

## 2022 polls: Raila factor splits OKA chiefs | Nation

*Samwel Owino / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

One Kenya Alliance (OKA) is on the horns of a dilemma on how to heed President Uhuru Kenyatta's call to unite and support ODM leader Raila Odinga in the 2022 General Election.

Leaders of the nascent coalition formed after strangling Odinga-controlled National Super Alliance (Nasa) have retreated to Naivasha, and while they agreed on many issues yesterday, accommodating Mr Odinga remains the elephant in the room.

Amani National Congress (ANC) leader Musalia Mudavadi, Wiper supremo Kalonzo Musyoka, Kanu chairman Gideon Moi and Ford-Kenyas Moses Wetangula are seeking a political rebirth, and are expected to come up with resolutions on their new alliance.

Sources told the Nation that there is general agreement among the four leaders that if they must support Mr Odinga, they will have to come up with tough conditions for him, which they will also present to Mr Kenyatta.

There is, however, an unease from allies of Mr Mudavadi who argue that by supporting Mr Odinga's candidature, it will automatically mean Mr Musyoka will be his running mate – a move that will vanquish the ANC party leaders' presidential ambition.

The thinking is that if Mr Odinga becomes the presidential candidate, his running mate has to come from outside western Kenya in the interest of regional balance.

On his arrival at the Great Rift Valley Lodge yesterday, Mr Mudavadi exuded confidence that the deliberations will go on well.

"The journey has just started not only for the coalition, but constituent parties...Parties need to have elected governors, senators, MPs and MCAs. The meeting is a holistic approach," he said.

Curiously, Kieni MP Kanini Kega, an ally of President Kenyatta, also attended the meeting with the sole purpose of knowing what OKA has for the Mt Kenya region.

"I'm here as a friend of OKA but also as a leader from Mt Kenya," Mr Kega said.

Most MPs from the four parties also arrived for the retreat, with unconfirmed reports indicating that an informal meeting was held last night to set the tone for today's meeting.

Kitui Central MP Makali Mulu (Wiper) said they will be briefed by the technical committee on the manifesto of the alliance and future strategic plans.

Asked whether the decision to support Mr Odinga as a presidential candidate will also be on the table, Dr Mulu said the position of Wiper remains the same and that it's time the ODM leader supported other candidates.

"We don't have a problem with Raila but the problem is for the two times we have supported him, he has not won. We don't want to get into another alliance where he will not win again. It's time for him to support another candidate because when we win, we will all enjoy the benefit," Dr Mulu said.

New logo

Also to be discussed is the alliance's logo. The proposed artwork, seen by the Nation, depicts a lion and stylised "O", "K", and "A". The lion is black and the letters have dashes of red, blue and green to represent Ford-Kenya, Kanu, and Wiper – the main parties in the alliance.

Initial reactions are that the red is too prominent, giving the logo a Jubilee feel.

A member of the technical team told the Nation that the symbol has been agreed upon by the principals except for a few tweaks.

Sources within the new political outfit told the Nation that while the technical team proposed that OKA names its presidential candidate next month, the leaders want more time to consult further.

The technical team argues that unveiling the flagbearer now will give the alliance ample time to popularise the candidate.

In their 29-page report to the principals last month, the technical team had identified the absence of a coalition leader, insufficient government support, weak parliamentary strength, lack of grassroots connection and weak organisational structure as the coalition's weaknesses.

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The technical team, which also outlined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with each candidate, indicated that the race is between Mr Mudavadi and Mr Musyoka.

However, the elephant in the room remains how to deal with Kanu as it has insisted that Mr Odinga must be brought on board.

It is still not clear whether Kanu will terminate the alliance with Jubilee to formally join OKA.

Kanu Secretary-General Nick Salat had earlier maintained that they are not ready to sever links with Jubilee.

Speaking to the Nation on the sidelines in Naivasha yesterday, Kitui Senator Enoch Wambua said the technical team was expected to brief the four OKA leaders early Tuesday morning.

He said the team was also tasked to come with a structured model of engagement with other political players.

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*End of 2022 polls: Raila factor splits OKA chiefs | Nation*

## Kenya risks isolation with low Covid-19 vaccine uptake

*Leon Lidigu / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Low uptake of Covid-19 vaccination could hurt Kenya, with the country risking isolation by the international community, experts have warned.

A potent mix of ignorance, lack of easy access, myths, disinformation and traditional and religious beliefs is derailing the uptake of the AstraZeneca jab, with only two in 100 Kenyans having been fully vaccinated by the end of last week.

A situation report released by the Health ministry shows that Coast and northern Kenya are lagging behind, with some counties, such as Marsabit, having fully inoculated a paltry 0.3 percent of their populations.

Mass inoculation provides a logical exit from coronavirus restrictions because the global consensus was initially towards ending the pandemic with vaccine-induced herd immunity.

But with the discovery and prevalence of increasingly vaccine-resistant variants, the goal is now reduction of serious illness, hospitalisations and deaths.

Kenya's low vaccination uptake is particularly concerning, considering the world is moving towards 'vaccine apartheid' where countries with low vaccination will remain off limits and on the red list.

Last week, the US slapped Kenya with a Level Three Covid-19 travel alert.

The CDC has issued a Level 3 Travel Health Notice for Kenya due to Covid-19, indicating a high level of Covid-19 in the country, the official statement read in part.

Photo credit: Nation Media Group

Your risk of contracting Covid-19 and developing severe symptoms may be lower if you are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorised vaccine.

This came less than a week after the UK retained Kenya on its Covid-19 red list even as it spared countries such as India where the Delta and Delta plus variants are wreaking more havoc.

In June, a number of Kenyans intending to travel to some European Union (EU) countries exclusively disclosed to the Nation that their Visa applications had been rejected.

A high ranking envoy from the EU in Kenya office confirmed it.

We cannot pre-empt the decision of the European Medicines Agency (EMA), so there is no guarantee, but the indications are that likely outcome is likely to be positive for Covishield. A decision is due in the coming weeks, a high ranking envoy told the Nation. Two months later, the EMA is yet to conclusively make a decision on approving the vaccine that is manufactured in India.

Such travel restrictions are likely to hurt businesses and hit the economy, with foreign exchange earners such as tourism likely to remain in the deep freeze.

But Dr Willis Akhwale, Kenya's vaccine advisory task force chairman terms the predicament as pure geopolitics.

Our current goal is to vaccinate as much as we can. We are expecting more J & J doses by 23rd or 24th this month, though Covax is yet to tell us exactly how many doses. We have taken lessons from the vaccine uptake situation report we released last week and things will be better, he assured.

Photo credit: Nation Media Group

Mr Mihr Thakar, a geopolitical analyst based in Mombasa, is of the view that the government must ensure that people are being vaccinated with doses that will actually give them international mobility. He advises tourism-dependent countries to agitate with their top source markets to allow fully vaccinated travellers to move freely, providing ease of movement and clarity on the process.

This will spur this new generation of anti-body carrying travellers who not only require stringent and transparent protocol, but also the initial willingness to sacrifice reciprocity depending on income level.

Dr Gitahi Githinji, the CEO of Amref Health Africa and an advisor of Kenya's Covid-19 Vaccine Advisory Task force, told the Nation that main issue is not really about the country's uptake of vaccines but quality assurance.

If the data that is available in terms of the quality assurance of Covid-19 tests is not adequate then you find that governments that have intelligence on these things are the ones that have trust issues, he said.

What the Kenyan government needs to do is invest in quality assurance of the laboratory diagnostics, data available so

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that those receiving the data have confidence in it.

Dr Ahmed Kalebi, Consultant Pathologist, yesterday told the Nation advised that people who are yet to accept the vaccine to have a mindset shift lest Covid-19 hits home, and hits hard.

Low vaccine uptake

We have seen in the real-world where many anti-vaxxers have ended up getting Covid-19 and dying, with many harrowing reports from places like the United Kingdom and USA where those dying of Covid-19 regret on their deathbeds when it is too late, he told the Nation.

He warned that counties that have generally low vaccine uptake risk getting more hospitalisations should infections soar, especially with the Delta variant in the country.

Those populations with low uptake will get higher incidences of hospitalisation and deaths than the ones who will have good uptake of the vaccines particularly affecting the elderly and the vulnerable with pre-existing conditions, he said

The highly mobile working-class, middle-aged individuals, he said, will act as super spreaders if they fail to get the vaccine.

It is therefore of personal individual interest for everyone to get vaccinated and protect themselves well if they can access the vaccine, and also of community and public interest as they will protect others as well.

Additional report by Hellen Shikanda

*End of Kenya risks isolation with low Covid-19 vaccine uptake*

## Over 120,000 Form Four leaves picked for university programmes

*Faith Nyamai / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

A total of 128,073 students who sat their 2020 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) have been placed to pursue degree programs while 193,949, have been placed to pursue Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) programs

While announcing the placement results on Tuesday, Education Cabinet Secretary George Magoha also revealed that a total of 6,617 students who had qualified to join university opted to pursue diploma courses of their choice in TVET institutions.

In the 2020 KCSE examinations, a total 142,540 candidates qualified for degree programmes, but only 134,690 (95 percent) applied for courses of their choice and were placed.

A total of 7,850 representing 5 percent did not apply for either degree courses or diploma courses through the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (Kuccps).

However this is not to say that these students have missed placement to universities, some of them could have opted to pursue degree as self-sponsored students, while others might have received scholarships and therefore we cannot say they have missed university placement, said Prof Magoha.

The number of students who qualified to join university in the last years exam also increased by 14 percent from the previous year.

In 2019, a total of 125,448 qualified to join universities while 146,193 were placed to join Tvet institutions.

This year, a total of 594,987 were eligible for placement into Diploma, Certificate, Craft and Artisan courses.

All the 137,072 applied for the available slots and all of them have been placed.

The placement to TVET was open to all, including those from previous years up to the year 2000, said Prof Magoha

In this years placement, Prof Magoha said the ministry noted that there was reluctance in some regions where most KCSE candidates failed to apply to join Tvets and universities.

The most affected regions were Mandera, Garissa and Wajir counties.

Prof Magoha said there were also cases of lack of proper guidance, end up selecting competitive courses in all the four expected slots.

In some instances, Prof Magoha said there were cases where a candidate selects a course in medicine in all the four options available.

What this means is that should the candidate fail to meet 11 the minimum cluster points for the course, then he/she would have minimised chances of joining other competitive courses, which would also have been filled during the first selection. This ends up frustrating many candidates, said the CS.

*End of Over 120,000 Form Four leaves picked for university programmes*

## Alfred Mutua and Lillian Nganga built business empire worth millions | Nation

*Pius Maundu / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The highly publicised break-up of Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua and Ms Lillian Nganga has brought into sharp focus the multi-million-shilling empire the celebrity couple had established.

In separate statements on Sunday, the two revealed they had mutually agreed to part ways two months ago, ending a romantic relationship that had lasted for more than a decade.

"With this (separation) I put down the Machakos First Lady cap and what an honour it has been to be of service! I will continue to do projects close to my heart, charity work etc through the 'Lillian Nganga Foundation' as this has always formed who I am as a person," Ms Nganga, 36, said on her Instagram account.

They, however, maintained that they would remain good friends, sparking questions on the fate of the wealth they had built in the years they had been together.

Machakos County Governor Alfred Mutua dances with his wife Lillian Nganga during the inaugural Machakos Youth Convention Forum held at Machakos Peoples Park on May 13, 2016.

The most conspicuous of their joint ventures is A & L Hotel, a luxury hotel on the outskirts of Machakos town, which opened its doors to clients last year. At the height of the economic slowdowns occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic last year, Dr Mutua, 50, took to social media to market the hotel whose bar and restaurant are open to walk-in customers. Ms Nganga identifies herself as the operations manager of the hotel on her LinkedIn profile.

Although the couple also own a resort at Ngaali village, a sleepy neighbourhood that borders the main entrance to Tsavo East National Park in Kitui County, Ms Nganga is said to be particularly fond of A & L hotel, whose name is believed to be fashioned from the couples names. Ms Nganga spends most of her time at A & L, according to reliable sources. The fate of the hotels name in the wake of the separation has been the subject of online jokes.

Aside from their businesses, Dr Mutua and Ms Nganga own a palatial home on the Kenyan coastline, where they occasionally retreated.

Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua joins Ms Lillian Nganga in a jig during a cancer awareness and screening event that the latter hosted in Kimutwa in Machakos Town Constituency in May 2016.

She will be a close adviser as I govern Machakos County and run for president because I trust her sharp insight and heart. She had always been my number one fan. Our love for each other is permanent but I think at times, space and new directions are important, Dr Mutua said.

Earlier in their relationship, a media house Dr Mutua had established collapsed.

A company associated with Dr Mutua and his estranged wife Josephine Thitu operated a vernacular TV station whose operations Ms Nganga frequently supervised. But the TV station closed down shortly after it started operations.

Dr Mutua had moved in with Ms Nganga long before he divorced Dr Thitu. The Nation has reliably established that Dr Mutuas blossoming relationship with Ms Nganga had a hand in the collapse of Woni TV and the careers of many.

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*End of Alfred Mutua and Lillian Nganga built business empire worth millions | Nation*

## Court row: AG Kihara Kariuki, Karanja Kibicho, fight to evade jail term

*Philip Muyanga / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Attorney-General Kihara Kariuki and Interior Principal Secretary Karanja Kibicho are battling to avoid jail for contempt of court in a five-year-old tussle between the state and a woman over compensation dues.

