

BBI is unconstitutional, Court of Appeal rules

Joseph Wangui / Friday, August 20, 2021

Court of Appeal throws out BBI appeal

Courts have dealt President Uhuru Kenyatta and ODM party leader Raila Odinga another blow after declaring the Building Bridges Initiative Constitutional Amendment Bill (2020) illegal.

In the judgment on Friday, the Court of Appeal upheld the decision of the High Court to find the three-year quest by President Kenyatta and Mr Odinga to amend the Constitution through the BBI as unconstitutional.

The process started in March 2018 following a political truce between the two leaders.

The judgment, in which the second highest court was heavily critical of President Kenyatta and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, stated that the BBI bill was unconstitutional and usurped the people's sovereign power.

The seven-judge bench also issued a permanent injunction restraining the IEBC from processing the Bill or subjecting it to a referendum. The Bill had already been approved by parliament.

The judges also upheld the High Court's finding that the President has no authority to promote amendment of the Constitution through a Popular Initiative and that he can be sued in respect to his actions or omissions in the constitution.

"The popular initiative cannot be used by the government or the people's representatives. Popular initiative is for ordinary Kenyans," said the judges.

The judges also threw out contentions by the government and the BBI secretariat that the Kenya's Constitution does not have a basic structure.

End of BBI is unconstitutional, Court of Appeal rules

BBI: Court of Appeal judges give verdict | Nation

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

The Court of Appeal is giving its verdict on the President's controversial three-year quest to change the constitution, a ruling that could shake up the political landscape less than a year before elections.

President Uhuru Kenyatta argues his proposed modifications to the 2010 constitution will help end repeated cycles of election violence, a hot-button issue that has divided the political elite.

Read: Justice Sichale: President is not immune from civil suits

Ruling offers grounds to impeach President Kenyatta

BBI ruling: 'Disappointed' Raila Odinga vows to appeal

The reforms came about following a rapprochement between Mr Kenyatta and his erstwhile opponent Raila Odinga and a famous handshake between the two men after post-election fighting in 2017 left dozens of people dead.

The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) seeks notably to dilute the current winner-takes-all electoral system blamed by Mr Kenyatta for poll unrest, and create new posts including one of prime minister.

Follow the BBI liveblog here

Download a copy of the BBI report here: [bbi-report](#)

End of BBI: Court of Appeal judges give verdict | Nation

The BBI journey: From start to finish?

Silas Apollo / Friday, August 20, 2021

To change or not to change the Constitution? That is the question many Kenyans have been grappling with since the onset of the BBI process seeking to amend the key document ahead of next year's General Elections.

Initially conceived as a political truce between President Uhuru Kenyatta and ODM leader Raila Odinga through the March 2018 handshake, the amendment process has been tedious and sometimes divisive, pitting the political class against one another, and against the electorate.

Read: How Uhuru-Raila handshake killed the Opposition

Download a copy of the BBI report here: [bbi-report](#)

Central to this fight are the divisions between those who support the initiative and those opposed to it, with Mr Kenyatta and Mr Odinga on one hand and Deputy President William Ruto, his allies and some members of the civil society on the other.

Mr Kenyatta and Mr Odinga, alongside their allies, have argued that the amendment process aims to unite Kenyans and redistribute leadership positions and resources equally and equitably across the country.

Read: Raila: We won't take BBI case to Supreme Court if we lose appeal

Divisive

But Dr Ruto, his supporters and some in civil society have termed the process as unconstitutional and illegal, and whose intention is to create a top-heavy Executive that rewards a select few with leadership positions.

Some commentators and pundits now believe that while the process may have been noble at inception, its implementation has achieved the opposite of its desired goal, with politics and legal hurdles disrupting its full realisation.

Lawyer Adrian Kamotho, an advocate of the High Court and a commentator on governance issues, said the BBI process has for the past three years suffered both political and legal consequences, leading to the collapse of its intended purpose.

When the process kicked off, the intentions were noble. The handshake pacified the nation. However, issues began arising on subsequent processes of implementation, where divergent opinions began to unfold, he said.

Mr Kamotho reckons these divergent opinions arose from some of the processes used by its initiators to identify areas in the law that needed changing, the collection of views, opinions and the goodwill of a majority of Kenyans, and even the political class, turning a process that was meant to unite the country into a divisive one.

Changing the Constitution has always been an emotive and contentious subject. And so when you have a process that proposes close to 70 amendments, some of which have little impact on the issues dividing Kenyans, then issues arise, he said.

Another point of concern for others was the process used in identifying these changes and the fact that attention was not given to how the changes would be approached. These are the issues that triggered the litigation.

But others, like Herman Manyora of the University of Nairobi, believe that the process has all along suffered the political consequences of the Kenyatta succession in 2022.

He argues that the divisions, which have led to the litigation, have all been nothing but a derailment of the process by those who fear being left out or who believe that the process may curtail their political ambitions.

This is a process that was celebrated by many. Friends and foes came together. But then politics and the politics of succession came in, and that is why we saw people like Deputy President William Ruto openly opposing the process and some of its provisions. Issues like the legality of the secretariat of the task force were merely procedural issues, he said.

Championed as the beginning of a new political dispensation, the handshake gave birth to what would be the team responsible for initiating the amendment process, otherwise known as the Building Bridges to Unity Advisory Task Force, which was gazetted by President Kenyatta in May 2018.

While announcing their new aspirations for the country at the steps of Harambee House in Nairobi, Mr Kenyatta and Mr Odinga identified what they termed as the nine-point agenda highlighting some of the issues they said were ailing the country, and which the team would address.

The BBI journey: From start to finish?

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In November 2019, the task force came up with an interim report detailing recommendations that they identified as the issues Kenya needed to address and which they said would require a constitutional amendment.

The President would again in January 2020 gazette the Steering Committee on the Implementation of the Building Bridges to a United Kenya Task Force, comprising 14 members and a secretariat drawn from representatives of both Mr Kenyatta and Mr Odinga.

The committee was directed to submit its comprehensive review of BBI by June 30, 2020. Meanwhile, proponents of the BBI embarked on a popularisation tour all over the republic as activist Okiya Omtatah filed a petition in court seeking to stop the President from extending the mandate of the 14-member team.

During the popularisation tours, several issues arose, including constitutional changes, the need to have a united country and the creation of the position of a prime minister. While the issues raised included legal, policy and administrative, it is the legal reforms that became the most contentious.

Economist David Ndii and four other activists would in September 2020 moved to court to challenge the drive, even as the taskforce launched its report at the Bomas of Kenya, culminating in the collection of signatures, their verification and later the publication of the Constitutional Amendment Bill.

Read: Uhuru, Ruto and Raila launch BBI report at Bomas

Mr Manyora reckons the future of the initiative, and any other plans to amend the Constitution, are open for debate.

What the rulings by both the High Court and the Court of Appeal would do is that they will have major implications on the countrys political future going forward, and even into 2022. It may mark the end of the BBI or even create a new lease of life for others, he said.

Follow the liveblog tracking BBI Court of Appeal judgment [here](#)

Watch the live proceedings below:

BBI: Court of Appeal judges give verdict

BBI: Court of Appeal judges give verdict

End of The BBI journey: From start to finish?

MP alleges bias in quest for Chinese visas

Samwel Owino / Friday, August 20, 2021

Kikuyu MP Kimani Ichungwa has complained about denial of visas and work permits to Kenyans seeking to travel to China despite producing valid vaccination certificates.

Mr Ichungwa said Kenyans seeking to travel to the Asian country were being asked to show proof that they had received a Chinese jab.

The MP said the travel condition was being imposed on Kenyans despite Astrazeneca, which is being used for mass vaccination in the country, having been fully approved by the World Health Organization.

The lawmaker, who spoke on the floor of the National Assembly, demanded a statement on why Kenyans intending to travel on business and other purposes were being treated unfairly despite Chinese nationals enjoying unfettered entry into the country.

In his statement, which was committed to the Defence and Foreign Relations committee, the Kikuyu lawmaker wants the committee to investigate and report back to the National Assembly why Chinese traders and middlemen were being allowed to set up shops to sell goods they have shipped into the country while importation from China and selling of such goods by their Kenyan counterparts is disallowed.

How many Chinese nationals have visited Kenya either on business or work visas from the advent of the pandemic to date and what work and businesses have they been permitted to come and do in Kenya? Mr Ichungwa demanded to be told.

What is the volume of imports brought in specifically by Chinese businessmen and middlemen into Kenya compared to imports by Kenyans? added Mr Ichungwa.

Further, the MP wants the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to state the number of Kenyans that have been issued with visas to do business or work in China from March 2020.

National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi committed the petition to the committee of Defence and Foreign Relations, which is supposed to investigate the matter and report back to the House within 21 days as stipulated in the Standing Orders.

However, the report could take longer as the House is from today proceeding on a month-long recess.

End of MP alleges bias in quest for Chinese visas

Taliban revenge fears grow in Afghanistan

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

The Taliban are going house-to-house searching for opponents and their families, according to an intelligence document for the UN, that deepened fears Friday Afghanistan's new rulers were renegeing on pledges of tolerance.

After routing government forces and taking over Kabul on Sunday to end two decades of war, the hardline Islamist movement's leaders have repeatedly vowed a complete amnesty as part of a well-crafted PR blitz.

Women have also been assured their rights will be respected, and that the Taliban will be "positively different" from their brutal 1996-2001 rule.

But with thousands of people still trying to flee the capital, the report for the United Nations confirmed the fears of many.

The Taliban have been conducting "targeted door-to-door visits" of people who worked with US and NATO forces, according to a confidential document by the UN's threat assessment consultants seen by AFP.

The report, written by the Norwegian Center for Global Analyses, said militants were also screening people on the way to Kabul airport.

"They are targeting the families of those who refuse to give themselves up, and prosecuting and punishing their families 'according to sharia law'," Christian Nellemann, the group's executive director, told AFP.

"We expect both individuals previously working with NATO/US forces and their allies, alongside with their family members to be exposed to torture and executions."

The German public broadcaster Deutsche Welle also reported that the Taliban had shot dead the relative of one of its journalists while searching for the editor.

"The killing of a close relative of one of our editors by the Taliban yesterday is inconceivably tragic, and testifies to the acute danger in which all our employees and their families in Afghanistan find themselves," DW director general Peter Limbourg said.

Frantic Afghans continue to flood Kabul airport and the roads leading to it, searching for a way to leave the country as foreign embassies carry on with chaotic evacuations.

A German civilian was shot on his way to the airport, a spokeswoman for the German government said Friday, adding his life was not in danger.

The Taliban have repeatedly said their fighters are not allowed to enter private homes.

Nazar Mohammad Mutmaeen, a senior Taliban official, insisted this remained the policy, though he conceded some of their fighters were breaking into properties.

"Some people are still doing this, possibly in ignorance," he said in a Twitter post.

"We are ashamed and have no answer for it."

Stoned to death

The Taliban have also insisted women have nothing to fear under their new rule.

During their first stint in power, women were excluded from public life and girls banned from school.

People were stoned to death for adultery, while music and television were also banned.

A video posted online by a high-profile woman journalist this week for a government-run television station offered a different reality to the Taliban's new image of tolerance.

"Our lives are under threat," Shabnam Dawran, an anchor in state-owned broadcaster RTA, said as she recounted being barred from the office.

"The male employees, those with office cards were allowed to enter the office but I was told that I couldn't continue my duty because the system has been changed."

There have been isolated signs of opposition to the Taliban in parts of Afghanistan this week.

Small groups of Afghans waved the country's black, red and green flags in Kabul and a handful of suburbs on Thursday to celebrate the anniversary of Afghanistan's independence -- on occasion in plain sight of patrolling Taliban fighters.

Taliban fighters fired guns to disperse dozens of Afghans in Jalalabad who waved the flag on Wednesday.

Taliban revenge fears grow in Afghanistan

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

Russia also emphasised on Thursday that a resistance movement was forming in the Panjshir Valley, led by deposed vice-president Amrullah Saleh and Ahmad Massoud, the son of a slain anti-Taliban fighter.

"The Taliban doesn't control the whole territory of Afghanistan," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said.

In the Panjshir Valley northeast of Kabul, Massoud, the son of Afghanistan's most famed anti-Taliban fighter Ahmed Shah Massoud, said he was "ready to follow in his father's footsteps".

"But we need more weapons, more ammunition and more supplies," Massoud wrote in the Washington Post.

The United States said Thursday that it had airlifted about 7,000 people out of Kabul over the past five days.

A video on social media showed Afghans at the airport lifting a crying baby above a desperate crowd and passing it to a US soldier.

An Afghan sports federation announced a footballer for the national youth team had died after falling from a US plane he desperately clung to as it took off.

End of Taliban revenge fears grow in Afghanistan

Covid-19: Kenya records 1,414 new cases, 31 deaths

Amina Wako / Friday, August 20, 2021

Kenya has recorded 1,414 new Covid-19 infections, from a sample size of 10,235 tested in the last 24 hours.

According to a press statement from the Ministry of Health released on Friday, the new infections, which posted a 13.8 per cent positivity rate, push the countrys total of confirmed infections to 227,077.

From the cases 1,380 are Kenyans while 34 are foreigners comprising 733 females and 681 males. The youngest is a five-month-old infant while the oldest is 99 years. Kenya has so far tested 2,297,678 samples.

1,670 recoveries

In terms of distribution per country, Nairobi registered the highest number of new infections in the last 24 hours with 419 cases followed Kiambu 203, Nakuru 90, Machakos 68, Kitui 63, Muranga 53, Uasin Gishu 40, Nyandarua 34, Kajiado 33, Garissa 31, Kilifi 30, Meru 28, Embu 26, Mombasa 25, Makueni 21, Kirinyaga 20, Tana River 19, Marsabit 19, Migori 17, Laikipia 17, Kisii 16, Nyeri 16, Nandi 15, Baringo 14, Bungoma 14, Lamu 12, Busia 9, Mandera 9, Narok 9, Kakamega 9, Siaya 6, Kisumu 7, Homa Bay 5, Turkana 4, Kericho 4, Vihiga 3, West Pokot 2, Elgeyo Marakwet 1, Samburu 1, Tharaka-Nithi 1 and Trans Nzoia 1.

Health CS Mutahi Kagwe announced that 1,670 recoveries were reported with 1,484 from the Home-Based Isolation and Care programme while 186 were from various hospitals across the country. Total recoveries now stand at 209,839.

At the same time, Kenyas Covid-19 death toll hit 4,435 following a report of 31 deaths. One of them in the last 24 hours while 30 are late deaths were late deaths reported after conducting facility record audits in the month of July and August 2021.

Supplemental Oxygen

A total of 2,066 patients are currently admitted to various health facilities countrywide, while 9,323 are under the Home-Based Isolation and Care programme. 167 patients are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), 75 of whom are on ventilatory support and 92 on supplemental oxygen.

Another 792 patients are on supplemental Oxygen with 734 of them in general wards and 58 in High Dependency Units. Some 2,290,801 vaccines had been administered across the country as of August 19 according to data from the Health ministry.

Of these, total first doses are 1,517,734 while second doses are 773,067. The uptake of the second dose among those who received their first dose is at 50.9 per cent with the majority being males at 55 per cent. Proportion of adults fully vaccinated is 2.8 per cent.

End of Covid-19: Kenya records 1,414 new cases, 31 deaths

Amason Kingi's dalliance with One Kenya Alliance raises eyebrows | Nation

Anthony Kitimo / Friday, August 20, 2021

After Kilifi Governor Amason Kingi announced he had ditched Raila Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), One Kenya Alliance (Oka) has begun talks with him to spearhead its campaign in the Coast.

The governor met Oka principals yesterday at Tamarind Hotel in Mombasa, in what was said to be initial talks as the alliance seeks to consolidate its support in the region ahead of next year's polls.

Oka leaders Musalia Mudavadi of Amani National Congress (ANC), Kalonzo Musyoka (Wiper) and Ford-Kenya leader Moses Wetangula met Mr Kingi, once an ODM pillar in the region, before addressing journalists.

Though Mr Mudavadi did not want to talk more about the talks with Mr Kingi, Mr Musyoka said they welcome new members.

Ukiona vyaelea, jua vyaundwa, said Mr Musyoka, meaning Governor Kingi was there for a reason.

ANC deputy party leader Ayub Savula told the Nation that they had been looking for Mr Kingi to join their camp.

Finally, our principals met him and he is welcomed. Once he has been welcomed by the principals, we give them backing to welcome more leaders into our camp, Mr Savula said.

Regional political outfit

The principals will discuss and agree whether to have him as part of them to represent the Coastal region. As ANC, we have given our party leader the mandate to seek a coalition with like-minded parties and individuals.

Last week, leaders of five main Coast political parties from which Mr Kingi was seeking support to form a regional political outfit turned their backs on him, saying he could only negotiate with them once he acquires a political party as he had ditched ODM.

That happened just a few weeks after Mr Kingi was ousted as Kilifi ODM chairperson and his position taken by Ganze MP Teddy Mwambire due to poor leadership and friction with Mombasa Governor Hassan Ali Joho. Immediately after yesterday's meeting, Mr Kingi confirmed on his Twitter page that he had met with Mr Mudavadi, Mr Musyoka and Mr Wetangula and had held talks with them.

Bumped into some of the principals of the Oka team in Mombasa; had a brief, impromptu discussion and that there is a need for further and structured engagement, Mr Kingi said.

Though he left the table after speaking with the media, the move to Oka is seen as his alternative to survive politically to reassure his supporters that he still pulls the political strings after completing his second term as Kilifi governor next year.

Mr Kingi accepted ODM's move to fire him and wished the party well in the next general election but decried betrayal by the party. Early this week, leaders of two of the five political parties, said talks with Mr Kingi collapsed a while back, and they will only allow him if he sings to their tune.

Bigger national cake

The five political parties, which united ahead of the next year's polls include Shirikisho Party of Kenya, Kadu-Asili, Republican Congress Party of Kenya, Umoja Summit Party of Kenya, and the Communist party of Kenya to form a coalition dubbed the Coast Integrated Development Initiative (CIDI).

Kadu-Asili secretary general Gerald Thoya said they are yet to come up with a name of the political party and its colours which will be unveiled soon.

It should be known that we are not working with Governor Kingi since he came in asking us to fold our parties and form new party, but we felt there was a trap. Since then, we continued with our agenda and we shall soon unveil our party, said Mr Thoya.

He added, We have asked him (Kingi) to come on the table to talk to us if he has a political party and not as an individual.

Shirikisho Party of Kenya leader Adam Mbeto said the talks with Governor Kingi could not move further since he came in without a political party.

We welcome him since he is for the idea, but he should know we have our own rules which he must abide to. He cannot come in as individual since he does not have the party and ODM Party is not with us, said Mr Mbeto.

Amason Kingi's dalliance with One Kenya Alliance raises eyebrows | Nation

Anthony Kitimo / Friday, August 20, 2021

Mr Mbeto was optimistic the new coalition will help save Coast people and have a bigger national cake in the next government.

End of Amason Kingi's dalliance with One Kenya Alliance raises eyebrows | Nation

Nakuru, Kenyas political bedrock | Nation

Eric Matara / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Over the past four decades, Nakuru has retained immense significance in Kenyas political landscape, and as the clock ticks towards the 2022 General Election, the county is living up to its billing.

One year to the polls, the cosmopolitan countys political significance is at play, with top politicians intensifying their forays into the region to woo its voters.

In the past few months, at least six presidential aspirants in the Uhuru Kenyatta succession race have toured the region.

In the latest forays on Tuesday, Nakuru played host to high-octane political events, with Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) party leader Raila Odinga meeting his close allies in Nakuru town as One Kenya Alliance (OKA) principals converged a few kilometres away in Naivasha town to hammer out a coalition deal.

In Nakuru town, the ODM leader launched Azimio la Umoja, a strategic plan that he said is aimed at unifying Kenyans.

