to replace employment with enterprise. It is to produce graduates who can do both. Some will build firms that employ dozens of people. Others will join those firms. Still others will serve in government and large companies. All of them will be stronger if they understand how value is created.

There is also a risk of shifting blame onto the young. A curriculum cannot fix weak growth, unreliable power or corruption. The South African youth agency made this point plainly: skills must be matched by demand. Universities, governments and businesses must therefore move together. Reform in one sector alone will disappoint.

Conclusion: from waiting to building

The image of the graduate waiting at home must not become the permanent face of African youth. It wastes talent, public money and hope. It also breeds a resentment that can turn into instability.

The way forward requires a new bargain. Universities must condition students, from their first year, to see themselves as creators of value and not only as applicants for vacancies. Governments must clear the road through simpler rules, fairer procurement and finance that does not demand what young people cannot provide. The private sector must become a full partner by opening its supply chains, sharing its expertise and investing alongside the state. Addressing the African Peer Review Forum in February 2026, President Nandi-Ndaitwah urged fellow leaders not to fail the young people of the continent. That appeal deserves an answer from every lecture hall, every ministry and every boardroom. The next generation of African graduates should leave university not with a list of employers to visit, but with a plan to build.

Silas Mwaudasheni Nande is an educationist and analytical writer based in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia. He is a school principal and a doctoral candidate in Education at the International University of Management (IUM), Windhoek. He writes on African governance, education and public policy.

Education is the key to success

The statement “Education is the key to success” reflects the close relationship between knowledge and achievement. Education opens doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain inaccessible



By: Sayfiddinova Ziyoda
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Education is one of the most powerful tools for transforming human life and building a successful future. Since ancient times, knowledge has been regarded as a valuable treasure that enables individuals to understand the world, overcome difficulties, and contribute to the development of society. In the modern era, education has become even more important because the world is changing rapidly under the influence of scientific discoveries, technological innovations, globalization, and digital communication. In such circumstances, people need not only basic knowledge but also the ability to learn continuously, think critically, and adapt to new situations. The statement “Education is the key to success” reflects the close relationship between knowledge and achievement. Education opens doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain inaccessible. It helps people discover their abilities, develop their talents, and establish clear goals for their personal and professional lives. Through education, individuals gain the intellectual tools necessary to make informed decisions, solve problems, and understand different perspectives. Education should not be understood merely as the process of memorizing facts or obtaining certificates and diplomas. It is a comprehensive process that shapes a person’s character, develops moral values, strengthens communication skills, and encourages independent thinking. A well-educated person is not simply someone who possesses a great deal of information but also someone who can apply knowledge responsibly and effectively in real-life situations. Furthermore, education is essential for the progress of nations. Countries that invest in the intellectual development of their citizens create stronger foundations for economic prosperity, scientific advancement, social stability, and cultural enrichment. Educated individuals can contribute to innovation, improve public services, and help solve important social challenges. Therefore, education is both a personal necessity and a fundamental condition for sustainable social development. The purpose of this article is to examine the importance of education in achieving personal success, developing professional skills, learning foreign languages, strengthening moral values, and contributing to

the advancement of society.

Main Part

1. The Role of Education in Personal Development

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping an individual’s personality and worldview. From the earliest years of childhood, people begin to acquire knowledge through their families, schools, social environments, and personal experiences. Formal education provides a structured environment in which students learn essential subjects, develop intellectual abilities, and discover their interests.

One of the most important benefits of education is the development of critical thinking. Students learn to analyze information, compare different ideas, identify relationships between facts, and draw logical conclusions. These skills are particularly important in a world where people encounter enormous amounts of information every day. The ability to distinguish reliable information from misleading claims enables individuals to make better decisions and become more responsible citizens.

Education also encourages creativity and independent thinking. When students are given opportunities to ask questions, express their opinions, conduct research, and explore alternative solutions, they become more confident in their abilities. Creative thinking allows them to approach familiar problems from new perspectives and develop innovative ideas.

Another significant aspect of personal development is self-confidence. Knowledge gives people the confidence to express their thoughts, participate in discussions, and pursue their ambitions. Students who understand their strengths and recognize areas for improvement are better prepared to overcome difficulties and continue working toward their goals.

