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Britain and Oman

The UK-Oman partnership is rooted in historical friendship, sustained through resilience, and renewed through innovation:



Britain and Oman renew historic friendship with Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq's state visit

By: Shamlal Puri
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& Senior Editor – UK
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The centuries-old ties between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Kingdom received a major boost last week, when the Sultan of Oman, His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq, visited Britain as the guest of King Charles III.

Over generations, sailors, soldiers, scientists, students, diplomats, and communities have built friendship between the two countries, creating deep generational trust between their peoples.



In honour of His Majesty the Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, a banquet was hosted at the Guildhall of the Lord Mayor of the City of London.

Contd Page 10

Sifuna launches Linda Mwananchi Party P 4

Motivation Page 8
Modern methods of supporting socially vulnerable families

News Backpage
French protests spread nationwide as tear gas and Halloween costumes fill the streets



Climate Change Threatens Food Security In Adamawa As 94.8% Of Farmers Report Crop Yield Changes - Dr Tari

By Munyal Manunyi

A new study has found that 94.8 per cent of farmers surveyed in three local government areas of Adamawa State reported declining crop yields over the past decade, raising concerns about food security and

farmers' livelihoods amid changing climatic conditions. The research identified changing rainfall patterns, drought, flooding, pests and crop diseases among the challenges affecting agricultural production in the state.

Dr Vahyala Adamu Tari, a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the Nigeria Police Academy, Wudil, Kano State, who led the study, said that his findings highlighted the need for greater investment in irrigation and climate-resilient agricultural practices.

The study, titled Climate Change and

Food Insecurity: Implications for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Adamawa State, North-East Nigeria, examined

Contd Page 14

Ghost students, real money:
How Kenyan nationals became entangled in America's \$130 million student aid fraud investigation

America



Page 12

Mandela's most magnanimous act:
Inviting the man who sent him to prison to lunch

South Africa



Page 16

Netanyahu loses his majority:
Israel's election throws the Middle East into fresh uncertainty

Asia



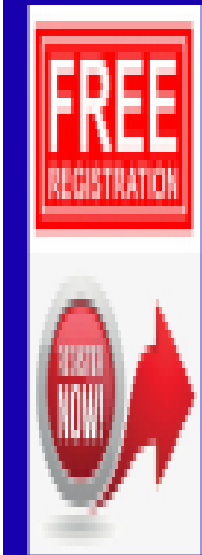
Page 18

When a Name Becomes More Than a Game:
Beyond the Legend: Ronaldo, the Making of a Global Icon

Sport

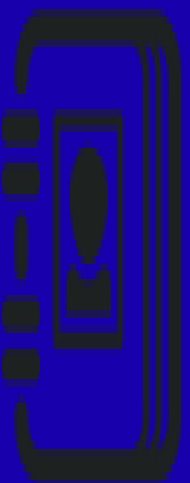


Page 20



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US approves \$2.1 billion Patriot missile sale to Ukraine, but Zelenskyy warns delivery could take years

Washington has greenlit the largest single missile sale to Kyiv since the war began, yet Ukraine's president says his country needs the weapons now — not in years

By: Jakes Mudane

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Worth Noting:

- Zelenskyy welcomed the decision and publicly thanked President Donald Trump for the approval. But within hours of the announcement, the Ukrainian president made clear that gratitude alone could not bridge the gap between a signed agreement and missiles in the sky over Ukrainian cities.
- Speaking on Friday evening, he issued a direct appeal to Washington and its European partners. "We are asking our American partners to find a solution for the time when there is a real danger," he said. "We are asking for decisions that can guarantee the protection of lives not the day after tomorrow or sometime later, but at the very moment the threat is there."

Ukraine's air defence crisis took centre stage on Friday when the United States State Department approved the sale of 500 Patriot missile defence systems to Kyiv at a total cost of \$2.1 billion — a significant commitment on paper, but one that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy immediately tempered with a stark warning: the munitions could take years to actually arrive, and Ukraine's cities are under fire today.

The State Department confirmed the approval in a formal statement, emphasising that no American taxpayer funds are involved in the transaction. The purchase will instead be financed through donations from Canada and European allies, including Germany and Norway. Principal contractor Lockheed Martin will manufacture the systems, and Washington said the deal would have "no adverse impact" on US defence readiness. The department framed the sale in strategic terms, stating it would "support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a partner country that is a force for political and economic stability in Europe."

Zelenskyy welcomed the decision and publicly thanked President Donald Trump for the approval. But within hours of the announcement, the Ukrainian president made clear that gratitude alone could not bridge the gap between a signed agreement and missiles in the sky over Ukrainian cities. Speaking on Friday evening, he issued a direct appeal to Washington and its European partners. "We are asking our American partners to



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy

find a solution for the time when there is a real danger," he said. "We are asking for decisions that can guarantee the protection of lives not the day after tomorrow or sometime later, but at the very moment the threat is there."

The urgency behind those words is not abstract. In a post on X, Zelenskyy disclosed that Russia had struck Ukraine's energy infrastructure more than 30 times in the preceding two weeks alone, targeting what he described as "the systems that sustain life in our cities and communities." With winter approaching and power grids already strained by years of sustained bombardment, the timing of any missile delivery is not a bureaucratic footnote — it is a matter of survival for millions of

Ukrainian civilians.

Zelenskyy's proposed solution was as practical as it was pointed: he called on the United States and European allies to transfer Patriot systems from their own existing stockpiles to Ukraine immediately, and then use the 500 newly purchased missiles to replenish those inventories over the coming years. It is an argument Ukraine has made before, and one that cuts to the heart of a tension that has run through Western military support since the early months of the war — the gap between what allies agree to provide and when that support actually reaches the front.

Ukraine has for months been sounding the alarm over dwindling Patriot supplies. The system, designed to intercept ballistic mis-

siles, cruise missiles and aircraft, has become one of Kyiv's most critical defensive assets against Russia's aerial campaign. Ukrainian officials have previously accused Washington of slowing deliveries of the missiles at moments of acute need, a charge that has added friction to an alliance already navigating complex domestic politics on both sides of the Atlantic.

Friday's announcement arrives against a backdrop of visible strain between Zelenskyy and Trump. The US president has faced criticism in recent days for waiving new sanctions on Russia just days before they were expected to take effect — a decision that drew sharp reactions from Ukrainian officials and European governments alike, and which raised fresh questions about

the consistency of American pressure on Moscow. The Patriot sale is the largest single missile agreement between Washington and Kyiv since the war began, and it carries undeniable symbolic weight. But symbols do not intercept Russian missiles. As Zelenskyy made plain on Friday, Ukraine is not short of future commitments — it is short of present protection. The \$2.1 billion deal may eventually strengthen Ukraine's defences in ways that matter. For now, the president of a country absorbing dozens of strikes a fortnight is asking his allies a simple and uncomfortably direct question: where are the weapons we need tonight?

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Politics

Sifuna launches Linda Mwananchi Party as opposition giants converge on Nairobi

By: Yvonne Wambui
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Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna yesterday officially unveiled the Linda Mwananchi Party's new national headquarters in Lavington, Nairobi, marking the formal transformation of the Equitable Party into a re-branded opposition movement and drawing together some of Kenya's most prominent opposition leaders in the clearest signal yet of a coordinated challenge to President William Ruto's administration ahead of the August 2027 General Election. The launch, held on Friday at the movement's new base in the leafy Nairobi suburb, brought Democracy for the Citizens Party leader Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka and DAP-Kenya leader Eugene Wamalwa under the same roof — a gathering that, whatever its internal tensions, represented the most visible convergence of opposition heavyweights since the last electoral cycle. The combined reach of the four leaders spans Nairobi, Mount Kenya, Ukambani, the coast and Western Kenya, a geographic spread that, if it holds, could fundamentally alter the political arithmetic heading into 2027. Sifuna, who has established himself as one of the most combative critics of the Kenya Kwanza administration, positioned the Linda Mwananchi Party not merely as a vehicle for electoral competition but as a political platform anchored in accountability, constitutionalism and the concerns of ordinary Kenyans — particularly young people locked out of a shrinking job market, small business owners crushed by high operating costs and families navigating a cost of living that has become the defining grievance of Ruto's tenure. "We are placing the ordinary citizen

at the centre of decision-making," Sifuna told the gathering, "not as spectators in their own country's affairs, but as the reason this movement exists."

The ambition is considerable. The Linda Mwananchi Party has announced plans to open offices in all 47 counties and establish formal structures for aspirants seeking to contest elections under its ticket. A National Delegates Convention has been scheduled for 13 November 2026 to advance the party's rebranding process and address key organisational questions, including the formal adoption of its constitution and the ratification of its proposed national leadership structure. The day after yesterday's Nairobi launch, the movement was set to take its mobilisation campaign to Kwale County, extending its reach to the coast and demonstrating an early intent to compete beyond its Nairobi base.

Yet the event also exposed the fault lines that have historically bedevilled Kenya's opposition coalitions. Tensions surfaced publicly when Kalonzo drew audible protests from sections of the crowd after he cautioned against prematurely declaring Sifuna the movement's presidential candidate before the party had completed its formal processes. The reaction was swift and pointed — a reminder that the enthusiasm of the base does not always align with the procedural caution that veteran politicians instinctively apply when their own presidential ambitions remain in play. Kalonzo himself has not abandoned his aspiration for the presidency, a fact that colours every statement he makes within the coalition, however diplomatically it is framed.

Gachagua's presence carried its own weight. The former Deputy President, impeached by parliament in October last year in circumstances he and his allies have consistently characterised as politically moti-



DCP's Rigathi Gachagua, Linda Mwananchi's Edwin Sifuna and Wiper Patriotic Front's Kalonzo Musyoka at the unveiling of Linda Mwananchi's secretariat in Nairobi on Friday, October 30, 2026 | Photo: X

vated, commands a loyalty across the Mount Kenya region that no opposition coalition can realistically do without. His alignment with the Linda Mwananchi movement — still evolving in its formal character — signals that his post-impeachment political project has found at least a temporary home, though the terms of that relationship and his role within any future coalition ticket remain unresolved.

Wamalwa's DAP-Kenya brings the Luhya vote into the frame, adding Western Kenya to an alliance that already reaches across Mount Kenya, Ukambani and the coast. The consolidation of those blocs, if genuine, would represent a formidable opposition front. Whether it constitutes a winning one depends on factors that no launch event can determine: the discipline of the coalition's leadership in the months ahead, the

credibility of its policy positions, the effectiveness of its county-level organisation and, ultimately, the extent to which economic frustration translates into voter mobilisation on polling day.

Kenya's opposition history is not short of grand unveilings that dissolved before the campaign season properly began. The pressures are familiar — competing presidential egos, ethnic arithmetic that shifts with each passing alliance, the persistent temptation of government patronage for those whose commitment to the opposition is transactional rather than principled. The Linda Mwananchi Party's architects are aware of that history, and several around Sifuna have been at pains to argue that the current alignment is structurally different: that Gachagua's bridges with Ruto are genuinely burned, that Kalonzo has no

where else credibly to go, and that Sifuna himself has built a cross-regional identity that transcends the Nairobi senator label he entered national politics with.

Those arguments will be tested in the coming months, as the coalition moves from the excitement of a launch to the grinding work of party organisation, candidate recruitment and policy development. The 2027 election will not be won in Lavington. It will be won or lost in the wards, the sub-counties and the county assemblies of a country that has heard many promises and is watching, with calibrated scepticism, to see which ones are kept. Sifuna's Linda Mwananchi Party has made its entrance. Kenya's political landscape will take some time to determine what it is worth.

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Heavy menstrual bleeding and iron deficiency anemia in women of reproductive age



By: **Diaspora Times Team**
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Abstract

This article examines the relationship between heavy menstrual bleeding and iron deficiency anemia in women of reproductive age, focusing on early detection, diagnostic methods, and preventive strategies. Heavy menstrual bleeding can lead to the depletion of iron stores, resulting in fatigue, weakness, dizziness, and reduced physical capacity. The article is presented as a literature review based on international clinical guidelines and scientific publications. It discusses the importance of identifying underlying gynecological causes, evaluating hemoglobin and ferritin levels, implementing cause-specific treatment, and promoting health education.

Keywords: iron deficiency anemia, heavy menstrual bleeding, reproductive age, gynecology, hemoglobin, ferritin, early diagnosis, prevention.

Introduction

Iron deficiency anemia is one of the most widespread health problems worldwide and is of particular clinical importance among women of reproductive age who experience menstruation. Iron is an essential element required for hemoglobin synthesis and oxygen transportation throughout the body. When iron stores become depleted, iron deficiency may initially develop without anemia. Subsequently, hemoglobin levels may decrease, leading to the development of anemia.

Heavy menstrual bleeding is one of the major causes of iron loss in women. In some cases, women consider excessive menstrual bleeding to be normal and therefore delay seeking medical attention. As a result, iron stores may gradually become depleted, negatively affecting daily activities, academic performance, and work productivity. International organizations emphasize the importance of identifying and managing iron deficiency in women.

Simply treating heavy menstrual bleeding as an isolated symptom is insufficient. It may be associated with underlying conditions such as uterine fibroids, adenomyosis, endometrial polyps, ovulatory disorders, or abnormalities of the blood coagulation system. Therefore, comprehensive gynecological assessment and evaluation of iron status should be conducted together.

The aim of this article is to analyze the relationship between heavy menstrual bleeding and iron defi-

ciency anemia in women of reproductive age and to summarize practical approaches to early diagnosis and prevention.

The objectives of the study are to review the main gynecological causes of heavy menstrual bleeding; describe the clinical manifestations of iron deficiency and anemia; highlight the importance of laboratory and clinical assessment in diagnosis; and summarize the principal approaches to treatment and prevention.

This article was prepared in the form of a literature review. The World Health Organization's guidelines on the diagnosis of anemia, as well as scientific publications concerning the identification and treatment of iron deficiency in women of reproductive age, were reviewed. No new patient group was examined, and no original statistical analysis was conducted by the author. The conclusions are based on the synthesis and analysis of previously published literature.