He was received by Governor Lee Kinyanjui and a host of other leaders.

Addressing a crowd, Mr Odinga said he chose Nakuru because of its political significance to Kenya.

In Naivasha, OKA principals declared at the Great Rift Valley Lodge that the nascent outfit will field a presidential candidate in 2022.

Rutos political bastion

Initially, there were reports that Mr Odinga would attend the OKA retreat, but he did not.

The Naivasha meeting came days after President Kenyatta told the OKA chiefs to back Mr Odinga for President.

Others who have toured Nakuru include Deputy President William Ruto, who in June attended a church function and held roadside rallies, Amani National Congress party leader Musalia Mudavadi, who also in June held a series of meetings with local leaders and key influencers from the county including business and political leaders.

Maendeleo Chap Chap party leader Alfred Mutua has also visited Nakuru, visiting Governor Lee Kinyanjui in his office.

On July 25, businessman Jimi Wanjigi also became one of the politicians to visit Nakuru recently as part of efforts to woo the vote-rich Rift Valley region as the 2022 battle for the presidency intensifies.

Nakuru is part of DP Rutos political bastion and is a significant battleground for politicians eyeing the top seat.

Mr Wanjigi, an ODM presidential aspirant, was hosted by county assembly Speaker Joel Kairu and held a closed-door meeting with Nakuru MCAs.

President Kenyatta is also said to be planning to tour the region later this month.

Kenyas political bedrock

Lawyer and political analyst Steve Kavita says Nakuru will yet again play a major role in 2022.

When Nakuru coughs, all of Kenya catches a cold. It is in Nakuru where key political declarations and decisions have been made in the past. In 2022, Nakuru is poised to play a key role in midwifing the next political dispensation, Mr Kavita told the Nation.

Jesse Karanja, another political analyst, says Nakuru has maintained its significance as a political melting pot for Kenya since the Mzee Jomo Kenyatta era.

Mzee Kenyatta loved Nakuru, and used to visit the place always and spend a lot of time here, same as President Daniel arap Moi. Moi even made Nakuru his home, settling at Kabarak. As such Nakuru leaders are keen to maintain that political significance, he said.

Nakuru, he said, is a political hotbed and no presidential aspirant wants to miss its attention, explaining why politicians are keen to win the county ahead of 2022.

Everyone wants to capture the attention of Kenyas political hotbed, get the blessings of Nakuru, with a population of nearly three million and nearly 1.5 million voters, before charting any political path, Mr Karanja added.

Nakuru is home to renowned politicians, and is considered Kenyas political bedrock, best known for various historic political events.

It is in Nakuru that key decisions and pronouncements are made before General Elections.

Countrys political bedroom

Nakuru, Kenyas political bedrock | Nation

Eric Matara / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Power, money and political intrigues have been the hallmark of the county, earning it the tag of the countrys political bedroom.

And because of its political significance, every presidential aspirant wants to get blessings from Nakuru.

Notably, it is in Nakuru, at the historic Afraha Stadium, that the Jubilee Alliance was born in 2013, bringing together Mr Kenyatta and Mr Ruto.

After the two unveiled their deal, they went on to win the 2013 elections.

In December 2016, they again returned to Afraha to unveil a new political vehicle, the Jubilee Party, after they agreed to merge their parties The National Alliance and the United Republican Party ahead of the bruising 2017 General Election.

The duo went on to win the 2017 polls, with Nakuru voting overwhelmingly for them.

They also held thanksgiving prayers at Afraha in 2016 following the collapse of their crimes-against-humanity cases at the International Criminal Court.

Governor Kinyanjui says Nakuru is the soul of Kenyas politics owing to the past political pronouncements that have shaped the countrys politics.

Fight over Nakuru votes

Nakuru holds a strategic position politically and economically and hence we must take a lead role in the 2022 General Election and determine who becomes the next President of Kenya, he said.

Ahead of the 2022 polls, this is a season of political engagements and we welcome all top political players to tour and campaign in Nakuru, then the voters will decide.

Our county is the third biggest in terms of population and we want to make it clear that we will not be mere spectators in national politics. We must be on the table when the national cake is being shared and we welcome all political players to the table, he added.

Political realignments are already shaping up by the day as the fight over Nakuru votes intensifies, with leaders keen not to be left out.

Governor Kinyanjui says peace is key to the Nakuru people as the polls draw near.

It is time for leaders to have conversations on sound politics and a peaceful election come 2022. For Nakuru, our number one priority is peace. As a cosmopolitan county, we are champions of a peaceful election and we want to approach the elections from a platform of agenda and policy, he said.

When ANCs Mr Mudavadi toured Nakuru, he joined the list of politicians keen to woo the vote-rich county.

Presidential ambitions

During his two-day visit, he was hosted by Governor Kinyanjui and assembly Speaker Kairu.

My race for the presidency is anchored around rebuilding a resilient economy and ensuring peace and stability in the country. I know you wont disappoint me, he told a group of leaders at a Nakuru hotel.

He urged communities in Nakuru to remain united as the country prepares for the next General Election and to support his bid to become Kenyas fifth President.

Nakuru is a cosmopolitan county with huge pockets of Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kisii, Kamba and Maasai votes. I urge the various communities that live in Nakuru to coexist and embrace peace as we go to the elections next year, he told a congregation at Christ the King Cathedral.

His Nakuru tour sought to bolster his message on resuscitating the economy and managing the public debt as he aims to be handed the mandate by Kenyans to succeed President Kenyatta.

During his tour, Mr Mudavadi also held consultative meetings with key influencers from the county including business and political leaders.

The Nation established that over 15 members of the Nakuru County Assembly endorsed the ANC leaders presidential ambitions, after he held a closed-door meeting with the leaders at a Nakuru hotel.

The political forays came after DP Ruto had visited Nakuru.

Nakuru, Kenyas political bedrock | Nation

Eric Matara / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Uhuru's grand plan

On June 25, DP Ruto attended the consecration ceremony of the elected general overseer of the Full Gospel Church of Kenya, Bishop David Macharia, at Langalanga in Nakuru town.

The DP later held rallies to drum up support for his United Democratic Alliance (UDA) party and his 2022 presidential bid, saying his administration would focus on empowering ordinary people through his bottom-up economic model.

President Kenyatta is also expected to tour the Rift Valley region later this month, in what is seen as a grand plan to appease the electorate.

But DP Ruto appears keen to consolidate his support in the region believed to be his stronghold.

Nakuru is also home to three Heads of State, including President Kenyatta and the late President Moi. President Moi, who ruled for 24 years, held most of his meetings either in his Kabarak home or at the Nakuru State House.

President Kenyatta, who has often expressed his high regard for the county, has a home at the expansive Gicheha farm, which neighbours Mois Kabarak home, both in Rongai sub-county.

Mr Kibaki also has a home in Bahati sub-county.

Nakuru has 11 sub-counties: Nakuru Town West, Nakuru Town East, Bahati, Subukia, Rongai, Njoro, Molo, Kuresoi South, Kuresoi North, Gilgil and Naivasha.

Nakuru is home to other big names, such as Ochieng Oneko, Kihika Kimani, Mark Mwithaga, Koigi Wamwere, Nganga Kihonge, Wilson Leitich, Kariuki Chotara, Alicen Chelaite and Mirugi Kariuki.

End of Nakuru, Kenyas political bedrock | Nation

OKA cedes ground on Railas 2022 bid | Nation

Justus Ochieng' / Thursday, August 19, 2021

President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday inched closer to brokering a truce between Raila Odinga and One Kenya Alliance (OKA) principals, with the latter reportedly giving a conditional nod to back the ODM leaders presidential bid as they await tomorrow's court ruling on the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI).

This came even as the Head of State told the OKA chiefs to start the process of disbanding the alliance in readiness for a larger formation – a coalition for national unity – that would bring in more leaders to reflect the face of the Kenya ahead of the 2022 elections.

The OKA chiefs, most of who were principals in the disbanded National Super Alliance (Nasa), had vowed not to back Mr Odinga's candidature again, citing their 2017 coalition agreement that required the ODM leader support one of them in 2022.

With the limited positions under the current Constitution, OKA leaders Kalonzo Musyoka (Wiper), Musalia Mudavadi (Amani National Congress), Ford Kenyas Moses Wetangula and Kanu chairman Gideon Moi, are said to have raised concerns about distribution of positions, should the larger formation be realised.

This, according to sources, informed their request to Mr Kenyatta and Mr Odinga to await the outcome of the BBI case at the Court of Appeal before they reconvene to fine-tune the deal next week.

There is hope for unity. We have been saying all along that you cannot ignore Raila and neither can you ignore his former Nasa allies or Jubilee coalition which also consists of Kanu, Kanu secretary-general Nick Salat said of the development, adding: We are happy that the leaders are seeing sense on the calls for unity and we hope we shall soon have a broader winning outfit.

The developments at State House Mombasa, point to President Kenyatta's rising authority in commanding his succession, with the Head of State keen to ensure his estranged deputy, William Ruto, is defeated.

Sources who attended the closed-door meeting intimated to the Nation that the Jubilee Party leader warned Mr Odinga and the OKA chiefs against creating chances for a run-off, which he termed risky.

The OKA principals appeared to cede ground, but the meeting was not conclusive until the court pronounces itself on the BBI on Friday (tomorrow), said a highly placed source privy to the discussions yesterday.

There are still hopes that the Appellate court would resuscitate the drive and so the positions can be discussed next week.

Mr Odinga had earlier during a phone interview on Radio Nam Lolwe said he will not challenge the court verdict at the Supreme Court should it go against his wishes.

The ODM leader also indicated that he and President Kenyatta were to meet the OKA leaders to inform them about their plans to form a coalition of the willing, as a political vehicle for the 2022 General Election.

We envisage a larger coalition of the willing. We have been with them (OKA) and know them quite well, but we don't want to despise anybody. We want anybody who wishes to walk with us to join us. We are in talks with them. Even today (yesterday), we are going to meet them and will tell them this is the plan... this is the path we should follow, Mr Odinga said during the morning interview.

The Nation has also established that with or without the BBI, the next battle frontier is likely to be the running mate position, should the OKA team agree to join the Kenyatta-Odinga coalition.

Even in yesterday's meeting there were concerns raised by the OKA team on the plans for a running mate slot should they agree to back the ODM leader. However, both the President and Mr Odinga were non-committal on the matter, with the Head of State insisting on the outcome of BBI, another source said.

The running mate slot has to be based on the numbers a candidate can bring on the table. Remember, if the OKA brigade agrees to back Raila, our strategists shall review their numbers vis-a-vis Mt Kenya region numbers which President Kenyatta has promised to deliver to the new coalition.

But even if the deal is reached, OKA chiefs are already facing resistance from within their parties.

ANC deputy party leader Ayub Savula insisted that the party will not buy any idea to have its leader drop out of the presidential race.

OKA cedes ground on Railas 2022 bid | Nation

Justus Ochieng' / Thursday, August 19, 2021

I have just received a phone call from Bungoma Governor informing me that my people had agreed to back Raila. I have dismissed him. But if Musalia goes that direction, it will sound a death knell for him politically, Mr Savula told Nation.

Mr Wycliffe Wangamati, the Bungoma Governor, however, did not confirm this when reached on phone.

Jubilee vice-chairman David Murathe said the OKA principals are facing intense pressure from their allies not to step down.

Meanwhile, Mr Odinga seems keen to lure OKA back to his fold, with his party meeting some of the demands it had reneged on in the Nasa agreement.

Yesterday, it emerged that ODM had already deposited some money to Wiper and ANC as agreed by Mr Odinga in partial settlement of the political parties funds owed to the Nasa partners.

The Mombasa meeting came as Dr Ruto accused the team of having no plans for the country other than struggling to unite to defeat him in next years polls.

They are trying to find means of stopping a defeat. But they don't understand that Kenyans are looking for someone who has an agenda and plan for the jobless and how to improve businesses and change lives, he said.

End of OKA cedes ground on Railas 2022 bid | Nation

Raila Homa Bay meeting to go on despite ban on gatherings

Rushdie Oudia / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Orange Democratic Movement leader Raila Odinga is on Thursday holding a consultative meeting in Homa Bay, despite the ban on political gatherings to curb the spread of Covid-19.

The meeting being held at Sikri Technical and Vocational Training Institute in Homa Bay is expected to attract over 700 delegates drawn Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori, Kisii and Nyamira counties.

ODM, however, postponed indefinitely a similar meeting planned for Kakamega on Friday.

Delegates arrive for the meeting.

On Wednesday, President Uhuru Kenyatta extended the ban on political gatherings for a further 60 days. This came as the High Court ruled that the ban on public gatherings is unconstitutional, throwing the country into confusion.

The Orange party through its secretary-general Edwin Sifuna said the meeting in Homa Bay will go on.

"The meeting in Sikri will proceed as planned but strictly in accordance with the Ministry of Health guidelines for Covid-19," said Mr Sifuna in a statement dated August 18.

After Nyanza, Mr Odinga will tour Kakamega and later go to Coast, North Eastern, Eastern, Rift Valley and Nairobi regions.

Delegates arrive for the meeting.

On Wednesday afternoon, delegates planning to attend the Nyanza convention vowed to endorse the ODM leader to vie for the presidential seat in the 2022 General Election.

ODM Nyanza Regional Chair Caucus held a meeting where they affirmed that Mr Odinga has all the qualifications to lead the county after President Kenyatta.

Earlier, the party officials met with Homa Bay Woman Representative Gladys Wanga, who is the chairperson of ODM in Homa Bay County.

Delegates arrive for the meeting.

Ms Wanga described the convention as a landmark meeting.

Besides the presidential declaration, the meeting is also meant to cement the unity campaign that Mr Odinga began in Nakuru on Tuesday.

During the meeting, analysts will be keen to see how the seasoned politician will deal with party rebels, wrangling among party officials, and the upcoming fringe parties seeking to eat into his support base.

End of Raila Homa Bay meeting to go on despite ban on gatherings

Embu brothers died the day they started a butchery business

George Munene / Friday, August 20, 2021

The two slain Kianjokoma brothers Benson Njiru and Emmanuel Mutura were no idlers.

Despite coming from an economically stable family, the young men believed in generating their own income. They ran a butchery business but as fate would have it, they never got to enjoy the proceeds of their first day at work.

While on holiday before their deaths after being arrested for violating the night-time curfew, the two had prevailed upon their father, Mr John Ndwiga, to set up a business for them.

Mr Ndwiga rented a pork butchery at Mbui Njeru market, four kilometres from his home for his sons.

On August 1, the brothers embarked on selling meat in their butchery to raise pocket money. In the evening after a good day of sales, they cleaned the premises and closed the business.

On arriving at Kianjokoma town some 200 metres from home, they met police officers who were enforcing curfew laws. They were arrested and bundled into a police vehicle together with nine other suspects.

They were whisked off towards Manyatta Police Station but two days later, their bodies were found at Embu Referral Hospital Mortuary.

Interviews with family members indicate they also set up the business to help their father pay their school fees.

Njiru studied at Don-Bosco Technology Training Institute in Nairobi where he pursued an engineering course while Mutura was a law student at Kabarak University.

A family Spokesman, Felix Nthiga Njagi said the butchery closed soon after the demise of the brothers.

They never lived to see their business take off. They desired to empower themselves and relieve their father some of the financial burdens but their dreams were shattered," he said.

Residents loved our sons and when they opened business the first day, they flocked there and the sales were high. But the same day they started operating the business, they were murdered," said Mr Njagi, an uncle to the victims.

The family claimed their sons were robbed of Sh15,000 and phones.

"We found them in the mortuary without the cash as well as phones. Police should explain who took the cash and phones from the deceased persons," said the brothers uncle.

Some of the neighbours told Nation.Africa that they were shocked by the deaths of the two brothers. Reports of the tragic deaths rattled the usually busy Kianjokoma market with angry residents rioting to demand justice.

The protests paralysed business in the usually busy town for two days. During the demonstrations, a police vehicle was set ablaze and a man killed.

Mr Ndwiga described his sons as good people who didn't deserve such a painful death.

"I have lost everything. Since my children died I have known no peace and those responsible for the death of my sons should not go unpunished," he told mourners during a funeral service held at Kianjokoma Primary School.

Already six police officers who were on duty when the brothers went missing have been arrested and arraigned in court.

A post-mortem revealed that the brothers succumbed to head and rib injuries inflicted with a blunt object.

End of Embu brothers died the day they started a butchery business

Armed bandits torch school belonging to Kuki Gallman

Steve Njuguna / Friday, August 20, 2021

An Education Centre belonging to conservationist Kuki Gallman was on Friday set ablaze by suspected bandits.

The institution located at Laikipia Nature Conservancy was torched at around 10:30am, according to the institutions director Sveva Gallman.

"Over 20 armed bandits were seen entering the institution by our security officers later, a huge fire was reported at the institution," Ms Gallman told Nation.Africa on phone.

She said that they had established the institution which helps children from the pastoral communities in the areas neighbouring the vast ranch.

"It took our workers over three hours to put off the fire. The children have been left with nowhere to learn as several classrooms were badly damaged," she added.

On 2018 a cottage at the ranch was set blaze by armed bandits.

"Last year, they had attempted to set ablaze classrooms at the institution but we managed to put off the fire," she added.

Laikipia County Commissioner Daniel Nyameti has said that security officers were pursuing the criminals.

The attack on the ranch comes amidst a heightened security operation to flush out illegal herders and bandits from private property.

End of Armed bandits torch school belonging to Kuki Gallman

Two suspects convicted of ivory trafficking

Brian Ocharo / Friday, August 20, 2021

Two suspects, including a university student, charged with trafficking in 8.5kg of elephant tusks have been convicted.

Chief Magistrate Edna Nyaloti ruled that prosecutors had proved their case against Ibrahim Samson Ali and Japheth Bakari Mbuguni for offences they committed in Mombasa three years ago.

I have considered the evidence tendered by the prosecution and submissions by the accused persons. It is my finding that the suspects are guilty as charged, the magistrate said.

Mr Alis bond was cancelled and he will be remanded in custody pending his sentencing.

Mr Bakari, 27, has been in prison since 2019 after failing to post a Sh50,000 bond. He also failed to provide evidence that he was a Moi University student at the time he was arrested and charged.

Since his arrest in 2019, he had made various claims in court to seek sympathy.

Earlier this year, he told the court that his father had died on March 15 and wanted to be allowed to attend his funeral.

Police investigated and reported to the court that Mr Bakari's father, who resides in Kwale County, was alive and healthy.

Yesterday, Ms Nyaloti explained to Mr Bakari that he had been kept behind bars since 2019 for his own security.

I did not want to release you on bond and then after a few days, we get a report that you have been killed. Your security is part of the reasons we kept you in prison, she said.

Japheth Bakari Mbuguni before Mombasa court. He has been convicted of a similar offence. The two have been remanded at Shimo La Tewa Maximum prison pending jailing on August 23

Mr Bakari has asked the court to consider the three years he has spent in prison when it sentences him.

Mr Ali and Mr Bakari are accused of possessing nine pieces of ivory weighing 8.5kg and worth Sh850,000

Police discovered the elephant tusks hidden in a white 50kg sack of dry maize.

Mr Ali had previous criminal records, the court heard. A letter from Interpol shows that he was convicted of a similar offence by a Ugandan court.

Key witnesses in the current case had feared for their lives, were put under police protection and used aliases when they testified.

The order to hide their identities came from the High Court after they told Director of Public Prosecutions Noordin Haji that they could only testify if they were put under witness protection.

In his many court appearances, Mr Bakari maintained that the charges against him arose from his romantic relationship with an undisclosed tycoon's daughter.

He alleged that his girlfriends father was the owner of the elephant tusks that they were arrested with.

He claimed he had been framed by the tycoon, whom he has not named and who allegedly warned him against the love affair.