Ms Lucy Nduta Nganga had sued the two over their failure to pay her Sh5.3 million in compensation following the fatal shooting of her kin Edward Kuria on September 24, 2009 as he was driving on the Mombasa-Nairobi Highway.

Ms Nganga filed the case in 2013 as a representative of Kuria's estate. She argued that police used excessive force, breached the procedure regarding arrests, and acted negligently and illegally. Kuria was 32. In 2016, the court issued the compensation order but, five years later, she's yet to get a penny from the state.

The High Court cited Mr Kariuki and Dr Kibicho for contempt for disobeying an order issued in October 2019 compelling them to honour a decree issued in 2016 by paying her the money.

It had summoned the two to appear before it on September 20 for sentencing. But yesterday, Mr Kariuki sought to have permanent suspension of their sentencing until the payment is done. In his application, the AG also asked for a permanent extension of time as they await the National Treasury to remit the money to Ms Nganga.

Mr Kariuki apologised

The applicants have demonstrated to court that they are willing to see to it that the decree is paid in full, said the AG, adding that the Solicitor General had, in a March 9 letter, requested the PS to settle the amount. Mr Kariuki apologised for the inordinate delay in payment and requested for an extension of 90 days pending hearing and determination of the application.

The AG argued that sentencing them would bring great disrepute to the court, adding that it's in the interest of justice that they be granted an extension of time to enable them to pay.

The punishment for contempt of court is an irreversible event and it's unfair to punish state officers who have demonstrated that they are carrying on their duties in accordance with the judgment and court orders, argued the AG in his application.

Through her lawyer, Mr Origi Owino, Ms Nganga had last month told the court that the money had not been paid and wanted the court to sentence Mr Kariuki and Dr Kibicho.

However, Justice Eric Ogola in Mombasa said the two cannot be sentenced before they appear in court for mitigation. The court had in January given the AG and the PS 90 days to honour the decree. Ms Nganga had argued in her application that, despite personal knowledge of the order, the respondents had wilfully disobeyed it.

Honour the decree

In his application, the AG had sought to have the court strike out his name and that of Dr Kibicho from the case as they did not have the capacity to honour the decree. He also argued that Dr Kibicho is protected from personal liability for acts done in good faith in his official capacity and that the suit was a non-starter.

He said orders sought in Ms Nganga's application were not only drastic but would lead to unnecessary embarrassment to the office holders in their personal capacity and to the executive.

Mr Kariuki said he is a necessary party in all suits against government ministries and departments only in his official capacity. The AG said he is a presidential appointee, yet threatened with committal to civil jail in his personal capacity for performing his statutory duty in good faith.

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*End of Court row: AG Kihara Kariuki, Karanja Kibicho, fight to evade jail term*



## 'Not an enemy' any more: Why Russia is courting the Taliban

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

While many countries are scrambling to empty their embassies and remove their staff from Afghanistan, Russia is staying put -- it has long prepared for the arrival of the Taliban in Kabul.

French air force plane headed for Kabul lands in Abu Dhabi

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Despite the hardline Islamist group tracing its origins back to the war against the Soviets in the 1980s, Russia's view on the group now is pragmatic.

Analysts say the Kremlin wants to protect its interests in Central Asia, where it has several military bases, and is keen to avoid instability and potential terrorism spreading through a region on its doorstep.

Concerned Afghans in the Bay Area over Taliban control

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A Russian foreign ministry statement Monday said the situation in Kabul "is stabilising" and claimed that the Taliban had started to "restore public order".

And ambassador Dmitry Zhirnov said the Taliban -- who he was due to meet Tuesday -- was already guarding his embassy and had given Moscow guarantees that the building would be safe.

The militants had assured the Russians that "not a single hair will fall from the heads" of their diplomats, he said.

This is a stark contrast to the last time hardliners came to power in Afghanistan in 1992, when Moscow struggled to evacuate its embassy under fire after a disastrous decade-long war.

Three decades later, the Kremlin has boosted the Taliban's international credibility by hosting it several times for talks in Moscow -- despite the movement being a banned terrorist organisation in Russia.

Sovereignty vs security

The aim of these talks, say analysts, is to stop the conflict from spilling into neighbouring countries and a terrorism spike in its Central Asian neighbours, where Russia maintains military bases.

"If we want there to be peace in Central Asia, we need to talk to the Taliban," said Nikolai Bordyuzha, the former secretary general of the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). He commended the Russian embassy for staying open.

The Taliban has moved to reassure its northern neighbours that it has no designs on them, despite several Central Asian countries having offered logistical support to Washington's war effort.

Ambassador Zhirnov suggested the Taliban had also given Moscow assurances.

He said Russia wanted Afghanistan to have peaceful relations with "all the countries in the world" and that "the Taliban had already promised us" this.

But Russia's foreign ministry has suggested it will not rush into a close relationship with a Taliban government, saying it would monitor the group's conduct before deciding on recognition.

And as the Taliban advanced through Afghanistan this summer, Russia staged war games with allies Uzbekistan and Tajikistan on the Afghan border in a show of force.

Central Asia expert Arkady Dubnov said Moscow would now look to strengthen its military presence in the region.

"To different extents, these countries will be obliged to accept Moscow's help, but none will want to exchange their sovereignty for their security," he said.

He stressed that Afghanistan's three Central Asian neighbours -- Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan -- have different approaches to the conflict.

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan held high-level talks with the Taliban and are likely to recognise Taliban rule, while Tajikistan has not engaged with the militants.

Years of courting

Russia's dialogue with the Taliban is the fruit of several years of courting.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in July described the Taliban as a "powerful force", and blamed the Afghan government



## 'Not an enemy' any more: Why Russia is courting the Taliban

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

for faltering progress in talks.

"It is not for nothing that we have been establishing contacts with the Taliban movement for the last seven years," the Kremlin's Afghanistan envoy, Zamir Kabulov, told the Ekho Moskvyy radio station on Monday.

This relationship has raised many eyebrows, given that the Taliban has its roots in the anti-Soviet Mujahideen movement from the 1980s.

But Alexander Baunov of the Carnegie Moscow Center said Russia now believed the Taliban have changed since the last time it was in power in the 1990s when it gave shelter to Al-Qaeda.

"Moscow does not see this version of the Mujahideen as its enemy," he said.

*End of 'Not an enemy' any more: Why Russia is courting the Taliban*

## Hundreds of Afghans pack US military plane in desperate effort to flee

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

A photo shows more than 600 Afghans -- women, men, children and the elderly -- sitting packed on the floor of a cavernous US military plane, part of a dramatic airlift hours after Kabul fell to the Taliban.

The now-viral image, obtained and posted by the respected military news site Defense One, was taken inside a US Air Force C-17 transport.

The Afghans crammed in the giant cargo hold on the Sunday night flight were among those approved for evacuation by US authorities, according to the site.

Inside Reach 871, A US C-17 Packed With 640 People Trying to Escape the Taliban | @TaraCopp and @MarcusReports <https://t.co/lf3LajzzzX> [pic.twitter.com/gLiAwD6k9T](https://pic.twitter.com/gLiAwD6k9T)

The US military said about 640 Afghans were on board.

But such a large number on one flight was not planned, a US official told Defense One -- many climbed onto the half-open ramp at the back of the plane in desperation.

"The crew made the decision to go" rather than force them out, the official said.

It came as Taliban fighters flooded the streets of Kabul, with panicked citizens rushing to the airport to try and find a flight out of Afghanistan.

"The unusually high number of passengers aboard this aircraft... was the result of a dynamic security environment that necessitated quick decision making by the crew," US Central Command spokesperson Karen Roxberry said in a statement.

It "ultimately ensured that these passengers were safely taken outside the country".

Among the people visible in the photo is a small child holding a feeding bottle in the lap of a woman. Several other people are seen holding small children.

Hardly any belongings are visible among the passengers, except a small suitcase and a backpack in the foreground.

The flight -- which Defense One said had the call sign Reach 871 -- landed in Qatar in the early hours of Monday, according to the tracking website FlightAware.

The US military did not specify the destination.

This C-17 was not the only one to take so many Afghans out of the country -- Defense One cited the US official as saying several planes took off from Kabul with similar numbers.

It is also not the first time Boeing C-17s -- workhorses of the US Air Force transport fleet -- have been used for such a large evacuation.

In 2013, a US C-17 flew out more than 670 people from the eastern Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan.

In its usual configuration, a C-17 carries just over 100 troops with equipment.

Chaos, desperation

There have been desperate and chaotic scenes at Kabul airport, where the apron and runway were flooded Monday by thousands of people hoping to get a flight out of the country.

Many were not eligible for evacuation flights, did not have tickets on commercial flights or even visas.

In harrowing videos shared on social media, hundreds of people are seen running next to a C-17 as it appears to gather speed, some clinging to the sides of the plane.

In another, attack helicopters are seen flying low near the crowds in an apparent attempt to clear the runway for an aircraft.

Afghan media reported that several people died after falling from planes as they took off.

One person died in the landing gear well of a C-17 that took off from Kabul, the Washington Post and Politico reported.

*End of Hundreds of Afghans pack US military plane in desperate effort to flee*

*Gerald Bwisa / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

It is an evergreen, woody shrub, which grows about four metres high, with broad, smooth and glossy leaves.

But unlike other plants, the *Cestrum nocturnum*, also called the lady of the night or night-blooming jessamine or jasmine, comes alive at night when its white-yellow, tubular flowers, which are closed during the day, bloom.

A species of plant in the potato family Solanaceae, the lady of the night plant has been described as one of the most scented in the world due to its fragrance of sweet perfume which can go as far as 100m and 150m. Despite the name, it is not a jasmine the other sweet-smelling flower. Jasmines are in the olive family Oleaceae.

But the jessamines strong scent, perhaps the strongest of any flower in the world, and its beauty, it seems, are orchestrated to hide the devil in this plant that scientists now worry could be the beginning of the end of indigenous trees in Kenya.

Kenya Forest Research Institute (Kefri) experts warn that in the next two to five years, there will be a huge loss of indigenous tree cover and grass if the shrub is not contained.

The *Cestrum* is deep, fibrous rooted and lowers the quantity of water sources, affecting the community who hugely depend on it. It is also poisonous to domestic animals, among them cattle, said Dr Jared Amwatta, a principal research scientist at Kefri.

The institute lists the negative effects of the shrub as replacement of the local plant communities, changing ecological functioning of ecosystems, reduction in forage resources for animals, changing forest structure and quality, the creation of imbalance in ecological processes, and forest degradation associated with habitat change and species modification.

What makes the shrub dangerous, especially to indigenous trees, is its ability to colonise around mature trees, and then suppressing their viability.

Besides its effects on the environment, the surrounding trees, and forests, scientists have also warned that the lady of the night plant is toxic to humans, and eating its fruit can cause elevated temperature, rapid pulse, excess salivation and gastritis.

The nocturnal fragrance, scientists have documented, can cause difficulty in breathing, irritation of the nose and throat, sneezing, intense headache, nausea and dizziness.

Experts have yet to come up with biological solutions to control the growth of the plant, after ruling out a chemical solution, one they deemed as posing even more danger to the ecosystem, especially to the water.

The only available means of controlling the spread of the shrub, they agree, is through mechanical ways that involve uprooting the shrub, taking all its roots out, and then burning the dried plant.

Farmers contracted under the Plantation Establishment and Livelihoods Improvement Scheme (Pelis) are encouraged to cut down and uproot all trees found on their plots as one way of containing it, said Dr Amwatta, who has been studying the effects of the plant.

Scientists believe the shrub also has the ability to suppress growth of grazing grass in forests and homes, causing even more harm to farmers.

In Trans Nzoia, some farmers have seen first-hand the effect of this resilient, but harmful plant.

They blamed the plant and its negative effects on grass for loss of income due to emaciated cows that can no longer eat to their fill.

We have been uprooting the shrub but it requires a lot of manpower. We request funds to engage individuals in an ambitious programme of uprooting the species, which spreads fast, said Mr Hesborn Wandera, the chairman of the Kiptogot Community Forest Association (CFA).

Mr Wandera called for urgent measures to contain the spread of the shrub, saying the existence of the forest is at stake since the shrubs suppress the growth of other trees.

The county government of Trans Nzoia has put in place several measures in partnership with the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to contain the spread of the shrub, which is visible in every part of the county.

We have been planting more resistant trees while restoring the forest cover of the water towers that have been destroyed by the shrub, apart from the ones destroyed by human beings, said the executive committee member in charge of natural

*Gerald Bwisa / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

resources, water and environment, Mr Andrew Musungu.

The shrub is believed to have been first propagated by white settlers in Cherangany who wanted to attract certain birds.

The shrubs spread to the Mt Elgon water tower by way of the birds.

According to the Kenya Forest Services regional ecosystem conservator, Mr George Abuto, the night-blooming jessamine has invaded almost a third of the forest, but majorly along water sources for the last three years, spreading fast.

This is also a big worry for Kiptogot Forest, gazetted in 1932, with 1,342.3 hectares plantation has over 30 species of trees, and which has Mubere, Kiptogot and Chepchoina rivers, which serve three quarters of Trans Nzoia and its environs.