Moreover, education teaches individuals to become independent and responsible. Completing assignments, preparing for examinations, participating in research, and managing academic responsibilities help students develop discipline and time-management skills. These qualities are valuable throughout life because success often depends on consistent effort rather than temporary motivation.

Thus, education contributes not only to intellectual development but also to emotional maturity, personal responsibility, and the ability to lead a purposeful life.

2. Education as the Foundation of Professional Success

In the contemporary world, professional success is closely connected with knowledge, qualifications, practical experience, and the willingness to learn. Almost every field requires individuals to possess spe-



Students in school

cialized skills and remain informed about new developments. As technology advances and professional requirements change, education becomes a lifelong necessity.

For example, medical professionals must continuously update their knowledge to provide effective treatment. Engineers need to understand new technologies and modern production methods. Teachers must develop effective teaching strategies and adapt their lessons to students’ needs. Similarly, specialists in economics, information technology, agriculture, and other fields must regularly improve their professional competence.

Universities play a particularly important role in preparing young people for their future careers. They provide students with theoretical knowledge, research opportunities, practical experience, and opportunities to communicate with professionals. Higher education also encourages students to examine complex problems, evaluate evidence, and develop solutions based on scientific reasoning.

However, professional success does not depend exclusively on academic qualifications. Employers and organizations also value communication, teamwork, leadership, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. Education can help develop these competencies when students actively participate in group projects, presentations, discussions, internships, and research activities.

It is equally important to understand that learning does not end after graduation. The concept of lifelong learning emphasizes the need to acquire new knowledge and skills throughout one’s professional career. Online courses, professional

seminars, educational conferences, books, and research publications provide opportunities for continuous development.

People who remain open to learning are generally better prepared to respond to professional challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities. Consequently, education should be viewed not as a temporary stage of life but as an ongoing investment in personal and professional growth.

3. The Importance of Foreign Language Learning

Foreign language learning has become an essential component of modern education. As countries become increasingly interconnected, the ability to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries offers significant academic, professional, and personal advantages.

English, in particular, is widely used in international communication, scientific research, business, tourism, and digital technology. A substantial amount of educational material, academic literature, and online information is available in English. Therefore, learning English enables students to access a broader range of resources and become familiar with developments taking place around the world.

Knowledge of Russian and other foreign languages can also create valuable opportunities. Languages allow individuals to communicate with people from different countries, participate in international educational programs, and explore diverse literary and cultural traditions. For students specializing in philology and language teaching, foreign language proficiency is es-

pecially important because it forms the foundation of their future professional activities.

Language learning also develops cognitive abilities. Students must understand grammar, expand their vocabulary, recognize different sentence structures, and communicate ideas clearly. These activities can strengthen memory, attention, analytical thinking, and the ability to understand different ways of expressing meaning.

In addition, learning a foreign language encourages cultural awareness and tolerance. Every language reflects the history, traditions, values, and experiences of the people who speak it. By studying another language, learners gain opportunities to understand different cultural perspectives and communicate respectfully with people whose backgrounds differ from their own.

Nevertheless, language acquisition requires patience and consistent practice. Memorizing vocabulary and studying grammar are important, but they should be combined with reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Students can improve their proficiency by reading books, watching educational programs, listening to podcasts, writing short texts, and participating in conversations.

Setting realistic goals is another effective strategy. For example, a learner may aim to master a certain number of new words each week, read one article every day, or practice speaking regularly. Small achievements gradually lead to significant progress.

Education is the key to success

The statement “Education is the key to success” reflects the close relationship between knowledge and achievement. Education opens doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain inaccessible

Contd from Page 21
xxxxxxxxxxxxx
.....

Therefore, foreign language learning is more than an academic requirement. It is a means of expanding intellectual horizons, building international connections, and increasing future opportunities.