I found myself in this problem because of the love affair. Her father did not approve of the relationship because of my poor background, he claimed in court in 2019.

The two will be sentenced on August 23.

End of Two suspects convicted of ivory trafficking

Relief for Kilifi OCS as court dismisses petition

Philip Muyanga / Friday, August 20, 2021

A senior police officer can breathe a sigh of relief after a Mombasa court threw out a petition, which sought to have her declared unfit to hold public office and cancellation of her appointment.

The High Court dismissed the petition filed by the Commission for Human Rights and Justice (CHRJ) against Ms Victoria Mutuku, the officer in charge of Kijipwa Police Station (OCS), saying if allowed, it will deprive her the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

CHRJ had claimed that it received a complaint that the officer had been making unreasonable demands to the public, and soliciting for bribes contrary to the conduct of the code of conduct of a state officer.

Justice Nyakundi said there was no requirement under the law for a complainant to pursue multiple ways to seek reliefs from court through different legal agencies on the same cause of action.

He said that before a criminal complaint can be dealt under the leadership and integrity test, the required exhaustion mechanism must be demonstrated to an extent that the complainant was unable to secure remedies sought in other forums.

The court added that the case was unique as proceedings touching on the officer are active and ongoing.

It also noted that the proceedings afford a chance to be pursued in other agencies like the National Police Service Commission, Independent Policing Oversight Authority, the Attorney General, Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and the office of the Director of Public Prosecution.

A complaint of this magnitude premised under the constitution is inadmissible if other judicial or quasi-judicial body is considering or has an inquiry as to the merits of making of the decision on the same matter, said Justice Nyakundi.

Justice Nyakundi disagreed with CHRJ that there was a blanket policy by the agencies tasked with crime investigation and prosecution to shield the officer from being taken to court.

The court said there are different perspectives touching on culpability of offences allegedly committed by the officer and it was clear that the complaint was being investigated by various constitutional agencies, with the view to either prosecute or take disciplinary action against her.

The presumption of innocence until the contrary is proved under the principle of fairness in the criminal law under Article 50 of the constitution means the current petition has to wait the doctrine of exhaustion on the side of the agencies probing into the issues, said Justice Nyakundi.

CHRJ had claimed that the officer had been using her office to harass, and intimidate members of the public, and to engage in illegal activities, thus eroding public confidence in the office and station she is commanding.

On her part, Ms Mutuku told the court that she has never made demands for donations at Kijipwa Police Station.

The officer told the court that any donations to the station are documented, and her superiors informed.

Ms Mutuku said allegations that she had received a bribe of Sh18,000 were untrue, as the money was a donation to the station for purchase of paint.

The officer said that for the 13 years she has been in service, she has upheld the rule of law, abided by the constitution, the law and the police service standing orders in discharge of her duties. She sought to have the case dismissed.

The Inspector General of Police said that they received a complaint from CHRJ for the alleged misconduct of the OCS, and that Director of Internal Affairs Unit was instructed to conduct investigations and submit the enquiry file for perusal and directions.

The IG, who was a respondent in the petition, said CHRJ did follow up to know the progress of the investigations, but filed the petition disregarding the laid down procedures for conducting criminal investigations into complaints against a police officer.

According to the IG, the petition undermined the independence of the IG and was filed in bad faith, and the court ought not to decide in favour of CHRJ.

End of Relief for Kilifi OCS as court dismisses petition

Kwale releases schedule for Covid-19 mass vaccination

Siago Cece / Friday, August 20, 2021

Kwale County has officially begun a rollout of vaccines to members of the public to boost its efforts to curb the spread and deaths because of Covid-19.

To reduce crowding at the vaccination centres, the county has slotted specific days to different groups of people, even as the number of health workers in vaccine uptake remain low.

As we aim to vaccinate the entire population, precautions need to be taken to minimize overcrowding in vaccination sites, Health Chief Executive Francis Gwama said in a public notice.

The public will be vaccinated all Friday as security personnel are slotted for Mondays, those working in educational institutions on Tuesdays, health workers on Wednesdays and other civil servants on Thursday.

Public facilities issuing the vaccination are Msambweni Referral hospital and Kwale Sub-County hospital in Matuga. Residents who want to be vaccinated are required to register online on the Ministry of Health portal.

The government early this week made it mandatory for all civil servants to be vaccinated.

Kwale has in the recent past lost prominent leaders like former Kwale Women Rep Zinab Chidzuga who was buried last week and Hassan Chitembe, a county ODM leader, both of whom died due to Covid-19 related complications.

This comes as the number of Covid-19 deaths in Kwale remains unreported, something Health Chief Officer Salim Mbete said was because most patients are seeking traditional treatment for the deadly disease. For this reason, he said the number of deaths in the past six weeks has not surpassed five.

With all diseases, there is an element of self-medication, so even when people die, this will not be in any records, he said in an interview with nation.africa.

He added that due to cultural barriers, that do not allow post-mortems to be conducted, many health conditions end up unrecorded.

It has also emerged that more Covid-19 patients are moving to Mombasa County from Kwale to seek medical assistance, hence their data is recorded in Mombasa County. This has made it difficult for Kwale to track and ascertain the numbers of people affected by the pandemic.

So far, the County Government has slowed down on its activities, advising most of their staff to work from home to reduce infections.

Residents have also been urged to put on their masks and maintain hand hygiene to protect themselves from getting the virus.

End of Kwale releases schedule for Covid-19 mass vaccination

Nyeri court dismisses Rev Richard Gitari's Sh85m compensation suit against KAG

Mercy Mwende / Friday, August 20, 2021

A Nyeri court has dismissed a suit by a Kenya Assemblies of God (KAG) church pastor who is seeking Sh85 million compensation after he was kicked out of the church.

Rev Richard Gitari, the presiding pastor of the KAG Kagio Church in Kirinyaga moved to court to protest what he termed unlawful dismissal from his pastoral duties.

But in his judgment, Justice Njagi Marete of the Employment and Labour Relations Court ruled that the pastor did not prove that he was employed by the church.

The judge said that the claimant did not sign any contract of employment with the church, an issue that would have otherwise proven that the management acted against the contract.

The court cannot declare that there was a breach of the contract of employment because in the first place there is no proof of employment, said the judge.

According to the judge, the cleric did not receive any salary for his pastoral duties during the 21 years he served at the church.

The 57-year-old pastor moved to court last year seeking for Sh50 million compensation for unlawful termination, Sh5 million damages for loss earning and Sh15 million as terminal benefits.

Sh2 million

He also sought another Sh2 million as damages incurred for harassment as he was being fired, Sh5 million for a loss of good health and hospital bills he had to pay after he was fired, Sh1 million damages for denial of a hearing before the management and Sh7 million compensation for acquiring a plot and putting up a church at Kagio.

He said that on November 23, 2020 he was conducting a service at Kagio in Kirinyaga when he was interrupted by his Bishop Benson Irungu who requested to hold a private discussion outside the church.

The bishop was accompanied by two pastors, two police officers and a journalist.

Bishop Irungu told him that he had been sent by the church's chief superintendent to take over the church immediately.

He said that I will not conduct any services at the KAG churches for three months because I had been suspended, said Rev Gitari in court papers.

But the bishop did not provide any letter from the church management to explain the reasons for his suspension.

Pastor Gitari said he was forced to dismiss his congregants following the disruption.

Two days later, he says he fell sick after the suspension and was hospitalised twice on different occasions.

He also requested the court to order the church to compensate him for searching and acquiring a piece of land to construct the church at Kagio.

The pastor claimed that, after the suspension, he lost his Sh40,000 monthly salary.

He added that according to the KAG constitution, he would have served the church until he attained 70 years.

Tithes

Upon my death, my wife would have continued receiving 50 per cent of the stipend I was getting as a pastor, said Mr Gitari in court documents.

But General Superintendent Philip Kitoto, Bishop Irungu and pastors Peter Mwangi and William Wachira, who are listed as the first, second, third and fourth respondents in the suit, denied all claims made by the pastor.

They said church policies required pastors to be supported by their congregants through the offerings and tithes.

This is not a salary but some sort of allowance given to the clergy and it is only subject to availability, said the respondents in their application to the court.

They claimed that it was the community that contributed to the church construction and not the pastor.

They said they were not liable for the pastor's sickness as they had invited him for a meeting to discuss his suspension but he refused to attend the meeting before he was sacked.

End of Nyeri court dismisses Rev Richard Gitari's Sh85m compensation suit against KAG

Mombasa court sets free alleged terror suspects

Brian Ocharo / Friday, August 20, 2021

Three suspects arrested last week on suspicion of being members of an undisclosed terror group have been set free. Mohamed Shendy Elhosseiny, Mustafa Abdi Saidi and Mohamed Mohamed Abdullahi were released Friday due to lack of evidence.

The respondents are hereby set free unless lawfully held, Mombasa Senior Resident Magistrate Vincent Adet said. State prosecutor Hillary Isiaho had asked the court to set the three free, noting that the Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU) had found no evidence linking them to terrorism.

But the prosecutor said Mr Shendy and Mr Saidi will be arraigned at the Rabai Police Station on drug-related charges. Last week, the ATPU told the court that they suspected the three had links to a terrorist group with members in Kenya, Uganda, Somalia and Egypt.

Police told the court that an intelligence report indicated Mr Shendy and Mr Saidi were being sought by Egyptian and Somali authorities for undisclosed offences.

Mr Shendy is an Egyptian while the other two are Kenyans of Somali origin.

Mr Shendy and Mr Abdi, police said, travelled to Mombasa on July 5 using a black Mazda Demio (KCQ 082P). They booked rooms at Tawakal Hotel in Mazeras, with Mr Shendy using his passport and Mr Abdi his national identity card.

The two were with Samuel Wambugu, a man police claimed was an accomplice that they were still seeking. Their alleged suspicious activities were reported to the Rabai Police Station.

Mr Abdullahi was arrested for hosting Mr Shendy and Mr Abdi at his Majengo residence.

Mobile phones seized from the three had been forwarded to ATPU headquarters for a forensic analysis. The findings were, however, not produced in court.

Police had told the court that the Mazda Demio was suspected to bear a home-made bomb.

But the ATPU reported back to the court that there was no evidence linking the three to terrorism.

End of Mombasa court sets free alleged terror suspects

Taita parents push for completion of secondary school

Lucy Mkanyika / Friday, August 20, 2021

Work on a new Sh230 million Voi Girls Secondary School in Taita Taveta has stalled because the contractor is owed more than Sh70 million.

Parents had asked the government in 2015 to move the school to another site to provide a better learning environment.

The school, in Tanzania village, will be relocated to Vindo to escape noise pollution from trains on the Standard Gauge Railway. Parents blame students poor grades on the noise.

The old Voi Girls was set up to accommodate students from low-income families in Voi constituency. It has more than 600 students.

The new campus, whose construction started in 2019 and is 95 per cent complete, is yet to be connected to electricity and a reliable water source.

The grounds have not been levelled. Final touches also need to be applied in the kitchen and dining room.

Speaking at the site, parents, led by chairperson Juma Kombora, said the old school sits near the SGR line and this disrupts learning.

We call upon the government to fast-track this project so that our children can come and learn here. The current location is unconducive to learning, he said.

An excavator machine lying idle at the new Voi Girls Secondary School in Taita Taveta County. The contractor has left the site due to slow payment by government.

The project was to be completed in March last year but it has stalled. It was a one-year contract so it has delayed for over a year.

He said the new school is expected to accommodate more girls and provide a conducive and safe environment for the students.

The old school is congested and lacks the necessary learning infrastructure. We are pushing for this new school because it will be larger with modern learning facilities and will take in more students, he said.

He said the students lose up to two hours of learning time daily because of noise pollution from trains.

Another parent, Doreen Msagha, said students score poorly in examinations because of noise and congestion.

Our worry is that we don't know when the school will be completed to enable our children to learn in a conducive environment, she said.

Lucia Chao urged leaders in the area to push the government to pay the developer, Jedy General Contractors Ltd, so that construction can resume.

We want our children to relocate here next term. We are giving the government an ultimatum of two weeks to disburse the funds, she said.

Entrance of new Voi Girls Secondary School in Vindo, Taita Taveta County. The school which is currently located in Tanzania will be shifted to the new area after the completion of the project.

Voi MP Jones Mlolwa said he will push Kenya Railways Corporation to pay the contractor.

I will follow up with the necessary institutions to ensure that the contractor is paid. I'm aware of the challenges the students are facing and I promise to follow this matter to the end, he told the parents.

The ultra-modern school will have four streams for each class and will accommodate more than 1,000 students.

It will also have more classrooms, teachers houses, laboratories, a library, an administration block, a dining hall and a modern kitchen, as well as playgrounds for various sports.

End of Taita parents push for completion of secondary school

Kilifis first high school for teen mothers raises hopes of dropouts

Maureen Ongala / Friday, August 20, 2021

Teenage mothers seeking to return to school after giving birth face shame, stigma and an unfriendly and unsupportive learning environment. But a new school offers hope to dropouts.

The national governments 100 per cent transition policy requires schools to readmit all girls who become pregnant and drop out of school to give birth.

One constituency in Kilifi County that has recorded high numbers of early pregnancies and marriages among schoolgirls is Ganze.

To help girls continue with their studies after giving birth, education stakeholders in Ganze resolved to convert Kafuloni Secondary School into a model high school for teen mothers.

The construction is funded by the Ganze National Government Constituency Development Fund.

In an interview with the Nation, Ganze MP Teddy Mwambire said the school will help address the barriers preventing young mothers from resuming their studies.

Stigmatised

Girls who decide to go back to school after giving birth are always stigmatised in the mainstream secondary schools and that's why we want to build a secondary school where admissions will only be given to those who got pregnant while in school and are willing to continue with their education, he said.

The school will offer frequent counselling sessions to girls so they can cope with their new life as mothers and students.

There will also be a breastfeeding centre for nursing young mothers.

The community has always victimised young girls who become pregnant. This has made them feel like outcasts in the community and hopeless in life as if they do not have a future, Mr Mwambire said.

Official launch

The MP officially launched the construction of the school in January. The work is supposed to be completed by the end of this month.

Already we have girls who have registered for enrolment at the school. Learning will commence once we officially put everything in place because we do not want to have anything that will disrupt the classes, he added.

Moving the Goalposts (MTG), a sports development organisation in Kilifi, observed at a forum that the community lacks information on the education re-entry policy and many parents do not see the value of returning teenage mothers to school.

There is a need for the information on the education policy to be disseminated to everyone including the girls themselves, said MTG education and livelihood team leader Doreen Sirya.

Challenges

She cited a lack of resources and poor infrastructure in secondary schools in remote parts of Kilifi as another challenge affecting girls' education.

Vulnerable girls, she said, need to be given hope in education to achieve their dreams.

The girls should not be made to feel like giving birth is the end of life. We need to provide a conducive learning environment for them at all levels, she said.

She noted that a majority of the girls in MTG's education programme were yet to report to school after giving birth.

Education stakeholders in Kwale have also lauded the programme, saying it will give girls a second chance in a stigma-free environment.

Married off

Many girls in Kilifi drop out of school or are married off at an early age after they become pregnant.

Some girls are brave enough to become professionals and they can achieve their dreams in a good learning environment though they are mothers. This is a noble idea and it shows that we are now getting to grapple with the problem, said Kwale County Commissioner Joseph Kanyiri.

But he said cultural, religious and political factors are likely to undermine the programme.

Kilifis first high school for teen mothers raises hopes of dropouts

Maureen Ongala / Friday, August 20, 2021

People might not take it positively, as much as it is a noble idea. It is, however, important that different stakeholders discuss and find appropriate ways to curb teen pregnancy, he said.

Ganze Sauti ya Wanawake chairperson Judith Uchi said the government should invest more in girls.

No support

The constituency, she said, has many girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy and have not been accorded the necessary support by the government and the community.

Many teenage mothers are wandering in the society. They have realised that life is not easy without education and they want to go back to school, but the big issue is where they learn without being subjected to victimisation, she said.

Kafuloni Secondary, she said, will help fight the high level of illiteracy in the area.

She cited the case of a young mother in Mwaeba village who was defiled aged 15 years and 13 years later, she has joined Form One.

After 13 years of being out of school, the lady decided to go back to school to have a bright future. We have many who might be willing but shame has forced them to stay at home, she said.

This story is part of a series examining teen pregnancies in Kenya's Coastal counties. Also Read:

Coast experiences steep rise in teen pregnancies

Joy as nursing teen joins Form One

End of Kilifis first high school for teen mothers raises hopes of dropouts

Lamu police seek to curb harassment of tourists, travellers

Kalume Kazungu / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Lamu police seek to curb harassment of tourists, travellers

Security agencies in Lamu have stepped up a campaign to curb harassment of tourists and other travellers.

New restrictions have been introduced, especially at jetties, pick-up and drop-off points and vehicle stages.

Public service vehicles must be parked at least 50 metres from the Mokowe jetty, Lamu West sub-county Police Commander Nyawa Murinzi said on Tuesday.

This will create space for passengers to gather their luggage and find boats or dhows to take them across the Indian Ocean to Lamu town.

Boat operators will also have to queue as they seek passengers instead of scrambling for customers. This will help protect travellers property and prevent injuries.

To ensure law and order are maintained, Mr Murinzi said security officers would be deployed daily to all drop-off and pick-up points, especially at the Mokowe jetty, the main depot, the Manda Airport jetty and the Lamu town jetties.

Private boat service providers are exempted from this directive.

There were many complaints from tourists and other travellers. The Lamu jetties and stages lacked order. Touts would harass and steal luggage from travellers, especially the tourists, Mr Murinzi said.

After a meeting of stakeholders, including those in the transport sector, the county government and the community, we all agreed to introduce the new directive that will see touts and travellers operating in a systematic manner.

Lamu Municipality Manager Omar Famau noted that calm and even hygiene among touts had greatly improved since the directive was adopted.

Mr Famau said the order has also ensured that only bona fide touts handle travellers, unlike before when thieves would hide among touts, confuse and even steal from tourists.

He said the county had also initiated training for touts and boat operators in Lamu town and Mokowe on how best to handle travellers.

We have had constant conflicts and confusion between genuine touts and imposters, especially on how to handle clients. All this is done in order to ensure the security and well-being of tourists and travellers visiting Lamu, he said.

End of Lamu police seek to curb harassment of tourists, travellers

No leads on death of 2012 top KCSE candidate Edgar Tony | Nation

George Odiwuor / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Doctors have said Edgar Tony Odongo, the top candidate in the 2012 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exam, could have succumbed to injuries he suffered when he was hit by a speeding motorist.

The Nation has learnt from a doctor who attended to him before he died at Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital that he must have suffered the injuries in a road accident.

The revelations come as his family prepares to lay him to rest in Kitere, Rongo, Migori County, with confusion surrounding the cause of his death.

Earlier reports had indicated that unknown assailants attacked Edgar as he left his home in Sofia estate, Homa Bay town, at night. He was found lying unconscious near a road in Ogongo trading centre, some 15km away, with injuries to his head and body.

The family said on social media through his stepbrother, Odongo Odol, that Edgar will be buried on Friday and his relatives needed financial help for the funeral.

Fundraising for burial

The Odongo family is fundraising to meet burial expenses for giving the late Tony Edgar Odongo a decent send off. Join the group below to assist us in this endeavor, or alternatively, you can channel your financial assistance to 0700506114. Burial date is 20th August, at our rural home in Kitere, Rongo, Migori, said an update posted on August 15, 2021.

While it is not clear whether a post-mortem examination had been carried out, Dr Peter Ogolla, Homa Bay Referrals CEO, said Edgar was taken there between 4am and 5am on Wednesday last week before being referred for specialised treatment at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) in Kisumu.

Edgar had bruises and was unconscious when he arrived at the hospital. Dr Ogolla told the Nation that his limbs were swollen, suggesting that he was hit by a speeding car.