With the two water towers of Mt Elgon and Kiptogot forest the main source of water for Kitale Municipality, with a population of 162,174 residents, scientists warn that if not addressed, the invasive plant may have serious effects on the water supply in the future.

"It has not reached that level where it has caused multiple death of trees. However, we have to be worried because the plant looks like it's spreading fast on tree species and if the trend continues to the level of affecting different species of trees, then we may lose forest cover or canopy, which can cause water levels to change," explained Dr James Kimondo, the Kefri deputy director.

The biggest issue, Dr Kimondo said, was how the shrub operates on tree canopies.

Initially they coexist, but eventually when it covers the whole canopy, it actually stops the tree from manufacturing its own food in the leaves, so the tree starts getting stress because of lack of enough nutrients and dies slowly," Dr Kimondo said.

Dr Wycliffe Kiiya, a scientist at Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (Kalro), agrees with Dr Kimondo, and suggests that sciences best way to address the effects of the plant might be through the use of an insect that can directly feed on the lady of the night.

*End of Beware of the lady of the night. Why scientists are worried about sweet-smelling shrub / Nation*

## The battle for 2.2 million Western Kenya votes | Nation

*Patrick Lang'at / Monday, August 16, 2021*

The battle for the 2.2 million-vote rich Western is on, with at least four presidential candidates lined up, in a region under the shadow of ODM leader Raila Odinga and which has seen increased interest by Deputy President William Ruto.

Amani National Congress (ANC) leader Musalia Mudavadi, his Ford-Kenya counterpart Moses Wetangula, ODM deputy party leader and Kakamega Governor Wycliffe Oparanya, and former Trade Minister Mukhisa Kituyi have all set eyes on State House next year, with alignments and re-alignments in the region.

While he has not expressed interest in the presidency, Devolution Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa, currently in President Uhuru Kenyatta's camp, is a likely kingmaker.

While Mr Mudavadi and Mr Wetangula are working together under the One Kenya Alliance with Wipers Kalonzo Musyoka and Gideon Moi of Kanu, Mr Oparanya has stuck with Mr Odinga, saying he was willing to take the baton in case the 76-year-old decides to hang his boots.

Drifted away

On the side-lines, Dr Kituyi, who had been seen as earlier leaning towards Mr Odinga and the pro-Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) team, has since drifted away, with his latest message hinting at his intention to run a solo campaign.

In an unlikely chide at the pro-BBI team, Dr Kituyi described their coming together under the leadership of President Kenyatta as an attempt to put new wine in old wines skin.

"Political friends who once worked together seeking the country's leadership in Nasa coalition have the right to look for each other and try to work together again for the betterment of our country but I don't think the fate of our politics will be propelled by coming together of such friends who once disagreed politically, Dr Kituyi said on Saturday at Mbakalo village in Tongaren, Bungoma North during the burial of Mzee Cheningi Lubao.

Mr Kenyatta-led meeting at State House, Mombasa last week, Dr Kituyi said, had no agenda in addressing the myriad challenges that the ordinary person is going through but was more of addressing political interests of few power-hungry leaders.

The comments by Dr Kituyi, who last week released a recorded campaign message, ups the stakes in the battle for Western, which has a considerable following for Mr Odinga, and which Dr Ruto seems to have focused on with frequent visits and defections to his camp.

Kituyi candidature

The comments also come just over a month after Dr Kituyi disclosed that he and Mr Odinga have never talked about supporting each other as the country heads to the 2022 General Election, and that he is focusing on selling his presidential quest.

I have not come to any moment that I consider that I want to support Raila, I am building a momentum for Kituyi candidature I am running for president and looking for persons of shared direction to see how to unlock our steps, Dr Kituyi on KTN News in June.

Western has more than two million votes spread across its four counties, with Kakamega having the largest share at 743,736, Bungoma 559,850, Busia 351,048 and Vihiga 272,409. Trans Nzoia, located in the Rift Valley but with a high Luhya population, has 339,622 votes.

"Our region has always been outside the government. For us to be in government in 2022 we should embrace our neighbours and work with them," Mr Oparanya, who is also ODM's deputy party leader, said early this month.

Western is particularly important battleground for Dr Ruto, Mr Odinga and Mr Mudavadi based on the 2017 elections results.

Jubilee MPs

In 2017 polls, Jubilee snatched 12 MP seats from a region widely controlled by Mr Odinga, with Mr Mudavadi and Mr Wetangula fully behind him.

While President Kenyatta had garnered a paltry 66,000 votes from the four Western counties in 2013, in 2017, this figure went up eightfold, raking in an impressive 242,000 votes.

## The battle for 2.2 million Western Kenya votes | Nation

*Patrick Lang'at / Monday, August 16, 2021*

This, Ruto allies say, is proof that constant focus on the region might bring in even more votes to the DP camp in 2022.

In an area that did not have any Jubilee MP in the 2013-2017 Parliament, Jubilee managed to win four of the 12 MP seats in Kakamegalkolomani, Malava, Navakholo and Mumias East with Dr Ruto having since won over Dr Boni Khalwale, the former Kakamega senator.

Kakamega is run by Governor Oparanya, a second-term governor who deputises Mr Odinga in the Orange Party, and who has since shown closeness to the centre of power, including being invited to the Mombasa State House talks, even though he is not a party leader like the rest.

Promoting UDA

Now, Dr Ruto's lieutenants in the region, led by Mumias East MP Benjamin Washiali, are focused on promoting the United Democratic Alliance (UDA)-backed bottom-up economic model and are currently drafting an economic plan for the region for the DP's manifesto in his 2022 race.

Mr Washiali said the plan will focus on revival of Mumias Sugar, Pan Paper, revitalise railway transport system within, set up an international airport and revive cash crop farming.

We had a meeting at DP's place in late May and we agreed to split ourselves into county committees so that we can have county positions, hence the global map of addressing issues affecting the Western region, said Mr Washiali, a key DP's ally in the region.

We do not want to go into this election without an agenda. Even in his manifesto, he must include them.

Former Sports Cabinet Secretary Rashid Echesa, a key ally of Ruto from Western, says while the region has not shown full support for the DP yet, Western was still in the race for Dr Ruto's running mate post.

If as Western manage to give him 60 percent of our votes, we will go for a big position-deputy president, Mr Echesa said.

Reciprocate

Earlier in the year, DP Ruto had castigated the Luhya Nation for taking advantage of his generosity and failing to reciprocate when it comes to voting.

You are misusing me. When it comes to development- church building, roads, school buses, you look for Ruto but on the voting day, you decide to change and go for those people who love riddles, said Dr Ruto then.

In Mr Mudavadi's camp, his allies like Kakamega Senator Cleophas Malala, say it was his time to lead.

Musalia for several years, he has been supporting others because he is not egocentric. He is a team player. In 2002, he backed Uhuru, 2007 and 2017, he threw his support behind Raila and now we are saying that we are done supporting others and we are focusing on ensuring that he becomes fifth President, said Senator Malala.

Mr Wetangula, on the other hand, is facing a separate battle for his Ford Kenya party, with Kanduyi MP Wafula Wamunyinyi and his Tongaren counterpart Eseli Simiyu, backed by Bungoma governor Wycliffe Wangamati, laying claim to the Simba party.

*End of The battle for 2.2 million Western Kenya votes | Nation*

## Uhuru's quandary: Push Ruto out of Jubilee or wait for him to jump ship | Nation

*John Kamau / Monday, August 16, 2021*

On April 22, 2013, Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, donning similar attire, stepped out onto the eastern steps of State House, Nairobi, to unveil their new government.

The media noticed, and rightly so, the tight political bromance that was in the air.

It didn't go far.

Today, with 12 months to go before their second term ends, both President Kenyatta and his deputy look, and behave, like strangers to each other.

At times, as they did during the launch of the Building Bridges Initiative at Bomas of Kenya, they play to the cameras.

But deep inside the two wings of the Jubilee Party, there is no love lost between them.

How long the pretence will continue, and when the official parting will take place, is no longer a question of if but when. A divorce looks imminent.

Why the camaraderie, similar to that displayed in 1964 between Jomo Kenyatta and his Vice-President Jaramogi Oginga Odinga when they usually appeared in public donning similar beaded beanies, collapsed has been fodder for both sides of the political divide.

DP Ruto takes a swipe at Raila, OKA leaders over meeting Uhuru

DP Ruto takes a swipe at Raila, OKA leaders over meeting Uhuru

Blame game

While DP Ruto blames his isolation on the emergence of Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) leader Raila Odinga as President Kenyatta's political soulmate, the President's Jubilee wing claims that during Mr Kenyatta's first term, most of the mega graft scandals were carried out by the DP's associates, who claim that they are cherry-picked for prosecution on account of being the DP's supporters.

They also point to the Covid-19 billionaire scandal, which happened while Dr Ruto was out in the cold.

For the last four years, President Kenyatta has been evading politics hoping to consolidate his legacy and also manage the succession.

To achieve that, he crafted an administrative system that took over the supervision of mega government projects.

This new structure reports to the President via Interior and Coordination of National Government Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiangi - the man Dr Ruto says took over his supervisory job.

With the infrastructure projects of President Kenyatta's first-term stained by graft and as corruption threatened to sink his second term, too, the President seems to have had little space left to manoeuvre.

More so, an election boycott by former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, after the Supreme Court nullified Kenyatta's August 8 victory, had left the country torn and in the mood for chaos.

So soiled was the political terrain that as Mr Odinga returned from a 10-day visit to the UK and the USA on November 17, 2017, the city erupted into chaos as police confronted his supporters for a whole day.

Caught between running a country and bitter opposition to him, President Kenyatta went for the easier option of bringing in the opposition leader to a handshake deal.

Mr Odinga, too, was in a quandary. He had been jilted by his adherent political supporters in the National Super Alliance (Nasa), who had failed to accompany him to his mock swearing-in at Uhuru Park.

Read: Party rebels take on Uhuru, Raila and Ruto

Also read: Don't impose Raila Odinga on Mt Kenya, William Ruto allies tell Uhuru Kenyatta

Raila's gamble

Shifting to President Kenyatta and agreeing to work with him was classic Mr Odinga.

After failing to clinch the presidency in the 1997 General Election, he emerged a poor third. Mr Odinga and his National Development Party (NDP) surprised everyone when he ditched the opposition and started working with President Daniel Moi, a move that led to the March 2002 merger.

In his calculations, Mr Odinga had hoped that President Moi would anoint him as his successor.



## Uhuru's quandary: Push Ruto out of Jubilee or wait for him to jump ship | Nation

*John Kamau / Monday, August 16, 2021*

The political gamble did not work out as Moi went for then political neophyte Uhuru Kenyatta who was defeated in the polls by Mwai Kibaki as part of a coalition that, ironically, included the Odinga-led Liberal Democratic Party.

The Ruto wing of Jubilee believes Mr Odinga has played, or is playing, the same card on Uhuru Kenyatta or using the same formula to get ahead of the pack in the August 2022 polls.

They claim Mr Odinga wants to rain on DP Ruto's parade as the State candidate.

But how much did the DP know about the negotiations between Mr Odinga and President Kenyatta?

This has been a tricky question, for only a few people were involved. More so, it now appears, not all cards were on the table.

But certainly, the isolation of DP Ruto started shortly after the handshake and he says Jubilee's failure to achieve its promises to the electorate was due to the handshake.

His boss, President Kenyatta, tends to differ. In public, he says he achieved more in this second term than his first.

DP Ruto, on the other hand, claims that Jubilee's Big Four Agenda was derailed because the President was kept busy with the agenda to change the Constitution and looking for positions through the BBI.

While DP Ruto does not directly mention the President, he says collaborators were to blame for the collapse of the Big Four.

DP Ruto on Uhuru's move to unite Nasa principals ahead of 2022

DP Ruto on Uhuru's move to unite Nasa principals ahead of 2022

DP's failures

But the President's supporters say the DP was isolated over his failures.

When the DP controlled half of the Government, mega graft scandals rocked the Government, including the Aror and Kimwarer dams scandal, the Hustler Jet scandal, Weston Hotel land grab and the likes. It should concern Kenyans that as the DP sells his agenda, he remains mum on the action to tame graft, some Jubilee legislators said last week in a press statement.

During the first term, multiple allies of President Uhuru Kenyatta now say, anyone who spoke ill of Dr Ruto would get a tongue-lashing.

Slowly, the President isolated his own men as the Deputy President entrenched himself especially in the Mt Kenya region.

Tied together by the same predicament the International Criminal Court threat and with their fate tied to their ticket, both Mr Kenyatta and Dr Ruto had been forced into a marriage of convenience.

But it was more than that.

When Mr Kenyatta vied for the presidency for the first time, Dr Ruto was one of the young turks who teamed up with him.

And on the day he conceded defeat, after he was beaten by Mwai Kibaki, it was Dr Ruto who stood beside him as Kanu veterans kept away.

Close associates of President Kenyatta say DP Ruto's desire to make him a lame-duck President backfired on him.

Shortly after the 2017 elections, the President wanted campaigning to stop but DP Ruto kick-started a campaign to realign politics, especially in Mt Kenya region, to his favour.

Fearing that he would be a lame-duck final-term President, and concerned that the political state had become uncontrollable, nay ungovernable, President Kenyatta started by waging a multi-pronged political war that not only identified avenues of sleaze but also managed to weaken the political structures left by his predecessor, President Mwai Kibaki.

It is the new structure under Dr Matiangi that has been giving nightmares to the political establishment.