Main Causes of Heavy Menstrual Bleeding

Heavy menstrual bleeding is assessed in relation to menstrual duration, the amount of blood loss, and its impact on a woman's daily life. Identifying its underlying causes is essential for selecting an appropriate treatment strategy. Uterine fibroids are benign tumors that develop in the muscular layer of the uterus and may cause increased menstrual bleeding in some cases. In adenomyosis, tissue resembling the uterine lining is found within the muscular wall of the uterus, potentially resulting in heavy and painful menstruation.

Endometrial polyps may also be associated with abnormal or excessive uterine bleeding. Ovulatory disorders, including certain endocrine conditions, can lead to irregular menstrual cycles. Heavy menstrual bleeding beginning during adolescence or a family history of excessive bleeding may indicate the need to investigate possible coagulation disorders.

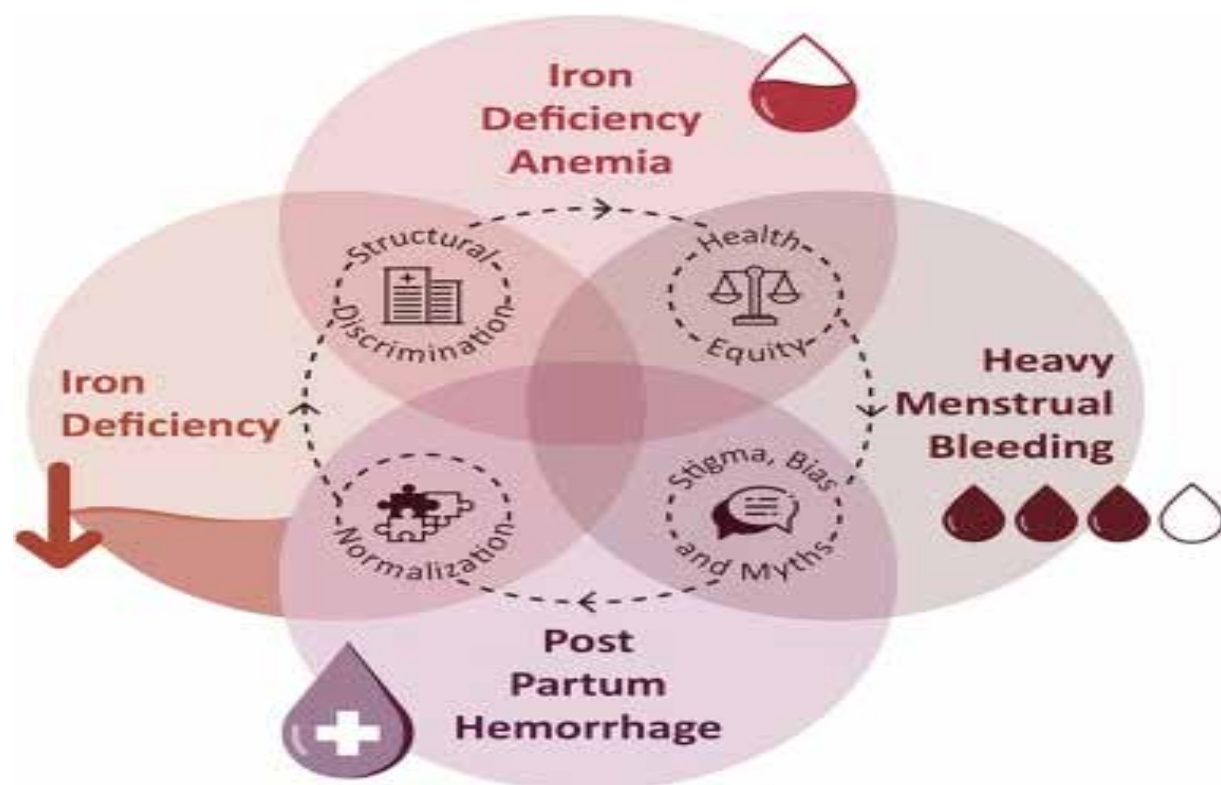
The underlying cause is not the same in every patient. Therefore, the woman's age, menstrual history, possibility of pregnancy, medications, coexisting medical conditions, and clinical examination findings should all be taken into consideration.

Clinical Manifestations of Iron Deficiency and Anemia

The development of iron deficiency may be accompanied by weakness, fatigue, dizziness, headaches, difficulty concentrating, increased heart rate, and reduced tolerance to physical exertion. Some patients may also experience pale skin and mucous membranes, hair loss, or brittle nails.

Since these symptoms may also occur in other medical conditions, a diagnosis should not be based solely on clinical manifestations.

If these symptoms occur together with heavy menstrual bleeding, medical evaluation and laboratory



investigations should be discussed with a healthcare professional. Severe weakness, fainting, shortness of breath, or extremely heavy ongoing bleeding may require urgent medical attention.

Diagnosis and Assessment

Diagnosis is based on the patient's complaints, menstrual history, physical examination, and laboratory findings.

Hemoglobin levels measured through a complete blood count help identify anemia, while serum ferritin is an important indicator for assessing the body's iron stores. Ferritin levels may appear elevated in the presence of inflammation; therefore, the results should be interpreted in the context of the patient's overall clinical condition.

To identify underlying gynecological causes, a physician may recommend ultrasonography, pregnancy testing, endocrine investigations, or tests related to the blood coagulation system when clinically indicated.

The selection of diagnostic procedures depends on the patient's age, symptoms, and risk factors. Not every woman requires the same set of laboratory and instrumental investigations.

Treatment Approaches

Treatment aims to replenish iron stores and address the underlying cause of excessive menstrual bleeding.

Iron supplements should be prescribed according to a physician's recommendations, taking into account laboratory findings and the patient's individual condition. The type, dosage, and duration of treatment should be determined individually. Unsupervised iron supplementation or premature discontinuation of treatment is not recommended.

Depending on the underlying cause, hormonal or non-hormonal medications may be used to reduce heavy menstrual bleeding. In certain cases, medical procedures or surgical interventions may also be considered.

Such decisions should be made by a gynecologist based on the patient's age, reproductive plans, coexisting medical conditions, and diagnostic findings.

Managing the source of blood loss alongside the treatment of iron deficiency helps reduce the risk of recurrence.

Prevention and Health Education

An important aspect of prevention is recognizing that heavy menstrual bleeding should not automatically be considered normal and that medical attention should be sought when necessary.

Women may be encouraged to monitor their menstrual cycles, the duration of bleeding, and its impact on everyday activities. Recurrent heavy bleeding over several months, bleeding between menstrual periods, or symptoms of anemia should prompt medical evaluation.

Iron-rich foods, including meat, legumes, certain leafy vegetables, and iron-fortified products, may contribute to a balanced diet. Foods rich in vitamin C can enhance the absorption of iron from plant-based sources.

However, dietary changes alone may not always be sufficient to treat clinically significant iron deficiency anemia. Confirmed iron deficiency may require medical treatment prescribed by a healthcare professional. Educational institutions, including schools and universities, can contribute to prevention by organizing age-appropriate and scientifically based educational activities on reproductive health, menstrual hygiene, symptoms of anemia, and the importance of seeking medical assistance.

Such initiatives may help women recognize health problems at an early stage, reduce misconceptions, and improve attitudes toward preventive medical examinations.

Discussion

The reviewed literature indicates that heavy menstrual bleeding and iron deficiency anemia should be

considered interconnected health problems rather than separate conditions.

Assessing hemoglobin levels alone may fail to identify certain cases in which iron stores have already decreased but anemia has not yet developed. Therefore, evaluating serum ferritin levels is also important when clinically indicated.

Another important consideration is that treatment should not be limited to correcting iron deficiency; the underlying cause of blood loss must also be investigated.

If conditions such as uterine fibroids, adenomyosis, endometrial polyps, ovulatory disorders, or coagulation abnormalities are identified, treatment should be directed toward the specific underlying cause.

An integrated approach combining early diagnosis, clear patient counseling, appropriate treatment, and regular follow-up may help preserve women's health and quality of life.

Conclusion

Heavy menstrual bleeding in women of reproductive age can lead to the depletion of iron stores and the development of iron deficiency anemia.

Early identification of this problem requires assessment of menstrual history and clinical symptoms, laboratory evaluation of hemoglobin and ferritin levels when indicated, and investigation of the underlying gynecological causes of excessive bleeding.

Treatment should involve not only replenishing iron stores but also identifying and managing the primary cause of blood loss.

Strengthening educational activities on reproductive health and anemia prevention in schools and other educational institutions may encourage timely medical consultation and promote healthy behaviors.

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Motivation

Modern methods of supporting socially vulnerable families



By: Karimova Marjona Faxriddin
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Abstract

This article analyzes modern scientific and practical approaches to identifying socially vulnerable families, providing them with comprehensive support, and helping them overcome poverty and dependency in the context of New Uzbekistan. The study examines the National Agency for Social Protection established under Presidential Decree No. PF-82 of June 1, 2023, the “Inson” Social Services Centers operating at the community level, the Unified Register of Social Protection, case management technology, and mechanisms for transitioning from passive assistance to active social adaptation.

Keywords: social protection, vulnerable families, Presidential Decree No. PF-82, “Inson” centers, case management, Unified Register of Social Protection, social contract, poverty reduction, social adaptation, empowerment.

International experience demonstrates that strong social policy is the foundation of state stability and sustainable economic growth. The revised Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan firmly establishes the country's status as a social state. This means that ensuring a decent standard of living for every family in need of social assistance, persons with disabilities, individuals who have lost their breadwinners, and older people living alone is a fundamental priority of the state. Until recent years, social protection was primarily provided through financial allowances and one-time monetary assistance, representing a passive approach to support. However, this approach has increasingly demonstrated its limitations. Continuous financial assistance, when not accompanied by measures that promote independence, may create dependency and restrict families from realizing their own potential. In this regard, Presidential Decree No. PF-82 of June 1, 2023, entitled “On Comprehensive Measures to Provide Quality Social Services and Assistance to the Population and Establish an Effective Monitoring System,” marked a significant turning point in the sector. Under this decree, the social protection system began transitioning from passive financial assistance toward active, individualized support, encouraging people to overcome hardship independently and bringing modern social services closer to communities.



1. TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO A MODERN MODEL

There are several fundamental conceptual differences between the traditional social protection model and the modern approach.

1. From passive benefit dependency to active participation (Empowerment). Modern social work is based on the principle of teaching people how to provide for themselves rather than simply giving them ready-made assistance. The goal is to equip families with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to improve their living conditions independently.
2. From a reactive approach to a proactive system. Previously, citizens often had to visit multiple institutions and collect various documents to receive assistance. Today, social workers visit households directly and assess their needs on-site, enabling problems to be identified and addressed more effectively.¹
3. From fragmentation to unified vertical management. Social protection services have been consolidated under the National Agency for Social Protection under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its local “Inson” centers, facilitating more coordinated service delivery.²

2. MODERN METHODS OF SUPPORTING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Today, the following modern methods and mechanisms are being implemented in Uzbekistan and are widely used in advanced international practice.

A. Digitalization and the Unified Register of Social Protection

To reduce human intervention, prevent corruption, and eliminate bureaucratic obstacles, a unified electronic register system has been introduced. This system:

- Is integrated with the databases of more than 16 ministries and government agencies.

- Automatically compares information on household income, real estate, vehicles, and utility payments.
- Identifies genuinely vulnerable families according to transparent and equitable criteria.³

Digitalization helps improve the accuracy of eligibility assessments, reduce administrative barriers, and ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most.

B. “Inson” Social Services Centers and Community-Based Case Management

One of the most effective methods in social work practice is case management, which involves the coordinated management of an individual's or family's circumstances and needs. Through social workers at “Inson” centers, this approach is implemented in local communities according to the following stages.

1. Screening and assessment. A social worker visits the household and evaluates the family's financial, medical, psychological, and social circumstances.
2. Individual social service plan. A specific plan is developed to address the needs of each family member. For example, it may include rehabilitation for a child with a disability, vocational training for an unemployed father, or psychological support for a mother.
3. Intervention. Comprehensive assistance is coordinated with employment, healthcare, and education institutions to address the family's identified needs.
4. Monitoring. The implementation of the plan is regularly reviewed, and the family's progress is monitored until its critical circumstances have been sufficiently addressed.

This approach ensures that social assistance is not limited to providing temporary relief but also addresses the underlying causes of vulnerability.

C. The Social Contract as a Mechanism for Promoting Independence

A social contract is an agreement establishing mutual responsibilities

between the state, represented by social service providers, and a family in need of support.

The state's responsibilities include:

- Providing grants, subsidies, and preferential loans.
- Offering free vocational education and training.
- Supporting families in generating income through household plots and other productive activities.

The family's responsibilities include:

- Using the financial assistance provided for its intended purposes.
- Continuing education or employment without abandoning agreed commitments.
- Ensuring that children attend educational institutions.
- Working toward earning an independent income within the established period and voluntarily relinquishing benefits when the family no longer qualifies for them.

This approach seeks to reduce dependency by encouraging families to take responsibility for their own well-being and actively participate in improving their living conditions.

D. Psychosocial Support and Family Therapy

In many cases, families remain trapped in poverty not only because of financial hardship but also because of psychological distress, alcohol abuse, family conflicts, and a lack of confidence in their own abilities.⁴

A modern social worker performs several important functions:

- Mediator: helping resolve family disputes and facilitating constructive communication.
- Psychosocial counselor: supporting individuals and families in overcoming emotional crises.
- Coordinator: bringing together available resources and connecting families with appropriate services.

Psychosocial support is essential be-

cause sustainable improvements in family well-being require attention to both material circumstances and emotional and social needs.

3. PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER IMPROVING THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM

The following proposals are put forward to further improve the support system for socially vulnerable families.

1. Expanding mobile social services at the community level. Introducing a “Mobile Social Patrol” system for vulnerable families in remote and mountainous villages would improve access to social services and ensure that assistance reaches households regardless of their geographical location.
2. Encouraging social entrepreneurship. Tax incentives and financial support packages should be expanded for businesses that employ working-age members of vulnerable families, particularly women who remain at home and face barriers to entering the labor market.
3. Improving the professional qualifications of social workers. Employees of “Inson” centers should receive regular training in advanced international case management practices, psychological assessment methods, and effective approaches to working with vulnerable families.