He had multiple abrasions on the body. There were friction burns on the legs, suggesting that he could have been involved in a traffic accident, he said.

The main injury, he said, was on his head and this is what could have led to his death.

CT scan

After a check-up, doctors decided that Edgar be taken for a CT scan, which Homa Bay Referral lacks.

Such medical services are offered in Kisumu and Kisii.

Dr Ogolla said they decided to send Edgar to JOOTRH for the specialised care.

We wanted him to travel to Kisumu and get other medical attention there. We did not recommend him travelling back to Homa Bay. He was to stay in Kisumu until he was discharged, he said.

A man reported to have taken Edgar to hospital told the Nation that he found him lying near a road at Ogongo at 3am.

Coincidentally, the Good Samaritan, who sought anonymity, said he knew him.

I was driving to Mbita when I saw him lying beside the road. At first I thought he was drunk but when I looked more closely I found out that I knew him, he said.

Edgar could speak at the time, he said.

He told me his mothers phone number, which I called and told the family about what had happened. They instructed me to take him to hospital, he said.

No report on incident

Ogongo Sub-Location Assistant Chief Margret Aluoch said her office had not received any report about the incident.

I have made enquiries at the centre but no one has any hints about the incident. The centre is normally empty at night so the chances that someone saw what happened are very slim, she said.

Edgar studied at Maseno School before proceeding to Yale University in the US and graduating with a bachelors degree in electrical engineering.

Role of technology

Until his death, he was described as a brilliant young man who was passionate about technology.

No leads on death of 2012 top KCSE candidate Edgar Tony | Nation

George Odiwuor / Thursday, August 19, 2021

On his LinkedIn page, Edgar wrote he was a believer in the role of technology in shaping the future of Africa.

I believe that social entrepreneurship should be sustainable, rather than a venture that always solicits for external funding, most likely from the western world, he wrote.

This can only be achieved by cementing social ventures with relevant technology to improve efficiency while reducing the administrative and logistical costs of running such ventures.

Before he died he was working on a project that was set to revolutionise e-commerce in Kenya, especially in smaller cities and urban centres, according to his social media page.

Drones

At Yale, Edgar researched how to use drones to track wildlife using radio telemetry.

On his LinkedIn page he wrote that he built Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) to classify 3,000,000 plant specimens in the Herbarium at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History by their reproductive status.

A relative said Edgar left his parents home on Wednesday last week without informing them where he was going.

Edgar's mother, Eunita Obere, declined to discuss the incident when approached for an interview.

Meanwhile, security officers in Homa Bay are yet to find any clues about the incident.

Homa Bay sub-county DCI boss Monica Berege said the report about what happened to Edgar was not made at the police station.

I have called the (police station commander) but he has said the incident was not reported at the police station for investigation, she said.

County Police Commander Esther Seroney said she had learnt of the incident from the media.

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End of No leads on death of 2012 top KCSE candidate Edgar Tony | Nation

Bosom buddies die together in road crash en route to burial

Macharia Mwangi / Thursday, August 19, 2021

They were bosom friends who never left each others side, and working in the same sector made their bond even stronger.

They attended social functions together and recently posted a photo on their Facebook pages signalling a strong camaraderie between the quadruple.

The four - Victor Oduor, his brother Stephen Kasila, friends Edward Musalia and Shem Chege - were simply inseparable.

On Wednesday they hired a vehicle to travel to Kitale for a burial but, unfortunately, their journey was cut short by the cruel hand of death.

Three of them perished in a road accident in Gilgil. Only Mr Kasila survived the horrific crash, escaping with serious injuries. He is being treated at a hospital in Nakuru.

The four were headed to Kitale to attend the burial ceremony of Victor's relative, said their fellow boda boda rider George Ngugi.

The mangled wreckage of the car in which three boda boda riders died after a road crash in Gilgil on August 18, 2021.

Gloom

At the Corner stage in Naivasha where the four plied their trade, gloom was evident as their colleagues tried to come to terms with the tragic news.

As burial plans got underway, grieving friends trooped to the pick-up point to confirm the dreadful news and to condole with other mourners.

We are clearly devastated by the tragic news. It is so painful to lose colleagues in such ghastly manner, Mr Ngugi added. He spoke of an almost telepathic connection between the riders that ensured they supported each other in times of need. Whether it was a dowry ceremony, a social event or even burial ceremonies, we were there for each other and that has been the trend, he said.

Ill-fated trip

He was with his colleagues on Tuesday evening and he was aware of the ill-fated trip.

Another rider, Daniel Mbuku, was among the first people to arrive at the accident scene when he received the news of the crash.

I had to rush to the scene to confirm that indeed they were the ones involved in the accident. I was heartbroken after confirming, he told the Nation.

He said the two brothers hailed from Busia but had lived in Naivasha for more than five years.

They were like brothers to us, he said.

The third victim Musalia also hailed from Western Kenya, with the boda boda riders saying they will arrange to have their bodies ferried to mortuaries near their homes.

Died on the spot

Gilgil Sub-County Police Commander John Onditi said the three died on the spot.

The driver, he said, was attempting to overtake several vehicles when the accident occurred around 6am on Wednesday. The driver of the saloon car overtook a number of vehicles before the vehicle collided head-on with a truck headed towards the Naivasha direction, he said.

The four were heading towards Nakuru while the truck was coming from the opposite direction.

The bodies were later taken to the Gilgil Sub-County Hospital mortuary, with the vehicles being towed to the police station.

End of Bosom buddies die together in road crash en route to burial

Big blow to Shahbal as senators halt Buxton housing project

Winnie Atieno / Thursday, August 19, 2021

A Senate committee has suspended work on a Sh6 billion affordable housing project in Buxton, Mombasa, until evicted tenants grievances are resolved.

This is a big blow to Mombasa tycoon Suleiman Shahbal, who won the tender to build the houses.

Meanwhile, the Roads, Transport and Infrastructure Committee has summoned Governor Hassan Joho to the Senate within 14 days to explain the controversies arising from the project or face arrest and prosecution.

The committee said the agreement between the county government and the developer is shrouded in secrecy.

The proposed project, Buxton Point, sits on about eight acres, formerly the site of Buxton estate. Work started in May 2021. The original tenants were relocated, the old structures demolished and new housing units will be built for sale to the general public, including the tenants, under the governments affordable housing scheme.

The Senate Committee on Roads, Transport and Infrastructure inspecting the Buxton housing project in Mombasa. The committee led by its chairman Kimani Wamatangi has suspended the construction of the Sh6 billion Buxton affordable housing project in Mombasa until the grievances by evicted tenants are heard and determined

The committee issued its verdict at the Mombasa County Assembly after listening to former tenants express their complaints.

We resolve to stop construction until issues raised by the tenants are heard and determined. We hold that the governor has absented himself from this sitting without proper engagement and satisfactory reason to this committee, said the chairman of the committee, Kiambu Senator Kimani Wamatangi.

But acting Mombasa County secretary Joab Tumbo defended his boss, saying Mr Joho was travelling overseas. He said the governor was to appear before the committee by video link but that was halted for logistical reasons.

The summons came when the governor was away. We apologise, Mr Tumbo said, adding that he would be back within seven days.

The committee wants all the documents held by the developer to be produced within 14 days.

The Senate Committee on Roads, Transport and Infrastructure inspecting the Buxton housing project in Mombasa. The committee led by its chairman Kimani Wamatangi has suspended the construction of the Sh6 billion Buxton affordable housing project in Mombasa until the grievances by evicted tenants are heard and determined.

Lawmakers said it is unclear whether the project is intended to benefit the evicted tenants, Mombasa residents, the county government or private investors.

The projects chief executive, Ahmed Badawy, refused to table the documents, saying they are protected by the confidentiality clause.

We have a joint agreement, but we have a confidentiality clause. I cannot disclose anything, he said. He said the project had kicked off and construction was at five percent.

He had a hard time answering questions from the committee on the project.

John Tsuma, who lived in the area for more than 20 years, condemned Mr Shahbal, saying he had deceived the tenants.

He said the tenants had been inhumanely evicted during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was the most trying period of our lives. Some people are yet to recover. Many were left homeless. Imagine losing your house and later you are fired due to the economic downturn caused by the pandemic? he told the committee.

Haki Yetu official Munira Ali said county officials owe residents crucial information on the project.

Mombasa Senator Mohamed Faki said the committee was in Mombasa on a fact-finding mission.

You are investing money in a property belonging to the public. What documents do you have? Was the land valued? he asked.

Nominated Senator Christine Zawadi and Mandera Senator Mohamed Mohamud asked about the fate of the evicted tenants.

End of Big blow to Shahbal as senators halt Buxton housing project

Police in Lamu arrest man for sexually molesting teen

Kalume Kazungu / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Police in Lamu have arrested a 34-year-old man that they said had sexually assaulted a child.

Mohamed Kale was picked up from his house in Kizingitini, Lamu East, where he is alleged to have locked up and molested the 15-year-old boy for one week

The teenager, a primary school pupil, was said to have had trouble walking as a result of the attack.

Speaking to Nation.Africa, Lamu Central sub-county police Commander Nyawa Murinzi said the boy had been reported missing since August 9, only to be found locked up in the mans house this week.

When my officers interrogated the boy, he revealed to them that the suspect had repeatedly molested him. We took him to a hospital, where doctors confirmed that he had indeed been assaulted several times. The suspect is in our custody awaiting to be presented in court any time, he said.

He urged the public to report to police promptly when their children go missing or are sexually abused.

You can imagine this child has missed classes for over a week now. He has also been sexually abused and tortured psychologically. Such behaviour should stop, he said.

Lamu Child Protection Initiative executive officer Abdulaziz Sadiq lauded the police for their quick response in the matter.

He advised parents to desist from sending small children to shops and markets alone, as that presents opportunities to paedophiles to prey on them.

He noted that child abuse cases had risen in Lamu in recent years.

Parents should monitor their childrens behaviour and movements. In fact, they should always accompany their children whenever they go for activities such as swimming in the Indian Ocean or any other venture to guarantee their safety, he said.

End of Police in Lamu arrest man for sexually molesting teen

I owe my life to my accordion, says Murang'a octogenarian | Nation

Mwangi Muiruri / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Mr Julius Gathia Kagimbi, 89, clutches his accordion so lovingly one is bound to believe him when he says the musical instrument is his divine communication channel.

I owe my life to my accordion, says Murang'a octogenarian

The instrument has taken him places and seen him wine and dine with the high and mighty. He told the Nation that it once saved his life.

The octogenarian says were it not for the fact that he is not greedy, it would by now have helped him amass enough material wealth to break him into the billionaires club, the fact that he never lasted beyond two weeks in nursery school notwithstanding.

His attachment to his accordion becomes much clearer when he narrates to the Nation an incident 62 years ago when he claims the instrument lured him to safety when death came calling.

Bad company

The year was 1959 and a youthful and impressionable Kagimbi had fallen into bad company. He had joined a gang that was keen to strike it rich by stealing from wealthy people in Muranga.

We had planned to attack a businessman in Gituamba trading centre who, according to our informers, had Sh3,000 stacked in his shop. We were to attack him as he opened for the day's business, around 6am, he reveals, adding that Sh3,000 was a lot of money back then.

On the night before the planned raid, however, he had a change of heart. Instead of going to bed early so as to be fresh and ready for the impending heist, he found himself picking up his accordion and walking into the forest in the dead of night. It was a mystical turn of events he cannot fully explain to this day.

When I returned home at 10am the following day, the village was awash with news that all my five friends had been lynched by angry villagers. The shopkeeper had raised the alarm and the gang was cornered. The accordion pulled me from the jaws of death! he says.

Prime property

Today, he claims, would be the owner of some prime property near Kenya Cinema in Nairobi, which first President Jomo Kenyatta had ordered that he be given 44 years ago.

It was Jamhuri Day in 1976 and I was among traditional crooners who had been invited to entertain the President at State House. I played the accordion with all my heart. Mzee Kenyatta loved music and the next thing I knew he was next to me, dancing and happily waving his flywhisk. When I was done, he was beside himself with joy. He directed that I be given some place to call home in Nairobi, he says.

Mzee Kagimbi says those were the days when the Presidents word was law.

The following morning, some youths built for me a two-roomed mud-walled house I was told that would be my temporary home as elaborate plans were made to have a decent home built for me, he said.

Mr Kagimbi recalls that around that time, Embakasi Ranching Company Limited was being converted into a land-buying firm under the leadership of the President and Kiambu politician Njenga Karume and city trader Muhuri Muchiri.

Muchiri was mandated by the President to ensure I got a home in the capital city. Three days after the Jamhuri Day celebrations, he took me to the city and showed me a plot in the area where Kenya Cinema stands today. I, however, knew building a house in Nairobi was not for me. I had no income or business, he says.

He told Muchiri that he preferred getting land in Muranga County.

Muchiri wrote me an introductory letter to the Muranga County Council detailing what the President had ordered. When I presented the letter to the council, I was allocated an acre in Sabasaba town. I did not understand why they wanted to give me a big plot when all I needed was some place to build a home as the President had ordered. In any case, I already had 166 acres in Kamahuha village, where I was born, he told the Nation in an interview.

Real-estate journey

I owe my life to my accordion, says Murang'a octogenarian | Nation

Mwangi Muiruri / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Mr Kagimbi's real-estate journey did not, however, start with the President's order. It started much earlier.

After dropping out of nursery school at the age of 12 years, he worked as a shamba boy. His salary was one shilling a month.

The colonialists taught him to play wandindi, a traditional string instrument. This sowed the seeds of his love for musical instruments. His passion for music would grow so much that by the time the Kapenguria Six - Jomo Kenyatta, Bildad Kaggia, Kungu Karumba, Fred Kubai, Paul Ngei and Ochieng Oneko were being released in August 1961, he was there to lead the celebrations in Murang'a.

I was the entertainer during the freedom celebrations and many other rallies and the income was good. On a good day I would make about Sh20, he says.

By 1966, he had saved enough, thanks to his accordion, to establish a hotel in Maragua town where he sold tea. A big mug of tea went for 10 cents and a small one for five cents.

Popular

By 1968, he had saved enough to develop a plot he had bought in Maragua town.

I had built a wagon that I used to ferry building materials from nearby quarries, the nearest being 20 kilometres. In fact, so popular was I and my accordion that women volunteered to dig the foundation trenches for my projects, he says.

The 10-roomed commercial building was completed in 1969. He, however, lost a lot of money to suppliers of building materials due to his illiteracy.

That is when I came face to face with the consequences of my lack of education. The suppliers, instead of giving me receipts for the money I gave them, would hand me invoices. They later sued me in Nairobi, saying I had surrendered the building to them to offset some Sh3,000 that I owed them. I was surprised that there was a signed agreement that I would be employed there as a caretaker, he says.

I lost the house, but my accordion came to my rescue. By 1989, I had compiled three albums with a total of 30 songs. In between these compilations I visited State House and, thanks to my accordion, I recouped what I lost through the building, he says.

Not paid

Come the dawn of multiparty politics, Mr Kagimbi became a sensation in Nairobi and Central Kenya as he would be retained to entertain audiences with his accordion, though some organisers failed to pay him.

To date, Mr Kagimbi and his accordion are inseparable. He travels to Sabasaba town every day from his Kaharate village home.

This is my guardian angel and the source of my livelihood, he enthuses when the Nation catches up with him in the town.

On the land he got through a presidential decree stand three buildings with his name emblazoned prominently on the front.

Wanaruona anarumenya, reads a message on one building, meaning only those who have witnessed strange things and great things can understand them. He says the message is a reminder of how he lost a completed building in Maragua town.

Kuhoha ti kúma (being weak does not imply one is dead), shouts another message on another of his buildings. And at 89, Mr Kagimbi says he feels like he is 40.

When I feel like I am getting ill, I just take my accordion and sing for good health. I have never been in hospital. This accordion gave me my two wives and the five children we have. I have a feeling that I will walk into heaven carrying my accordion, he says.

End of I owe my life to my accordion, says Murang'a octogenarian | Nation

Mombasa businessman abducted by suspected security agents

Farhiya Hussein / Thursday, August 19, 2021

A Mombasa businessman was arrested on Wednesday by unknown people suspected to be officers from the Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU) officers.

Abdulkhaleem Salim Sagar, 40, was returning home from a mosque at around 6pm when he was grabbed by unknown people in Kuze, Old Town, his brother told the Nation.

He was heading to his house, which is near the mosque he attends. A group of seven people who identified themselves as officers confronted him and placed him in a Toyota Hilux double-cabin truck before driving him away, Faris Sagar said.

The father of three is said to have been in the company of two of his children when he was taken.

Mr Sagar said his brother had received several threats.

He was being followed by unknown people for months. They were driving a Toyota Probox, he said.

Nation.africa has learnt that Mr Salim has an ongoing terrorism-related case at a court in Shanzu, Mombasa, that started in 2018.

He has never skipped any case. I am shocked by the way they arrested my brother in front of his wife and children, Mr Sagar said.

The family's lawyer, Mbugua Mureithi, said Mr Salim was charged with possessing terror-related materials on his mobile phone.

We demand those who have taken him to bring him before the court. He has been cooperating with the officers. Even when he was asked to appear at the ATPU offices in Mombasa he did, he said.

Mr Mureithi noted that Mr Salim had reported to the ATPU offices once every month since 2018.

He was first taken into custody in 2018, following the arrest of his employee.

In 2018, two men were arrested in the Liboi area, one of whom confirmed to be working for Mr Salim as a gas supplier. Later, the officers arrested him (Mr Salim) and we have been following up on the case since then, said Mr Mureithi.

He added that only the investigative officer was remaining to take the stand.

Mr Salim's other brother, Mohammed Sagar, told the Nation that his brother runs a cyber-business in Old Town, Mombasa.

My brother was charged but the other two were released due to lack of evidence. But a few months later, the two went missing. No one knows where they are, Mr Mohammed said.

End of Mombasa businessman abducted by suspected security agents

Leave out youth at your own peril

Mutuma Mathiu / Friday, August 20, 2021

Does anybody know where the offices of the Njuri Ncheke are? I'd like to apply to join that august body so that I can dress politicians in wet skins and promote them to elders, sit in judgement of wayward husbands, eat roast and boiled goat given as fines by land thieves, give advice at weddings, speak at funerals and generally enjoy great food, stress-free assignments and sitting under a tree where the air is clean and views gorgeous.

As the father of a teenager on the verge of adulthood, I can join any council of elders. I can join the Kikuyu Council of Elders and receive applications for the presidency from sixth-tier politicians, the Luo Council of Elders and spend the rest of my life speaking a lot of English with the same message (yup, its Tinga), the Kalenjin Council of Elders and hang out with ex-military bigwigs or the Kaya elders in Kilifi and do voodoo in forest shrines.

Three-quarters 75 per cent of the population of this country are aged 35 and below. A full 40 per cent are 15 and below. Only three per cent are 55 and above. When Kenyans talk about representation, they are thinking about tribe. How many parliamentary seats are being created in Mandera, how many new seats for Central, and so on. Nobody ever thinks about the most important representation of all: Generational.

Your stage in life is everything. It determines your ambitions, your dreams, your perspectives, your priorities. There is no such thing as shared goals: It depends on your priorities, and they are different at various points of your life.

Without a future

I had planned to write about failure and disappointment but when I saw the One Kenya Alliance good folks and the plans to link up with the Jubilee-ODM axis to form one grand, happy coalition, I changed my plans. I thought, Kenyan politics is like a fixed interview process: It gives you the wrong outcome, irrespective of the talent you feed into it.

William Ruto, 54, Raila Odinga (76), Kalonzo Musyoka (67), Moses Wetangula (64), Musalia Mudavadi (60) and Gideon Moi (57) have a combined political experience of 168 years. If you combine their ages, 376 years, you are operating in the Methuselah zone. Demographically, they represent about three per cent of the population.