And while the President and Dr Matiangi have managed to destabilise avenues of sleaze, the battle is not yet won as prosecutors have been snail-paced.

## Uhuru's quandary: Push Ruto out of Jubilee or wait for him to jump ship | Nation

*John Kamau / Monday, August 16, 2021*

And since DP Rutos position is shielded by the Constitution, unless he jumps out voluntarily, the President has been left in an awkward position and can hardly discipline his deputy.

While the only avenue left to get rid of him is through a tricky impeachment process, it does not seem to be a game President Kenyatta wants to play.

Read: Sudis sooty tongue turns him into Turkish plane conductor

Also read: Why Mt Kenya region is DP Rutos poisoned chalice

Ruto's grand plan

Of late, DP Ruto has publicly indicated that his heart is at the United Democratic Alliance, the vehicle he intends to use in next years General Election.

While Jubilee is under the weather thanks to internal wrangles brought by the falling-out between President Kenyatta and his deputy and its survival and strength to field a presidential candidate next year is in doubt, it is now clear the President is looking outside his own party for a successor.

But does Jubilee have the guts to kick out DP Ruto on account of his affiliation with another party?

Last week, the DP convened his own parliamentary group meeting at his Karen residence and declared he will formally quit government.

At the meeting, Dr Ruto also cited the failures of the Jubilee government for the last four years, blaming them on former Nasa coalition partners and their collaborators in Jubilee.

Since the reintroduction of multiparty politics, no political party has managed to hold onto power for two terms.

Initially, President Kibaki was elected on a Narc ticket but as he finished his first term, Narc was a divided house and he secured his second term under the banner of the Party of National Unity.

During his first term, President Kenyatta looked like a minion rather than an astute leader and often faded, to his chagrin, in the shadow of his deputy an always-on-the-road politico whose touch with the grassroots has been impeccable.

Uhuru tells off DP Ruto allies for criticising State projects

Uhuru tells off DP Ruto allies for criticising State projects

Dr Ruto is a shrewd political operator, incredibly underrated and, until recently, had a well-oiled campaign machine.

While questions have been raised about the sources of his wealth, he has not been directly targeted by investigators.

But with the war against corruption and cartels, President Kenyatta has not only weakened the political system by using administrative and security apparatus but also set loose the State machinery to clamp down the financial structures that financed the rogue political state.

The question on the table is whether President Kenyatta can finally go to trim his deputy to size and in what manner.

Talk has been rife this week that a reshuffle that could see some of the remaining Ruto allies kicked out of the Cabinet is in the works.

But that may have to wait for the ruling on the fate of the BBI next week, which might offer the country some more political fodder in the coming months. Will President Kenyatta have the guts to let his party drop the DP or will DP Ruto jump the ship to organise his party? That is the tricky question for both.

[email protected], @johnkamau1

*End of Uhuru's quandary: Push Ruto out of Jubilee or wait for him to jump ship | Nation*

## Police officers linked to Embu brothers' deaths arrested, appear in court

*George Munene / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Six officers accused of killing the two Embu brothers arrive at Milimani Law Courts

Six police officers linked to the deaths of the two Embu brothers were on Monday evening arrested and transferred to Nairobi.

The suspects were then arraigned at the Milimani Law Courts on Tuesday under a miscellaneous application.

The suspects arrive at the Milimani Law Courts on August 17, 2021.

Officers linked to the deaths of two Embu brothers at the Milimani Law Courts on August 17, 2021.

Six officers linked to the deaths of two Embu brothers at the Milimani Law Courts on August 17, 2021.

On Monday, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Noordin Haji ordered the immediate arrest and arraignment in Nairobi of all police officers involved in the deaths of two brothers in Kianjokoma, Embu County.

Emmanuel Mutura, 19, and Benson Njiru, 22, the brothers who were found dead after police arrested them during curfew hours.

The officers were earlier suspended after the conclusion of investigations into the deaths of Benson Njiru, 22, and Emmanuel Mutura, 19. The two were found dead earlier this month after being arrested by police during curfew hours.

DPP Haji issued the directives to Inspector General of Police Hillary Mutyambai In a statement on Monday.

He said that the move will "avoid any interference with evidence and/or intimidation of witnesses" as the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (Ipoa) investigates the matter.

"For that reason and keeping in view the urgency of this matter, we expect to receive results of all investigations into this matter not later than close of business today," he said.

The DPP said his instructions were based on a preliminary investigation file by the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU).

Read: Uhuru demands answers as Embu brothers buried Friday

Slain Embu brothers buried in emotional ceremony

Senior police officers transferred after death of Embu brothers

Alleged cover-up by officers

Since their bodies were discovered, officers in Embu initially claimed they had jumped from a police vehicle, but the brothers' relatives, Kianjokoma residents and local leaders have refuted this claim.

After visiting the family, Speaker Justin Muturi alleged that the burning of a police vehicle during recent protests in Kianjokoma was deliberate since it was the same car that carried the brothers.

"They (police officers) watched as the vehicle was being set ablaze and didn't fire even a single shot to disperse the public. The vehicle, which had a lot of evidence...The officers made sure the evidence was destroyed," he said last week.

Speaker Justin Muturi speaks on deaths of two Embu brothers

Speaker Justin Muturi speaks on deaths of two Embu brothers

Mutura (19) and Njiru (22) were buried in the same grave during an emotional ceremony held at Kathangari village, Embu County last Friday.

Emotions run high in Embu during the funeral service of slain brothers

Emotions run high in Embu during the funeral service of slain brothers

*End of Police officers linked to Embu brothers' deaths arrested, appear in court*

## Police arrest key suspect in murders of four men in Kitengela

*Stanley Ngotho / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The main suspect behind the murder of four men in Kitengela is in police custody, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations said on Tuesday.

Detectives said the suspect, Benson Melonyie ole Mungai, 40, was seized from his hideout in Kitengela town on Monday evening.

Mungai was positively linked with the killings after forensic investigations placed him at the scene of the crime. Authorities believe that he coordinated the killing of the four men.

Two brothers, Victor Mwangi Wanjiru, 25, and Fredrick Mureithi Wanjiru, 30, alongside their friends Mike George Onduso, 29, and Nicholas Kyengo Musa, 28, were killed and their mutilated bodies dumped near Munjiriri River.

The four, three of them sporting dreadlocks, were good friends who mostly hang out together over the weekend.

The suspect was moved from Kitengela police station to the Kajiado Law Courts early Tuesday under heavy police guard.

He will be arraigned and police will be seeking to hold him for several days to complete investigations.

*End of Police arrest key suspect in murders of four men in Kitengela*

**Raila Odinga's speech in Nakuru | Nation**

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

ODM leader Raila Odinga visited Nakuru Town on Tuesday.

When he arrived, he addressed residents, who showed up on the streets of Nakuru town in large numbers to welcome him.

Mr Odinga says he came to Nakuru to launch what he calls Azimio la Umoja, adding that he chose the county because of its significance to Kenya.

In a speech to residents, he reiterated that no one can stop reggae.

Political fights

Mr Odinga says political rivalry was hurting the country and that it was time to fix Kenya, saying the state is reeling from the effects of corruption, toxic politics, violence and insecurity among others.

"Some Kenyans are doing well, yet others are in extreme poverty," he said.

He then accused some politicians of using Kenyans' problems to advance their political agendas.

Report by Stella Cheroni

*End of Raila Odinga's speech in Nakuru | Nation*

## Man injured by stray elephants in Isiolo town

*Waweru Wairimu / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Marauding elephants roaming in Isiolo town have badly injured a 20-year-old man Tuesday morning.

The two jumbos are believed to have sneaked from Buffalo Springs National Reserve.

The incident caused fear and panic in the town as some traders who were opening their shops at the time hurriedly locked the doors while a majority of residents ran for safety.

From a distance, a few residents were seen recording videos of the jumbos that were walking along the Isiolo-Moyale highway.

Before invading the town, the elephants had damaged a perimeter wall of one of the boarding secondary schools in the town.

Surprisingly, the animals did not cause any destruction in the town that has numerous shops and stalls and is always full of activity.

Provoked

But it was while leaving the town that the non-violent animals were provoked by Mr Nicholas Morun, who attempted to chase them away.

We had warned him against going so close to the jumbos but he would not listen. He kept insisting they were harmless before he started chasing them, one of the residents said.

Isiolo County Referral Hospital Medical Superintendent Hussein Mohammud said the man sustained injuries on his head, ribs and knees and was in stable condition.

He is stable and being monitored by the doctors, Mr Mohammud told Nation.Africa.

Kenya Wildlife Service Senior Warden Mohammud Madera said KWS officers managed to drive the wild animals back to the reserve, preventing further destruction.

With the persistent drought, he said, cases of human-wildlife conflict could rise in the coming months due to reduced pasture.

A man was last week killed by stray elephants in Ngaremara Ward. The animals had that sneaked from the game reserve.

The deployment of officers along the routes will ensure the attack cases are reduced, Mr Madera said.

The official appealed to residents to always alert authorities whenever they spot the jumbos so that they are immediately driven back to the parks.

*End of Man injured by stray elephants in Isiolo town*

**MPs question use of funds in Ngala Utalii College project**

*Maureen Ongala / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Lawmakers have questioned how money meant for the ongoing construction of the multibillion-shilling Ronald Ngala Utalii College in Vipingo, Kilifi County, was used.

Members of the National Assemblys Committee on Implementation accused the contractor, Mulji Devraj, of colluding with some officials from the Tourism Fund and the Ministry of Tourism to swindle money through penalties and interest.

Tourism Fund officials confirmed that as of June 30, 2020, they had paid Mulji Devraj Sh4 billion of the Sh4.9 billion allocated for the project.

They also said the project consultant, Baseline Architects Ltd, was paid Sh3.2 billion, while lawyers and the environment watchdog Nema were also paid Sh117 million.

The Tourism Fund needs a total of Sh560 million to clear debts to the contractor (Sh185 million), sub-contractors (Sh20.5 million) and the consultant (Sh354 million).

The committee, led by chairperson Narok North MP Moitalel Ole Kenta, toured the site to establish whether there was prudent use of public funds.

They also wanted to find out why the project had not been completed, seven years after it started.

They noted that there was no value for the taxpayer money spent on the project.

The lawmakers investigation followed a petition by Kilifi North MP Owen Baya to Parliament asking the committee to find out whether there was prudent use of public funds in the project.

It had been established that the college, which was to cost Sh4.9 billion - the cost having been scaled down from the initial Sh8.9 billion - had lost Sh2.9 billion in interest and penalties.

Work on the proposed state-of-the-art, 3,000-capacity college started in April 2013 and was to be completed in 2017.

The project was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism under the Tourism Fund.

Speaking to journalists, Mr Ole Kenta said more money had been pumped into the project than what was budgeted.

The project started in 2013 and up to date, it is still not complete. Sh4.9 billion was supposed to be used to construct and complete the project, but the incomplete facility has consumed about Sh8 billion and the work done is only at 60 per cent, he said.

He warned that legal action would be taken against anyone who fraudulently received money from the project.

But in a meeting between the committee, the Tourism Fund Board, Mulji Devraj and Baseline Architects, it was established that the Tourism Fund did not engage an officer from public works as required by the law.

It was also established that some major facilities in the project plans were omitted.

These include a nursing bay, a fire engine and a primary school.

The projects initial estimated cost was Sh1.9 billion before it was raised to Sh8.9 billion and later reduced to Sh4.9 billion.

Kilifi County Commissioner Kuswa Olaka, the chair of the County Implementation Coordination Committee, said the slow pace of construction was also an issue.

He observed that the frenzy of activities at the site might have started a few days ago.

He also disclosed that the implementation team had proposed that the college be attached to Pwani University.

The multi-billion Ronald Ngala Utalii College at Vipingo in Kilifi that is still under construction since 2013. The state of art hospitality facility was to offer studies for both local and international students in the tourism and marine sectors.

We have been concerned about the rate of implementation of the project because we have visited the site about five times and there has been no activity taking place, he said.

We were not very happy and part of the discussion was that if we are not making any progress, we should look for an alternative and have the centre attached to Pwani University.

The college was to offer courses, including marine studies, to local and international students.

The remaining money, Mr Baya said, is not enough to complete the project considering what is still left to be done.



## MPs question use of funds in Ngala Utalii College project

*Maureen Ongala / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The MP questioned where the Tourism Fund was getting money to pay penalties and interest.

If the contractor has been paid Sh4 billion, it means that he only has Sh900 million to complete the project, which is not enough, he said.

The college will take more money than expected. For a project of Sh4.9 billion, you have constructed up to 60 percent with a difference of 40 per cent.

He said there was a conspiracy to ensure that there was no progress on the project.

The project is being deliberately delayed by the contractor and government officials to siphon public money, he said.

Belgut MP Nixon Koech said officials from Baseline Architects did not tell the committee what they had done since 2013 to deserve to be paid over Sh3 billion.

Mathioya MP Peter Kihara said it did not make sense that the consultant was walking away with an amount of money similar to what was allocated for the project.

We cant have a Sh4 billion project and a consultant takes a similar amount of money, he said

Also present was Mugirango North MP Joash Nyamoko and Msambweni MP Faisel Bader.

Speaking on behalf of Baseline Architects, Dominic Mwatanya said they had to review the project again to identify major works that will be implemented in 12 months under the accelerated programme.