CONCLUSION

Supporting socially vulnerable families is a fundamental means of upholding human dignity and building a just society. The reforms implemented in Uzbekistan, particularly the mechanisms introduced under Presidential Decree No. PF-82, have helped transform social protection from a bureaucratic system of distributing benefits into a modern model based on professional services, individualized support, and the activation of individuals' internal potential.

The coordinated implementation of the Unified Register of Social Protection, community-based “Inson” centers, case management, and social contract mechanisms is of exceptional importance in addressing the specific problems of vulnerable households, helping them escape persistent poverty, and enabling them to become independent and prosperous members of society.

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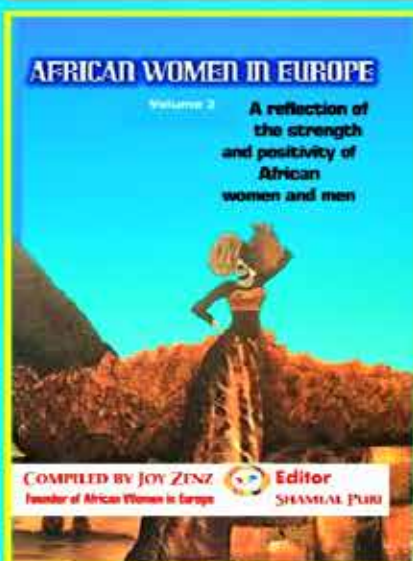
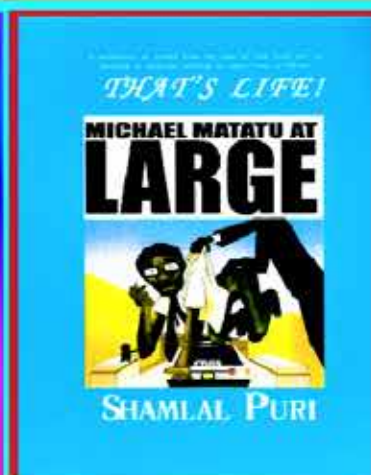
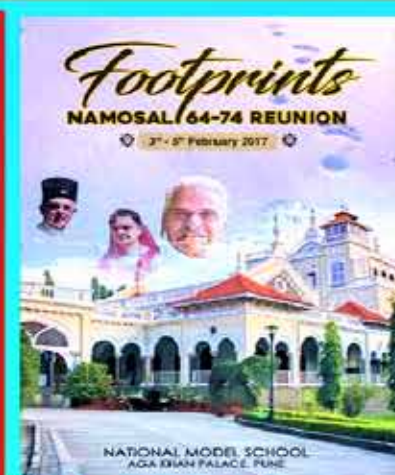
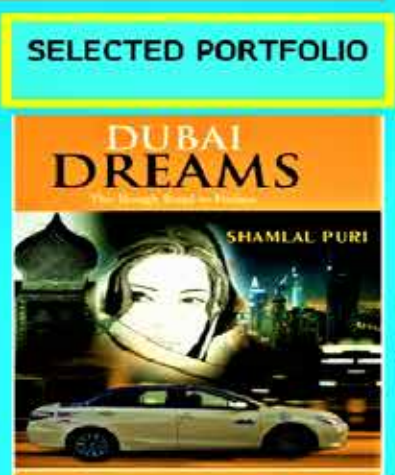
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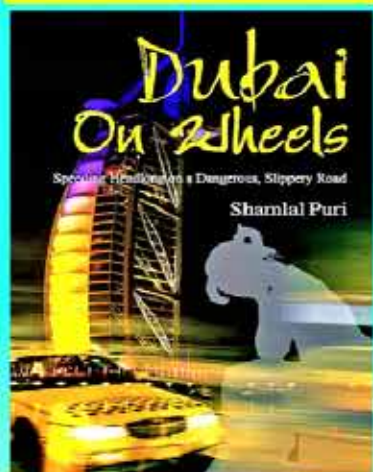
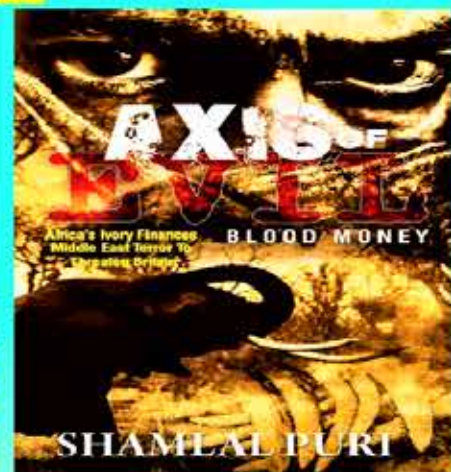
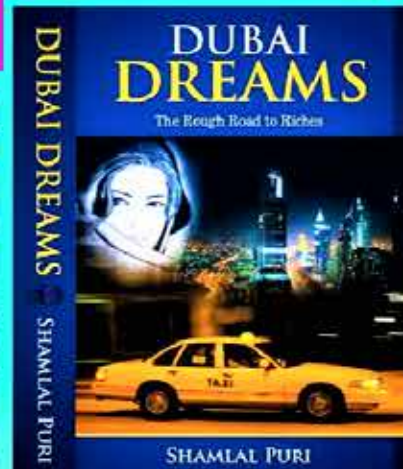
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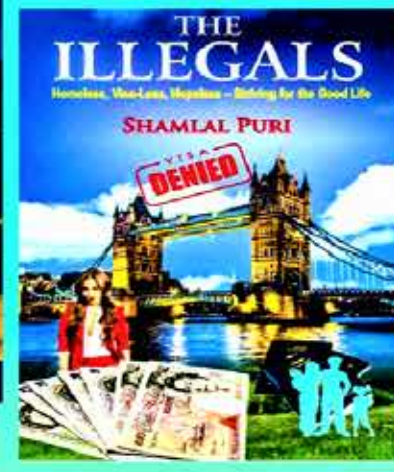
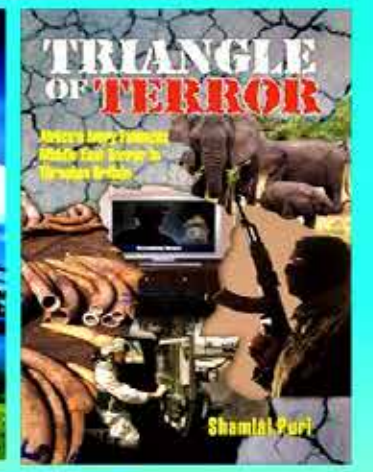
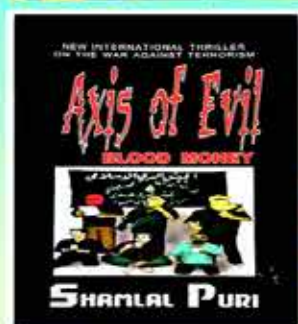
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UK News

Britain and Oman renew historic friendship with Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq's state visit



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& Senior Editor – UK
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Contd from Page 1

Last week, the United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman welcomed a package of announcements to build on this legacy and deepen links between their people and institutions for future generations. This includes closer cooperation on heritage, air connectivity and tourism, sport and the creative industries, and strengthening next-generation and community links through the British Omani Society.

“The United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman commit to strengthen and deepen our relationship, monitor progress against agreed priorities, and ensure that cooperation remains focused on mutual benefit, Oman’s Vision 2040, the UK’s growth agenda, and the shared goal of building a more secure, prosperous and resilient world.”

This was stated in the joint statement issued on the occasion of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq’s State Visit to the United Kingdom as the guest of King Charles III on 20-22 October 2026.

During the State Visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, Sultan of Oman, to the United Kingdom, the two countries reaffirmed the enduring friendship between them, reflected in the close relationship between His Majesty The King and His Majesty the Sultan, and agreed to build an ambitious, forward-looking partnership for the future.

At 10 Downing Street on 21 October, Prime Minister Andy Burnham and Sultan Haitham bin Tariq welcomed the depth, warmth, and longevity of the relationship between the United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman. They agreed on priorities to shape cooperation in the years ahead.

These priorities include modernising cooperation on security, defence, and national resilience; expanding trade and investment in green and advanced industries; working together on regional stability and global challenges; and strengthening ties between people and institutions. His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and His Highness Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said welcomed their roles in supporting the next generation of the relationship, including through joint patronage of the British Omani Society.

The UK Defence Secretary Wes Streeting and the Omani Deputy



The Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq and his host King Charles III of the United Kingdom head for Windsor Castle for the State Banquet.



A section of specially invited guests at the banquet in honour of His Majesty the Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, at the Guildhall of the Lord Mayor of the City of London.



His Majesty the Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq with the British Royal family, King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Windsor Castle before the banquet.



His Majesty the Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq began his visit by viewing the exhibition of innovative companies and projects, which showcases a range of advanced technologies and solutions in the field beneficial to his country



His Majesty the Sultan Haitham bin Tariq paid an official visit to HereEast which could play an important role in Oman’s development. Here East is owned by clients of Delancey, a specialist real estate investment advisory company

Prime Minister for Defence Affairs Shihab bin Tariq bin Taimur Al Said also reaffirmed their commitment to the enduring UK–Oman defence partnership and its continued modernisation.

The UK Foreign Secretary, Ed Miliband, and Oman’s Foreign Minister, Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al Busaidi, continued their detailed discussions on bilateral affairs, covering matters of regional and global importance.

The UK Minister for Trade, Baron Sarwar, also met with the Omani Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, to discuss the steps needed to ensure the high-

ly anticipated signing of the UK–Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement.

The Omani Minister of Education, Madeeha bint Ahmed bin Nassir al Shibaniyah, also met with the CEO of the British Council to explore innovative approaches to integrating emerging technologies into education.

The UK–Oman partnership is rooted in historical friendship, sustained through resilience, and renewed through innovation. It is underpinned by the Comprehen-

Contd Page 11

UK News

Britain and Oman renew historic friendship with Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq's state visit

Contd from Page 10

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sive Agreement of Enduring Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation (2019) and the Joint Defence Agreement (2019), and delivered through the UK-Oman Ministerial Dialogue, Joint Defence Talks, and Strategic Advisory Group, among other bilateral fora.

The United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman commit to strengthening and deepening their relationship, monitoring progress against agreed priorities, and ensuring co-operation remains focused on mutual benefit, Oman's Vision 2040, the UK's growth agenda, and the shared goal of building a more secure, prosperous, and resilient world.

The two countries reaffirmed the importance of their trusted defence partnership and their intent to deepen defence industrial cooperation, strengthen military-to-military cooperation, and increase focus on defence expertise, testing, innovation, and future capability.

The Saif Sareea exercise series remains a flagship expression of this relationship. Both countries welcomed preparations for Saif Sareea IV. They agreed to explore the next phase of long-term exercise cooperation, including future capability development, testing and experimentation, and maritime security information exchange.

They also agreed to deepen collaboration across security and national resilience and work more closely in several areas, including cyber security, to tackle shared international security challenges.

The UK-Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement will provide further opportunities to deepen trade and investment between the United Kingdom and Oman once signed and implemented.

The UK-Oman Strategic Advisory Group will continue as the flagship dialogue for investment and growth, supporting knowledge exchange, structured innovation and delivery of shared economic objectives.

The Sovereign Partnership for Cooperation and Promotion of Investment will provide a focal point for long-term economic cooperation, strengthen links between the UK's Office for Investment and the

Oman Investment Authority and advance cooperation on green growth, advanced technologies, critical minerals, space, innovation, scale-up finance, industrial clusters and regional connectivity.

It will prioritise sectors within the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy and Oman's future-industries ecosystem, using Omani industrial zones and innovation clusters as platforms for UK expertise, while supporting Oman's economic diversification and its role as a gateway for regional growth.

Recognising green growth as a shared national priority, the United Kingdom and Oman will advance cooperation on green industries and decarbonisation.

UK Export Finance (UKEF) and the Oman Net Zero Centre also announced strengthened cooperation to support the sustainable, secure and responsible development of green and decarbonisation projects.

The UK welcomed the proposed Oman Green Growth Roadshow delegation in 2027 to take these partnerships forward.

Alongside this, UKEF has increased its country limit for Oman by £1.6 billion, providing up to £7 billion of capacity to support UK exports to Oman.

This will create greater capacity to support priority projects, deepen commercial ties and connect Omani opportunities with UK goods, services and expertise.

Net Zero Industry Wales and the Oman Net Zero Centre will also launch a partnership to share knowledge and build links amongst industrial clusters, renewable energy sectors, academia and public bodies.

The two countries agreed to deepen cooperation in advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, data centres, critical minerals and space, through targeted roundtables, delegations and technical exchanges.

They welcomed an agreement between the UK Space Agency and the Oman National Space Programme to share best practice, explore future cooperation on space launch, and promote commercial partnerships.

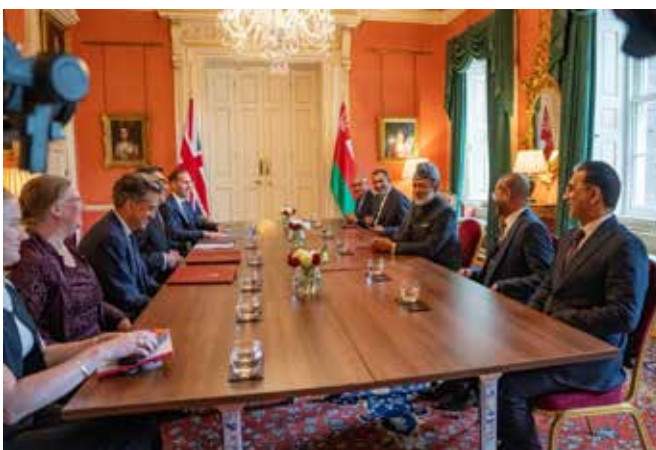
They also welcomed the UK-Oman Innovation Initiative, regional innovation links, Growth Hub and Growth Fund mechanisms to help UK and Omani businesses grow, scale and access each other's



King Charles III bids farewell to HM the Sultan Haitham bin Tariq at Windsor Castle at the conclusion of the Royal reception ceremonies



The Sultan of Oman His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq signs the VIP visitors' book at 10 Downing Street watched by the Prime Minister Andy Burnham



The Sultan of Oman His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq and Prime Ministers Andy Burnham in a meeting with top ministers and officials from both countries at 10 Downing Street.

markets.