Am I promoting ageism? How can I? I am making the point that our political process, fixated on preserving the established political class and its hold on the teat of state largesse, is missing the most important variable of all: The seething fury and disappointment of that 75 per cent of the population, the one that feels misunderstood and neglected, the one that feels hopeless and without a future, the one that feels that they will never find a job, the one that fears that the country is set against them.

Dr Ruto is looking like a hero because at least he talks about the youth. But his idea of a wheelbarrow as the symbol of economic rescue; how do you think those dreaming of being lawyers on Wall Street, actors on Broadway and doctors in Chicago are going to receive the news that their presidential candidate is dreaming of a future full of pushing wheelbarrows for them? They are thrilled, right?

Mr Musyoka is a nice guy and good leader, first elected 36 years ago. He has been in office longer than 75 per cent of the population has been on this earth. This is not a bad thing. But the question is, if he is still fighting for the job, when will the young ones get a chance to try their hand at it?

Recycling glorious past

A young country should not be led by old people; it should be led by a mix of old and young people with the young ones being more than the old ones. The profile of leaders should approximate the profile of the population. The trouble with Kenya is that old people like me have all the jobs and the young people are out in the cold.

Age is not just a number; it is also the psychological, social and physical being. Your age determines what you think, what you need and how invested in the future you are. The trouble with our old leaders is that they have not modernised their thinking. They have nothing in common with the majority of the citizens not even wheelbarrows.

In the old days, warriors were forced to retire and sit down and let younger braves take over the job of making trouble and rustling cattle. Older elders were also retired from decision-making to rolling the condemned down a hill in beehives.

Our politics should be a process of transmitting leadership to the youth, not recycling the glorious past. If Mr Odinga is a candidate brilliantly reciting the national anthem and talking about South Korea and Malaysia in 1963, I'll wake up to vote only if it is mandated by the Njuri Ncheke. I do know for a fact that my daughter will not vote in that election, not

Leave out youth at your own peril

Mutuma Mathiu / Friday, August 20, 2021

for that or the wheelbarrow stuff, no matter how many dresses I buy her.

End of Leave out youth at your own peril

Let us celebrate Bidens ending of a brutal war

Salim Lone / Friday, August 20, 2021

Amid the disastrous and lightning end to Americas longest war, and the inconceivable lack of preparedness for this very scenario, the most important outcome of the Afghanistan conflict is being overlooked by the media: a brutal, 20-year war and occupation seems to be drawing to a close.

Of all the violations of human and other rights we condemn, nothing is more destructive than war, which kills thousands of innocents, plants internal hatred and sets back the invariably weaker nation for decades without any accountability for the aggressor. And yet few have made eradicating war a priority, even though the UN was founded for this explicit purpose after WWII.

The war in Afghanistan has ended because President Joe Biden recognised there was no other alternative unless the US wanted to fight there forever. He resisted relentless pressure from military and intelligence chiefs as well as the powerful media to continue maintaining a small military force in Afghanistan, which of course was not acceptable to the Taliban.

Bidens determination was not new. He has been arguing for this pullout for more than a decade. I am not a fan of Bidens foreign policy, particularly fanning a new Cold War with his needlessly confrontational and even abusive approach towards Russia, China and Cuba. So convinced was he that US interests would be served in pulling out of Afghanistan that he readily followed in President Donald Trumps footsteps, even though his rationale for seeking the White House was visceral opposition to all that Trump stood for.

In any case, the Taliban had in effect won this war a long while back. Afghan support for the regime had been plunging as corruption mushroomed and presidential and other elections were routinely rigged.

The disaffection was indubitably demonstrated in the Talibans almost effortless 10-day sweep of the provincial capitals and Kabul, many of which surrendered without a fight. Some \$2 trillion and thousands of lives were extinguished in vain, and a country demolished.

No wonder, Biden broke diplomatic protocol by openly excoriating the Afghan leadership and armed forces. He said they had not been prepared to defend their regime despite vastly outnumbering the Taliban foot soldiers (by five times!) and being as well equipped as any army in the world, while the insurgents were lightly armed and had no air force. However, the Taliban were armed by a powerful cause fighting occupiers.

Foreign policy disaster

Richard Fontaine, the head of the Centre for A New American Security an influential think tank captured this dichotomy by saying that everything depends on the will to fight for the government. And that, it turns out, depended on US presence and support.

But Fontaine did not explore a bigger truth that in this poorest of countries, support for the occupation was significantly built by the hundreds of billions of dollars that the US poured into the economy, which provided unheard of incomes to thousands of Afghans serving the vast needs of mighty occupying powers. The same was true of the Iraq occupation, where the US in the first year handed over \$12 billion in cash to the new government.

The other significant source of Afghan support came from women and other marginalised groups who had exercised their rights in a way they had never been able to under the Taliban or even earlier.

Hailing Bidens ending the war cannot nevertheless hide the enormity of the humiliation dealt to the US by the Taliban, as the Washington Post said in its editorial.

In the UK, Thomas Tugendhat, the chairman of Parliaments Foreign Affairs Committee, termed this collapse the greatest foreign policy disaster since the failed UK-French attempt to seize the Suez Canal in 1956.

The global and domestic reverberations from the Taliban victory will haunt Bidens presidency. He had enjoyed overwhelming media and Democratic party support despite a flawed overall performance, thanks to the lurking Trump. But now, even senior Democrats are criticising him, fearing that the scale of the debacle could lose them the presidency as well as the Senate and the House in 2024.

Biden is clearly not the only offender in this mess. How could the military, national security and intelligence agencies, with their vast networks built over 20 years of occupation, been so out-of-touch with ground realities and utterly unprepared for what unfolded?

Iron fist rule

Let us celebrate Bidens ending of a brutal war*Salim Lone / Friday, August 20, 2021*

Afghanistan has revealed a profound US military and security weakness. The disaster is reminiscent of the devastating, across-the-board failure of multiple American institutions to deal with coronavirus last year. There are many other weaknesses as well as arrogance which would be Americas undoing were it not a superpower able to routinely project force in all corners of the globe.

What will come next? Taliban ruled with an iron fist in their five years in power and revoked numerous core freedoms, especially for women and girls, with their extremist interpretation of Islamic law. In their 20 years of exile and global exposure, their pronouncements this week indicate they have seemingly come to an awareness about the importance, and advantages, of more enlightened and inclusive governance.

They have publicly forgiven those who fought them and said women will be allowed to work and dress within sharia principles. Taliban leaders are engaging with governments and international organisations, with one leader going to a Unicef office and asking that the agency stays and continues teaching girls.

That many women leaders have expressed scepticism about their real intentions is hardly a surprise, and the thousands trying to flee the country show that only actions will reassure the population.

Its not at all easy to predict how the Taliban will rule, but British Chief of Defence staff Nick Carter was right to urge that we give the group space to find out it governance priorities.

Russia and China are cautiously optimistic and working towards negotiating formal ties.

In the US, many in the media are using extremist language, which is wrong and entirely counter-productive. CNNs Jake Tapper, one of Americas most senior anchors, was the worst offender, calling the Taliban barbaric, enslavers of women and rapists.

Way to govern humanely

On August 14, the New York Times twice used the term brutal in describing the Talibans successful campaign. The paper did not provide evidence of brutality. Ironically, the New York Times also said that the Taliban greatly reduced mass casualty attacks, which many other neutral media also reported.

I wonder how many American journalists characterised as brutal or barbaric the killing of civilians in US drone strikes and the massive bombing of Afghanistan after the 9/11 al-Qaeda terror attacks.

The main international concern is the Talibans treatment of women and keeping terrorist groups out.

It is crucial they find a way to govern humanely as they will again become pariahs if they return to their old ways.

But we need to recognise that the Taliban have the right to rule by Islamic law, as most Afghans are religiously conservative. It is possible to do this without straying from globally enshrined norms.

After their 20-year struggle to seeming victory against overwhelming odds, the world has an obligation to engage the Taliban and press them to rule humanely.

If they do not, the answer is not to bomb them but to continue to engage them, and if needed, penalise them.

End of Let us celebrate Bidens ending of a brutal war

How will I know if the editor will publish my article? Do your part

Peter Mwaura / Friday, August 20, 2021

How will I know? These are some of the words I hear most often from readers looking to publish letters to the editor, opinion pieces and other articles.

The words, in many cases, sound like a refrain from *How Will I Know*, recorded by Whitney Houston. The song is otherwise known as *There's a boy I know, he's the one I dream of*.

The would-be writers ask: How will I know if the editor will publish my article? I say a prayer with every word I type. How will I know what he's thinking? I try to phone but they redirect my call to you. I'm asking you what you know about these things.

I operate independently and physically outside the newsroom at Nation Centre on Kimathi Street, Nairobi. But I do know that most of the questions would not arise if the would-be writers did their homework. I'm recommending the homework here.

Most of the questions they ask are elementary. Examples: I have an article that I would like to be published online; what's the criteria or way forward?, Do you tell the writer when the article is going to be published?, Please advise on how I can get my article published in your dailies, I understand all that is required and have been following that in my writing but none of my articles have been published; what's going on?

Some of the would-be writers come hauling emotional baggage. One of them claims he has been ignored: I've emailed copies of three letters, which the opinion editor has ignored due to his selective habit. I complained to you through my letter of 4th October, 2019. Please find out and advise me on why he doesn't want to publish my letters.

Comprehensive answer

The reader says one of his articles has been published in *The Standard* (as if that was proof positive of fine writing). I hope you'll probe the underlying reasons why your opinion editor can't similarly publish my articles. Could it be due to bias, favouritism, arrogance or whatever that makes a restless editor trash such articles?

It's worth noting that when some of us write, it's because of burning issues which we want the authorities to address. It's not because we want to see our names printed in the media. The media is the only means through which we can reach the authorities.

For example, the Ethiopian dam concerns millions of people around the region. How, then, can a responsible editor shelve or trash an article on such a subject? We need seasoned and elderly editors who can review opinions from varied age groups. Alternatively, have the editors reshuffled from time to time to avoid a situation where an overstayed editor tries to personalise the post.

Another reader says he wrote an opinion article more than a week ago and was advised to downsize it to 700 words. I cut off content and sent it back. What could be the reason for it not being published yet? Maybe you can go through it and advise.

Over the years, I've answered most, if not all, of these questions, including why editors reject articles. Anybody who has such questions can get a comprehensive answer by reading the following Public Editors Notebook articles: How to get your article published in *Nation* without breaking a sweat (October 16, 2020); This is what you should do to get the editor to consider your article (September 1, 2016); Opinion editor offers advice on how best to present your article (February 22, 2018); Why the editor has discretion to reject, shorten or rewrite letters (January 24, 2019); Follow these guidelines to ensure your articles see light of the day (December 27, 2019); and How contributors can go beyond the unsolicited article category (January 31, 2019).

However, I suspect most of those who ask *How Will I Know* will not take the trouble to read the articles because it's work. It's a pity. Because most of their questions can be answered by reading the articles.

The Public Editor is an independent news ombudsman who handles readers' complaints on editorial matters including accuracy and journalistic standards. Email: Call or text 0721989264.

End of How will I know if the editor will publish my article? Do your part

Opinion journalism and evidence

Peter Mwaura / Friday, August 20, 2021

I read two pieces in which you raised concerns about the unsubstantiated attacks on Deputy President William Ruto by Prof Makau Mutua in his weekly column in the Sunday Nation.

The first was in response to readers who considered Prof Mutuas attacks as unwarranted. The second was a response to those who have no problem with the columnists personalised attacks on the DP. In both, you argued that credibility and integrity of opinion writing is rooted in facts or evidence supporting the opinion.

I have been a keen reader of editorial or opinion pages of the Daily Nation and other publications right from secondary school. I was particularly attracted to the opinion writings of professors William Ochieng, Ali Mazrui and Anyang Nyongo, and Mutahi Ngunyi (when he wrote for the Sunday Nation). I was also particularly attracted to the Kwendo Opangas The Week That Was in the Sunday Nation.

I did not know at the time the roots of my fascination with opinion journalism. It was only later, during my reading of books on rhetoric, that I discovered why I was hooked on this genre of journalism or writing.

I learnt that opinion or argumentative writing, which largely defines editorial or opinion writing, must have a thesis, claim or assertion about an issue, problem or person.

Proof or evidence

The second important element I learnt was that the writer, or the proponent of the assertion, must provide proof or evidence that supports the thesis, claim or assertion.

The third important element from my reading was that an opinion stands on the warrant, assumptions or values upon which the writer centers his thesis, claim or assertion.

The other is that the writer, or proponent of a position, must be decent enough to take into account the counter-thesis, or opposing assertion or claims, and demonstrate how it sits ill with his assertion or thesis. He must also have decent respect for his interlocutor.

All writers, regardless of the sophistication of their education, ideas or position in the society, must adhere to these principles of argumentation or opinion writing.

Kennedy Buhere, Nairobi

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End of Opinion journalism and evidence

Foreign control is a tough trade

Charles Onyango-Obbo / Thursday, August 19, 2021

After 20 years, the United States and its allies are leaving Afghanistan humbled as the Taliban retake the capital Kabul. For all the breathless reporting about the surprise at the lightning advance of the Taliban, the dramatic collapse of the government and the disaster that America has suffered, this was a story long in the making.

What it has taken the superpower to purchase defeat tells us how well-nigh impossible occupation and conquest of foreign lands have become in modern times.

Forbes reports that, since September 11, 2001, the US has spent more than \$2 trillion [Sh200 trillion] on the war in Afghanistan. That's \$300 million per day, every day, for two decades. Or \$50,000 for each of Afghanistan's 40 million people. In baser terms, Uncle Sam has spent more keeping the Taliban at bay than the net worth of Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Bill Gates and the 30 richest billionaires in America combined.

And the costs are even greater in terms of lives lost. There have been 2,500 US military deaths in Afghanistan and nearly 4,000 more US civilian contractors killed. That pales beside the estimated 69,000 Afghan military police, 47,000 civilians killed plus 51,000 dead opposition fighters.

Russia's adventure in Afghanistan earlier, in 1979 -1989, lasted only half the period of America's but was more ferocious and deadlier. About 15,000 Soviet soldiers were killed and another 35,000 injured. A mind-boggling two million Afghan civilians were killed.

Uncomfortable to say it, but there was a time when occupations, colonialism and imperialism were more successful that is, lasting 75 years and more. The Ottomans, Spaniards, Portuguese and British were particularly good at it. For crying out loud, the Philippines was under Spanish rule for 333 years, the longest occupation.

Amisom media junket

So what does it take for imperialism, or a foreign military campaign, even a peacekeeping one, to be relatively successful?

The first time I went to Mogadishu, shortly after the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) had kicked Al-Shabaab out of the battered city, one could quickly see the possibilities and perils.

A bunch of us journalists arrived on what, if truth be told, was an Amisom media junket. The situation at the Aden Adde International Airport was stressful. As soon as we identified our bags, Somali carriers started bumping us and jostling to carry them (for a fee). The Amisom military party that received us stood by, stone-faced, and did little to save us from the chaos until we made it out and they led us into armoured personnel carriers.

When we returned on our way out days later, it was even worse. We were knocked over, shoved and hauled from one corner of the check-in area to another. The Amisom fellows who brought us to the airport again did nothing until, finally, one of them called a Somali airport official and, after a whisper in his ear, he came and shouted around and we made it through.

By then it had become clear why an Amisom that called the shots in Mogadishu was eager to not publicly show authority over local officials and airport hustlers: It doesn't sit well if you are a foreigner. When you are in other people's countries and you are the powerful one, you buy time by playing as powerless as you can. It is nearly an impossible task, and even for Amisom, the rewards have been modest.

Parachute journalism

Modern occupations also have a peculiar problem: The technological superiority of the conqueror becomes a liability. Foreign armies fly in in aeroplanes, drones, satellites and all sorts of fancy technology covering them. They take an airport, or a field, and establish a fortress as their base. They are never part of the community and venture out mostly in armoured cars, bulletproof vests and helmets.

Earlier conquerors arrived by foot and, maybe, on horseback. They walked the roads, climbed the hills, met people along the way, learnt a bit of their language, ate local food and often pillaged the towns along the way. By the time they reached the capital, where the king or chief ruled, they had some local knowledge.

Today's imperialism suffers the problem of parachute journalism. A chap flies in from New York, lands at JKIA, and the next day is in Laikipia pretending to know the dynamics driving the conflict between ranchers and nomadic cattle keepers.

Foreign control is a tough trade

Charles Onyango-Obbo / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Successful conquerors from earlier times in Europe also got down and were very personal. They married the local women, carefully picking brides from chiefly and royal families to expand their influence and buy acceptance.

Times have changed, and societies are different. Occupying armies patronise brothels. The local elite they extend patronage to arent prestigious, nor do they have the respect of the communities. They have very few paths to peoples hearts.

The market for imperial occupation, and colonialism, has collapsed. The powerful have to invent more creative forms of dominion over other people if they want to remain in the business.

Ms Onyango-Obbo is a journalist, writer and curator of the Wall of Great Africans. @cobbo3

End of Foreign control is a tough trade

Nangulu: Youthful derision is driving low Covid-19 vaccine uptake

Moses Nangulu / Friday, August 20, 2021

I had a frank discussion with my second-year students about the Covid-19 vaccine uptake in Kenya. Out of 50 students, only five opened up about their experiences with Covid-19.

Their family members, either close or extended, friends and anyone in their social circles had contracted, recovered or succumbed to the disease.

For the rest, their only experience is through media, especially social media platforms. None of them has been vaccinated or fallen ill due to Covid-19 in the entire university.

These students told me that they found wearing face masks bothersome and social and physical distancing an inconvenience, yet they are the likely super-spreaders, as studies have shown. It is a generation that is blissfully ignorant.

One or two will listen to the Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe's press briefing on the Covid-19 situation in Kenya by sheer chance if only the Brenda-Brian memes are trending.

The sick online humour that ensued on the Brenda-Brian recovery and discharges from Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) isolation ward did not make matters any better among the Kenyan university students perception of the ravages of the Covid-19 pandemic among the Kenyan youth and Kenya in general.

Youthful population

Nonetheless, the majority of Kenya's youthful population boast higher immunity levels because of their youthfulness. Unlike Europe's ageing population, Africa constitutes the youngest population but with low life expectancy. Kenya is the seventh most populous country, with a population of about 53 million people. From the 2019 Census, we are a youthful country teeming with a youthful rural population of 35.7 million Kenyans (75.1 per cent) below 35 years, of which 32.73 million (68.9per cent) live in rural areas.

Kenya's rural population is relatively homogenous in their respective cultural inclinations and highly cynical and averse to medical messaging that threatens masculinity and femininity. Would such a vast segment of our population readily accept the Covid-19 vaccine? A paltry three per cent is 65 years and above while 4per cent is those in the 55-64 age category.

A risk factor

Most academic staff in Kenyan universities are over 35. To the academic staff, the student community is indeed a risk factor. Imagine you have five courses to teach, notwithstanding the aversion students hold towards social and physical distancing. Furthermore, unlike boarding schools, these students commute from different residences in and around Kenyan urban areas.

The multiplier effect of infection and transmission of Covid-19 in the event of an asymptomatic patient among the university community is unimaginable.

With this in mind, I took the jab. As did most of my colleagues at the university. On the first day, I experienced slight fatigue and a headache. On day two, I had a slight fever.

That was all for me as far as side effects go. Unlike most of my students, I know many people who have had Covid-19 and have recovered, but some have succumbed to it.

The emotional, physical and financial strain is excruciating.

The worst is stigma, though. Back at home in Bungoma County, a friend was taken ill due to Covid-19 though she already had the first jab. An ambulance went for her with its blaring sirens at night. This roused the whole village. She went into the intensive care unit and pulled through. On returning home, she found a zoo. From inside the house, she could see villagers stopping and gesturing towards the house. They would pretend to mind their business and walk on when she stepped outtypical rural Kenya.