4. The Role of Teachers and Educational Institutions

Teachers are among the most influential figures in the educational process. Their responsibilities extend beyond explaining academic subjects. They inspire curiosity, encourage students to think independently, guide them through difficulties, and help them recognize their potential. An effective teacher understands that students have different interests, abilities, learning styles, and levels of preparation. For this reason, teaching should not rely exclusively on memorization or traditional lectures. Discussions, collaborative projects, practical exercises, educational games, presentations, and research activities can make learning more engaging and meaningful. Modern educational methods encourage students to become active participants rather than passive recipients of information. When learners are encouraged to ask questions, express their opinions, and solve problems independently, they develop a stronger sense of responsibility for their education. Educational institutions also have an important responsibility to create supportive learning environments. Well-equipped classrooms, accessible libraries, digital learning resources, laboratories, and extracurricular activities can help students develop their abilities. Equally important is the establishment of a respectful atmosphere in which students feel comfortable expressing their ideas and learning from their mistakes. The relationship between teachers, students, and parents is another important factor. Cooperation among these groups can strengthen motivation, improve learning habits, and help students overcome academic challenges. Parents can support education by encouraging reading, discussing school experiences, and demonstrating the importance of perseverance. In addition, teachers themselves must continue learning. By attending professional development courses, studying innovative teaching methods, and exchanging experiences with colleagues, educators can improve the quality of their lessons and respond effectively to changing educational needs. Ultimately, successful education requires cooperation between individuals, families, schools, universities,



Students in class

and society as a whole.

5. Education and Technological Development

Technology has significantly transformed the way people learn and share information. Digital platforms, online libraries, virtual classrooms, educational applications, and interactive learning resources have made knowledge more accessible to people in different parts of the world. Students can now attend online lectures, access international publications, communicate with teachers remotely, and participate in educational programs without always being physically present in a classroom. These opportunities are especially valuable for learners who wish to study subjects that are not widely available in their local educational institutions. Digital tools can also make learning more flexible and personalized. Students may review recorded lessons, complete interactive exercises, and study at a pace that suits their individual needs. Teachers can use presentations, educational videos, and online assessments to explain difficult concepts and evaluate students' progress. However, technological development also creates challenges. Excessive use of social media, digital distractions, unreliable online information, and unequal access to technology may negatively affect the learning process. Students therefore need digital literacy, which includes the ability to evaluate online sources, protect personal information, use digital tools responsibly, and

distinguish trustworthy information from misleading content. Technology should support education rather than replace the human elements of teaching and learning. Teachers provide guidance, encouragement, feedback, and personal interaction that remain essential to students' development. When used thoughtfully, technology can improve educational opportunities and help learners prepare for a world in which digital competence is increasingly important.

6. The Connection Between Education and Moral Values

True education involves more than academic achievement. It also contributes to the development of moral values, social responsibility, and respect for others. Knowledge becomes especially valuable when it is used ethically and for the benefit of individuals and society. Educational environments provide opportunities for students to learn honesty, fairness, cooperation, patience, and mutual respect. For example, completing assignments independently teaches academic integrity, while group projects encourage cooperation and responsibility. Classroom discussions can help students understand different opinions and express disagreement respectfully. Education also helps individuals develop a stronger awareness of social issues. By studying history, literature, philosophy, science, and social sciences, students can better understand human experiences, cultural diversity, and the consequences of individual and collective decisions.

Literature has a particularly important role in moral development. Through stories, novels, poems, and plays, readers encounter different characters, emotions, conflicts, and life experiences. Literary works can encourage empathy, strengthen imagination, and help young people reflect on questions of justice, friendship, responsibility, and human dignity. Respect for cultural heritage and national identity is another important aspect of education. Learning about a nation's history, language, literature, and traditions helps young people understand their roots while developing respect for other cultures. A balanced education enables individuals to value their own heritage and participate confidently in international communication. Thus, education should aim to develop not only knowledgeable individuals but also thoughtful, ethical, and socially responsible members of society.

7. The Contribution of Education to National Development

The development of a country depends significantly on the knowledge, skills, and creativity of its people. Educated citizens contribute to economic productivity, scientific research, technological innovation, cultural development, and the improvement of public services. When young people receive quality education, they gain the ability to participate more effectively in economic and social life. They can establish businesses, develop new technologies, improve agricultural practices, conduct scientific re-

search, and contribute to the development of their communities. Education is also closely connected with social mobility. Access to learning opportunities can help individuals develop their abilities and pursue careers that might otherwise be difficult to attain. In this way, education can contribute to reducing barriers to opportunity and enabling people from different backgrounds to participate in society. For Uzbekistan, the education of young people is particularly important for preparing future teachers, researchers, doctors, engineers, entrepreneurs, and other qualified specialists. Young people who combine professional knowledge with creativity, responsibility, and foreign language proficiency can build connections with international academic communities and contribute to national progress. However, the benefits of education depend on its quality and accessibility. Educational opportunities should be available to learners regardless of their geographical location, economic circumstances, or personal background. Improving teaching quality, supporting educators, developing libraries, and expanding access to modern learning resources can help create a stronger educational system. Investment in education should therefore be regarded as an investment in the future of a nation. Knowledgeable and skilled citizens are essential for sustainable development and for addressing the chal-

Education is the key to success

The statement “Education is the key to success” reflects the close relationship between knowledge and achievement. Education opens doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain inaccessible

Contd from Page 22
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

lenges of an increasingly complex world.