The two nations reaffirmed their shared commitment to peace, stability and dialogue in the Middle East and beyond, and agreed to strengthen cooperation on conflict prevention, peaceful resolution, humanitarian response and multilateral engagement. They reaffirmed their commitment to a two-state solution as the only viable basis for a just and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine. They also underscored the importance of adherence to international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, reaffirming in this context Oman's sovereignty over Omani waters in the Strait of Hormuz and the importance

of maintaining maritime security, freedom of navigation and the safe passage of international shipping in accordance with international law. To support this cooperation, they will strengthen collaboration between His Majesty's Diplomatic Service College and the Oman Diplomatic Academy.

The United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman reaffirmed their shared commitment to achieving Net Zero by 2050 and to demonstrating international leadership on climate, nature and environmental protection.

Both countries recognised the importance of clean energy and resilient supply chains in supporting sustainable growth.



HM the Sultan Haitham bin Tariq was welcomed by the Prime Minister Andy Burnham at 10 Downing Street where they held a bilateral meeting.



The Sultan of Oman His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq and Prime Minister Andy Burnham in discussions at 10 Downing Street where they held a bilateral meeting.



His Majesty the Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq concludes his two-day state visit to the United Kingdom.

On education and skills, both sides welcomed the reopening of the Chevening Scholarship for the first time since 2021, a British Council pilot on AI-assisted education in Omani schools, the new

Oman Net Zero Centre-Car diff University scholarships, and stronger links in skills and professional qualifications.

FRAUD

Ghost students, real money: How Kenyan nationals became entangled in America's \$130 million student aid fraud investigation

Operation Ghostbusters exposes an alleged cross-border scheme in which stolen American identities and fictitious college enrolments were used to siphon millions in federal student aid — with financial trails leading to Kenya

By: Levis Wangamati
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Operation Ghostbusters exposes an alleged cross-border scheme in which stolen American identities and fictitious college enrolments were used to siphon millions in federal student aid — with financial trails leading to Kenya

By Levis Wangamati

An American government programme created to open the doors of higher education to financially disadvantaged students has become the unlikely centre of a sprawling international fraud investigation. It has exposed an alleged network of stolen identities, fictitious college enrolments and millions of dollars in misappropriated public funds — with financial threads stretching from several American states all the way to Kenya. The investigation raises uncomfortable but necessary questions about the security of digital education financing and the growing sophistication of international financial crime.

On 29 October 2026, the United States Department of Justice announced the first indictments arising from what investigators are calling Operation Ghostbusters. The operation targets an alleged nationwide scheme in which criminal actors used stolen identities belonging to genuine American citizens to create fictitious student accounts, fraudulently obtain federal financial assistance and redirect the resulting funds through bank accounts controlled by associates. Among those implicated are Kenyan nationals and American-based defendants accused of facilitating transactions involving associates in Kenya.

For the Kenyan diaspora in the United States, the investigation carries particular weight. It places individuals with alleged connections to Kenya at the centre of a major American financial crime investigation and underscores the growing importance of cooperation between the two countries in combating cross-border criminal activity. One distinction, however, must be clearly drawn at the outset: the \$130 million identified by American authorities is associated with potentially fraudulent student aid identification numbers. It is not an amount established as stolen by Kenyan individuals, and the investigation covers a much broader range of suspects, schemes and jurisdictions than any single nationality.

At the heart of the investigation is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known by its acronym FAFSA — the American government's sys-

tem through which eligible students apply for federal financial assistance to pursue higher education. The programme provides access to student loans and grants, helping millions of Americans meet the cost of attending colleges and universities. Its scale and reach make it an attractive target for individuals seeking to exploit weaknesses in digital application and verification processes. According to the Justice Department, the alleged fraudsters obtained personal information belonging to genuine American citizens and used it to submit fraudulent financial aid applications. They then enrolled fictitious students in educational institutions, creating the appearance of legitimate beneficiaries entitled to receive federal assistance. These so-called ghost students existed within the education financing system on paper, but they never actually sat in the classrooms for which the funding had been awarded.

The alleged operation did not stop at the submission of fraudulent applications. Once institutions processed the enrolments and released financial aid refunds, the money was allegedly channelled through bank accounts controlled by participants in the scheme. Some individuals reportedly served as money mules — receiving deposits through American financial institutions before transferring substantial portions of the funds to overseas associates. Investigators believe this arrangement enabled the criminal network to ex-

ploit a legitimate public programme while concealing both the movement and the ultimate destination of the money.

The consequences for genuine American citizens whose identities were allegedly stolen are deeply troubling. The Justice Department reports that some victims discovered their personal information had been used to enrol them in educational institutions they had never attended or even heard of. Such cases raise serious concerns about identity protection, fraudulent financial obligations and lasting damage to victims' education and credit records. A programme designed to expand educational opportunity was allegedly turned into a tool for exploiting unsuspecting citizens and public institutions alike.

The Kenyan dimension of the investigation becomes clearer when examining the individual cases announced by American prosecutors. In Nebraska, a federal grand jury returned a ten-count indictment against Francis Mogambi, a Kenyan citizen, on 19 October, charging him with five counts of theft of government money and five counts of aggravated identity theft. According to the indictment, Mogambi allegedly worked with associates in Kenya between November 2025 and May 2026 to obtain stolen American identities, enrol fictitious students and redirect federal student financial aid payments.

Prosecutors allege that Mogambi

retained 30 per cent of the proceeds and transferred the remainder to associates in Kenya. Court documents further indicate that he allegedly discussed receiving approximately \$2,000 weekly and sought a business through which he could cash larger cheques. The allegations offer a revealing window into how investigators believe the network operated — though the charges against Mogambi have not been proven in court. A separate case in Virginia involves another Kenyan national accused of participating in a scheme intended to defraud the American government of more than \$1.4 million in student financial assistance. According to prosecutors, this defendant allegedly acted as a money mule in a transnational conspiracy involving individuals in Kenya. More than 700 fraudulent federal student aid refund deposits, totalling approximately \$1,439,548, were allegedly received through multiple bank accounts, with at least \$1.3 million subsequently transferred through thousands of transactions involving accounts in both the United States and Kenya.

The New Jersey case adds yet another dimension to the alleged network. Three defendants — Mabel Patricia Utate-Alberto, Patricia Arisleydi Perez and George Arturo Alfau Mendez — have been charged with allegedly acting as money mules in a scheme involving more than \$1 million in federal student aid funds. Prosecutors allege that the defen-

dants received money obtained through fraudulent FAFSA applications filed using stolen American identities, before transferring funds overseas to associates in Kenya connected to a purported safari company. Two Kenyan-based co-conspirators have been identified, and American authorities have stated their intention to pursue charges as the investigation continues.

Taken together, the three cases illustrate how investigators believe the alleged network operated across different jurisdictions. Two Kenyan nationals have been charged in the Nebraska and Virginia cases, while the New Jersey prosecution involves three additional defendants accused of facilitating transfers to Kenyan associates. These are separate legal proceedings, and the allegations against every defendant remain to be tested through the American judicial process.

Perhaps the most striking figure to emerge from Operation Ghostbusters is the identification of 830,840 potentially fraudulent Federal Student Aid Identification numbers, associated with nearly \$130 million in financial assistance disbursed during September and October 2026. According to the Justice Department, investigators recommended that the Department of Education disable the affected identification numbers as part of efforts to prevent further fraudulent applications and disbursements.

That figure demands careful han-



FRAUD

Ghost students, real money: How Kenyan nationals became entangled in America's \$130 million student aid fraud investigation

Operation Ghostbusters exposes an alleged cross-border scheme in which stolen American identities and fictitious college enrolments were used to siphon millions in federal student aid — with financial trails leading to Kenya

By: **Diaspora Times Team**
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dling. The nearly \$130 million represents financial assistance linked to potentially fraudulent identification numbers — it is not a confirmed amount stolen, nor money established as having been transferred to Kenya. The investigation covers numerous suspected operations, individuals and transactions spread across the United States. Presenting the entire sum as proceeds of a Kenyan-linked operation would be a misrepresentation of the evidence and a disservice to readers.

The FBI has separately identified more than \$32 million in losses connected to similar ghost student schemes, with additional suspected losses still under review. The Justice Department, meanwhile, estimates that the wider fraud could exceed \$200 million in total. More than 40 investigations are open across 26 FBI field offices and over 20 United States Attorney's Offices. These figures make clear that Operation Ghostbusters is part of a much larger reckoning with the exploitation of American education financing — not a collection of isolated incidents. Beyond the indictments, Operation Ghostbusters has brought to light meaningful cooperation between American and Kenyan law enforcement agencies. In September 2026, representatives of the American Justice Department and partner agencies travelled to Kenya specifically to discuss extradition, prosecution and the recovery of assets allegedly obtained through financial crime. That engagement underscores the importance of international cooperation when the proceeds of suspected criminal activity move beyond the jurisdiction where the original offences occurred.

According to the Justice Department, assistance from Kenyan law enforcement partners enabled investigators to seize more than \$750,000 in cryptocurrency from an account belonging to a Kenyan national connected to the alleged scheme. American authorities described the recovery as the first international seizure of its kind in the history of the Fraud Division. Kenya's Directorate of Criminal Investigations, Asset Recovery Agency and Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions are among the institutions identified as active participants in that cooperation.

The seizure is significant. Recovering suspected criminal proceeds can be considerably more complicated than identifying individuals accused of participating in a fraud.



Investigators must trace the movement of funds, establish beneficial ownership and satisfy the legal procedures required to freeze or recover assets. Cryptocurrency introduces additional complications, given how rapidly transactions can cross borders — making close cooperation between financial intelligence agencies and law enforcement bodies essential.

For Kenyans living in the United States, the investigation raises important questions about identity protection, financial accountability and the security of public education programmes. Individuals whose personal information has been compromised may discover that their identities were used to obtain loans, file education applications or access government services without their knowledge — creating financial and administrative headaches that can be both costly and time-consuming to resolve.

There are also practical implications for legitimate international students. As American institutions tighten their identity verification procedures in response to the alleged

fraud, genuine applicants may encounter additional checks designed to prevent fictitious enrolments and fraudulent financial aid applications. Universities and colleges will face the challenge of safeguarding public funding without placing unnecessary burdens on the honest students they exist to serve.

The reputational dimension of the investigation also deserves thoughtful attention. Kenya has a significant diaspora community that makes real and valuable contributions to the country's economy through remittances, investments, professional expertise and international networks. The alleged conduct of individuals facing criminal charges should not become grounds for sweeping generalisations about an entire nationality or diaspora population. Indeed, the active involvement of Kenyan law enforcement in the investigation makes precisely the opposite case — Kenya is part of the international effort to pursue those responsible.

The broader concern for Kenya itself is whether individuals and financial intermediaries operating within its borders are being used to

receive, conceal or transfer proceeds of international financial crime. Addressing that concern calls for robust financial monitoring, stronger identity verification systems and closer cooperation between the institutions responsible for investigating suspicious transactions. It also presents Kenya with an opportunity to demonstrate to its international partners that it takes financial accountability seriously.

Operation Ghostbusters lays bare a difficult challenge facing governments in an increasingly digital world. Financial assistance programmes depend on accurate personal information, reliable verification systems and, ultimately, public confidence. When those safeguards are exploited, the damage extends far beyond immediate financial losses — it erodes trust in public institutions and undermines the confidence of the very people those programmes were designed to help. The American investigation shows how technology and international financial networks can allegedly transform a programme built to expand educational opportunity into

an instrument of organised fraud.

For the United States, the immediate priorities are establishing the full extent of the alleged scheme, protecting victims of identity theft, recovering public money and prosecuting those found responsible. For Kenya, the task is ensuring that anyone proven to have participated faces the appropriate legal consequences — while protecting its law-abiding citizens and diaspora communities from the kind of broad-brush association that serves neither truth nor justice.

The ghost students may never have set foot in the classrooms for which the financial assistance was allegedly obtained. But the consequences of the scheme are entirely real — felt by taxpayers, by genuine students, by identity theft victims and by the institutions entrusted with managing public resources. As Operation Ghostbusters continues to unfold, its findings will deepen our understanding of how international financial crime operates and what governments must do to protect public programmes in an ever more interconnected world.