As for the unexplained side effects of the vaccine in three years, it is a medical deep-end. There is no data available.

Nangulu: Youthful derision is driving low Covid-19 vaccine uptake

Moses Nangulu / Friday, August 20, 2021

This is how I think of it: There's no existing data either on the impact of consuming vegetables and nduma grown using sewage water, GMO chicken and beef and their products, bootlegged liquor, over the counter viagra, beauty products, especially skin lightening ones etc. This does not stop anyone.

In the words of a colleague on vaccine hesitancy and efficacy, maybe the vaccinated might have a better death than the unvaccinated ones.

End of Nangulu: Youthful derision is driving low Covid-19 vaccine uptake

Uganda suspends 54 NGOs including prominent rights group

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

The Ugandan government announced on Friday it had halted the activities of 54 non-governmental organisations, a major escalation of its efforts to tighten control over civil society.

One of the groups affected is the country's most prominent rights organisation, Chapter Four. The National Bureau for NGOs, part of the ministry of internal affairs, said in a statement the shutdown was ordered "with immediate effect".

It said the decision was made because the groups had failed to comply with legislation covering their activities, including operating with expired permits, failing to file accounts or failing to register with the authorities.

Some of the organisations ordered to close had taken part in an election monitoring operation on polling day in January which was raided by security forces and several of their leaders arrested.

The election saw President Yoweri Museveni returned for a sixth term in office after a violent campaign marked by the harassment and arrest of opposition figures, attacks on the media and the deaths of several dozen people.

Chapter Four executive director Nicholas Opiyo confirmed his group had received the government's order to close and described the situation as "serious".

End of Uganda suspends 54 NGOs including prominent rights group

Cameroon violence kills 32 as thousands flee

Ndi Eugene Ndi / Friday, August 20, 2021

Clashes between fishermen and herders in Cameroon have killed 32 people and forced thousands to flee to neighboring Chad for safety, the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, said Thursday.

What has been described as the worst intercommunal violence in the country in contemporary times started between Choa Arab herders and Mousgoum fishermen and farmers over agricultural, fisheries and pastoral resources in the Logone Birni district of the Far North region on August 10.

At least 32 people were killed and 74 injured and 19 villages burned down, UNHCR said in a statement.

The UN body said Chadian authorities have reported the arrival of 11,000 people fleeing violence to seek refuge in Chad while an additional 7,300 were displaced within the country.

It said about 85 percent of those who have fled to neighboring Chad are women and children, and most of the men are elderly.

"UNHCR calls on the governments concerned to do everything possible to reduce the intercommunal tensions that have caused this displacement and to ensure the safety of people forced to flee," the UN Agency's Regional Director for West and Central Africa, Millicent Mutuli said.

The UNHCR said those who have fled to Chad are in urgent need of shelter, especially during the rainy season, explaining that many of them are sleeping under trees while some have found shelter in schools or with host families.

There is an urgent need for temporary shelter because most of the new arrivals are women and children exposed to a wide-range of protection risks, UNHCR Deputy Representative in Chad, said Iris Blom was quoted in the statement.

Authorities in Cameroon have since been working on restoring calm and provide assistance to the victims.

Unlike in neighboring Chad and Nigeria, deadly clashes between communities like that of August 10 are relatively rare in Cameroon. The latest however occurred in a region already facing serious security challenges with repeated attacks from Nigerian-based Boko Haram jihadist group. Analysts say the intercommunal violence could complicate the country's fight against the group.

End of Cameroon violence kills 32 as thousands flee

Burkina Faso once more in mourning after jihadist massacre

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

The impoverished Sahel state of Burkina Faso was plunged once more into mourning on Thursday, as the toll of people killed by suspected jihadists the day before climbed from 49 to 80, including 65 civilians.

The national flag was lowered to half-mast for three days of mourning at the parliament, presidency and government offices in the capital Ouagadougou, an AFP journalist saw, while the heavy casualties raised fresh doubts about the country's armed forces.

Several television and radio channels changed their programming, mostly broadcasting songs paying tribute to the defence and security forces.

Newspapers and online media placed a black edging of mourning around their front pages, although some raised pointed questions over the country's security crisis.

"Over the past five years, the days have come and gone but look the same to the Burkinabe public," said the online outlet Wakatsera.

"The flags are raised and then almost immediately dropped to half-mast to mourn new dead, civilians and/or troops, in attacks by armed individuals who are usually never identified," it said.

"This time, the mourning will last 72 hours. What about tomorrow?"

Bloody toll

The landlocked country has been battered for the past six years by jihadist attacks from neighbouring Mali -- the epicentre of a brutal insurgency that began in 2012 and has also hit Niger.

Thousands of soldiers and civilians have died in the three countries, while according to UN figures, more than two million people have fled their homes.

In Burkina Faso itself, the toll stands at more than 1,500 dead and 1.3 million displaced.

In Wednesday's attack, 65 civilians and 15 gendarmes were killed near the town of Gorgadji in Burkina's Sahel region, communications minister and government spokesman Ousseni Tamboura said late Thursday.

The location is in the so-called three-border area, where the frontiers of the three countries converge -- and gunmen linked to Al-Qaeda and the so-called Islamic State roam.

The security forces killed 58 "terrorists" and the rest fled, according to the government, which on Thursday offered its "congratulations to the defence and security forces" for the action.

Struggling military

It was the third major attack on Burkina troops in the past two weeks, placing a spotlight on the country's poorly equipped and ill-trained armed forces against a highly mobile foe.

Since the start of August, more than 90 people have died in attacks in the north and northeast of the country.

Overnight on June 4, gunmen killed at least 132 people, including children, in the northeast village of Solhan. It was Burkina's deadliest attack in the history of the insurgency.

"With each new attack, we say we've hit bottom, but then another one comes along, reminding us that there is always something worse," said Bassirou Sedogo, a 47-year-old businessman.

"We observe national mourning, but we also wonder how an ambush against a military convoy... can leave so many casualties.

"If they can kill so many civilians who are under escort, that means no one anywhere in the area is safe from these killings."

The police and volunteers in the Gorgadji attack had been providing a security escort for civilian victims of preceding assaults who were going back to their homes elsewhere in the region, the authorities say.

On Niger's side of the "three-border" region, more than 450 people have been killed since the start of the year.

On Monday, armed men arriving on motorbikes killed 37 civilians in the village of Darey-Daye as they worked in the fields. Four women and 13 children were among the dead.

End of Burkina Faso once more in mourning after jihadist massacre

Two killed, five injured in Mogadishu suicide bombing

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

At least two people were killed and five wounded Thursday after a suicide bomber detonated a device inside a cafe in the Somali capital Mogadishu, police and witnesses said.

The suicide bomber targeted a tea shop near a crowded junction in northern Mogadishu which was reportedly frequented by members of the Somali security forces as well as civilians.

The Al-Qaeda-linked group Al-Shabaab claimed the attack through their Shahada News Agency, according to the US monitoring group SITE.

The early-evening attack, which sent debris flying outside, killed two members of the security forces and injured five people, said Mohamed Ali, a traffic policeman who was at the scene.

"Pieces of metal and destroyed plastic seats were strewn around the whole area," said Abdukadir Sagaalle, an eyewitness.

Al-Shabaab, which is fighting to overthrow Somalia's internationally-backed government, regularly attacks government and civilian targets in Mogadishu.

Last month, the jihadists claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing on a crowded tea shop in Mogadishu that killed at least 10 people and wounded dozens.

The group controlled Somalia's capital until 2011 when it was pushed out by African Union troops, but still holds territory in the countryside.

End of Two killed, five injured in Mogadishu suicide bombing

Ethiopia now targets Tigrayans living in Addis, says HRW

Tesfa-Alem Tekle / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has raised the alarm over the alleged conduct of Ethiopian authorities against Tigrayans living in Addis Ababa.

The lobby has released a report saying Tigrayans are arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, and subjected to other forms of abuse by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government.

In the report issued on Wednesday, HRW said that since Tigray's regional capital Mekelle was recaptured on June 28 by the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF), government security forces have escalated human rights violations against ethnic Tigrayans in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopian security forces in recent weeks have carried out rampant arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances of Tigrayans in Addis Ababa, said Laetitia Bader, HRW's Horn of Africa director.

The lobby has demanded that authorities immediately account for Tigrayans forcibly disappeared and release those being held without credible evidence of crime. It has also called on Ethiopian authorities to end all discriminatory treatment.

Arbitrary arrests

HRW has also urged authorities to end arbitrary arrests and detentions of Tigrayan activists and journalists.

The government should immediately stop its ethnic profiling, which has cast unjustified suspicion on Tigrayans, produce information on everyone being held, and provide redress to victims.

HRW issued the report after several interviews with current and former Tigrayan detainees, business owners, relatives of detainees, witnesses to abuses and lawyers.

It says it also reviewed court and police documents and relevant photos.

In mid-July, Addis Ababa police commissioner Getu Argaw told the media that over 300 Tigrayans had been arrested. He said they were under investigation for their alleged support for TPLF, which Ethiopia's parliament designated as a terrorist entity in May along with the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), referred to by the government as OLF-Shene.

Ordinary citizens targeted

Although the attorney-general told the media that ordinary citizens would not be affected, according to HRW's research, most, if not all, appeared to have been targeted on the basis of their ethnicity.

Witnesses and former detainees told HRW that police checked identity documents before arresting people and taking them to detention centres.

They said security forces stopped and arrested Tigrayans on the streets, in cafés and other public places, in their homes and in workplaces, often during warrantless searches.

In many cases, security forces checked people's identification cards to confirm their identity before taking them to a police station or other detention facility, the report says.

A Tigrayan political activist and a Tigrayan aid worker, both based in Addis Ababa, were among those arrested in July, as were at least a dozen journalists and media workers who have reported on abuses against Tigrayans.

Businesses closed

Since late June, security forces and police have also closed dozens of businesses owned by Tigrayans in several neighbourhoods of Addis Ababa.

Many of the unlawful tactics currently being used by the security forces, such as secretly transferring suspects among various police authorities to evade legal requirements and prolong detention periods, were used in 2020 against arbitrarily detained opposition figures and journalists, HRW says.

While family members often knew where their relatives were being held during the first few days of detention, many were then secretly transferred to unidentified locations.

Forcible disappearance

Lawyers and families discovered, often weeks later and sometimes only informally, that some detainees were being held in the Afar region, over 200 kilometres from Addis Ababa. The whereabouts of others, including 23 cases Human Rights Watch documented, remain unknown, the report says.

Ethiopia now targets Tigrayans living in Addis, says HRW

Tesfa-Alem Tekle / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Forcibly disappearing people denies them access to lawyers, undermining their right to a fair trial, and may inflict severe mental suffering on their families.

Last month, victims of the ongoing wave of arbitrary arrests told Nation.Africa that they were targeted on the basis of their ethnicity. They said they lived in fear of getting arrested again despite their release.

Previously, Addis Ababa and federal police denied allegations of large-scale ethnically motivated crackdowns.

End of Ethiopia now targets Tigrayans living in Addis, says HRW

Classy Chepkoech glides to steeplechase gold

Ayumba Ayodi / Friday, August 20, 2021

Jackline Chepkoech destroyed the field to uphold Kenyas dominance in womens 3,000m steeplechase, winning the race in personal best of nine minutes and 27.40 seconds at the ongoing World Athletics Under-20 Championships in Nairobi.

Chepkoech, who bolted out early with only one lap intact, dragged along the pack with only her compatriot Faith Cherotich and Ethiopias Zerfe Wondemagegn taking the challenge but not for long.

Cherotich and Wondemagegn engaged in the battle for silver but it's the Ethiopian, who eventually prevailed in 9:35.22 as the Kenyan settled for bronze in 9:44.76.

Kenya's Jackline Chepkoech celebrate after winning the women's 3,000 metres steeplechase during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 20, 2021.

Chepkoech retained the title which fellow countrywoman Celliphine Chespol won in the last two editions in 2016 Bydgoszcz and 2018 Tampere both in championship records.

That saw Kenya stay on the top of the medal standings with six medals; three gold, a silver and two two bronze.

From left: Kenya's Faith Cherotich (bronze), Ethiopias Zerfe Wondemagegn (silver), Jackline Chepkoech (gold) pose for a photo after the women's 3,000 metres steeplechase during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 20, 2021.

Finland moved to second with three medals; two gold and a silver followed by Ethiopia with five medals; one gold, three silver and a bronze.

End of Classy Chepkoech glides to steeplechase gold

Gold and silver! Gateri leads Yego to a 1-2 Kenyan sweep in 3,000m

Ayumba Ayodi / Friday, August 20, 2021

Teresiah Muthoni led compatriot Zenah Jemutai to a 1-2 sweep of gold and silver in the 3,000m final at the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on Thursday.

The Kenyans showed their might, relegating Ethiopia's Melknat Wudu to bronze in 9:00.12 on the wet track at Kasarani on the second day of the World Under 20 Championships.

Muthoni chalked 8:57.78 to win Kenya's second gold at the championships with Jemutai coming home second in 8:59.59.

Kenya's Teresia Muthoni crosses the finish line to win the women's 3,000 metres final during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 19, 2021.

Benson Kiplangat had given Kenya her first gold medal of the championships after scorching pre-race favourite Tadesse Worku in the men's 5,000m moments before the women's 3,000m final.

The Kenyan youngsters worked as team in the race and were rewarded for their brave run which ended the long drought in womens 3,000m.

Muthoni's victory is the first by a Kenyan since Mercy Chebwogens exploits in 2012 Barcelona, Spain.

After an explosive exchange between the Kenyan duo and Ethiopians Melknat Wudu and Prisca Chesang from Uganda, it's Muthoni who hit the front at the bell.

Kenya's Teresia Muthoni (centre) leads Ethiopia's Melknat Wudu (left) and Kenya's Zenah Jemutai in the women's 3,000 metres final during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 19, 2021.

Wudu then tried to go past the Kenyan but the Japan-based youngster refused to bulge as Jemutai stayed third in check.

Then Muthoni moved clear to win which was a good revenge from the Kenyan women after their male counterparts lost to Ethiopians in a similar fashion on Wednesday.

"Zenah was an outstanding team player. Our good team work destroyed our rivals game plan and I am happy she bagged silver. It's such a good feeling to win on my first championship event," said Muthoni, adding that Obiri's consistent performance inspired her to victory.

Besides defending her World 5,000m title in 2019, the year she also won the World Cross Country Championships title, Obiri once again won silver in 5,000m at Tokyo Olympics.

Jemutai was over the moon after settling for silver, a great improvement from 2018 Tampere where she finished fifth over the same distance.

"We were yearning for revenge after they beat our men's team in 3,000m on Wednesday. Personally, it feels good after improving from the previous outing," said Jemutai.

End of Gold and silver! Gateri leads Yego to a 1-2 Kenyan sweep in 3,000m

Clayton stuns Olympics revelation Masilingi in World U20 100m

AFP / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Nairobi, Kenya

Jamaica's Tina Clayton won the women's 100m final at the World Under-20 Championships on Thursday, edging out Beatrice Masilingi, who shone at the Olympics and found herself at the centre of debate over physiology.

Clayton timed 11.09sec for victory with Namibia's Masilingi at 11.39 in second and Switzerland's Melissa Gutschmidt taking bronze in a time of 11.51.

From left: Second place Namibia's Beatrice Masilingi, Jamaica's Tina Clayton (winner) and Switzerland's Melissa Gutschmidt celebrate at the end of the women's 100m final at the World Under-20 Championships on August 19, 2021 at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani.

Masilingi, 18, was one of the revelations of the Tokyo Olympics when she finished in sixth place in the 200m final, her maiden appearance at a major championship.

However, she and compatriot and 200m silver medallist Christine Mboma were unable to run in the 400m at the Games as they are determined as having differences in sexual development (DSD) with naturally high testosterone levels.

Under World Athletics rules, the two sprinters' rare physiology is deemed to give them an unfair competitive advantage in track events ranging between 400m and one mile.

Mboma is due to compete in the heats of the 200m on Friday as is Masilingi.

End of Clayton stuns Olympics revelation Masilingi in World U20 100m

Benson Kiplangat gives Kenya first gold of World U20 Championships

Ayumba Ayodi / Thursday, August 19, 2021

Benson Kiplangat produced a stunning performance to win the men's 5,000 metres gold for Kenya in the World Athletics Championships on Thursday at the Moi International Sports Centre.

Kiplangat won in a personal best of 13:20.37, stunning Ethiopia's Tadese Worku (13:20.65) - winner of the 3,000m gold on Wednesday - to second place.

Ethiopia's Tadese Worku (left) competes with Kenya's Benson Kiplangat (centre) and Levy Kibet in the men's 5,000 metres final during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 19, 2021.

Kenya's Levy Kibet took bronze in 3:26.01 after running for the last six laps with a shoe that had untied laces.

Worku had on Wednesday led compatriot Ali Abdilmana to a 1-2 sweep in the mens 3,000m on the opening day of the World Under 20 Championships.

Kiplangat's victory ensured the title that Edward Zakayo won in 2018 in Tampere, Finland remains in Kenya.

It was a beautiful race and equally a sweet revenge against Worku. I am really excited for the gold medal, said Kiplangat, who said the victory came as a surprise.

Kiplangat said that he told his teammates to pray for them and God delivered. We knew the Ethiopians would storm our party again but we couldnt allow that against after the first day, said Kiplangat, who trains in Kuresoi, Nakuru County with the likes of 2017 World marathon champion, Geoffrey Kirui.

Kibet also ensured that Ethiopia failed to get another 1-2 finish after he locked out Addidu Yihune from the podium in the 12.5-lap race that curved into a Kenya versus Ethiopia affair with nine laps to go.

End of Benson Kiplangat gives Kenya first gold of World U20 Championships

Owili upbeat as Kenya Morans fly to Kigali for AfroBasket finals

JOSEPH KANYI / Friday, August 20, 2021

Kenya Morans were scheduled to fly out of Nairobi early Saturday morning for Kigali for the 30th edition of the Fiba AfroBasket Championships.

Morale is high in the Kenyan team as the turn to Africas premier basketball competition for the first time in 28 years.

In my ten years playing for the national team, there has been no better feeling than fighting for our flag at the highest level in the continent, said Morans centre Desmond Owili.

The centre, 33, who plays for Diamond Valley in the Australian League, has trained for two days after landing in Kenya from his base Down Under.

The African finals tip off at the impressive Kigali Arena on Tuesday and run until September 5.

The prolific player averaged 5.7 points and 2.3 rebounds per game on the international scene before suffering an injury against continental giant Angola in the second round of qualifiers.

The journey to Kigali started in 2018 and it has been a good experience as we waded through the qualification rounds. We have done what many thought was impossible and we face the championship with full confidence, said Owili.

According to Owili, Morans believe in themselves soared after they defeated Angola 73-74 in Yaoundé, Cameroon in February.

It has taken a lot of sacrifice to get to this level. We have had dreams to make an impact for our nation. Beating Angola in that qualifier match was as a result of concerted effort by everyone in the team. It was a magical moment, he added.

Morans assistant coach Sadat Gaya acknowledged the effort by Owili to build the team together saying that the centre was responsible for mobilizing the diaspora players.

Owili said the key to success in Kigali was for Morans to play as a team and stick to the game plan.

End of Owili upbeat as Kenya Morans fly to Kigali for AfroBasket finals

Zhoya explodes to world record as Kenya's Wambua bows out

Ayumba Ayodi / Friday, August 20, 2021

Frenchman Sasha Zhoya Friday set a new Under-20 World record in the 110 metres hurdles after clocking 12.93 seconds to win Heat 2 of the semi-finals at the ongoing World Athletics Under-20 Championships.

Zhoya, 19, is now the fastest man over the distance this season and remains a huge favourite for the gold medal.