8. Challenges in the Pursuit of Educational Success

Although education offers numerous opportunities, students may encounter various challenges during their learning journeys. These may include financial difficulties, limited educational resources, language barriers, lack of motivation, time-management problems, and fear of failure.

One common challenge is the belief that academic difficulties indicate a lack of ability. In reality, learning often involves mistakes, uncertainty, and repeated effort. Students may not understand every concept immediately, but persistence and appropriate learning strategies can help them improve.

Time management is another important factor. Students frequently need to balance academic assignments, examinations, personal responsibilities, and extracurricular activities. Creating a realistic study schedule, dividing large tasks into smaller steps, and setting priorities can make the learning process more manageable.

Motivation may also fluctuate. At times, learners may feel tired or discouraged, especially when progress seems slow. In such situations, remembering long-term goals, celebrating small achievements, and seeking guidance from teachers or classmates can help them continue.

A positive attitude toward mistakes is equally essential. Instead of viewing errors as evidence of failure, students should treat them as opportunities to identify weaknesses and improve their understanding. Constructive feedback can guide learners toward better strategies and stronger results.

Furthermore, educational success should not be measured solely by grades, awards, or certificates. These achievements can be meaningful, but genuine learning also involves curiosity, independent thinking, practical competence, and the ability to apply knowledge in everyday life.

By developing discipline, resilience, and a willingness to seek help when necessary, students can overcome many obstacles and make steady progress toward their goals.

9. Practical Ways to Achieve Educational Success

Achieving success through education requires a clear purpose and consistent effort. Students can improve their learning outcomes by developing effective habits and tak-



Students in class

ing an active role in their education. First, learners should establish clear and realistic goals. A goal such as improving English proficiency, mastering a particular subject, or preparing for a university examination provides direction and helps students measure their progress.

Second, regular study habits are essential. Studying for a manageable period each day is often more effective than attempting to learn everything shortly before an examination. Repetition, revision, note-taking, and practice help strengthen understanding and memory.

Third, students should develop a habit of reading. Books, scientific articles, newspapers, and educational publications expose learners to new ideas, improve vocabulary, and strengthen analytical abilities. Reading in foreign languages can provide additional linguistic and cultural benefits.

Fourth, asking questions is an important part of learning. Students should not hesitate to seek clarification when they encounter unfamiliar concepts. Discussions with teachers and classmates can reveal new perspectives and deepen understanding.

Fifth, learners should combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Experiments, presentations, research projects, volunteer activities, internships, and creative assignments enable students to apply what they have learned in meaningful contexts.

Finally, students should maintain a

balance between academic responsibilities, rest, physical activity, and personal interests. Effective learning requires concentration and regular effort, but it also benefits from adequate rest and a healthy daily routine.

These habits can help learners become more independent, confident, and prepared to pursue their ambitions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, education is one of the most important foundations of personal achievement and social progress. It provides individuals with knowledge, develops critical and creative thinking, strengthens communication skills, and prepares them for professional responsibilities. Through education, people can discover their abilities, overcome challenges, and create opportunities for themselves and others.

The importance of education extends far beyond schools and universities. It influences the way people think, communicate, make decisions, understand different cultures, and participate in society. Quality education also promotes moral responsibility, mutual respect, and a deeper understanding of the world.

In the modern era, foreign language proficiency, digital literacy, practical skills, and lifelong learning have become increasingly important. Students must therefore remain curious, adaptable, and willing to im-

prove their knowledge throughout their lives. Teachers, families, educational institutions, and governments all have significant roles in creating conditions that support learning and academic development.