WORLD

Climate Change Threatens Food Security In Adamawa As 94.8% Of Farmers Report Crop Yield Changes - Dr Tari



By: Munyal Markus Manunyi
@themtkenyatimes

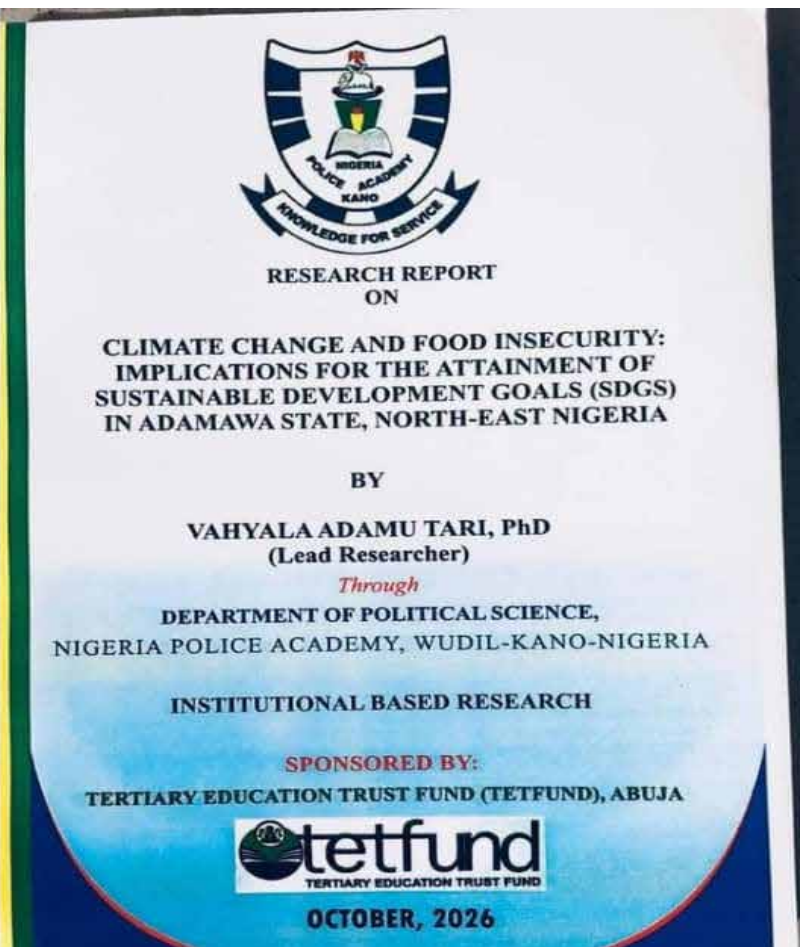
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Worth Noting:

- The study, titled **Climate Change and Food Insecurity: Implications for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Adamawa State, North-East Nigeria**, examined how climate change affects food production and the implications for Nigeria's progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- Tari said the research found that farmers growing maize, beans, rice and other staple crops had experienced declining yields, with the resulting losses affecting their incomes and ability to provide food for their households.
- He said: "The first finding is that climate change has significantly affected crop production and farmer household food security."
- He also attributed the challenges to changing rainfall patterns, drought, flooding and other environmental pressures that disrupt agricultural activities.
- According to the researcher, farmers who invest substantial amounts in cultivation, risk suffering financial losses when adverse weather conditions damage their crops, leaving them with less income to feed their families and meet other household needs.



Dr Balthiya Alfred Fakuta



how climate change affects food production and the implications for Nigeria's progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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According to the researcher, farmers who invest substantial amounts in cultivation, risk suffering financial losses when adverse weather conditions damage their crops, leaving them with less income to feed their families and meet other household needs.

The study covered 346 active crop farmers selected from a population of 1,752 registered farmers identified through the Adamawa State Ministry of Agriculture.

He noted that the respondents were drawn from Michika Local Government Area in the northern senatorial zone, Girei in the central zone and Ganye in the southern zone.

However, Tari said the three areas were selected to provide coverage across Adamawa's senatorial districts, with funding and time constraints also influencing the scope of the research.

He said the research lasted six months, and adopted a mixed-method approach alongside a cross-sectional research design. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents, while correlation and regression analysis techniques were applied in analysing the data.

Limited Awareness and Adaptation Challenges

The study also found that farmers' awareness of climate change was moderate, with limited participation in awareness campaigns and advocacy activities.

Tari explained that many farmers relied on social media to obtain information about changing climatic conditions and their effects on agricultural production. He therefore called for more public education and awareness campaigns, to help farmers understand climate risks and adopt appropriate responses.

"How do you address something that you are not much aware of? How do you confront that?" he asked, stressing the importance of equipping farmers with the knowledge and practical skills needed to respond to changing weather patterns.

The research also identified drought-tolerant seeds and irrigation as leading adaptation strategies used by farmers to cope with climate-related challenges.

Meanwhile, Tari said the cost of improved seeds and inadequate irrigation infrastructure limited farmers' ability to adapt, particularly when rainfall was insufficient or unpredictable.

He argued that dependence on rain-fed agriculture alone was no longer adequate to address the challenges facing agricultural production in the state. In his words: "It is clear that rain-fed agriculture can no longer sustain us."

The researcher called for expanded access to alternative water sources, improved seeds and climate-resilient farming technologies to strengthen food production.

Farmer Recounts Sharp Decline in Maize Harvest

Mr Danjuma Nelson, a farmer in Adamawa State, said irregular rainfall and drought had seriously affected his farming activities over the past three years.

He recalled that during the previous farming season, rainfall started later than expected, forcing him to begin planting in early June. And sadly, a severe drought struck around July lasting for almost a month, significantly reducing his harvest. He said: "Where I used to harvest 100 bags of maize, I

got only 31 bags."

Mr Nelson said the changes had also affected his income and reduced his capacity to continue farming.

According to him, he spent about ₦1.25 million on farming, but earned only ₦80,000 from the produce leaving him with a shortfall of ₦570,000.

He noted that he had not received any government support as a farmer. He however called on the government to support farmers with low-interest agricultural loans and subsidies on fertiliser and agrochemicals to help sustain production.

Expert Identifies Other Factors Worsening Food Insecurity

An independent agricultural economist, Dr Balthiya Alfred Fakuta, has described the study's finding as significant and alarming, saying it reflects the vulnerability of farmers operating in a predominantly rain-fed agricultural system.

Fakuta, a lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Calabar, and an indigene of Adamawa State, said irregular rainfall, prolonged dry spells, drought, flooding and changing planting seasons were affecting crop growth and productivity.

She, however, cautioned against attributing declining crop yields solely to climate change, identifying other

factors including declining soil fertility, high costs of agricultural inputs, insecurity, farmer-herder conflicts, inadequate access to credit, poor mechanisation and limited agricultural extension services.

According to her, poor rural roads, inadequate storage and processing facilities, and weak market access also reduce farmers' profitability and undermine household food security.

Fakuta said the government's provision of subsidised fertiliser, improved seeds, tractors, extension services and weather information was commendable, but insufficient to address the challenges facing farmers.

She identified inadequate irrigation infrastructure, limited access to affordable agricultural finance and insurance, insufficient extension coverage, poor storage facilities and weak market linkages as critical gaps requiring attention.

She stressed that government interventions should be assessed not merely by the quantity of agricultural inputs distributed but by whether they translate into improved crop yields and farmers' incomes.

She said: "The need is extremely urgent. Adamawa has considerable agricultural potential and water re-

Contd Page 15

WORLD

Climate Change Threatens Food Security In Adamawa As 94.8% Of Farmers Report Crop Yield Changes - Dr Tari

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sources, particularly around the Benue and Gongola river systems. Expanding irrigation will reduce farmers’ dependence on unpredictable rainfall and create opportunities for year-round production.”

Dr Fakuta also recommended the promotion of climate-smart practices, including the use of drought-tolerant seeds, conservation agriculture, agro-forestry, crop diversification and efficient water management.

She urged the Adamawa State Government to prioritise the rehabilitation of existing irrigation schemes, development of small-scale irrigation facilities and improved access to early-maturing crop varieties.

She further called for stronger collaboration between universities, research institutions and meteorological agencies to provide farmers with location-specific climate information and practical adaptation strategies.

Ministry Outlines Interventions for Farmers

Responding to the findings, Dr Heidy Edgar, a Permanent Secretary with the Adamawa State Ministry of Agriculture, in a phone interview that the government had introduced several interventions to support farmers and improve agricultural production.

She said the state government provided fertiliser to farmers at subsidised rates during the last wet-season farming period, to encourage increased production.

Dr Edgar added that the government also provided improved varieties of seeds to farmers as part of its agricultural support measures.

She also highlighted that the state government procured tractors around May 2026, ahead of the rainy-season farming period, and distributed them across the state’s 21 local government areas to improve farmers’ access to mechanised land preparation.

According to her, timely and proper land preparation could improve cultivation and contribute to better agricultural productivity.

The Permanent Secretary also identified agricultural extension workers as part of the ministry’s efforts to help farmers adopt climate-smart agricultural practices.

She said the workers regu-

larly engaged with farmers to educate them on farming techniques that could help mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce production costs.

On the researcher’s finding that farmers had limited awareness of climate change, Edgar said: “The ministry had, over the years, used radio jingles and agricultural extension workers to raise awareness among farming communities.”

She added that early warnings and information about expected rainfall patterns had also been disseminated to farmers across the state’s local government areas.

She however acknowledged that more needed to be done to improve farmers’ understanding of climate change and their ability to respond to its effects.

In her words: “There is still much that can be done to further improve on that,” adding that the ministry was considering ways to intensify awareness campaigns and improve farmers’ knowledge of climate adaptation measures.

Researcher Urges Stronger Irrigation Investment

Despite the interventions outlined by the ministry, Tari maintained that expanding irrigation infrastructure and access to drought-tolerant seeds should remain priorities for the state.

He argued that reliance on rain-fed agriculture alone was increasingly inadequate amid changing rainfall patterns and the growing threat of drought and flooding.

The researcher urged the Adamawa State Government to prioritise climate-smart agricultural policies, including improved access to drought-tolerant seeds, irrigation equipment, water-management infrastructure and soil-conservation facilities.

He also called for collaboration among researchers, government ministries, agricultural agencies, non-governmental organisations, development partners and the media to strengthen climate education and agricultural adaptation.

According to him, further research is needed to establish how different crops respond to changing climatic conditions so that agricultural interventions can be tailored to farmers’ needs.

He also advocated a coordi-



Dr Vahyala Adamu Tari, Researcher

nated approach to environmental protection, including addressing deforestation and bush burning while providing communities with viable alternatives to activities that contribute to environmental degradation.

The researcher said climate-related pressures on food production could undermine efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2, which seeks to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and Goal 13, which calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

He identified Goal 2 as the primary focus of the study, while Goal 13 provided a framework for examining the adaptation measures needed to protect agricultural production.

With the 2030 deadline for achieving the SDGs approaching, Tari called for practical interventions to improve food availability and strengthen farmers’ capacity to withstand climate-related shocks.

He said expanding irrigation and making improved seeds more accessible should be among the government’s immediate priorities for addressing food insecurity in

Adamawa State. Tari said he had published the research through two public universities in Nigeria in the weeks preceding the interview.



Dr Balthiya Alfred Fakuta

South Africa

Mandela's most magnanimous act: Inviting the man who sent him to prison to lunch

Twenty-seven years behind bars, yet Nelson Mandela sat Percy Yutar at his presidential table — and in doing so, delivered the most powerful lesson in leadership that modern politics has yet to learn

By: Ashford Kimani

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Some men leave prison seeking revenge. Nelson Mandela left prison and invited one of the men responsible for putting him there to his dining table. It was not weakness. It was a devastating demonstration of the difference between possessing power and having the character to use it wisely.

There is something deeply uncomfortable about the story of Mandela and Percy Yutar. It forces us to confront a question that many political leaders would rather sidestep: what do you do when the person who helped destroy the best years of your life suddenly finds himself entirely at your mercy?

You could humiliate him. You could make him answer publicly for his past. You could remind him, in front of television cameras, that you lost 27 years of your life partly because he stood on the opposite side of the courtroom. You could ensure that his name became permanently synonymous with the injustice he helped administer.

Or you could invite him to lunch. In 1995, Mandela did precisely that. His guest was Yutar, the former prosecutor in the 1963 Rivonia Trial — the judicial proceeding that sent Mandela and several other anti-apartheid activists to prison for life. Yutar had represented the apartheid state against men whose political struggle would eventually transform South Africa. He had sought severe punishment for the accused at a time when the death penalty remained a very real and frightening possibility.

Mandela received a life sentence and spent 27 years behind bars.

Twenty-seven years. Sit with that for a moment before rushing to celebrate the lunch. Twenty-seven birthdays missed. Twenty-seven years of family life interrupted. Twenty-seven years in which the world changed, history moved and civilisations shifted — while one of its most consequential political figures remained confined behind prison walls. His children grew up without him. His mother died. His marriage to Winnie Mandela endured extraordinary and almost unbearable pressures. The world did not wait. And yet, when he finally became president, Mandela did something that should embarrass many of today's occupants of presidential palaces across the globe.

He invited his former prosecutor to lunch.

When journalists identified Yutar as the man who had prosecuted him,

Mandela did not erupt in anger. He calmly corrected the reporter's suggestion that Yutar had personally sent him to the gallows, then quietly observed that the matter belonged to the past. The meal was even arranged to accommodate Yutar's Jewish religious requirements. This was not merely a meeting between two former courtroom adversaries. It was a deliberate, thoughtful demonstration of consideration towards someone who had once served a system that denied millions of South Africans their basic humanity. Yutar was reportedly astonished. He reportedly wondered aloud in what other country a head of government would invite to lunch the man who had prosecuted him thirty years earlier.

That question ought to have embarrassed the entire political establishment.

Mandela had emerged from prison without developing the appetite for vengeance that has consumed so many people who have suffered considerably less. He possessed the presidency, the moral authority of the liberation struggle and the deep affection of millions. He could have used all three to settle personal scores. Instead, he used the occasion to demonstrate something far more powerful — that the presidency was bigger than his personal grievances, and that he was bigger than the system that had tried to break him.

But let us not turn this encounter into a simplistic fairy tale, because it is far richer and more complicated than that.

Yutar was not necessarily a repentant man genuinely seeking forgiveness. Years later, he advanced the controversial argument that his prosecution had somehow helped save Mandela and his co-accused from execution by securing life sentences rather than death. That interpretation was vigorously challenged by people associated with the defence, who regarded it as a self-serving attempt to rewrite history and claim credit for an outcome that was ultimately determined by the court. Mandela's generosity at the lunch table did not automatically absolve Yutar of his historical role, nor did a presidential meal transform the apartheid judicial system into an instrument of justice.

Forgiveness must never be confused with historical amnesia.

Mandela understood something that many contemporary leaders have spectacularly failed to grasp: you can forgive an individual without sanitising the injustice of the system he served. You can extend a hand without surrendering the truth. You can refuse revenge without abandoning accountability. These are not contradictions. In Mandela's hands,



Mandela sat Percy Yutar at his presidential table

they were the very foundations of statecraft.

Sadly, our politics has produced an alarming number of leaders who understand power only as an instrument of punishment.

When political administrations change, the language of revenge tends to follow almost immediately. Opponents are threatened with investigations. Former allies become enemies. Public institutions risk being converted into weapons in personal political battles. The new occupant of power often behaves as though the country has been handed over as private property — to be used, distributed and withheld according to personal preference.

In Kenya, where political competition is frequently and intensely personalised, Mandela's example deserves far more than a passing nod of admiration.