He said they want to complete building the school first before embarking on the hotel.

He said the accelerated programme will cost Sh1.96 billion under the first part of phase one.

Other projects, including the library, will be built under the second part of phase one.

Work on the accelerated projects started in June and is expected to be completed in July 2022.

The project includes a student centre, an administration block, part of the tuition blocks, a kitchen and a dining hall, a 250-capacity student hostel, a sports complex, houses that will include two- and three-bedroom maisonettes and a waste management plant.

Tourism Fund Board acting CEO David Mwangi said phase one is expected to be completed by July18, 2022.

But the second phase, which will include building a hotel, will be implemented under a public-private partnership due to financial challenges.

We are working towards obtaining a solid public-private partnership before the commissioning of the project, he said, adding that in the arrangement, the Tourism Fund will only offer land

[email protected]

*End of MPs question use of funds in Ngala Utalii College project*

**Two suspected thugs, man and woman, gunned down in Nairobi**

*Mary Wambui / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Police on Monday evening gunned down two suspected thugs, a man and a woman, on Old Kiambu Road.

Police claimed the two have been involved in a spate of robberies in Muthaiga and Spring Valley.

A pistol loaded with seven bullets, two crowbars, a DVD player, laptops and over 150 keys were seized from the suspects, police said.

Starehe sub-county police boss Julius Kiragu said the suspects fired at the police when they were cornered. Police responded fatally shooting two of them.

"One escaped on foot with gunshot wounds after running towards Karura forest," said the police commander.

No police officer was hurt during the incident.

"They [the suspects] had masked one letter of the Honda Fit vehicle they were driving with a black masking tape to make J read as U," Mr Kiragu said.

In the recent past, there has been an increase of robbery incidents in Muthaiga. Police said they have heightened patrols in the neighbourhood, during the night.

*End of Two suspected thugs, man and woman, gunned down in Nairobi*

## Lamu Old Town crier: A tale of resilience, passion and determination

*Kalume Kazungu / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Crying is normally a sign of sadness, grief and in some instances a sign of joy.

On the streets of Lamu Island, a man has cried his lungs out for the past 15 years and continues to do so with fierce passion.

Meet Bwana Shee, 62, the official town crier for the island and adjacent areas.

His job is just like any other. Mr Shee's job description includes making public announcements or proclamations, usually by shouting along the streets.

He says he drew his inspiration from his childhood dream of becoming a broadcaster.

He had been unable to get into the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, the only college providing media and journalism training in Kenya back then. His poor parents could not afford to pay the fees.

I was disappointed because that had been my ultimate goal. The fire to broadcast continued to burn within me.

Shee Bwana Shee, 62, the Lamu Town crier who has been doing the job for 15 years. He is in action, making announcements at the Lamu Old Town main gate.

He joined the Kenya Prisons Service in 1982, serving for 12 years as a warder.

Mr Shee worked at the prisons in Nairobi West, Kisumu, Nyeris Kingongo, Shimo La Tewa in Mombasa, Hindi GK in Lamu and Garissa GK in northeastern Kenya.

In 1994, aged 35 years, Mr Shee sought early retirement, citing frustrations from his seniors and general boredom from doing a job he did not love.

I really don't think I was cut out to work in the forces but I had to, just so I could make a living. But even then, my heart was crying out for broadcasting.

Shortly after leaving his prison warder job, Mr Shee tried his luck at the boat transport business in Lamu, working as a tout and boat operator for another 12 years.

He describes the experience as nostalgic, as it enabled him to put his speaking skills to work.

The job involved a lot of shouting and communicating as I sorted passengers to travel on the boats.

It is in this period that he discovered what he describes as a gap in information flow and announcements in the community in Lamu Old Town and the neighbouring villages of Shella and Matondoni.

Many people did not pay much attention to information on notice boards and in newspapers while just a handful owned and listened to radios.

Most of the community members didn't own television sets and as such I discovered that crucial information was not reaching the targeted audience on time.

It is this discovery that opened doors to Mr Shee's current profession as Lamu's town crier, which he began in 2006.

Armed with his tool of trade, a megaphone that he purchased using his savings, he describes his job as both fulfilling and a source of income, as he is able to make an honest living and support his family.

On how he draws customers, Mr Shee says he has made a name for himself as the only town crier in Lamu Island, and as such, there is always an overwhelming number of people seeking him out to have their messages broadcast in the streets.

Referrals from previous and current clients have also helped market his trade and attract more clients.

The father of six, four boys and two girls, says he has been able to educate all his children through his town crier job.

His last-born child completed Form Four in 2019.

Mr Shee says in a good month he makes up to Sh40,000.

As with many other Kenyans, the Covid-19 pandemic has not been kind to his business. Few job offers are coming his way, meaning he is not earning as much as he used to.

His major clients include Lamu's health department.

Others are non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and business people.

I have survived the Covid-19 season mainly because of the health department, which has ensured I have announcements to pass across on an almost daily basis. I do announcements on Covid-19, malaria, polio vaccination and elephantiasis,

## Lamu Old Town crier: A tale of resilience, passion and determination

*Kalume Kazungu / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

among others.

Shee Bwana Shee during interview with Nation.Africa in Lamu. He says he has at one town beaten in the course of his duty, his megaphone smashed and broken with his hand harmed but says he has never given up in performing his duty as it has enabled him sustain his family.

His business, however, peaks during election campaigns.

Mr Shee is always sought after to make announcements for politicians.

For a normal announcement, I charge between Sh1,000 and Sh2,000, depending on the size of the area I have to cover. For Lamu town alone, I charge Sh1,000 but the figure rises the farther I go away from the town.

But he charges slightly higher for his services during political campaigns because the demand is higher.

For instance, during the 2017 elections, I would charge between Sh1,500 to Sh2,000 for a single political announcement. In a day, I would have over six announcements to make which is good money.

The most memorable episode of his journey as a town crier was in 2010 when he was gifted a modern megaphone by a tourist who was impressed by his work.

But Mr Shees job comes with challenges.

He says the nature of his job occasionally compromises his personal security, especially during elections.

I do this to earn a living irrespective of whom I am doing it for. There have been some instances, however, where I have been roughed up by members of the public for running announcements for certain politicians.

Mr Shee passing out announcements along the narrow streets of Lamu Old Town

He recalls an incident in December 2007, during post-election violence, when his megaphone was smashed and broken by supporters of opposing political supporters.

His left hand was also injured in the altercation.

As the 2022 General Election draws near, Mr Shee is wary and urges the public to treat his job as any other and that the announcement he might be paid to make is not his personal opinion.

When they see me with my megaphone issuing messages from this and that politician, I beseech them not to throw stones at me. I am just a messenger. Let them treat this as a disclaimer.

Mr Shee was born in 1959 in Langoni, Lamu town.

The firstborn in his family, he attended Lamu Boys Primary School between 1968 and 1975.

He joined Lamu Boys Secondary School in 1976 and completed his studies in 1979.

We may refer to him as the town crier but in his community, he is fondly referred to as Babu Mtangazaji, the grandpa of broadcasting.

Its a dream fulfilled for me, though in a much different way than we are used to. They do it on radio and TV and I do it on my megaphone. At the end of the day, we all broadcast.

[email protected]

*End of Lamu Old Town crier: A tale of resilience, passion and determination*

## Woman risks jail for keeping Sh271,200 mistakenly sent to her M-Pesa

*Joseph Ndunda / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

A businesswoman in Nairobi risks spending two years in jail for keeping Sh271,200 erroneously sent to her M-Pesa account.

Appearing before Kibera Senior Principal Magistrate Philip Mutua on Monday, Elizabeth Karimi Muthoni admitted to withdrawing the money.

It was erroneously sent to her M-Pesa account by Mr Bakar Hussein Mohamed in Kitengela, Kajiado County, on July 14.

The court heard that Mr Mohamed was buying an M-Pesa agent account and that while depositing the money for the float, he mistakenly sent it to the wrong agent account.

The agent account belongs to Ms Muthoni, whose business is based in Kitengela.

KCB Bank had promised to reverse the transaction and credit Mr Mohammeds account, but it failed since the money had been withdrawn by the accused.

The accused told the court that she had only withdrawn part of the money and was in talks with Mr Mohammed on repaying him.

After pleading guilty to theft charges, the court slapped her with a Sh200,000 fine.

She will be jailed if she does not pay the fine.

[email protected]

*End of Woman risks jail for keeping Sh271,200 mistakenly sent to her M-Pesa*

## Probe launched into macabre murder of man whose body was skinned

*Simon Ciuri / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Police in Thika, Kiambu County, are investigating an incident in which a man was found murdered and his skin removed yesterday.

Thika East police boss Kutima Namutali told the Nation that the body of Mr Simon Githae, 36, was discovered by local residents who later informed the police.

The incident is currently being treated as a case of murder and investigations are underway.

What we understand so far is that the deceased is a 36-year-old man named Simon Githae whose body was discovered this morning in Gatuanyaga in Thika by the locals who alerted the police, said Mr Natumali.

Mr Githae until his death worked as a farmhand at a nearby flower farm and we are liaising with detectives from Thika to find out how the victim met his death, he added.

Mobile phone

The police boss further said detectives are probing the victims mobile phone to establish who Mr Githae may have spoken to before his death.

The body was taken to General Kago Funeral Home in Thika and has been positively identified by family members, a morgue attendant at the facility told Nation in confidence as he is not authorized to speak to the press on behalf of the facility. The skin had been removed from the body except for the head and the lower parts of the legs.

The body is in bad shape and it seems the deceased was brutally tortured, murdered and then skinned. He must have died a painful death, the morgue attendant added.

Still fresh

Another source at General Kago Funeral Home told the Nation that the body was still fresh when it was booked by police officers from Thika East.

This implies that the victim may have been killed on Sunday night.

Police say people who positively identified Mr Githae at the scene said he had reported to work on Saturday and later retired to his house that is not very far from where he worked.

In a separate incident, police are investigating the death of a man who was found dead outside his car in Thika under unclear circumstances.

The body of Mr John Gacheru, 46, was moved to General Kago Funeral Home.

A source at the morgue told the Nation that the family of the deceased wants to have a post-mortem examination done on the body tomorrow to ascertain how he met his death.

One suspect has been arrested in connection with Mr Gacherus death.

*End of Probe launched into macabre murder of man whose body was skinned*

**DP Ruto still expected in Garissa, after weekend miss**

*Farhiya Hussein / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Deputy President William Ruto is still expected to visit Garissa County, even after failing to show up last Saturday.

Speaking to the Nation.Africa, United Democratic Alliance (UDA) Garissa Township coordinator Mohammed Gedi said the party leader was supposed to visit the county on August 14 but that did not happen.

The visit was postponed due to the recent spike in Covid-19 infections in the county. The government had banned public gatherings, he said.

Mr Gedi said DP Ruto was to open the partys office.

Three weeks ago, the party launched a membership registration drive.

We already started registering members. We are now at more than 10,000. We were waiting for the party leader to launch it officially, he said.

UDA will take over space that was formerly the Jubilee headquarters in Garissa.

But opening the office was not a top priority for Dr Rutos visit, said Mr Gedi.

The main purpose of the visit was for the Deputy President to help in spearheading an Islamic university fundraiser, he said.

Al Mustaqbal University houses more than 2,000 male and female students.

The school is not well off financially. Most students lack funds to pay for their education while teachers are limited. That is why we asked the Deputy President for his assistance, he said.

He said a new date had been agreed on and the DP will visit within the next few months.

On July 14, a group of Muslim clerics from the region, led by Garissa Township MP Aden Duale, held a meeting with Dr Ruto in Nairobi.

We applaud religious institutions for their friendship and cooperation on social causes such as health and education, Dr Ruto said on his social media pages.

Met with the board of trustees of Al Mustaqbal Islamic University. We discussed the expansion of the institution.

The county is still waiting to hear who will raise the UDA partys flag in the gubernatorial race, said Mr Gedi.

Mr Duale and Garissa Woman Representative Anab Gure have been at the forefront in campaigning for the partys interests.

*End of DP Ruto still expected in Garissa, after weekend miss*



## Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in accident

*Stella Cherono / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Nominated senator Victor Prengei is dead. Mr Prengei died on Monday night in a grisly road accident on the Nakuru-Kabarak road.

Police said the accident occurred near Gioto dumpsite, a few kilometers from Nakuru town.

Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in accident

Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in accident

Mr Joseph Towett, chairman of the Ogiek Council of Elders who confirmed the death, said the senator lost control of his car before it landed in a ditch.

"The senator was driving home at the time of the accident, he died while receiving treatment at the War Memorial Hospital," said Mr Towett.

His body was moved to Umash Funeral Home in Nakuru.

Nakuru County Police Commander Beatrice Kiraguri said that the legislator was driving towards Kabarak from Nakuru town.

Mr Prengei, 37, was nominated by the Jubilee Party in 2017 to represent the youth at the Senate.

He was the first Ogiek community MP and was seen as a voice of the minority community in the Kenyan political circles.

Nakuru Governor Lee Kinyanjui described the senator as a dedicated servant of the people.

Today, at around 9.45pm, we lost a dynamic and dedicated servant of the people, he represented the Ogiek community in the Senate and was a beacon of hope to many, said Governor Kinyanjui.

He added: His elevation to the Senate was a major recognition of the rights of the Ogiek and other minority communities.

Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in road crash.

Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in road crash.