He will however face stiff competition from Jamaica's Vashaun Vascianna who won Heat 1 in 13.35 seconds.

Sasha Zhoya of France clears a hurdle in Heat 2 of men's 110 metres hurdles race during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 20, 2021.

Meanwhile, Kenya's Jonathan Wambua bowed out of the competition after finishing eighth in Heat 1 of the 200 metres semi-finals.

Wambua, who had posted personal best time of 21.43 seconds to qualify for the semis, lowered his PB to 21.13 seconds but it wasn't enough to proceed to the final.

Botswana's Letsile Tebogo won the first heat in 20.31 to boost his chances of a double after winning the 100m gold.

End of Zhoya explodes to world record as Kenya's Wambua bows out

Vihiga Queens face Ethiopia's Commercial in Champions League qualifiers

Victor Otieno / Friday, August 20, 2021

Vihiga Queens were on Friday included in Group "B" of the Cecafa zonal qualifiers for the inaugural Confederation of Africa Football (Caf) Womens Champions League.

The competition, bringing together eight women football clubs from the Cecafa region, was rescheduled for August 28 to September 9 in Nairobi.

Initially, the three-time Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL) champions were pooled in Group "C" alongside Rwandas Scandinavian and Djiboutis FAD Club.

But Scandinavian pulled out of the competition due to Covid-19 restrictions, forcing Cecafa to conduct a mini-draw on Friday to find new opponents for Vihiga and FAD.

FAD have been pooled in Group "A" which also has Ugandas Lady Dove FC, Burundis PVP FC and Tanzanias Simba Queens.

In Group B, Vihiga under the tutelage of coach Alex Alumira, will face Commercial Bank of Ethiopia and South Sudans Yei Joint Stars.

The winner of the Cecafa Zonal qualifiers will clinch the sole ticket to the Caf Womens Champions League reserved for the region.

The competition will take place in Egypt in November and December.

Each of the CAF Zones including Cecafa, Council of South African Football Association (Cosafa), Union of Football Federations of Central Africa (Uniffac), West African Football Union (Wafu), Union of North African Football Association (Unaf) will organise qualifiers tournaments that will produce the six top teams. Afterwards, two other teams will be added with one from the host nation and the other from the combined CAF Zones tournaments best loser, arriving at a total of eight teams. The final eight teams will then be divided into two groups of four teams each for a face off for the Champions League title.

Egypt will field a team by virtue of being hosts.

We are very hopeful that this will be a very competitive tournament as we get the best team to represent the zone in the inaugural Total Energies Womens Champions League final to take place in Egypt, said Yusuf Mossi, the Cecafa Competitions Director.

Vihigas opening match in the qualifiers will be against Commercial Bank of Ethiopia on August 28. The group matches will end on September 3rd, before the semi-finals are played on September 6th and final three days later.

Before Vihiga broke camp in July following the postponement of the qualifiers, coach Alumira had made it clear of his sides intention to triumph in the competition.

For us (Vihiga), we always believe that when we suffer a setback, we must have a comeback, which must be greater than the setback. So having lost the league (to Thika Queens), I think it is a motivating factor because we have to win this one, said Alumira then.

Draw

Group A

Lady Dove FC (Uganda), PVP FC (Burundi), Simba Queens (Tanzania) and FAD FC (Djibouti)

Group B

Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (Ethiopia), Yei Joint Stars (South Sudan) and Vihiga Queens (Kenya)

End of Vihiga Queens face Ethiopia's Commercial in Champions League qualifiers

Bandari enter partnership with Austrian club

Abdulrahman Sheriff / Friday, August 20, 2021

Bandari and FC Retz of Austria have struck a partnership to identify talented youngsters and nurture them into football stars.

Bandari and FC Retz officials met at Bahari Hotel in Mombasa on Thursday and decided to finalise the agreement on Sunday.

The two clubs intend to work together in scouting talented young players from Mombasa and Coast region and train them to become big players.

Bandari Media Officer Steven Heywood said FC Retz, which participates in Austria's Third Division League, has agreed to provide equipment and pay for education expenses for the young players who will receive football training under the auspices of Bandari.

"Bandari and Retz have agreed to start the project in the next three weeks and are expected to finalise the full plans for the project by Sunday," said Heywood who added that the youngsters needed are between the ages of 14 and 18.

Officials representing Bandari FC at the meeting were the club's board member Herbert Mwachiro, Chief Executive Officer Edward Oduor, Deputy Coach Daniel Mshamba Lenjo and Heywood.

Retz was represented by Franz Weber and Catherine Weber.

End of Bandari enter partnership with Austrian club

Serem, Kiprop make statement to storm 3,000m steeplechase final

Ayumba Ayodi / Friday, August 20, 2021

Kenyans Amos Serem and Simon Koech gave a sneak preview of what to expect in the final, winning their respective 3,000m steeplechase first round races on Friday at the ongoing World Athletics Under-20 Championships in Nairobi.

Serem warmed up the paltry crowd when he overtook Ethiopias Tadesse Takele just after the last water jump to take the second heat in eight minutes and 29.98 seconds.

Tadesse, who led at the bell in 7:29.78 with Serem breathing on his neck, settled second in 8:30.47 as Ugandas Leonard Chemutai came in third in 8:42.71 to also qualify for the final due Sunday.

Koech left nothing to chance in the slow race, guiding the pack through the bell in 7:50.15 before claiming the first heat in 8:52.43. Ethiopias Samuel Firewu came in through second in 8:52.87 followed by Eritreas Simon Behrahtu in 8:54.08.

Kenya's Simon Koech (left) clears a hurdle ahead of Ethiopia's Samuel Firewu in Heat 1 of the men's 3,000 metres steeplechase during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 20, 2021.

Serem and Koech will be looking to recapture the title Kenya lost to Ethiopia in 2018 Tampere.

Its Takele Nigate, who beat Kenyas Leonard Bett to the title in Tampere with the Kenyan settling for silver as Nigates compatriot Getnet Wale took bronze.

Kenya had only missed winning the title during the inaugural 1986 Championships in Athens.

We wanted to pass a strong message that Kenya is still strong in the steeplechase and will remain a powerhouse, said Serem. I realised my Ethiopian rival was slow at the water jump and that is the weakness I used to crush him, said Serem.

I shall have a chat with Koech to see how we shall handle the final, said Serem.

It was all about testing my opponents by staying behind them. I realised that I was in good shape and Kenya should expect a gold from us, said Koech, who was inspired by two-time Olympic champion Ezekiel Kemboi to take up the event. I want to tell Kenyans to expect nothing short of victory.

Kenya's Simon Koech (right) clears a hurdle ahead of Ethiopia's Samuel Firewu in Heat 1 of the men's 3,000 metres steeplechase during the World Athletics Under-20 Championships at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani on August 20, 2021.

Kenya's dominance in the 3,000m steeplechase was broken at the Olympics after Soufiane El Bakkali bagged gold in Tokyo at the recently concluded Games. Benjamin Kigen settled for bronze in the race that saw Kenyans miss out on gold for the first time since 1968.

But Friday's performance by Kiprop and Serem, both only 18 years old, will serve to restore confidence of local athletics fans that the steeplechase is still a Kenyan speciality.

End of Serem, Kiprop make statement to storm 3,000m steeplechase final

Unbeaten Strathmore face Thika, NCPB prey on JKUAT in handball league

Agnes Makhandia / Friday, August 20, 2021

Strathmore University coach Peter Mwathi is optimistic his charges will not crack under pressure when they put their unbeaten run on the line against Thika on Sunday in the Kenya Handball Federation National League at the Nyayo National Stadium.

Strathmore will battle Thika in one of the six matches on the cards as the leaguereturns after taking a break last weekend.

The varsity said are placed second on table with 16 points from eight matches same as National Cereals and Produce Board(NCPB) but Cereals have played one more match.

"Being the only team that is yet to lose a match in this competitive season at this stage is rewarding but also it has it's fair share of pressure. I hope we dont crack," said Mwathi.

Thika are placed sixth with 11 points from nine matches in the 20-team men's league.

"We have had a good run and I don't see why we should falter against Thika. Thika have shown improvement and therefore we will give the match the seriousness it deserves," said Mwathi, who doubles up as the men's national team coach.

Thika coach Julius Berege remained optimistic of a good outing.

"Hopefully we will be the one to break the unbeaten streak. Strathmore have good players who are agile and their game is also organised and therefore it will be a match to look out for," said Berege, who plays for the former champions Kenya Defence Forces.

Leaders NCPB battle newcomers Vickers, as on-form Buccaneers face Technical University of Kenya (TUK).

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agricultural and Technology (JKUAT) will face-off with General Service Unit (GSU) in other men's matches.

In the only women's match of the day, back-to-back champions Nairobi Water will be chasing their sixth win in a row when they take on JKUAT.

Nairobi Water, who lead standings with 10 points from five matches and are unbeaten, play a JKUAT side that has won only one match and are seventh on table with two points.

Nairobi Water coach Jack Ochieng was eager ahead of the tie.

"JKUAT is an upcoming team. But there is nothing that makes me happy than seeing how my players turn up against not so well known opponents," said Ochieng, who is also the national women's coach.

Fixtures

Saturday

Gunners v Kahawa 9am

JKUAT v GSU 10:30am

JKUAT v Nairobi Water(W) 12pm

TUK v Buccaneers 1:30pm

NCPB v Vickers 3pm

Thika v Strathmore 4:30pm

End of Unbeaten Strathmore face Thika, NCPB prey on JKUAT in handball league

History-girl Wawira targets 'memorable' Paralympics bow

Victor Otieno / Friday, August 20, 2021

Powerlifter Hellen Wawira Kariuki is just six days away from making history.

When the bronze medallist at the 2015 All Africa Games in Congo takes to the stage at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics in Japan on August 26, she will become the first Kenyan female powerlifter to ever compete at the Games.

And she is determined to make her first appearance at the big stage a memorable one.

I am very happy to get the opportunity (to compete at the Paralympics). Of course I am a bit under pressure because all eyes will be on me but it is something I know that I will deal with. It will be tough because I will be competing with the best in the world but I will do my best, said Wawira, who is the world number two in the under-41 kilogrammes category.

She will depart for Japan on Saturday - being the first athlete among the nine in Team Kenya to jet out for the Tokyo Games that will be held from August 24 to September 5.

A section of the Kenya National Paralympics Committee officials had last Thursday flown out for the Games.

Wawira, who took up powerlifting in 2014, qualified for the Tokyo Paralympics thanks to a bipartite commission invitation.

The powerlifter from Embu said that going by her improvement in training thus far, her target in Japan is to lift 95kg.

If I compare my performance now and when I was training at home, I can say that I have improved a lot because I have been managing 80kg in eight rates. At home, I could only manage 80kgs in four rates. If by Gods grace I manage 95kg in Tokyo, I will be so proud of myself, she said.

Wawira's other successes in powerlifting include gold medal in the 2020 Nigeria Para Powerlifting World Cup and bronze in the 2016 International Paralympics Committee Powerlifting World Cup in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

End of History-girl Wawira targets 'memorable' Paralympics bow

Arteta shocked Arsenal forced to play through Covid outbreak

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

London, United Kingdom

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said on Friday he was surprised his side were forced to play their Premier League opener at Brentford last week despite a coronavirus outbreak that saw four players test positive.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Alexandre Lacazette, Willian and reserve goalkeeper Alex Runarsson missed the match.

An extra round of testing was carried out on the day of the Gunners' 2-0 defeat to the Premier League new boys, but Arteta was mystified as to why the precedent of matches being postponed in such circumstances from last season was not continued.

Manchester City, Fulham, Aston Villa and Newcastle all had games called off in the 2020/2021 campaign due to outbreaks.

"I was surprised, but the regulators decided that the best thing to do was to play the game," said Arteta at his pre-match press conference ahead of Chelsea's visit to the Emirates on Sunday.

"We did what we had to do through the club, through the club doctor, how things developed and the risk we could see there."

Aubameyang and Willian are in contention to return against Chelsea, but Lacazette and Runarsson remain unavailable.

Arteta added that most of his squad have received both doses of a coronavirus vaccine, but the decision on whether to get vaccinated or not was still a personal one.

"Most of them are double vaccinated, others have had one vaccine," added the Spaniard.

"We are trying to encourage them to get vaccinated because they are going to protect the people around them.

"It's a really personal matter, we are trying to guide them and explain the reasons to do it, but at the end it is a personal decision."

End of Arteta shocked Arsenal forced to play through Covid outbreak

Paralympic flame arrives in Tokyo as virus surges days before opening

AFP / Friday, August 20, 2021

Tokyo

The Paralympic flame arrived in Tokyo on Friday as virus cases hit fresh records nationwide just four days before the Games begin.

Japan's daily infections topped 25,000 for the first time on Thursday, with the number of severe cases also higher than ever as the nation battles a fifth wave driven by the more contagious Delta variant.

As Tokyo prepares to host the top sporting event for athletes with disabilities, organisers urged participants to follow virus rules with increased vigilance.

"The infection situation today is different to how it was before the Olympics. It has deteriorated," said Tokyo 2020 official Hidemasa Nakamura.

"And the local medical system is also in a very tight situation," he told reporters after a meeting of experts to discuss Covid-19 measures.

"Para athletes, compared to Olympic athletes, risk having even more serious symptoms, so we need to be even more careful."

Flame-lighting ceremonies were held without spectators across Tokyo on Friday, after the traditional torch relay was scrapped over fears that crowds could spread infections.

In the past week, multiple Paralympic flames have been transferred from torch to torch at similar scaled-back events across the country.

They will be combined on Friday evening at a ceremony attended by top officials including Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

Meanwhile a huge version of the red, blue and green Paralympic agitos symbol was brought to the Tokyo bay area on a barge, replacing the five rings which were towed away after the Olympics.

The pandemic-delayed Olympics were held mostly behind closed doors, with athletes tested daily and confined to their accommodation and Games venues.

These conditions will largely be replicated at the Paralympics, which open on Tuesday with around 4,400 athletes set to compete in 22 sports.

So far, 86 positive tests have been recorded among Paralympics participants, mostly among Japan-based employees and contractors.

Organisers insist the Olympics did not cause any significant increase in virus cases in Japan, with 546 cases detected out of tens of thousands of athletes, officials and media.

The vast majority of Paralympic athletes will be vaccinated, officials say.

On Friday, the number of fully vaccinated people reached 50 million, or around 40 percent of the population.

End of Paralympic flame arrives in Tokyo as virus surges days before opening

Mozzart Bet donates medical equipment worth Ksh3 million to Nyamira County

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

On Friday, August 20, 2021, gaming firm Mozzart Bet donated medical equipment worth slightly over Ksh3 million to Nyamira County, in aid of the fight against Covid-19.

The equipment included personal protective gears, wheelchairs and ICU beds.

The county has witnessed a stubborn rise in Covid-19 infections despite concerted efforts by both national and the devolved authorities to curb its spread.

Mozzart has lent its support to Nyamira County by ensuring that medics who are the first-line responders are protected from the virus.

At hand to receive the equipment was Gladys Momanyi, the Nyamira County Executive in charge of Health. She was accompanied by other dignitaries.

This is a good gesture, especially when we have been attacked by this pandemic. We do not take this initiative for granted. On behalf of the Governor of Nyamira County Hon Amos Nyaribo, I thank Mozzart. We will ensure everything is transparently used to benefit the people of Nyamira.

This is the best time to be your brothers keeper, and as Mozzart, we have done exactly that since the pandemic struck early last year, said Mozzart Bet Country Manager, Sasa Krneta.

We are therefore very pleased to present our donation of equipment worth Ksh3,015,500 to Nyamira County to help them curb the spread of coronavirus. It is our hope that all health facilities in the county will benefit from this as we continue to fight the deadly virus, he added.

Mozzart has spent over Ksh53 million in supporting healthcare facilities in different counties in the last three years. The company has also spent Ksh15 million so far in digging freshwater wells in various parts of the country.

The company paid tribute to the government for creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive even during tough times as currently witnessed. Mr Sasa vowed to continue the companys Community Social Responsibility (CSR).

We will always be ready when called upon to support various projects within Kenyan communities, he said.

End of Mozzart Bet donates medical equipment worth Ksh3 million to Nyamira County

More animals, fewer sandstorms as Tibet greens

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

Dondrup, 42, still has an article he wrote over two decades ago in high school about his aspirations.

My grandma told me that 30 years ago, there were forests all around my village, and there were bears, deer and other wild animals, said Dondrup, born in a village in the city of Shannan, southwest Chinas Tibet Autonomous Region.

Due to the destruction of vegetation, not only the number of wild animals decreased but villagers had to travel far away to get firewood, the Tibetan wrote.

With less vegetation on the mountains, there will surely be fewer animals. Thus, I decided that in the future, I want to become a forestry worker to protect our forests, the letter reads.

His dream has come true. In 2010, he began working in Shannans forestry and grassland bureau, where he takes part in organising tree-planting activities every year.

With continuous government investment and unremitting efforts from various sides, Tibetans are enjoying a constantly improving environment, and Tibet has become one of the regions with the best ecological environments in the world.

Samten Norbu, head of Shannans forestry and grassland bureau, said that after the tree-planting efforts over the past decades, the city has built a 160km green belt along the Yarlung Zangbo River.

The environment has improved. Dusty days have decreased year by year, and peoples sense of happiness, gain and accomplishment is on the rise, said Samten Norbu.

Tibet had invested a total of 81.4 billion yuan (\$12.55 billion) in the area by the end of last year. In 2020, the forest coverage reached 12.3 percent, and the comprehensive vegetation coverage of natural grassland grew to 47 percent, according to a white paper released in May.

The improvements are witnessed and also contributed to by Paljor, 62.

Since 2004, Paljor has turned more than 400 mu (about 27 hectares) of barren and desert-like land in Shannan into a nursery garden by planting over 70 types of trees.

Under the support of the local government, his nursery garden now has an annual output of about four million yuan, employing more than 70 full-time workers.

As the environment greens, wild animals are returning. In Paljors nursery, roe deers are seen playing in the woods. He recalled the deers were first spotted in the garden around 2010, and there are also foxes and birds.

Every afternoon, different kinds of colourful birds will gather in my garden, and I can hear their merry chirps, Paljor said with pride.

The biodiversity improvement came as wild animals and their habitats have been better protected. The population of the endangered black-necked cranes has increased from no more than 3,000 in the 1990s to more than 8,000 now, and the population of Tibetan antelopes is around 300,000, the white paper said.

Thanks to favourable government policies, the vegetation protection in my hometown is getting better and better. As a forestry worker, Im proud, Dondrup said.

SIDE-BAR

Plateau railway propels Tibets development to new heights

A train running on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway passes by the Nyainqentanglha Range in southwest Chinas Tibet Autonomous Region, March 1, 2020.

Sangye Puncog, 22, never saw a train until his high school graduation tour to Lhasa, capital of southwest Chinas Tibet Autonomous Region.

Fascinated by the steel giant, Sangye Puncog, a Tibetan hailing from the rural Nyingchi City, was inspired to major in transportation and went on to study at Southwest Jiaotong University.

Financially aided by the government, he graduated in 2019 and is now in charge of passenger loading and unloading at the Golmud Railway Station, a railway hub in Qinghai Province neighbouring Tibet.

I didnt know I would work here when I passed through it on a train to the university, Sangye Puncog said with a smile.

In July 2006, the railway section connecting Golmud and Lhasa went into operation, marking the opening of the worlds

More animals, fewer sandstorms as Tibet greens

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

highest and longest plateau railroad the Qinghai-Tibet railway.

The railway, the first connecting Tibet with the rest of China, has stimulated the development of the plateau region by bringing tourists, materials, and business opportunities.

By the end of June, the railway transported 29.63 million passengers and 68.35 million tonnes of cargo from and to Tibet, according to the China Railway Qinghai-Tibet Group Co Ltd.