How many of our leaders can sit across a table from someone who opposed them, humiliated them or contributed to their political suffering without turning the encounter into a theatrical demonstration of superiority? How many can genuinely distinguish between the legitimate demands of justice and the selfish appetite for revenge? More importantly, how many understand that winning an election is not remotely the same thing as earning the moral authority to govern?

Mandela's greatness was not that he forgot what had happened to him. He could hardly forget — and no reasonable person would have expected him to. His greatness was that he refused to allow the men who prosecuted him to determine the kind of leader he would become. They had stolen 27 years of his life. He was not about to let them steal

his character as well.

There is another uncomfortable lesson here that tends to be overlooked. Forgiveness is often demanded of victims by people who have never personally experienced the injustice in question. It is easy to preach reconciliation when someone else has paid the price. Mandela's decision was entirely his own, arrived at through his own moral reasoning on his own terms. It should never be invoked to pressure other victims of injustice into silence, or used as a convenient excuse to shield perpetrators from accountability. His was a personal act of magnanimity. It was not a blanket pardon for apartheid.

And perhaps that is precisely what makes the lunch so remarkable. Mandela did not stage a grand speech about forgiveness. He did not issue a presidential decree proclaiming himself magnanimous. He simply invited Yutar, attended to his religious needs and allowed the world to witness an encounter that quietly challenged every conventional idea about power, memory and human dignity.

There is a difference between a powerful man who demands respect and a great man who commands it without asking.

Mandela had every reason to hate Yutar. He had every reason to refuse him an audience. He had every reason to ensure that history would remember their respective roles with the starkest possible contrast. Instead, he sat Yutar at his table. And the question worth asking is not whether Yutar deserved the invitation. The question is whether Mandela needed to prove anything to him at all.

He did not.

The man who had once stood in court seeking Nelson Mandela's punishment was now sitting in the home of the president of a democratic South Africa, enjoying a meal prepared with genuine consideration for his faith. That was not a victory in a courtroom. It was a victory of character — quiet, complete and unrepeatable.

Mandela had lost 27 years to prison, but he refused to surrender a single additional day to bitterness.

And here is the question that should haunt every leader who confuses power with greatness: if you cannot sit down with yesterday's adversary without plotting tomorrow's revenge, what exactly have you conquered?

Mandela conquered apartheid's prison walls. More remarkably still, he refused to allow those walls to become the boundaries of his heart. *Ashford Kimani is a teacher of English and Literature who writes on education and social affairs.*

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

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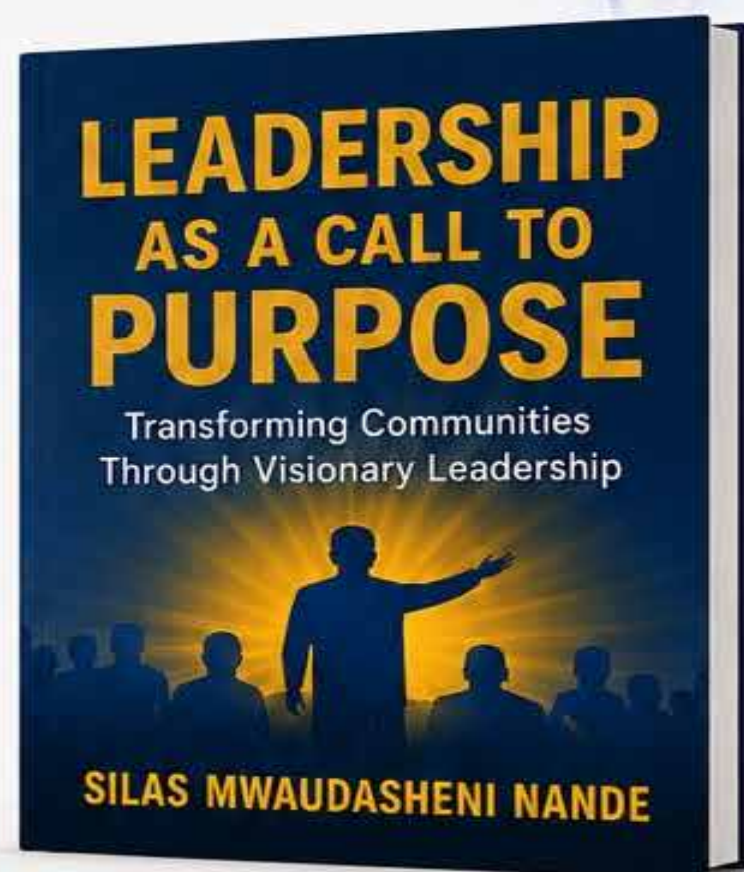
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Diaspora

Netanyahu loses his majority: Israel's election throws the Middle East into fresh uncertainty

The Israeli prime minister won more seats than any rival but fell short of a governing majority, opening a political crisis with profound implications for the region and for Washington

By: Jack Roberts
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Israel woke on Wednesday to a political landscape as fractured as the conflicts still raging on its borders. The results of the 27 October 2026 Knesset elections have confirmed what many observers feared going in: no bloc has won a clear majority, and the country that has been at the centre of the Middle East's most consequential wars now faces the very real prospect of prolonged political paralysis at precisely the moment it can least afford it.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-of-centre Likud party emerged as the single largest party in the 120-seat parliament, securing 27 seats. The wider bloc of parties aligned with Netanyahu won 53 seats in total — more than any rival grouping, but still short of the 61 seats needed to form a government. The centrist Yashar party, led by former military chief Gadi Eisenkot, led a rival bloc that secured 48 seats. Arab-led parties, which have declared their opposition to Netanyahu, claimed the remaining 19 seats — a record high that has already become one of the most contested features of an already contentious result.

Netanyahu has wasted little time in raising allegations of election fraud linked to Arab-led parties, a move that Israeli authorities have greeted with notable scepticism. Some have opened investigations; others have stated publicly that the allegations appear to lack evidence. For a man who has led his country longer than any other prime minister in its history — serving between 1996 and 1999, again from 2009 to 2021, and continuously since 2022 — the accusations carry a familiar ring. Netanyahu has navigated inconclusive elections before, leading successive caretaker governments for over a year following the inconclusive polls of April and September 2019. He has been on trial for corruption-related charges since 2020. His political resilience, admired by supporters and unnerving to opponents, has become a defining feature of Israeli public life.

Under Israeli law, President Isaac Herzog must assign the task of forming a government within seven days of the official publication of results, expected on 4 November. The designated leader will then have 28 days — extendable by a further 14 — to assemble a coalition. If that effort fails, other figures may be given the opportunity. Should the entire process reach a dead end, Netanyahu's current administration would remain in office on a caretaker basis pending a fresh election, most likely



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

in early 2027.

The arithmetic of coalition-building is fiendishly complicated. The most immediate question is whether the uncertainty will force some form of power-sharing arrangement between Netanyahu and Eisenkot, potentially featuring a rotation of the prime ministership — a mechanism Israel has used before, with mixed results. Netanyahu is reportedly not without leverage in any such negotiation. According to analysts tracking the talks, he may seek to exploit the possibility of renewed joint military action with the United States against Iran as a bargaining chip, using the threat of regional escalation to pressure rivals into a unity government on his terms. Before the election, Eisenkot rejected any arrangement that would see Netanyahu serve as prime minister. Whether that position holds under the pressure of coalition arithmetic remains to be seen.

A second possibility, more politically combustible, involves Eisenkot's bloc forming a minority government with the support of Arab-led parties. The Ra'am party, which was part of the eight-party coalition that briefly unseated Netanyahu in 2021 before that government unravelled in 2022, could in theory provide the numbers needed. So could passive backing from the Arab-led

Joint List. During the election campaign, however, significant voices within Eisenkot's own bloc publicly opposed accepting Arab support. The Hamas-led attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 — which killed around 1,200 Israelis and triggered the military campaign in Gaza — have deepened mistrust and made the prospect of Arab involvement in a governing coalition politically sensitive in ways that go beyond tactical positioning. Eisenkot has reportedly indicated that any coalition partner, including Ra'am, would need to formally recognise Hamas as a terrorist organisation and support its destruction. Whether Ra'am would accept such conditions remains an open and uncomfortable question. The implications extend far beyond Israeli domestic politics. Since October 2023, the Netanyahu government has directed military operations that Israeli officials credit with substantially degrading threats posed by Iran and its regional allies — in Gaza, in Lebanon and elsewhere. Those same operations have resulted in tens of thousands of civilian casualties and have profoundly destabilised the wider region, drawing sustained international criticism and, in some cases, sanctions from Western governments. Within the cabinet, ultra-nationalist ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben

Gvir have shaped policies on Israeli settlements and security operations in the West Bank that critics argue have inflamed Palestinian communities and undermined what little remains of the Palestinian Authority's capacity to govern.

A change of government could, in principle, alter some of those policies. Eisenkot has pledged that no Palestinian state would be established under his leadership — a position that aligns with Netanyahu's on the central question — but he has also called for a formal state commission of inquiry into the failures that allowed the October 2023 attacks to occur, the repeal of legislation passed under the previous government that critics say politicises Israel's judiciary, and a resolution of the long-running and deeply divisive dispute over military conscription for ultra-Orthodox Haredi Jews. Such a government might also be more willing to engage with American and European pressure on West Bank policy, potentially reducing some of the friction that has strained Israel's relationships with its traditional allies.

Washington's role in whatever emerges will be closely watched. President Donald Trump endorsed Netanyahu near the end of the campaign, a public gesture of support that was noted carefully in Jerusalem

and in regional capitals alike. Before the vote, Netanyahu was reportedly in contact with both American and European officials about the possibility of a unity government — one that would include Eisenkot but exclude the ultra-nationalists Ben Gvir and Smotrich. According to one media report, such an arrangement might be more receptive to American-backed regional initiatives and could strengthen the prospects of expanding the Abraham Accords, the normalisation agreements between Israel and several Arab states that were brokered during Trump's first term. One scenario reportedly under discussion includes a presidential pardon by Herzog for Netanyahu as part of a broader political settlement.

In Washington, the Israeli election has landed in a Congress already sharply divided over American policy towards Israel. Several members of the 119th Congress have proposed conditions on certain military sales, citing the impact of Israeli operations on Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. Others have tabled legislation targeting Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank or individuals deemed to be threatening stability there. The outcome of Israel's coalition negotiations will shape how those debates develop and what posture American lawmakers adopt towards continued military assistance and defence co-operation in the year ahead.

The harder truth, which the election results have made impossible to ignore, is that Israel faces an extraordinary set of challenges simultaneously: active conflicts on multiple fronts, a polarised domestic politics, an international community growing increasingly critical of its conduct in Gaza and the West Bank, and a governing process that has now, for the fifth time in seven years, produced results too ambiguous to yield a clear mandate.

Netanyahu has survived every previous version of this moment. Whether the mathematics of this particular election, and the character of this particular opposition, finally change that calculation is the question that will dominate Israeli and regional politics for weeks to come. The ghost students in America's student aid scheme never sat in their classrooms. The ghost government in Jerusalem may soon be all Israel has — and a region already burning cannot afford to wait.

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FOOTBALL

When a Name Becomes More Than a Game:

Beyond the Legend: Ronaldo, the Making of a Global Icon

By: Pragatee Gupta
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- Born in Funchal, Madeira, on 5 February 1985, Cristiano grew up in a family that faced financial difficulties. Football wasn't handed to him on a silver platter; he had to pursue it through sacrifice and determination.
- At around 12, he joined Sporting's youth academy in Lisbon. In a later UEFA interview, he recalled how difficult the decision was for him and his parents. For a child, leaving at such a young age meant facing loneliness and uncertainty in pursuit of an ambition no one could guarantee.
- His talent developed quickly. By his teenage years, he was training with senior groups at Sporting. In 2003, an impressive performance against Manchester United helped secure his move to England.
- At 18, he began life in a different country, surrounded by experienced, respected players, and faced new challenges.

Some legends are born beneath the brightest lights; others begin far from the spotlight, carrying little more than a dream. Cristiano Ronaldo's (fans fondly know him by his surname) journey began on the Portuguese island of Madeira, where a boy's love for football would eventually become a global phenomenon. I never followed football passionately. Yet I knew Ronaldo's name long before I looked beyond the fame. What drew me towards him was not simply his ability to score goals, but the discipline behind his achievements, the intensity of his ambition and the emotions he sometimes struggled to conceal.

I wondered what kind of journey could shape a person into a figure recognised across continents, even by people who rarely watch football.

Perhaps that is where Ronaldo's story becomes more than sport. It invites us to look beyond the legend and discover the human journey behind the name.

Born in Funchal, Madeira, on 5 February 1985, Cristiano grew up in a family that faced financial difficulties. Football wasn't handed to him on a silver platter; he had to pursue it through sacrifice and determination. At around 12, he joined Sporting's youth academy in Lisbon. In a later UEFA interview, he recalled how difficult the decision was for him and his parents. For a child, leaving at such a young age meant facing loneliness and uncertainty in pursuit of an ambition no one could guarantee.

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At 18, he began life in a different country, surrounded by experienced, respected players, and faced new challenges.

His rise was extraordinary, but it wasn't talent alone. It demanded adaptation, persistence and a willingness to keep learning.

Madeira gave him his beginning. Lisbon provided the opportunity. What followed would transform his life—

and football history.

At Manchester United, Ronaldo grew from an exciting young winger into a decisive goal scorer. His first Ballon d'Or, won in 2008, marked his arrival among football's elite.

His 2009 move to Real Madrid opened another remarkable chapter. He scored 451 goals in 438 competitive appearances for the Spanish club, helping it win four UEFA Champions League titles. Later came Juventus, a return to Manchester United and a new challenge with Saudi Arabia's Al-Nassr.

His achievements are extraordinary, but they reveal as much as they do. Reaching the top requires ability; remaining competitive for years demands continual effort, adaptation and discipline.

The world sees the goals, celebrations and trophies. It rarely sees the repetition behind them—the training, preparation and countless hours spent refining a skill that spectators may witness for only a few seconds.