The governor described Mr Prengei as a quiet and humble leader, who was always conscious of the huge burden he carried.

Mr Prengei attended Mariashoni Primary School before joining Moi Secondary School- Amalo. He later later joined Maseno University for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics.

In 2017, he graduated with a MBA- Strategic Management from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

*End of Nominated Senator Victor Prengei dies in accident*

## Tana River blacksmith keeps alive ancient skill of metal art

*Stephen Oduor / Monday, August 16, 2021*

The ancient skill of turning metal into implements may be long forgotten and replaced by modern technology, but for Athman Saed, old is gold.

The 65-year-old has kept alive the sunset industry that has earned him a living for the past 45 years.

Mr Saed is an established hand craftsman in Old Town, Galole constituency, where he turns metal into various tools.

I inherited this skill from my father. I wanted to carry on this old craft in memory of him because the money he earned paid our school fees, he says.

He started blacksmithing at the age of 24 after trying to find a regular job in vain.

The trained chef tried his hands at various ventures in Nairobi and Mombasa but did not feel contented and so he moved back home.

The city is crowded and full of rowdy people. The competition was very high and you could go to bed with a job and wake up without one, he recounts.

He said he realised he had a unique skill in metalwork that could generate a good income compared with what he used to do in the city.

Athman Saed (green T-Shirt) with his son hammer a metal rod to shape at their working station in Old Town, Galole Constituency, Tana River County.

He notes that blacksmithing requires a lot of effort. It is not glamorous and so not everyone is willing to pick up the trade, and hence there is little competition.

He begins his work each day at 8am, his tools being two pieces of cement bags tied to a metallic pipe and charcoal.

In a single day, he takes orders from farmers, hunters and masons who prefer his handmade tools, and as a result, he strives to deliver for his clients.

I deliver at least six items in a day as per the list. If I promise a client that Im going to deliver the item by the end of the day, I must do that, he says.

Mr Saed heats his metal to craft out arrows, spears, hoes, mallets, nails, axes and drills, which traders then buy to sell to their own customers.

He curves out a spear for Sh800 and a hoe for Sh450, while an arrow goes for Sh250 and a mallet Sh500.

On a good day, he makes Sh6,000 and Sh1,200 when the season is low.

Most of my sales are good during the rainy season. That is when most people buy hoes and spears, but when its dry like now, sales are very low, he says.

He has built a home for his family and pays school fees for his children with proceeds from his trade.

His clients find the implements he makes more reliable and durable than industrially produced items.

His items dont break; they are very strong. Some of these industrially produced items cannot stand work in very tough areas like the handmade tools can, said farmer Hassan Malibe.

Mr Malibe notes that the hoes he buys from Mr Saed do not bend when they hit stones on the farm and rarely lose their sharpness.

Nevertheless, challenges abound. Mr Saed suffers burns during work, for example.

His hands and legs have been injured by fire, but he keeps going.

Some of the tools already made by Athman Saed at his working station in Old Town, Tana River County.

The materials for his job have also become scarce and sometimes he also lands on fake metal thus affecting his productivity.

Not every metal in the market is worthy. Some are very weak and unfit for making good tools, he says.

The blacksmith intends to pass on the skill to his son when he retires, and so he involves him in most of the work.

He says no one can steal the skill from him or solicit a bribe to provide him favours.

[email protected]

*End of Tana River blacksmith keeps alive ancient skill of metal art*

## Iraqi man with forged documents to be deported

*Brian Ocharo / Monday, August 16, 2021*

An Iraqi citizen arrested at Moi International Airport in Mombasa County, en route to Europe using forged documents, will be deported, a court has ruled.

Mr Omar Azad Abdulstar Omar was heading to Paris, France, on an undisclosed mission when he was intercepted at the airport on July 30.

Documents presented in court indicate that the foreigner planned to fly to the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi before taking another flight to Paris Charles de Gualle Airport.

Mr Omar presented his Belgium passport for clearance but the airport staff raised suspicion about the authenticity of the document, the papers state,.

A thorough search established that he was an Iraqi national yet he had presented himself as a Belgian.

He had used the Iraqi passport to travel to Kenya. A further search established that the suspect forged a Belgium passport while in Iraq with the aim of accessing the European country, the court was told.

The Belgian embassy in Kenya confirmed, in a letter to the Immigration Department, that Mr Omar is not a citizen.

Country blamed

Mr Omar was on Monday presented before Mombasa Senior Resident Magistrate Christine Ogwen and charged with two counts being in the country illegally and forging a passport, contrary to the law.

The charge sheet indicates that he presented a forged Belgian passport, number EI316024, to a Kenya Airways official, purporting that it was issued to him by the Belgian government authorities.

Mr Omar was further charged over the lack of valid documents from the Immigration Department.

The suspect pleaded guilty to the charges but blamed his country for his woes.

Through his advocate Derick Odhiambo, he said the insecurity back home has created confusion, making it impossible to ascertain whether documents issued by various agencies are genuine.

Mr Omar was not aware that the Belgian passport he was issued in his country was not genuine. He only discovered that while at the airport, said Mr Odhiambo.

Sh150,000 fine

The foreigner, however, pleaded for leniency and asked to be repatriated to his country immediately.

There is no record to the effect that the foreigner is being sought for any other reason or that he has committed any offence in this country, the advocate said.

Immigration officers have been holding the suspect since his arrest at the airport in Mombasa. He had allegedly stayed in Mombasa for five days, prior to his arrest while boarding a plane to Nairobi.

The magistrate imposed a Sh150,000 fine on the foreigner, saying he will serve a one-year prison sentence if he defaults.

The suspect will be repatriated to Iraq upon compliance with the above orders, said the magistrate.

Ms Ogwen also directed that the fake Belgian passport be destroyed and a report confirming the same be filed in court.

[email protected]

*End of Iraqi man with forged documents to be deported*

## Kilifi raises alarm over unrecorded Covid-19 deaths

*Maureen Ongala / Monday, August 16, 2021*

A majority of suspected Covid-19 deaths happening at homes in Kilifi County are not being recorded.

Some of the dead are taken for preservation in mortuaries while others are buried immediately.

Speaking in Rabai sub-county, Health executive Charles Dadu said the county will be compelled to test all family members when a suspected Covid-19 death occurs.

The data for Covid-19 patients and deaths being announced are for those cases reported in our health facilities, he said.

Many suspected Covid-19 deaths happening in the community are not being captured. We will now be forced to test the whole family in case of any suspected case.

This, he said, will help prevent the spread of the virus in families.

Some grieving families seek to beat the 48-hour deadline set by the county government to bury their dead, one of the measures intended to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Mr Dadu said Kilifi had recorded an increase of 40 per cent in the Covid-19 infections in the past two months.

Some 2,171 cases have been recorded in the past two and a half months.

This rate of infection is high and we find that people aged from 25 to 59 are contributing to the spread of the virus and they are the ones that are being depended on in the society. We are losing an important generation, he said.

As of Saturday, Kilifi had reported 91 deaths, he said.

The Governor Amason Kingi led county has tested 32,952 people, out of which 5,428 were positive.

Some 42 patients were in isolation - 11 at Kilifi County Referral Hospital and 31 at Mitangani prison in Malindi.

Some 128 patients were in homecare isolation.

Mr Dadu warned that the Delta variant is on the rise in Kilifi and that the county was leading the coastal region in infections.

The Delta variant is now leading in Kilifi, higher than even Mombasa County. It is not sparing anyone. A majority of those that were affected have died, he said.

He appealed to the public to get vaccinated for Covid-19.

Our positivity rate is between 19 percent and 22 per cent. We should ignore the myth about the Covid-19 vaccine that has led to the fear of the unknown and protect ourselves, he said.

It is now four months since we started vaccinating the public. We have been monitoring them very closely and there is no incident where a person has been reported to have succumbed to the vaccine.

He said a total of 13,269 people had been vaccinated 3,209 healthcare workers, 1,781 teachers, 632 security personnel, 3,591 senior citizens and 4,056 others.

[email protected]

*End of Kilifi raises alarm over unrecorded Covid-19 deaths*

## Kilifi records win in open defecation battle

*Maureen Ongala / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Residents of Kilifi County are embracing the use of toilets.

The county was ranked in the top six among 15 where most people still answer the call of nature in the bush.

Last week, Mwawesa and Ruruma, two of the four wards in Rabai sub-county, were declared open defecation-free areas.

Kambe/Ribe and Rabai/Kisurutini have over 50 per cent and 25 per cent toilet coverage, respectively.

In 2007, Jaribuni village in Kauma sub-county in Ganze was the first village in Kenya to be declared an open defecation-free area.

WASH Alliance Kenya CEO Tobias Ovoko said Kilifi had recorded an improvement in toilet coverage.

We want to work together with the community, the county government and our partners to ensure that we have Kilifi as an open defecation-free county, he said.

He spoke during the end of celebrations to mark world sanitation week at Kiwandani village in Kilifi North sub-county.

Mr Ovoko said 280 villages in Kilifi County were triggered to embrace hygiene under the WASH programme that started in October 2020.

Kilifi County Executive officer for health Charles Dadu flanked with health officials and members of the public erecting a billboard that declares Mwawesa ward in Rabai Sub-county as an Open Defecation Free(ODF) zone

Out of that number, 120 were verified while 110 were certified as open defecation-free zones.

This is a good gesture and a big milestone for the people of Kilifi in maintaining sanitation and hygiene because they have managed to improve within a short period, he said.

Besides building toilets, he said, the programmes also aim to prevent the spread of the coronavirus by encouraging the public to wash hands.

The status of hygiene and sanitation in Kilifi is unsatisfactory, said county head of preventive promotion Ummy Buni.

We are not doing well in Kilifi in matters of sanitation and hygiene. This is an issue of concern to us, she said.

The community, she said, mostly builds toilets just to show public health officers that they have complied with their orders and a majority of people still relieve themselves in the bush though toilets are available.

However, Dr Buni said washing hands to prevent the Covid-19 infections had reduced cases of cholera and diarrhoea in the county.

She said the county government has embarked on a programme to ensure all markets have public toilets.

Purity Kahindi, a community health worker from Kiwandani village in the outskirts of Kilifi North sub-county demonstrates how to construct homemade hand washing equipment.

Sanitation officer Amos Ndenge said only 20 per cent of Kilifi's population is not using toilets and washing hands.

In our roadmap, we expect that by 2024, Kilifi County will be declared open defecation-free, he said.

Mr Ndenge said a majority of Kilifi sub-counties are recording an increase of between 70 per cent and 80 per cent in toilet coverage and handwashing.

But Malindi and Magarini sub-counties are lagging.

This is after the county introduced a community-led total sanitation programme to sensitise people through community health workers and volunteers on the importance of embracing hygiene.

This approach has given the community a role to take the lead in issues of sanitation, unlike before when public health officers used to move around ordering people to build houses. Everybody has a responsibility to maintain hygiene, he said.

He said the programme had helped address major cultural impediments that blocked a majority of families from building toilets. Among them was the myth that a father-in-law cannot share a toilet with her daughter-in-law.

Community health volunteer Kanze Thoya, from Bwagamoyo in Mwawesa ward, said it was not easy to convince women to use toilets.

Women were reluctant to build toilets. They brushed us off and told us that they could not mix their stool with that of their father-in-laws, she said.

**Kilifi records win in open defecation battle**

*Maureen Ongala / Monday, August 16, 2021*

But she said efforts by volunteers and the public gradually paid off.

[email protected]

*End of Kilifi records win in open defecation battle*

## Lelan, oasis of bounty in land of poverty | Nation

*Oscar Kakai / Monday, August 16, 2021*

In a small corner of this semi-arid land, on the slope of Tapach Hills, Pokot South in West Pokot County, lies Lelan, the village with chilly weather but with beautiful homes and gardens all around the area.

Here, where all converge at the Kaibichibich main trading centre, business is booming.

You are likely to see donkeys on the road ferrying milk, pyrethrum and Irish potatoes to the market, while at home, merino sheep bleat at the homes, ready income for the owners at any time.

But it was not always like this. Twenty years ago, Lelan was a battlefield for cattle rustling between the Pokot and Marakwet communities.

And many other areas in the county are still in the ruin, characterised with images of an unruly region; dry and hot conditions; a tough land plagued by bloody cattle rustling.

Relief food

The worst areas are north and central Pokot where residents depend on relief food from the government, NGOs and other well-wishers.

In this part of the country, therefore, Lelan stands out as an oasis of wealth in a region plagued by poverty, banditry and starvation.

Tucked away 70 kilometres from Kapenguria town, Lelan is a success story on the agricultural front, with nearly every home now erecting wooden fences with Friesian cattle boxed in, and gardens arranged with great deliberation.

The crown jewel of Lelan area is the Muruny Dairy Cooperative Society, a 2,000-member group that has its own milk chilling plant and receives an impressive 2,800 litres a day, bought at Sh38 a litre from the farmer.

Every month, the cooperative pays out Sh2 million for milk delivered there by farmers.

Improved economically

As early as 2008, there was nothing in Lelan. No one had a car or a motorcycle. Today, we have improved economically and there are motorcycles all over now, says David Mnangat, a farmer from Cheparten who makes Sh3,000 every two weeks.

The cooperative sells its milk to Brookside Company, transported daily by truck.