Hu Xiaodi, a 57-year-old tourist, headed for Lhasa on the Z6801 train. He and five of his relatives planned to hire a car in Lhasa for a road trip in Tibet.

Tourism in Tibet is so popular that we can hardly book enough tickets for us to the Potala Palace, said Hu, from the city of Suzhou, Jiangsu Province.

Tibet received 1.8 million tourists from home and abroad in 2005, one year ahead of the opening of the landmark rail link. It received more than 35 million tourists in 2020 despite the impact of COVID-19.

Due to the unavailability of train tickets to Lhasa because of high demand, Ma Yuxiu, who was travelling with her four-year-old daughter, had to transfer twice from Xining, the capital of Qinghai and starting point of Qinghai-Tibet railway. She was there to meet her husband, who is a crane driver and has worked at different construction sites in Tibet for three years.

Considering that he is too busy, we have to meet him every year and travel around, said Ma, 26, adding that they have visited several destinations in Tibet like the Potala Palace and the Yambdrok Lake.

Built at an altitude of more than 4,500 metres, the Nagqu railway station in the city of Nagqu is the worlds highest railway station combining passenger and cargo transportation.

The annual number of passenger trips handled by the railway station surged from 16,000 in 2006 to 310,000 in 2020.

The waiting hall, which opened to the public in 2006, is so small that many passengers have to stand during peak season, said Dong Shenggang, head of the station.

The station handled 518,000 tonnes of cargo in 2020, skyrocketing by 619 percent from 2006.

Construction materials such as steel, cement, timber, as well as daily necessities like grains and salt have been among the major goods delivered up here, Dong said.

The Chinese central government made a cumulative investment of 1.63 trillion yuan (about \$253 billion) in the 70 years after the peaceful liberation of Tibet, showed figures released in May.

Over 590 billion yuan of the total investment went into the construction of major projects that have significantly driven the regions economic development, including the Sichuan-Tibet Highway and Qinghai-Tibet Railway.

The regions gross domestic product soared to more than 190 billion yuan in 2020 from 34.2 billion yuan in 2006.

Xu Guoming, who had just left Lhasa by train for Xining, is amazed by the mushrooming buildings and infrastructure projects in Lhasa.

The entrepreneur in truck transportation from east Chinas Shandong Province first came to Lhasa in 2013.

Compared with my first trip there, I could hardly recognise the street I had lived in, said Xu, 42, adding that he is optimistic about his business prospects in Tibet.

To meet the rising demand for passenger transport, the old Golmud station measuring 500 square metres has been replaced by a new one covering nearly 15,000 square metres. It can accommodate 2,000 passengers in the waiting hall at the same time.

The Golmud station worker Sangye Puncog is also delighted as a new railway section connecting Lhasa and his hometown Nyingchi went into operation last month.

The 435km line, the first electrified railway in Tibet, has shortened the travel time between Nyingchi and Lhasa to three and a half hours from some seven hours by bus.

Arranged by Sangye Puncog, his father, a rice farmer, took a train trip for the first time in his life to Lhasa. His mother, who was then in poor health, did not go.

Im planning to take my mother on board a train when Im on vacation. My parents are proud of me, he said.

More animals, fewer sandstorms as Tibet greens

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

End of More animals, fewer sandstorms as Tibet greens

Unknown Author / UnKnown Date

Since its establishment in 1973, the Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) has consistently supported the empowerment of communities across the country. Most of the Company's Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programmes and projects, which are executed through its philanthropic arm KPC Foundation are aimed at enhancing inclusivity and equity, especially among vulnerable individuals, needy and disadvantaged groups.

In line with the national development goals, KPC management has ensured inclusivity is at its core, as one of the operating service principles, which the company has demonstrated by dedicating at least one percent of its profits to CSI. KPC's empowerment initiatives are categorised under key themes, including Inclusive Education, Health and Sanitation, Empowerment of Youth, Women and Persons with Disability, Provision of Clean Water, Sports, Energy Conservation and Environmental Restoration, among others.

Inuka Scholarship Programme

The Inuka Scholarship programme is a flagship scheme for needy and disabled children across all the 47 counties in Kenya. Implemented in partnership with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), Inuka resonates well with the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan 2017-2021, titled, Education for all, Embracing Change, Securing the Future. The first cohort of Inuka students joined Form One in January 2016.

The Inuka Scholarship involves the selection of two of the best performing primary school students with disabilities from each county every year, making a total of 94 students per year. One boy and one girl are selected from each county and receive scholarships to attend secondary school.

Since the inception of the Scholarship, the Company has spent Ksh56 million to cater for 376 students who have so far joined the programme.

Now in its 5th year and with the pioneer Inuka students graduating from secondary school, KPC is proud of the impressive results posted by the beneficiaries, in the recent Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

Miriam Kipkemboi Chepleting of Moi Girls High School Eldoret scored top marks countrywide in the special needs education category, and was singled out for praise by Education Cabinet Secretary, Prof George Magoha, after she scored an A of 84.88 points.

Born in June 2002 in Uasin Gishu County, Miriam lived a normal life until 2014 when she was diagnosed with Osteogenic Sarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer, which resulted in the amputation of her right leg. She, however, defied the odds and scored an impressive 403 marks in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE).

KPC engages in various other initiatives and investments towards promoting social inclusion. The details are captured in this downloadable PDF.

End of Champion of Inclusion: When KPC stretches its philanthropic hand, many lives get transformed

Reclaiming our voices: Young Kenyans' take on politics

COLLINS KARIUKI / Friday, August 20, 2021

Throughout history, the youth have been the spark that has started numerous revolutions, challenged the existing status quo and brought a change in their communities.

From the Soweto uprising in 1976, the velvet revolution in 1989, Arab Spring in 2010, to the black lives matter movement, which started in 2013 and is still very active, when the youth united and spoke in one voice, change happened.

According to the 2019 census in Kenya, 75 per cent of Kenyas population is under the age of 35, meaning most of the population is youthful. Whereas the majority of the population is youthful, the leadership in the country bears no correspondence with a majority of positions held by senior citizens. It, therefore, begs the question, do the youth in Kenya have a voice? If so, what are they saying? What do they stand for, and are they being listened to?

This week, we spoke to young people involved in politics and policy to unravel this mystery.

Suzanne Silantoi Lengewa

For many, the early twenties are marked with confusion and a struggle to figure out what to do with your life. However, Suzanne Silantoi, a policy analyst and content creator, is cut from a completely different cloth.

Her early twenties were marked by the frustration of what was happening around her, clarity of what needed to be done and the resolve to do it herself.

While working in the health sector, I had a first-hand experience of how poor healthcare is in the country. I was very disappointed by the failure of the government to provide decent health care services and the never-ending corruption cases. I was a Kenyan who was frustrated by the government, and I decided to do something about my frustration, she says.

In 2017 when she was just 23 years old, Suzanne got into active politics. She vied to be the senator for Nairobi county as an independent candidate.

During that election, even though she did not win, she managed to get over 32,000 votes, which greatly motivated her and gave her hope because there were people willing to listen to a different type of politics and those people placed their faith in her.

Suzanne Silantoi Lengewa.

Whereas weve witnessed movements, such as End SARS and not too young to run in Nigeria, Rhodes must fall in South Africa, and Black Lives Matter, globally which are all led by young people and have proven the power of young people in making changes in our communities, Kenyan politicians views young people as tools to be used and disposed of after every election.

Young people are not being heard enough, and it is a lot more difficult to assert our space in politics. A young person needs to work a lot harder to be taken seriously, she says.

According to Suzanne, one of the main issues preventing the voice of youth from being given the attention it deserves is the lack of a united voice for young people. According to her, this should ideally be done by the National Youth Council if it worked as provided by the National Youth Policy of 2007. If we can have a centralised voice in the country, this would translate into greater bargaining power favouring young people.

In as much as we champion the inclusion of young people in leadership, it is important to understand that being youthful is not a valid qualification on its own. It must be accompanied by other qualities such as empathy and compassion, which make a good leader. These qualities will allow leaders to get into the shoes of those we seek to represent, and they are qualities lacking in some young politicians we see today. Some of them glorify wealth, regardless of how it is acquired, and this is not only misleading to other young people, but it also derails them from the work a leader should perform, she says.

Another challenge that I see today with leadership is the political parties. Political parties are the main channels to elective office. For as long as our parties are centred around specific people and led by older people, young people will never have a fair shot at carrying a plan in the spaces they occupy.

As much as her first shot at an elective office wasnt successful, it served as a teacher with lots of lessons to offer. The mere act of getting into politics served to solidify her belief that indeed solutions lie with us. As much as we are all

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waiting for someone to do something about our communities, in reality, the world is waiting for us to step in and do something.

Suzanne, who holds a masters degree in public administration and public policy from the University of York, started a civic education platform on YouTube and on her podcast, *Is That So? With Silantoi*, where she breaks down complex policy issues for young people to understand how the government works and their role in improving governance. She has also worked with organisations such as the African Union in different capacities, including working in short-term observation missions in Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Additionally, she has spoken to over 52 heads of electoral bodies in Africa concerning the participation of young people in electoral processes and created a training manual on the same.

In her words, more civic education needs to be done to help young people understand that politics affects every aspect of our lives, and nothing should be done for us without us.

Kiprotich Ngetich

Kiprotich Ngetich is a political activist and a champion for youth inclusion in political processes where they don't just participate as spectators but make meaningful contributions as the leading players.

According to him, the sad state of affairs in the country can be corrected if the young people who are the majority of the population and are the major victims of unemployment and poverty get organised and take the front row in governance and political decisions made in this country.

Kiprotich Ngetich.

In his words, the youth must refuse strategic relegation to youth leagues where their decision-making input is peripheral.

Whereas we might ask whether the youth are being heard or not, the million-dollar question is, are youth issues being given the attention they deserve? I think not. The youth in Kenya are being heard, but lip service is given to their concerns. Ask yourself, does the president need a constitutional amendment to give young people a tax holiday? Does he need a constitutional amendment to effect the HELB Moratorium? All these are things that can be affected through the existing legal framework. Still, because of political dishonesty, young people must continue to suffer while being used as pawns in larger political schemes, he says.

As we speak, the National Youth Council (NYC) has not been constituted for more than six years now. Worse still, the council currently operates only with a heavily underfunded secretariat. I was even surprised to see the cabinet secretary in charge of youth affairs appoint a youth advisory board, which has no purpose. According to the law, the board is supposed to advise the council, not the secretariat. This only goes to show that the government is handling youth issues in a very pedestrian manner.

Ngetich's interest in leadership and the political scene traces back to his high school days as a prefect and college when he served as a student leader. However, his road to Damascus moment happened when he attended a youth devolution symposium organised by the Emerging Leaders Foundation (ELF). The symposium's clarion call, let's stop agonising and start organising is what started a spark in him, which has driven him to rise and be the change he wants to see. After the symposium, he enrolled on a leadership development program with ELF and graduated as a fellow. The lessons from the program are what shaped his understanding and view of policy, politics and leadership in the country.

I believe and stand for a free society in which people live in harmony and with equal opportunities, as Nelson Mandela put it. That is an ideal I hope to live for and achieve, and if need be, I am prepared to die for. The society we live in Kenya is unjust, unequal, and skewed in terms of opportunities and distribution of resources. The gap between the rich and the poor is beyond what JM Kariuki foretold in 1975. Clearly, progress as a country is pegged on us making a radical shift in economic policies, he says.

For instance, heavy investment in infrastructure such as standard gauge railway, though important for economic takeoff, has no direct bearing on the improvement of livelihoods of the common person. We must therefore reshape our economic models and come up with balanced policies that directly touch on low-income families to help alleviate poverty.

To start effecting change in his small way, Ngetich joined the Youth Serving Organisations - consortium (YSO), which comprises more than 16 youth-focused organisations. As a member of the organisation, he has honed his leadership

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skills, especially in youth advocacy issues and has represented the consortium in engagements with the Kenyan parliament, the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) and was the secretary-general for the youth against the building bridge initiative has severally given press statements on the consortiums stand on the issue.

They say the wearer of the shoe is the only one who knows where it pinches. When it comes to unemployment and poverty, we, as youths, are the majority of the victims. We are, therefore, the best placed to come up with solutions to these problems. Whereas it has been argued that young people are the disorganised majority led by the organised minority, I believe we can end that trend. That is why I have decided to get into party politics, and I am a registered aspirant of leadership positions within the United Democratic Alliance party, first as County Chairman then Regional Chairman and God willing one of the Positions at the National Level.

Nerima Wako Ojiwa

The first time I ever appeared on television was in an interview with Larry Madowo. I received a phone call from him asking whether I was as good at speaking as I was at writing, a question I responded to with a yes, and he said hed put me on his show that night and told me what we were covering. Immediately I ended that call, I became so nervous and almost threw up. I remember before we went on air, I was seated with two other professors who were on the panel with me. I was so tiny, and my feet were dangling, and I couldnt help but wonder whether I was supposed to be here.

Nerima Wako Ojiwa.

As we were waiting, one of the professors looked at me and asked if I was in the right place. He told me we are about to discuss politics and not entertainment. I presume he might have said that because of how my hair looked, and it shattered me. I couldnt help but wonder if this is what a professor can tell me; what does he tell the young women in political science in his class?

Nerima Wako Ojiwa is the executive director for Siasa Place, a youth NGO that was registered in 2015. Her experience is not unique and clearly shows the hurdles young people have to go through to get their voices heard. According to the elder generations captured by the professors views, young people should discuss entertainment and leave politics to senior citizens, an opinion which Nerima strongly disputes.

Starting Siasa Place was a very ambitious thing, and some people even laughed when they heard the name of our organisation which they thought was unique but silly. However, we chose Siasa because young people often think that politics only happens during elections, which is not necessarily true. Politics is every day, and all decisions are political and young people need to realise that. It shouldnt be that we only engage and participate during a general election or a by-election. Engagement with politics should be throughout. When I say political, it is not just campaigns but also budget cycles in counties, public participation and more. Therefore, theres a need for young people to completely look at politics differently, hence the inspiration behind our name.

Through Siasa Place, Nerima and her team focus on educating the youth on the constitution and engaging them on how to participate meaningfully on electoral processes and understanding the avenues of engagement with the government. This entails educating young people on why they need to engage in public participation and helping them understand the institutions that exist as far as governance goes and how they can engage with the government rather than complain on the outskirts.

According to Nerima, complaining or raising issues through the wrong avenues makes the voices of young people go unheard. The only way young people can make positive change is by meaningfully engaging with the right leaders.

As Siasa Place, weve had tremendous results and have made an impact. I particularly feel proud seeing young people weve worked with entering boards, getting appointments or engaging communities and the community, encouraging them to enter politics. We have a few wholl enter political leadership in the coming elections. Weve also seen impact like dispensaries being equipped and people caring about the kind of medications within these health facilities because of what the youth highlighted in Facebook Live and were able to get the attention of county governments. Weve seen sewer lines being fixed that had destroyed land, and weve seen roads being built inwards because young people complained. The proudest moment for us, however, was taking a certain matter to court. We were concerned with the presidents appointment with the National Employment Authority board chair. We felt like unemployment is a big issue

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with young people, and we needed the right people to come up with solutions.

The fact that the courts heard us and agreed with us was a huge achievement and showed that young people could take petitions and win.

End of Reclaiming our voices: Young Kenyans' take on politics

Take 5 with Ngwatilo Mawiyoo

Abigail Arunga / Friday, August 20, 2021

Ngwatilo Mawiyoo made her debut as a writer/director and producer with her short film, *Joy's Garden* in 2021.

She received a Docubox production grant for it. The film had its World Premiere at Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF) in 2021. Its lead, Melvin Alusa, won the award for Best Actor. Ngwatilo is also a respected poet and performer, the author of two poetry collections, *Blue Mothertongue* and *Dagoretti Corner*.

She has twice been shortlisted for the Brunel University African Poetry Prize and twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize. In 2016, Ngwatilo received her MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia.

1. The world of applying for grants can be a bit complicated. How, as a writer and filmmaker, do you navigate that? Is there a WhatsApp group? What do you think people need to know as they apply? I'm definitely on the journey trying to learn the ins and outs of this as well. Please add me to the WhatsApp group too! What I've observed from people experiencing far more success is there's relentlessness in the searching; it also requires and rewards generosity.

Often you find things that aren't relevant to the particular area you're working in and it's great use of energy to share it with someone for whom it may be more relevant.

That positive energy ricochets back at you one way or another.

2. Tell us about your film and why you decided to make it. Where can we see it? *Joy's Garden* is a short film about a little girl who sets out to recreate her old garden when she arrives at her estranged father's bachelor pad, wrecking his comfortable home life. You hear a lot about absent or unavailable dads. Women know or are made to feel that they have to transform into motherly figures when they have children.

Others have spoken about that pressure. I wanted to see what it might look like for the most ill-equipped "cheers baba" to learn to show up for his child.

Picture the dude who has a child somewhere; he hasn't seen her for the last year. Perhaps he sends money for upkeep once in a while. That's the person the child in my story has left in the world, and he has to find it in himself to show up.

The second thing is the idea of a garden in the film also represents a type of magic, the enchantment of a child, and how she can enchant and create the world she needs, even in her dad. I wanted the film to walk that line. In the spirit of sharing opportunities, I made it after receiving a 2,500 \$ micro-production grant from Docubox East Africa Film Fund. They have these types of opportunities every so often. The film just had its world premiere at Zanzibar International Film Festival in July. It showed at the Almagro International Film Festival in Spain at the beginning of August. So it's travelling at the moment. In Nairobi, it showed at a recent Shorts, Shorts and Shots screening (by Docubox). But as the situation in the country improves, I hope to have a screening in an actual Nairobi cinema. 3. It must be exhausting to always be asked when the next volume of poetry is coming out (but your poetry is so great, we can't help it!). What made you foray into film and create in this different way? And...will there be another poetry volume? I used to do a lot of acting, so I suppose the TV and film bug bit me back then.

For some reason, though, I haven't been writing roles for myself to play. I've just been craving some different stories. If I compare my poetry and film work, I think the motivation is the same. Still, the medium allows for a different set of possibilities. It's not been easy by any means; I'm like a child all over again, learning and growing and occasionally sitting in puddles. There will be another poetry volume. I have to get better at multi-tasking. I've been working on a short collection of love poems. I was hoping to get it out by the end of the year we'll see how that goes.

4. How important were prizes and being nominated for prizes to you in your career? Are they important overall for writers? They are a double-edged sword. They exist; one makes one's peace with that, because they function as reader discovery, as a way for creatives to acknowledge each other, and as a way to distribute resources. They are also good for bragging rights - for instance, I don't mind letting you know that my lead, Melvin Alusa won the Best Actor prize at ZIFF! He also plays lead in [the new film] *MISSION TO RESCUE*. I think as long as one's identity isn't wrapped up in awards and they're not getting in the way of your impetus to create then that's fine. It's damaging when we get the idea that only "award-winning" so-and-sos are worth our time. As a Kenyan poet, there aren't many Kenyan or African awards to vie for. Does that mean Kenyan poets don't exist and aren't working and thinking in their communities? Not in the least. Perhaps the structure of the poetry industry here doesn't look like it does in markets where awards are more prevalent. What would such an award mean for readers, for prospective award winners? What would it enable or

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disable?I've appreciated the acknowledgement I've received when shortlisted or even simply published or reviewed. Sometimes it's about trying to find a piece of work for the best possible platform.

5. Is there any other film you're burning to make?I've been developing a new short film set in Ukambani about a young woman forced to heal a rift with her dead grandfather, a rift as old as she is. I'm excited about it and working with Barbara Minishi and Ivy Kiru as Director and Producer, respectively. We're hoping to secure some funding soon, and I'm excited about the idea of making a film predominantly in Kikamba. Send Kamba speaking actors and prospective actors my way!

End of Take 5 with Ngwatilo Mawiyoo