Ronaldo's career success is not a single moment of brilliance. It is often the accumulation of decisions made before anyone begins applauding.

His public image is closely associated with confidence, competitiveness and an uncompromising desire to win. Yet his emotional reactions have also revealed how intensely he experiences the game.

We often expect successful people to appear strong in every situation. Ronaldo's tears, frustration and visible disappointment challenge the idea that greatness requires emotional invulnerability.

His reactions will not always be interpreted positively, and admiration shouldn't prevent fair criticism. Competitive intensity can inspire extraordinary performances.

I cannot claim to know Ronaldo personally, and I would not pretend that public appearances reveal his entire character. What I find compelling is the reminder that even the most celebrated athletes experience pressure, disappointment and vulnerability.

Football has given him international recognition, but it has also placed him under

constant scrutiny. Every performance invites judgement, and every reaction can become a global discussion.

Perhaps that's why his story reaches beyond football. Most of us will never experience the pressure of a stadium filled with thousands of spectators. Yet, we understand what it means to care deeply about something, fear failure, and struggle with the expectations placed on us.

Ronaldo's fame extends far beyond the pitch. His name is tied to international brands, commercial success, and a lifestyle few people will experience. But influence can be measured in more than visibility.

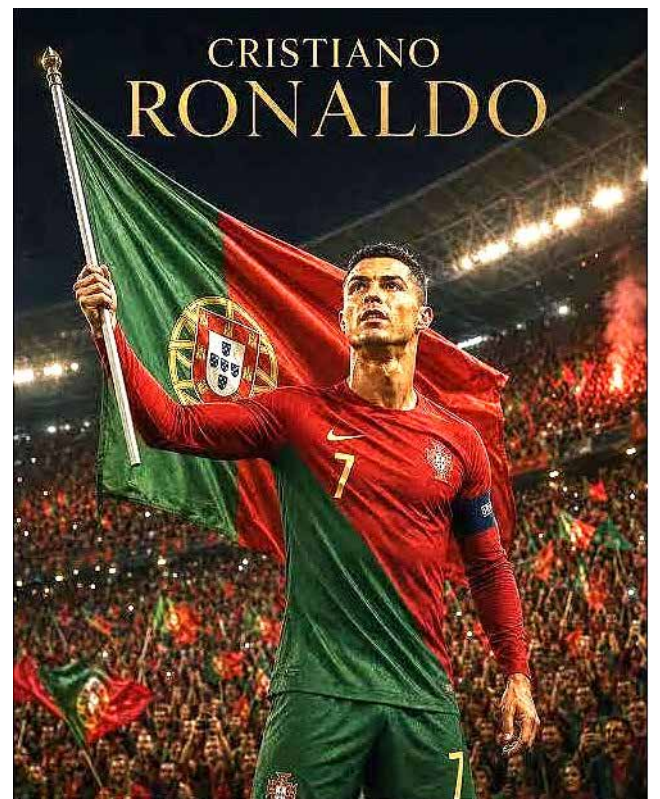
In 2013, he joined Save the Children as a Global Artist Ambassador, supporting efforts to address child hunger and obesity and promote healthier lives for children. His involvement showed how a celebrated athlete's public reach can draw attention to causes beyond sport. Charitable work alone cannot tell us everything about a person, just as wealth and fame cannot define an entire life. Nevertheless, using public influence to support meaningful causes shows how sporting recognition can reach beyond competition.

Ronaldo's career has also attracted controversy and criticism. In October 2026, the Portuguese Football Federation suspended him for 30 days after he left the national-team camp amid a disagreement over his role. He later apologised for leaving his teammates and failing to acknowledge supporters, and said he was willing to represent Portugal again.

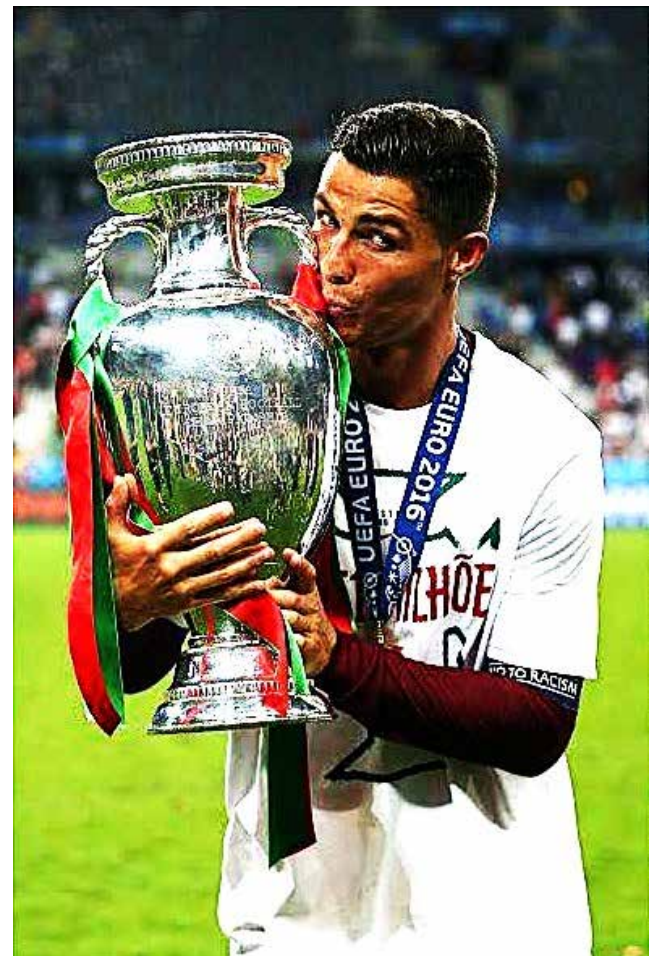
This reminds us that even an exceptional career comes with consequences. A serious tribute need not conceal uncomfortable moments. Recognising a person's achievements while examining their mistakes honestly makes the account more credible.

Admiration should encourage us to look more closely, not stop us from asking questions.

Ronaldo's relationship with Portugal represents one of the defining parts of his career. He made his senior international debut in 2003 and gradually became the face of a generation of Por-



Flag bearer Cristiano Ronaldo is respected by fans globally. Photo Courtesy.



Ronaldo earns honours through hard work and training. Photo Courtesy.

tuguese football. At EURO 2004, Portugal reached the final but lost to Greece. Twelve years later, the country returned to the European Championship final. Ronaldo had to leave the match against France through injury.

He watched from the sidelines as his teammates secured a 1-0 victory after extra time. Portugal had won its first major senior men's

international title. That triumph belonged to an entire team.

Ronaldo's journey as captain formed an important part of the occasion supporters would remember.

By September 2026, UEFA recorded him as Portugal's most-capped men's inter-

FOOTBALL

When a Name Becomes More Than a Game:

Beyond the Legend: Ronaldo, the Making of a Global Icon

Contd from Page 20
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Worth Noting:

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- His achievements are extraordinary, but they reveal as much as they do. Reaching the top requires ability; remaining competitive for years demands continual effort, adaptation and discipline.
- The world sees the goals, celebrations and trophies. It rarely sees the repetition behind them—the training, preparation and countless hours spent refining a skill that spectators may witness for only a few seconds.
- Ronaldo's career success is not a single moment of brilliance. It is often the accumulation of decisions made before anyone begins applauding.



A shared triumph... Leading a generation of fighters to secure an unforgettable chapter in football history. Photo Courtesy.

national player, with 234 appearances and a world-record 146 international goals. These numbers represent more than individual excellence; they reflect an amazing service to his country. A player may represent several clubs throughout a career, but a national shirt carries a different meaning. For Ronaldo, Portugal connects his international achievements to the place where his story began. He has helped put his country's name in front of audiences worldwide. Portugal, in turn, has given his achievements a national identity and a place in a shared sporting history. In August 2026, Ronaldo said the current year was probably his last in professional football. His words brought a question that once seemed distant into sharper focus: what happens when a career that has defined an era finally ends? His comments reflected his thinking, not a formal retirement announcement. That distinction matters. Until he makes a definitive decision, the end of his playing career remains a developing story. For fans who began watching football because of Ronaldo rather than out of lifelong devotion to the sport, the thought carries a particular emotional weight. His possible departure would mean more than losing the opportunity to watch a celebrated player. It would mark the approaching end of a

sporting chapter that has influenced people far beyond football's traditional audience. Still, retirement is a personal decision. Supporters may want another season, another goal, or one last unforgettable performance. But the athlete who has lived through a career's demands must ultimately decide when to move forward. I would not want Ronaldo to continue because the world is reluctant to say goodbye. Nor should his achievements be reduced to a countdown towards his final match. A career deserves to be remembered for its entire journey: the beginnings, the breakthroughs, the disappointments, the comebacks and the moments that brought people together. Not everyone inspired by Ronaldo will become a footballer. Not everyone who admires him will share his ambitions. Yet his journey offers lessons that extend beyond sport. Talent can open doors, but dedication helps us make use of opportunities. Success, however impressive, does not remove the need to keep learning. His story does not promise that hard work will bring everyone fame or extraordinary wealth. Life is more complicated than that. Everyone faces different circumstances. But it reminds us not to decide our limits too early or mistake a diffi-



More than a player, the face of a nation... Carrying the hopes, identity and pride of Portugal on the global stage. Photo Courtesy.

cult chapter for the end of our story. I do not know when Ronaldo will finally leave football. What we know is his influence has reached people who may never step onto a professional pitch. His journey has given reasons to look more closely at the game—and at the determination, sacrifice, and humanity behind sporting greatness. One day, the stadiums will welcome new stars. Records will be challenged, and another generation will create its own unforgettable moments. Ronaldo's story will remain part of football's collective memory. Beyond the legend is a journey. Beyond the records is a human story. Beyond the final whistle lies the possibility that one person's determination may continue to inspire others long after the game ends. Pragatee Gupta is an Award-winning journalist, writer, and photographer..

Editing: Shamlal Puri, Senior Editor, London



More than a machine ...The raw emotion of a global icon reminding us that even legends feel the pain on the pitch.

The evolution of the female image in Uzbek literature and its role in the socio-cultural structure

The study provides an in-depth analysis of mythological elements in folklore, the philosophy of classical literature, the literary environments of nineteenth-century Kokand and Khiva, social tragedies in the enlightenment prose of the Jadid period, socialist realism in Soviet literature, and the psychological and existential transformations in contemporary Uzbek prose after independence

By: Shukurova Laylo Fakhriddin
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Abstract

This comprehensive scholarly article systematically examines the socio-cultural status of women and the centuries-long evolution of female characters in the history of Uzbek literature through comparative-historical and gender-based approaches. The study provides an in-depth analysis of mythological elements in folklore, the philosophy of classical literature, the literary environments of nineteenth-century Kokand and Khiva, social tragedies in the enlightenment prose of the Jadid period, socialist realism in Soviet literature, and the psychological and existential transformations in contemporary Uzbek prose after independence. The article theoretically substantiates the patterns underlying the development of female characters from traditional symbolic archetypes into complex individuals with rich inner conflicts, as well as their transition from passive objects to active subjects.

Keywords: Uzbek literature, female image, evolution, gender interpretation, Jadidism, socialist realism, Zulfiya, O'tkir Hoshimov, Zulfiya Qurolboy qizi, psychologism, national mentality, archetype of loyalty.

Introduction

Literature is one of the greatest mirrors reflecting the social thought, cultural level, historical experiences, and spiritual values of every nation. Within this spiritual mirror, women's lives and their roles in the family, state, and socio-cultural structure have always been among the central and aesthetically significant themes, alongside different social groups and systems of social relations. In Uzbek literary studies, examining gender issues, women's rights, and the evolution of characters in literary works is important not only for identifying aesthetic principles but also for understanding profound socio-anthropological and historical-philosophical processes. Throughout the centuries, changing socio-political systems, religious paradigms, the consequences of colonialism, and different layers of national mentality have directly and significantly influenced the artistic representation and typological characteristics of female characters in literature. The evolution of female representations has covered an extensive historical distance, beginning with mythological goddesses and heroic girls in folklore and extending to the complex, urbanized women of the modern era. By examining this evolutionary process, it is possible to understand how the



spiritual and intellectual development of the Uzbek people has transformed over time. The relevance and purpose of this study are to identify the artistic and aesthetic nature of female characters characteristic of different historical and social periods of Uzbek literary thought, examine their psychological representations in epics, poetry, and prose, and analyze the dynamic changes in their inner worlds. Through this analysis, the study aims to develop a comprehensive scholarly understanding of the evolution of female characters in Uzbek literature.