We are happy the roads have been constructed and we don't have many problems transporting our milk. The cooling plant is what brought electricity to Lelan and now other businesses are coming up because of that. With farmers dumping Zebus, shifting to Friesians, modern farming and making money, Lelan needed a financial service. But there was none anywhere near except, again, in Kapenguria 70km away, " said another farmer, Susan Lotera.

In keeping with their enlightened self-interest, the founders of Muruny Cooperative had seen that a profitable dairy industry would shift incentives away from cattle rustling and violence between the Pokot and Turkana.

We know nothing about insecurity and cattle rustling as we are busy in our farms. Milk production has boosted the economy of the area, said Mrs Lotera.

Long distance

It happened that as these problems cropped up, the Lelan Dairy managers were also dealing with a range of other problems where farmers were bringing milk in plastic jerricans from as far as 14km on their heads.

This meant that they couldn't carry all the milk they produced, and often the milk arrived spoiled.

But the opening up of a savings account with the cooperatives has helped solve this problem, getting them a little money for upkeep while allowing them to save to cash in at the end of the month, or quarterly.

We are paid money for evening milk and have to wait for the rest, said Mr Kenguria who walks six kilometres from her home to bring milk to the chilling plant.

West Pokot County Governor John Lonyangapuo celebrated Lelan, saying it had set an example of a village that no longer depended on food relief.

An alcohol free zone with the blessing of the elders, the county government has now moved in to help entrench the economic activities to keep residents away from cattle rustling.

The reason why guns have gone silent across West Pokot County is because our people are busy farming attending to



**Lelan, oasis of bounty in land of poverty | Nation**

*Oscar Kakai / Monday, August 16, 2021*

various agricultural practices. Pokot will never be the same again, Prof Lonyangapuo said.

Cattle rustling

According to the first-term governor, cattle raiding, cattle theft, and cattle rustling had derailed development activities in the region.

For decades now, cattle rustling has been a common practice amongst pastoralists in the arid and semi-arid land regions that involves the forceful acquisition of cattle from one community by another using guns and other weapons and may lead to loss of lives and destruction of property but am happy that our people have put all these behind us and resorted to do farming for value addition, explained Prof Lonyangapuo.

According to the county boss, the county is banking on livestock keeping, which he says is the backbone of the regions economy.

What makes me happy is that our people who in the past entirely depended on their livestock as a source of livelihood, have started diversifying and even the young men who had abandoned their studies are going back to schools, a move that has seen the literacy levels here rise, said the governor.

Prof Lonyangapuo also pledged to dispatch a team of agricultural extension officers in the area to help locals boost their farming skills for value addition.

The annual breeds improvement programme through distribution of Sahiwal bulls and Gala goats is on the right trajectory. These are some of the key highlights for the work we have done in the past year, he told the Nation.

[email protected]

*End of Lelan, oasis of bounty in land of poverty | Nation*

**Teacher killed after school bus rolls in Tharaka Nithi**

*Alex Njeru / Monday, August 16, 2021*

A teacher at Kianjeru Primary School in Tharaka Nithi County has died after a school bus he was travelling in overturned in Kangoro on the Meru-Nairobi highway.

According to Tharaka Nithi County Emergency Response Team Coordinator Alex Mugambi, the driver and 10 students of Ibiriga Day Secondary School who had been given a courtesy ride to their school were injured and rushed to Chuka County Referral Hospital for treatment with minor injuries.

Mr Mugambi said the driver lost control of the bus and it veered off the road, rolled before landing in a ditch.

He said the driver could have lost control of the vehicle because the road is very slippery due to the ongoing rains.

Kenya National Union of Teachers Tharaka Nithi County Branch Executive Secretary Njeru Mutani say the death is the teacher is a huge blow to the teaching fraternity and appealed to school bus drivers to be extra careful during the wet season.

Mr James Mutugi, an eye witnesses, said bus was not speeding when the incident happened.

*End of Teacher killed after school bus rolls in Tharaka Nithi*

## Kenya's High Commission in London should do better

*The Watchman / Monday, August 16, 2021*

**Undiplomatic** Kenyan embassies, especially the High Commission in London, are among the worst worldwide, says Betty Luttah Kutto. Its website doesnt work and, therefore, one cant book an appointment, and phones are not answered. Ive tried in vain! If they are working from home due to Covid-19, there should be skeleton office staff and the website should work. Her contact is [email protected].

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**Dark zone** Nearly two months since reporting to Kenya Power faulty streetlights on Ole Sangale Road, Madaraka Estate, Patrick Korir is upset there has been no response. Its the area from Baraka Court, near Strathmore University. Also not functioning are the floodlights at the Keri Road junction. The last time I complained the reference was No. 6820989. His contact is [email protected].

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**Road safety** Henry Kibet praises the government for enhancing safety on the Nakuru-Eldoret highway. Places that have been black spots have been redesigned and weve seen a reduction in accidents. But theres a section just after Mau Summit (Total) that was poorly done. KeNHA should have it redone it and consider having a word with its oversight team. His contact is [email protected].

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**Bad staff** An 85-year-old widows attempt to register a power of attorney at the Lands Office in Nakuru, her son, Anthony Ndegwa says, has been frustrated by uncooperative staff. Her documents were returned. I appeal to Lands Cabinet Secretary Farida Karoney to intervene, though I trust there are still some decent civil servants out there. God help us all! His contact is [email protected].

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**Medal haul** Congratulating Team Kenya for topping Africa on the Tokyo Olympics medal list, Samuel Onyango is proud of the performance, although the country can do better. National Olympic Committee of Kenya should start planning for the 2024 Paris Games to win more medals. They should explore the possibility of taking part in more disciplines. His contact is [email protected].

Have a wider day, wont you!

*End of Kenya's High Commission in London should do better*

## Guarantee Dennis Itumbi his security

*Macharia Gaitho / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

There is no doubt that Dr Fred Matiangi is one of the most powerful men in the country.

His position as Cabinet Secretary for the Interior and Coordination of National Government gives him direct authority over all the key security and administrative organs, including the police and other agencies, the system of regional and country commissioners, Immigration, border control and almost every other strategic docket.

Add to that his appointment in 2019 to chair the National Development Implementation and Coordination Committee of the Cabinet and you essentially have a Cabinet Secretary to whom all other colleagues report. He has been described as a Super CS but could also be likened to a de facto Prime Minister.

To be given such onerous responsibilities obviously means he enjoys the complete trust and confidence of President Kenyatta.

It is, therefore, a bit strange that a person entrusted with such awesome powers is reduced to mud-wrestling with the likes of social media political strategist Dennis Itumbi.

**Insecure president**

A little background is in order. Dr Matiangi exercises powers and functions that an insecure president would be wary of ceding.

In the process, Deputy President William Ruto, who previously oversaw much of the development coordination now under Dr Matiangi, has been reduced to irrelevance in government.

The DP has been the principal victim of President Kenyatta's dalliance with Opposition leader Raila Odinga that aims at locking him out of the presidential succession race come 2022.

Stripping him of all power and responsibility is, therefore, just one of the moves aimed at containing and defanging the DP, leaving him with a high title, big office, motorcade and all the bells and whistles but no job or responsibility to speak of.

Seen in that light, Dr Matiangi is just a cog in the wheel rather than a principal actor behind the DP's effective demotion.

The Interior CS is, however, mystified that DP Ruto is directing so much invective in his direction. In private conversations, Dr Matiangi expresses fury and outrage that the DP blames him for all his tribulations yet he is but a mere functionary.

**Cross the line**

Attacks against Dr Matiangi have escalated in the wake of the controversial barring of the DP from flying to Uganda and the subsequent arrest and expulsion of his Turkish travelling companion Harun Aydin, who was variously accused of money laundering, terrorist financing and entering Kenya illegally.

The DP's minions, notably Itumbi and Kapsaret MP Oscar Sudi, have launched vicious attacks against Dr Matiangi that clearly cross the line in language and tone. The two directly blame the CS for the latest humiliation meted out on their boss, but seem to conveniently ignore the fact he cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be the principal player in the saga.

Beyond the regular social media posts, the controversial Itumbi, who describes himself as spokesman of DP Ruto's Hustler Nation political movement, penned a letter insulting Dr Matiangi in the most extreme terms and levelling all manner of unproven allegations against him.

The August 13 letter was in response to a cease and desist letter from Dr Matiangi two days earlier in regard to a running Twitter tirade.

But if Dr Matiangi thought a letter from his lawyer threatening to sue for defamation would silence Itumbi, he must have been left shocked by the reply. It added insult to injury by repeating in most crude and vile terms the insults and contentious accusations.

**Attempt on his life**

The same night, Itumbi claimed there had been an attempt on his life. He reported to police that a strange car had tried to block his but he hit it and sped off, hearing gunshots as he made his escape.

His claim presented a dangerous escalation, which must be investigated fully and those responsible brought to book. But

**Guarantee Dennis Itumbi his security**

*Macharia Gaitho / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

that depends on how much of the account is true. It all sounds too pat, as if designed to point fingers in a certain direction.

Itumbi is a very clever and pleasant fellow, even if he does have a penchant for politics that has little regard for truth and common decency.

One big problem is that, when one has a well-earned notoriety for vicious propaganda and serial accusations that on close examination hold no water, reports grounded on genuine fears might not be taken seriously.

However objectionable the fellow, however, and to whatever extent he rubs Dr Matiangi or anyone else the wrong way, he must still be guaranteed the security due every other Kenyan. It is incumbent on the police to fully investigate the reported murder attempt to its natural conclusion.

[email protected] @MachariaGaitho

*End of Guarantee Dennis Itumbi his security*

## Its hard to reform killer police

*Kaltum Guyo / Monday, August 16, 2021*

The latest travel advisory by the United States State Department, issued on August 9, begins by telling Americans to reconsider travel to Kenya due to Covid-19. Exercise increased caution in Kenya due to crime, terrorism, health issues and kidnapping.

It ends with the warning that violent crime, such as armed carjacking, mugging, home invasion and kidnapping can occur at any time. Street crime can involve multiple armed assailants. Local police often lack the resources and training to respond effectively to serious criminal incidents.

These are not statements that cover Kenya in glory. Say what you want of Magical Kenya but concerns by the US and many other Western countries on the level of serious crime in the country do not do our image a favour.

The Kenyan police is doing a great job in burying any shred of credibility we have in the world by being one part of the criminal enterprise. We can argue until cows come home that not all police officers are bad elements but the few brutal, bad ones are enough to cause maximum damage to the psyche of the citizens and visitors alike with their level of impunity.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on many tourism markets around the world and keeps pulling down economies of most countries. Ours has not been spared either. The last thing we need is a group of police officers implicated in bribery allegations, kidnappings, extrajudicial killings and extortion of visitors. We rely heavily on tourists from the countries that have been steadfast at issuing travel advisories against our country, especially the US, United Kingdom, Germany and Italy.

Tourism is a fickle industry; it takes the slightest shock for it to crumble. It is one of our highest earners but we are not committed enough to deal with insecurity to protect the industry from such shocks.

### Extrajudicial killings

However, it is not only visitors security that should concern the government but that of citizens too. The latest reports on police brutality makes for sad reading.

A mother in Embu losing two innocent sons at the hands of overzealous police should be a Code Red for impunity within the National Police Service and calls for a unified demand for reforming the institution. Sadly, that is not what happened. Instead, the police and government went into self-preservation mode and settled on transferring police officers involved than charge them in the court of law.

The Independent Police Oversight Authority (Ipoa) reacting after the horse has bolted is not the panacea to our policing challenges. The government, indeed, Ipoa, are reactive rather than proactive to police excesses. By the time Ipoa takes disciplinary action, is at all, it will be too late for victims of police brutality and impunity.

Benson Njiru, 23, and Emmanuel Mutura, 19, have had their lives cut short before their prime, like many other young victims of extrajudicial killings. Many innocent Kenyans who die at the hands of the police, whether its through an unnecessary shoot-to-kill policy or kidnappings, are still waiting for justice.

And could these deaths have been avoided? Most importantly, why is it so hard to reform our extortionate and killer police force into a unit that is known for saving lives rather than taking them needlessly?

### Cosmetic reforms

I have argued several times before that the continued use of live bullets by the police on unarmed civilians contributes to the killings of innocent Kenyans by the officers. It is excessive and unjustifiable powers that is given to the Police, and which is also open to abuse as we have witnessed over the years. What would it take to replace live bullets with stun guns, which have a higher chance of saving lives?

We can jump up and down to get justice for victims of extrajudicial killings but the best justice is to ensure that innocent lives are not lost at the hands of corrupt and trigger-happy police in the first place.

Bribery and extrajudicial killings are intrinsically linked to unmotivated and underpaid police. This is the same lot we give guns, hence the power to take lives, and they will do so with not a care in the world, putting the lives of the innocent at risk.

The recent police reforms were cosmetic and did not go deep enough to run the golden thread of human rights and rule of law through its structure. New police uniforms were not necessary as much as stun guns. Or is it because kickbacks

**Its hard to reform killer police**

*Kaltum Guyo / Monday, August 16, 2021*

were desperately required? Are guns in the police hands for an ulterior motive and not keeping us safe? Kenyans need to know that.

It is not rocket science to reform the police from the institution bedevilled with impunity that it is to one that is exemplary to the citizens and visitors alike. Campaigns such as magical Kenya for promotion of tourism amount to throwing good money after bad if we still allow impunity to thrive within the police.