Nevertheless, education alone does not automatically guarantee success. Knowledge must be accompanied by hard work, perseverance, integrity, and the determination to achieve meaningful goals. Individuals who use their education wisely and continue developing their abilities are better prepared to face difficulties and contribute positively to society. Young people, in particular, should recognize that the knowledge they acquire today can shape their opportunities tomorrow. Every lesson learned, every book read, and every skill developed can become a valuable step toward a brighter future. Ultimately, education is not simply a means of obtaining a diploma or finding a profession. It is a lifelong journey of discovery, personal growth, and contribution to humanity. When individuals and societies recognize the true value of learning, they create the conditions for innovation, prosperity, and a more promising future. For these reasons, the statement “Education is the key to success” remains highly relevant in the modern world.

About the Author

Sayfiddinova Ziyoda was born on December 25, 2008, in To'raqo'rg'on District, Namangan Region, Uz-

bekistan. In 2026, she successfully graduated from Secondary School No. 3 in To'raqo'rg'on District. She is currently a first-year student at Is'hoqxon Ibrat Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages, specializing in Philology and Language Teaching (Russian).

Ziyoda has a strong interest in foreign language learning and academic development. She holds an IELTS certificate with an overall score of 6.5 in English, a B+ level certificate in Russian, and a C+ level certificate in History. These achievements reflect her commitment to learning, determination, and desire to broaden her academic knowledge.

Her academic interests include philology, Russian language and literature, foreign language acquisition, and language teaching methodology. She is committed to improving her linguistic competence, expanding her intellectual horizons, and developing the professional skills necessary for a successful career in education.

Her long-term goal is to achieve high academic results, gain a deeper understanding of foreign languages, strengthen her research abilities, and become a qualified specialist in philology. Through continuous learning and professional development, she hopes to contribute to educational progress and make a positive contribution to society.

Who defines Africa's destiny? The western lens, African compliance and the struggle for intellectual sovereignty

"A continent does not lose its way merely because others misunderstand its history; it loses its direction when its own leaders begin to mistake another civilisation's prescriptions for the only possible blueprint of its future."



By: Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx



For generations, Africa's development has been discussed, diagnosed and prescribed through intellectual frameworks largely shaped beyond its borders. From university lecture halls to international financial institutions, the continent has frequently been portrayed as a society struggling to escape tradition, overcome institutional weakness and resolve the structural disadvantages of its relationship with the global economy. Yet a fundamental question remains: are these interpretations adequate explanations of Africa's predicament, or has the continent gradually accepted the conclusions of those who historically possessed the power to define it?

The answer demands neither an indiscriminate rejection of Western scholarship nor an uncritical celebration of African exceptionalism. Rather, it requires a serious examination of how knowledge, history, economic power and political authority interact to shape the development choices available to African societies. The problem is not that Western theories have nothing to teach Africa. It is that partial explanations become dangerous when presented as universal truths, and borrowed prescriptions become liabilities when they replace independent judgment.

Modernization theory, influential during the decades surrounding African independence, offered one of the earliest systematic explanations of the continent's development challenges. Associated with scholars such as Walt Whitman Rostow, it envisioned societies progressing from traditional economic arrangements towards industrialization, urbanization, technological advancement and mass consumption. Western Europe and North America consequently became reference points against which other societies were measured. Traditional institutions and cultural practices were frequently presented as impediments to progress, while Western capitalism and social organization appeared to represent development's natural destination.

The contradiction was profound. Africa possessed established com-

mercial networks, sophisticated systems of governance, agricultural knowledge, metallurgy and intellectual traditions long before European colonial expansion. The scholarship of Timbuktu, the commercial sophistication of the Swahili coast and the political organization of historical African kingdoms demonstrate that the continent's history cannot be reduced to stagnation awaiting Western intervention. African societies experienced their own transformations, achievements and failures. Their development pathways, however, were neither identical to Europe's nor necessarily destined to reproduce them.

More importantly, modernization theory often underestimated colonialism's disruptive consequences. Colonial economies were structured substantially around resource extraction, labour control and the export of primary commodities. Political and administrative institutions frequently prioritized imperial interests over inclusive development. To explain contemporary African weaknesses without adequately accounting for these historical interventions risks treating the consequences of an unequal encounter as evidence of an inherent African deficiency.

Yet the institutional approach introduces an equally important corrective. No historical explanation can permanently excuse contemporary political failure. Competent leadership, professional administration, credible elections, independent oversight and the responsible management of public resources remain indispensable to development. Across Africa, corruption, patronage, weak enforcement and political interference have undermined public confidence and diverted resources from essential services. These failures cannot all be attributed to colonialism or external economic structures.