Main Body

Mythological and Folkloric Roots: Symbols of Resilience and Sovereignty in Heroic Epics

The oldest and most fundamental layers of the concept of woman in Uzbek literary thought can be traced back to oral folklore, particularly mythological narratives, fairy tales, and heroic epics. In ancient myths, influenced by the legacy of matriarchal societies and subsequent totemistic beliefs, women were initially portrayed as life-giving figures, sacred protectors of clans and tribes, and beings possessing supernatural power. The character of Barchinoy in Alpomish, one of the most prominent masterpieces of Uzbek heroic epic poetry, vividly embodies ancient ethnic ideals and perceptions of women's social freedom. An analysis of the epic reveals that Barchin is not merely a symbol of physical beauty or a woman confined to domestic responsibilities. Rather, she is an independent individual capable of competing with the most powerful heroic men in physical strength, military ability, and intellectual capacity. Barchin's setting of four challenges for the heroes at Oydin Lake is not

simply a fairy-tale detail. It represents a firm demand for a woman's right to determine her own destiny, establish her social position, and exercise her freedom. By setting these conditions, she becomes an active participant in social relations. The underlying philosophy that the hero who fulfills her conditions will win and receive her hand in marriage reflects the idea of female independence. In lyrical and romantic epics such as Oygul va Baxtiyor and Kuntug'mish, female protagonists are also portrayed not as helpless figures who merely weep in the face of difficulties, but as courageous and determined individuals who stand alongside men and participate in strategic decisions concerning the destinies of states and tribes. Therefore, in the folkloric period, Uzbek women can be seen as possessing a high degree of moral and physical strength in literary representation. The Representation of Women in Classical Literature: From the Philosophy of Divine Love to the Poetics of Real Historical Figures

During the Eastern Renaissance and the development of classical Uzbek literature, particularly in Chagatai-language poetry, the image of women acquired new spiritual dimensions through Sufi symbolism and philosophical-aesthetic interpretations. The great poet and thinker Alisher Navoi elevated the female individual to the level of human perfection in his immortal epic collection Khamsa. The character of Shirin in Farhod va Shirin challenges the traditional image of the passive beloved in Eastern literature. In Navoi's interpretation, Shirin is an educated woman with considerable intellectual and philosophical abilities who possesses extensive knowledge of Greek and Eastern philosophy. Most importantly, she is an independent political leader capable of governing

Armenia wisely in economic, cultural, and judicial matters, placing the welfare of her people above her personal happiness. Meanwhile, the character of Layli in Layli va Majnun represents the dramatic, tragic, and existential rebellion of a woman's heart trapped within the strict moral and social conventions of feudal society and the constraints of tribal traditions. Layli is not merely a beautiful body viewed through the eyes of a man; through her love, she becomes a spiritual figure who attains divine knowledge. Despite the strict prohibitions imposed by society, she preserves her spiritual freedom and the sovereignty of her inner world. When examining Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's Baburnama, literature moves away from philosophical symbolism toward the depiction of realistic characters. Babur describes his grandmother, Eson Davlat Begim, and his mother, Qutlug' Nig'orxonim, emphasizing their intelligence and strong political will during periods of palace intrigue, military campaigns, and severe geopolitical crises. Eson Davlat Begim's military and tactical strategies in preserving the throne and punishing conspirators when Babur was still a young child serve as historical and documentary evidence of women's fundamental role in the governance of feudal states. By the nineteenth century, the emergence of poets such as Nodirabegim, Jahon Otin Uvaysiy, and Mahzuna in the literary environments of Kokand and Khiva initiated a significant transformation in the position of women as literary subjects in Uzbek literature. Women were no longer merely lyrical objects portrayed through the eyes of male writers. Instead, they began to express their own pain, sorrow, and spiritual resistance to social injustice and male dominance through ghazals and mukhammas poems. Nodira's

ghazals, in particular, demonstrate the independent and dignified position of the female heart within the social hierarchy. Jadid Literature and the Tragedies of National Awakening: The Fate of Women Under Ignorance and Feudal Oppression

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jadid enlightenment movement in Turkestan raised the issue of women's liberation, their freedom from oppressive forms of religious fanaticism, access to education, and transformation into equal members of society. These issues were presented not merely as social concerns but as essential conditions for the survival and development of the nation. In the works of leading Jadid writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Abdulhamid Cho'lpon, and Abdurauf Fitrat, female characters moved beyond the domestic and familial sphere to become central figures in social, political, and national liberation discourse. An analysis of Abdulla Qodiriy's novel O'tkan kunlar

The tragic destinies of Kumushbibi and Zaynab in this early Uzbek novel represent the culmination of social and moral conflicts between traditionalism, religious superstition, and feudal backwardness. Through Kumush, Qodiriy created not only an ideal of physical and moral beauty but also an image of Eastern intellectual independence shaped by the enlightened family environment of Margilan. Kumush possesses emotional independence and remains steadfast in her love for Otabek. However, the crisis caused by Otabek's second marriage in Tashkent, arranged by his parents against his wishes, draws both Kumush and Zaynab into a devastating

The evolution of the female image in Uzbek literature and its role in the socio-cultural structure

The study provides an in-depth analysis of mythological elements in folklore, the philosophy of classical literature, the literary environments of nineteenth-century Kokand and Khiva, social tragedies in the enlightenment prose of the Jadid period, socialist realism in Soviet literature, and the psychological and existential transformations in contemporary Uzbek prose after independence



Contd from Page 22

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psychological and physical tragedy. Zaynab, whose identity is gradually undermined by feudal stereotypes and the pressure of clan traditions, becomes another victim of this social system.

Zaynab's inner jealousy and psychological breakdown are consequences of the violence inflicted on female psychology by the feudal family system. Through the tragic destinies of these two women, Qodiriy reveals the legal and moral decline of an entire society and the corruption of its family institutions.

An analysis of Abdulhamid Cho'lpon's novel *Kecha va kunduz* Cho'lpon exposes the lack of women's rights under a cruel social order through the character of Zebi. She is an innocent young woman deprived of social, legal, and personal rights. As a result of her father's religious fanaticism and ignorance, she is forced into marriage as the fourth wife of Akbarali Mingboshi, a man several years older than her. Her tragedy lies in her innocent perception of the world through singing and pure emotions.

Cho'lpon connects Zebi's personal tragedy with the broader political crisis of society. At the end of the novel, Zebi becomes the victim of a crime she did not commit and is unjustly sentenced by a court of Tsarist Russia to exile in Siberia. Through

Zebi's character, Cho'lpon conveys a powerful message: a nation that keeps its women uneducated and enslaved can never fully liberate itself from the chains of colonialism. Soviet-Era Literature: Socialist Realism, Postwar Resilience, and the Formation of the Archetype of the "Devoted Uzbek Mother"

Soviet-era literature, following the principles of socialist realism, idealized women on the surface as leading workers and active participants in public life. Nevertheless, Uzbek writers managed to preserve the profound national, lyrical, and dramatic essence of Uzbek womanhood within these ideological frameworks.

The creative phenomenon of Zulfiya Isroilova and the representation of women in her poetry

In Zulfiya's poetry, the female image emerges through both luminous lyricism and profound social-philosophical reflection. Women in her works are not merely beautiful, emotionless beloved figures; they are individuals with deeply suffering hearts and strong characters who endure separation and the hardships of fate.

In poems such as *Matonat*, *Shu qiz edi*, and *Xotira*, written during the Second World War, women were elevated to symbols of national defense, loyalty, and freedom. In the poetic works written after the untimely death of her husband, Hamid Olimjon, Zulfiya created a lasting spiritual monument to Uzbek women's fidelity and enduring devotion.

She expanded the representation of Uzbek women beyond the family sphere, presenting them as creative, intellectual, and globally significant individuals in Uzbek poetry.

The concept of motherhood and womanhood in the works of O'tkir Hoshimov

In O'tkir Hoshimov's prose, the female image receives one of its most lyrical and emotionally profound interpretations. His novella *Dunyoning ishlari* is an outstanding literary tribute to motherhood in Uzbek literature. The Mother portrayed in this work represents the national archetype of a woman capable of carrying the concerns of the entire world in her heart and willing to make any sacrifice for her children. The characters of Qora amma, Robiya, and Qurbon xola in his novel *Ikki eshik orasi* also reveal the resilience and tragedy of Uzbek women who carried the burden of difficult physical labor, traditionally expected of men, during the war and the difficult postwar years.

The Period of Independence: Psychological Realism, Modernist Trends, and the Transformation of Contemporary Perspectives

Following independence in 1991, Uzbek literary thought experienced a fundamental aesthetic transformation. The false ideological idealization characteristic of Soviet literature and the exclusive emphasis on women's oppression and victimhood typical of the Jadid period gradually gave way to more complex representations. At the center of lit-

erature emerged the independent female individual, with her own inner conflicts, mistakes, and personal needs, demanding recognition of her distinct identity within society and the family.

The works of Zulfiya Qurolboy qizi and the analysis of female psychology

Zulfiya Qurolboy qizi is one of the contemporary Uzbek prose writers who boldly explores the hidden dimensions of female psychology. In her novel *Oyimtilla* and several short stories, the individual psychology of women is revealed through internal monologues and stream-of-consciousness techniques.

The character of Nilufar differs significantly from the traditional image of the obedient Uzbek woman. She is a dynamic character who constantly changes under the influence of childhood psychological trauma and the harsh social environment of the modern market economy. Nilufar strives for professional advancement, confronts the male-dominated world, and assumes responsibility for her own destiny.

New trends in contemporary prose In contemporary short stories by Xurshid Do'stmuhammad, Isajon Sulton, Erkin A'zam, and Javlon Jovliyev, female characters are portrayed amid the conflicts of the modern era, including economic migration, Westernization, and tensions between national values and changing social expectations. Women in contemporary literature are no longer represented merely as

housewives confined to the family. Instead, they emerge as entrepreneurs, social activists, politicians, and individuals striving for personal happiness and freedom.

Conclusion

The artistic and aesthetic nature of female characters and their socio-cultural significance in Uzbek literary studies have undergone fundamental and systematic changes alongside the historical, ideological, political, and cultural development of society. The evolutionary process that began with the free and sovereign heroic girls of folk epics was spiritualized in medieval classical poetry and elevated to the level of a spiritual renaissance.

The social tragedies of the Jadid period in the early twentieth century were followed by Soviet-era representations of resilient, devoted, and lyrically elevated mothers. The creative freedom that emerged during the independence period introduced a new type of female character into national literature: a modern woman who has undergone profound psychological transformation and is conscious of her individual rights.

In conclusion, the representation of women in Uzbek literature has evolved from a passive and disenfranchised object of artistic portrayal into an active social subject capable of determining her own destiny and identity.

French protests spread nationwide as tear gas and Halloween costumes fill the streets

Soaring living costs and police violence are driving hundreds of thousands of French citizens onto the streets each Saturday, testing the government of President Emmanuel Macron six months before a presidential election

By: John James
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French anti-government protests gripped cities across France again on Saturday as hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in what has become a weekly test of the Macron government's authority, with clashes erupting in several cities even as the vast majority of marchers kept the mood largely peaceful — some of them, remarkably, dressed as Spider-Man and Frankenstein for Halloween.

French police fired tear gas and clashed with groups of protesters in multiple locations as the demonstrations swept the country for the third consecutive Saturday. France's interior ministry reported approximately 320,000 people rallying nationwide, with Paris alone accounting for around 70,000, according to police figures. By Saturday night, authorities had recorded more than 560 arrests across the country — adding to the thousands detained in the wake of riots and looting that had marred the two preceding weekends.

The scenes varied sharply from city to city, capturing both the breadth and the complexity of a movement that has refused to dissipate despite a heavy security response. In Marseille, France's southern port city, demonstrators clashed directly with police. In Lyon, the country's third-largest city, protesters threw projectiles at officers, prompting the use of tear gas. In Toulouse, water cannon were deployed against an unauthorised protest drawing several thousand people, many of them young, some in costume. In Paris, meanwhile, thousands wound their way through the city's eastern districts beneath a circling police helicopter, carrying placards that captured the movement's mixture of frustration and dark humour: "No need for tear gas to make our future look bleak" and "Dressed up as an angry citizen for Halloween."

Hard-left presidential candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon joined the Paris march, having accused the Macron government of taking what he described as an increasingly authoritarian turn. His presence underlined the degree to which the protest movement has become entangled with the country's approaching presidential election, now less than six months away, with far-right leader Marine Le Pen currently leading opinion polls.

Not all participants were angry in the conventional sense. In the



Tear gas used in Paris and Lyon as French protests turn violent

northern city of Lille, 47-year-old Aurelie Herrmann chose to dance. "I dance because on television they only show damage and destruction, whereas you can perfectly well demonstrate in good spirits," she said. In Nantes, 31-year-old Camille Guerin was more direct about the politics: "We say no to the cost of living, no to the far right, yes to high school students' demands, yes to giving citizens a voice."

The contrast between these voices and the scenes of broken glass and burning buildings from previous weeks points to one of the most important features of this protest cycle: a movement with a broad social base that the French authorities have struggled to manage without alienating the very public whose support they need. Interior Minister Laurent Nunez had warned on Friday that police had prepared for violence on a scale comparable to the unrest two weeks earlier, when shops were looted and public buildings set ablaze. His office said authorities had detected social media calls urging protesters to use Halloween gatherings as cover for sparking what was described online as a "revolution."

The warning was sufficient to send

a chill through the business community. Some shopkeepers boarded up their premises again, anticipating the worst. Wael Boubaker, a café employee in eastern Paris, was covering a storefront with plywood panels as the day began. "Everyone is staying home," he said. "No one is going to come and buy anything." Alain Di Crescenzo, president of France's chamber of commerce, put it more pointedly when he told broadcaster France Inter: "Shopkeepers can't wait for Saturday to be over."

The protest movement that has now consumed three consecutive Saturdays did not begin with confrontation. It grew from a coalition of trade unions, student activists and ordinary citizens united by grievances over the soaring cost of living, persistent inequality and what students described as deteriorating conditions in schools and universities. Those economic concerns remain at the movement's core. France's economy, the second largest in the eurozone, is teetering on the edge of recession, and the government is simultaneously under pressure from European partners to reduce its debt levels. That combination leaves the Macron admin-

istration with almost no fiscal room to offer the kind of spending concessions that might take the heat out of the demonstrations.

But the movement has since grown beyond its original economic focus. A heavy-handed security response — including a ban on certain marches and serious injuries to some protesters — has brought civil liberties and the right to protest into the centre of the debate. Student demonstrators this week specifically complained that police had refused to authorise a march through central Paris, and they have vowed to stage fresh blockades of schools and universities in the week ahead. What began as anger at grocery bills has broadened into something more politically charged: a confrontation over the kind of country France is becoming.

That confrontation is unfolding in a political environment already crackling with tension. The presidential election is close enough for every protest, every arrest, every canister of tear gas to carry electoral significance. Le Pen's continued lead in the polls gives the government little comfort. Every Saturday that ends in disorder risks reinforcing a narrative

of governmental dysfunction; every Saturday that passes peacefully risks emboldening protesters to escalate. France is not alone. Similar youth-led demonstrations have erupted across Europe in recent weeks, with thousands of young Germans taking to the streets nationwide on the same Saturday. The sense of a continent-wide restlessness among younger generations, driven by economic insecurity and a feeling that established political institutions are failing them, lends the French protests a significance that extends well beyond the republic's own borders.

For now, France's Saturdays belong to the streets. Whether the coming week's threatened school blockades and the approaching election calendar eventually channel this energy into the ballot box — or deepen the crisis on the pavements — is the question that the Macron government, and France itself, cannot yet answer.