Kenya illustrates the distance be-

tween constitutional aspiration and lived experience. Its constitutional framework recognizes popular sovereignty, devolution, public participation, human rights and accountability. Nevertheless, the existence of these guarantees does not automatically ensure equitable access to healthcare, employment, public procurement or responsive administration. The decisive question is whether institutions translate legal promises into tangible improvements in citizens' lives. African leadership must therefore be judged not by the sophistication of its policies but by their measurable consequences.

Dependency theory, which gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s, challenged the assumption that Africa's poverty arose principally from internal cultural and institutional deficiencies. Scholars including Walter Rodney, Samir Amin and André Gunder Frank argued that colonial extraction and unequal incorporation into global capitalism had helped reproduce economic vulnerability. Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* remains an influential challenge to the idea that European expansion simply delivered progress to a passive continent. Contemporary economic realities lend weight to aspects of this argument. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in its 2024 Economic Development in Africa Report, highlighted commodity dependence, infrastructure deficiencies and exposure to external shocks as significant constraints on African trade and development. Economies that export unprocessed minerals or agricultural commodities while importing expensive manufactured products often struggle to retain sufficient value to finance industrialization, create quality employment and build domestic technological capacity.

However, dependency theory is not a complete explanation either. Inter-

national capitalism does not produce identical outcomes everywhere, and external exploitation cannot explain every failed project, mismanaged public fund or unproductive investment. African governments possess agency. They negotiate agreements, determine spending priorities and establish the rules governing domestic economic activity. Some have leveraged international trade and investment to expand productive capacity; others have failed to convert natural-resource wealth into broad-based prosperity. The challenge is to understand external constraints and internal decisions as interconnected forces rather than mutually exclusive explanations.

The deeper contemporary concern is intellectual sovereignty. Political independence has not automatically delivered economic autonomy or the confidence to formulate development strategies independently. International lenders, investors, rating agencies and development institutions influence the choices available to African governments. Their expertise and financial resources can be valuable, but policies built around aggregate economic indicators may overlook informal livelihoods, social inequalities and the consequences of reducing essential public services. The danger emerges when external approval becomes a substitute for domestic legitimacy and locally grounded evidence.

African leaders sometimes reinforce this dependence by adopting fashionable policy models without adequately testing their suitability, commissioning strategies they never implement or treating international endorsement as proof of competence. They may condemn external interference while failing to strengthen regional trade, fund research or confront corruption. Intellectual dependence, therefore, is not imposed exclusively from outside; it can also be sustained by domestic political choices.

There are, nevertheless, signs of an alternative trajectory. The African Union's Agenda 2063 articulates a vision of continental integration, prosperity and greater African ownership of development priorities. The African Continental Free Trade Area offers an opportunity to strengthen regional markets, encourage value addition and reduce excessive dependence on external trading relationships. These initiatives acknowledge that Africa's collective bargaining power, productive capacity and political influence can be strengthened through cooperation rather than fragmented national strategies.

But declarations alone cannot deliver transformation. African countries must invest in research, industrialization, education, technological innovation and accountable institutions. Indigenous knowledge should be assessed seriously rather than dismissed automatically, just as inherited practices that perpetuate discrimination must be challenged. International partnerships should be welcomed where they advance African priorities, negotiated transparently and evaluated against demonstrable public benefit.

Ultimately, the question is not whether the West is right or wrong about Africa in every respect. Modernization theory identifies the importance of technological advancement; institutionalism illuminates the consequences of leadership and governance; dependency theory exposes inequalities in global economic relationships. Each contributes valuable insights, but none adequately explains the continent in isolation.

Africa's future depends on its ability to combine these insights into an independent, evidence-driven development philosophy rooted in its historical experience, contemporary realities and collective aspirations. Sovereignty must mean more than political independence or rhetorical defiance. It must encompass the capacity to negotiate equitable partnerships, finance development priorities, protect citizens and hold leaders accountable.

"Africa will not secure its future by rejecting every lesson from the world, nor by accepting every prescription offered to it. Its destiny will be determined by the courage to question inherited assumptions, the wisdom to choose what works, and the resolve to build a continent in which knowledge serves its people rather than dictates their possibilities."