Let us reform the police to keep the citizens safe first and visitors would, naturally, feel safe to come over.

Ms Guyo is a legal researcher. [email protected] @kdiguyo

*End of Its hard to reform killer police*



## Hakainde Hichilema: Zambian accountant who trounced President Lungu

*Michael Chawe / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

In Lusaka,

When Zambia's new President Hakainde Hichilema joined politics in 2006, he was largely viewed as an outsider, inexperienced and elitist. It is an image he seems to have shed off over the years, appearing more ordinary in dress and language.

He was often mocked by late president Michael Sata as an under-five and calculator boy, referring to his past experience in the corporate world where he rose to become CEO of an accounting firm.

Mr Hichilema's firm was at the centre of the privatization drive in the 1990s during economic reforms from a socialist-oriented economy under Kenneth Kaunda to a liberal one that saw the government dispose of several state assets into private hands.

President-elect Hakainde Hichilema (centre) waves at supporters after a press briefing at his residence in Lusaka, on August 16, 2021.

He was said to have personally benefited, accumulating massive wealth from the transactions that he has expanded into various sectors and becoming one of the country's richest men. He has invested in finance, ranching, property, healthcare and tourism.

He denies having taken advantage of the process.

The narrative was twisted by his opponents, who used it as an albatross in political head-butting.

Born 59 years ago in Monze district Southern Province, Mr Hichilema calls himself a cow boy who grew up herding cattle, a mainstay in the area where dairy agriculture was common wealth.

He says he grew up in an ordinary setup, starting education in a village school. His efforts led him all the way to the University of Zambia, where he earned a degree in economics. He thereafter enjoyed a stellar career in the corporate world, but at some point got the urge to join politics.

By the age of 26, he was CEO of the Zambian branch of a large international accountancy firm, according to his party.

Supporters of Zambian President-elect for the opposition party United Party for National Development (UPND) Hakainde Hichilema gestures as they ride on a pickup truck in the streets of Lusaka on August 16, 2021.

So upon the death of United Party for National Development founder Anderson Mazoka, also a tycoon from his village in Monze, Mr Hichilema entered the fray to salvage what was left of the party he bankrolled.

Before this year's presidential election that he won, he had contested and lost all polls held in the southern African country since 2006, though he was boosted each time by a greater share of the vote.

The opposition party seemed permanently lodged in third position, beaten by the Patriotic Front party formed much later in 2001, a situation that got him taunted as a perpetual loser.

In 2016, he unsuccessfully challenged the results of the presidential election, which he said was stolen from him after he narrowly lost by 100,000 votes.

But in this previous campaign, Mr Hichilema played into the widespread dissatisfaction with PF's Edgar Lungu running of the economy, campaigning under the slogan bally will fix it.

Zambia's presidential candidate Hakainde Hichilema and incumbent president Edgar Lungu.

While in the thick of things, Mr Hichilema often crossed paths with Mr Lungu, who had a barbed exchange with him, displaying bad blood between the two. In his recent political forays, he claimed he had been arrested 15 times since entering politics.

Most recently, after the 2016 election, he faced treason charges for allegedly failing to give way to a presidential motorcade in the west of the country. He spent 121 days in a maximum-security jail before the charges were dropped. His release was negotiated by the international community.

That incident seemed to have baptised him in fire, making him some sort of political gladiator as he simultaneously seemed more in command of opposition politics. His opponents still said he would not make it even as the ground shifted in his favour, often branding his party as a tribal grouping enjoying support from his home province in the south.

Lungu's mismanagement of the economy

## Hakainde Hichilema: Zambian accountant who trounced President Lungu

*Michael Chawe / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The courts validation of Mr Lungu as eligible to contest the 2021 election after being sworn in twice (2014 and 2016) for what opposition parties saw as a third term earned him enormous opposition from civil society, dividing the legal fraternity to which he belongs.

A newspaper vendor is seen carrying Monday's Zambian dailies in Lusaka, on August 16, 2021.

PF dislodged the MMD from power in the 2011 election on account of corruption. On assuming power, it embarked on a massive infrastructure drive that forced the regime to borrow, a move that sent the economy into a tailspin.

Commodity prices soared as did inflation. Ordinary people were heard saying, Are we going to eat infrastructure? Even as the face of the country modernised, the cost of living seemed to be the narrative entrenching itself in the minds of ordinary Zambians.

In his final campaign speech in the capital Lusaka, Mr Hichilema said his political drive came from the wish to see a better life.

It hurts to see citizens go to bed without food in such a country with so much wealth, he was quoted saying.

Critics of Mr Lungu said the narrowing of political freedoms was another reason his party lost power to UPND.

We have made it after suffering oppression under this regime for a long 10 years, said Kaunda Mwape shortly after Mr Hichilema was declared winner of the presidential vote.

Under his watch, Mr Lungus regime shut down a number of media houses critical of his regime.

One of the biggest private dailies, The Post, was closed on the pretext that it had failed to pay taxes. Some radio stations were closed while others were threatened with suspension or attacked by ruling party supporters for hosting opposition leaders.

The growing impunity of unruly and violent cadres seemed to have struck a raw nerve with voters, mostly the young.

Mr Lungus six-year rule was criticised for alleged human rights abuses, corruption, a failing economy and massive unemployment.

Mr Hichilema now faces the huge challenge of turning around Zambias economic fortunes.

The election was Mr Hichilemas sixth attempt at the top job and the third time he had challenged the 64-year-old Mr Lungu.

In 2016, he narrowly lost to Mr Lungu by about 100,000 votes.

Mr Lungu faced the electorate amid growing resentment about the rising cost of living and crackdowns on dissent.

Mr Hichilema was backed by 10 opposition parties in the most recent election.

Observers have roundly praised the election as transparent and peaceful, despite the restrictions on freedom of assembly and movement during the campaigns.

Security forces often prevented Mr Hichilema from campaigning in several areas, citing breaches of coronavirus measures and a colonial law on public order.

UPND made inroads in PFs strongholds of the Copper Belt, Lusaka and Northern Province.

In the Copper Belt region, though Mr Lungus government had taken over the mines, voters were not enthused.

*End of Hakainde Hichilema: Zambian accountant who trounced President Lungu*

## Zambia's Hichilema vows 'better' democracy after landslide win

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Zambian president-elect Hakainde Hichilema on Monday slammed the southern African country's outgoing "brutal regime" while promising a "better democracy" in his debut address to the nation, hours after winning the top job in a landslide.

Zambia's Lungu congratulates Hichilema on election victory

Zambia's Lungu congratulates Hichilema on election victory

Speaking shortly after his predecessor Edgar Lungu conceded defeat, the business tycoon and veteran opposition leader said his camp had been victims of a "brutal regime that is exiting".

"I will be a president of all Zambians, of those that voted for me and of those that did not," he pledged.

After a campaign dominated by the country's economic woes and marred by sporadic violence, Hichilema garnered 2,810,757 votes against 1,814,201 for the incumbent Edgar Lungu, according to nearly final results.

Lungu conceded defeat, saying he congratulated "my brother... Hichilema for becoming the seventh republican president."

In a nationally televised address, Lungu thanked Zambians for "a great opportunity to be your president. I will forever cherish and appreciate the authority you invested in me."

The electoral commission proclaimed Hichilema president-elect in the early hours of Monday, bringing the curtain down on Lungu's nearly six-year reign.

Hichilema, 59, pledged: "We will foster a better democracy... rule of law, restoring order, respecting human rights, liberties and freedoms."

Wiping away tears, Hichilema said his victory was the "historic moment millions of Zambians have been waiting for."

Hundreds of supporters had gathered on the dirt road leading up to Hichilema's sumptuous residence in a leafy suburb of Lusaka, and they shouted "Bally, Bally" (slang for "father") as he began to speak.

"It is with great honour, humility, gratitude that I stand before you today to say change is here," Hichilema said.

Recalling that he had been arrested 15 times, Hichilema said: "We are not going into office to arrest those who arrested us."

He added: "Once we restore the rule of law, we will see more economic investment."

It was Hichilema's sixth bid for the top job and his third challenge to his bitter rival Lungu, 64, after losing to Lungu by a wafer-thin 100,000-vote margin in 2016.

Finally, he has done it!

Thousands of supporters flocked onto the streets of Lusaka, erupting into song and dance, cheering and waving party flags.

The celebrations continued into the morning.

At a hotel breakfast room early Monday, a waiter had swapped his usual dark tie for a bright red one.

"My vote helped swing it," he told AFP with a wide smile and twinkling eyes.

On Saturday, as ballots were being counted, Lungu cried foul, but his objections gained little traction.

International election observers have commended the polls' transparent and peaceful organisation, with a turnout of around 70.9 percent -- a huge jump from the 57.7 percent recorded in the 2016 polls.

But they also criticised restrictions on freedom of assembly and movement during campaigning.

Security forces blocked Hichilema from campaigning in several areas, including the strategic Copperbelt Province, citing breaches of coronavirus measures and a public order act.

Lungu deployed the military following pre-election clashes and reinforced the army presence in three provinces after two deaths were reported on election day.

Social media access was restricted in the capital Lusaka just as Hichilema cast his vote but was restored on Saturday following a court order.

Democracy boost?

## Zambia's Hichilema vows 'better' democracy after landslide win

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Observers viewed the election as a referendum on Lungu's rule, which saw plummeting living standards and deepening repression in the country of more than 17 million.

Legislative and local elections were held alongside the presidential ballot on Thursday.

Kenya's former prime minister Raila Odinga congratulated Hichilema for a "decisive victory".

"The Zambian people have made Africa proud for conducting a successful election," Odinga tweeted. The election "reminds fellow Africans elsewhere that nothing is impossible".

Despite occasional episodes of political violence, Zambia has earned a reputation for stability. Every transition of power has been peaceful since the former British colony adopted its multi-party system in 1990.

"Zambians have lived up to be true democrats. It's a different African story," Ringisai Chikohomero, researcher at the Pretoria-based Institute for Security Studies, told AFP.

Hichilema's prime task on taking office will be to tackle an economy wracked by high debt, inflation and unemployment.

Last year, the copper-rich southern African nation became the first country on the continent to default on its debt in the coronavirus era.

*End of Zambia's Hichilema vows 'better' democracy after landslide win*

## In Sudan, Tigrayans fear the worst as bodies wash up in river

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

In an east Sudan town, Tigrayan Gabratansay Gabrakhrastos panics whenever his phone rings: it could be grim news of yet more bodies washing up on the banks of a river bordering Ethiopia.

Gabratansay says he has been receiving such phone calls since late July, when Sudanese villagers found the first corpse floating down the Setit River, known as the Tekeze in Ethiopia.

Since then, he says, a stream of calls has followed, bringing news of even more gruesome discoveries of bloated and deformed bodies with bound hands and severe wounds.

"It has been the case for weeks now. Once a new body is found, they call me and other Tigrayans here," Gabratansay told AFP at Wad al-Hiliou, a village in the eastern Sudanese state of Kassala.

"We may not know them personally, but they are the bodies of our people," says the 40-year-old farmer.

Gabratansay and others like him who recover the bodies fear they are evidence of mass executions by government-allied troops in Tigray, a small but historically powerful region of northern Ethiopia that has been ravaged by more than nine months of fighting between the army and battle-hardened local forces.

Allegations have swirled of atrocities, ethnic cleansing and mass killings, including a massacre in the town of Humera, in western Tigray. All have been dismissed by the Ethiopian government as "fabricated".

Along with other Tigrayans, Gabratansay says he has helped to retrieve and bury some 50 bodies found in the river, including five women.

Many of the corpses bore gunshot wounds, others appeared to have suffered burns, deep slashes, or had body parts missing, and almost all had their hands tied behind their back, he says.

'Hands tied'

Gabratansay says that based on information received from Humera, "around 150 Tigrayan prisoners were executed by federal forces with their hands tied behind their back".

These accounts came from Tigrayans who fled Humera as well as people still in the town who spoke of hearing "screams and gunshots", he says.

"We think there are more bodies in the river but we have not found them yet."

Tigrayan Kahsay Gabrselsey, who took part in the search for bodies, believes they belong to the Tigrayans allegedly executed in Humera.

"We have heard that federal forces killed dozens of Tigrayan prisoners... and threw them in the river," he says. "We think these are their bodies."

Although the men have little evidence to support their claims, they say some of the bodies had tattoos written in their language -- Tigrinya.

"One body had a tattoo of the words 'I love you' on his arm, and another had the name of his beloved carved on his arm as well," says Tigrayan Gebremaden Gabro.

Tigray has been wracked by violence since November, when Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent in troops to oust the region's ruling party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, a move he says was in response to TPLF attacks on army camps.

Thousands have been killed, and tens of thousands forced to flee into Sudan.

Weeks into the fighting, Abiy -- winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize -- declared victory after his forces captured the Tigray capital, Mekele.

In June, a stunning turn of events unfolded when the TPLF regained control over Mekele and much of Tigray.

The fighting spread, however, as western Tigray remained under the control of allied government forces, and the TPLF pushed east and south into the neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions.

Shallow sand graves

The men shared with AFP images of what appeared to be several bodies floating on the surface before being carried away on mats and buried in shallow sand graves on the banks of a river.

"We wished we could take them somewhere better to be buried, but we couldn't," Gabratansay says, pointing to large

## In Sudan, Tigrayans fear the worst as bodies wash up in river

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

stones he placed atop the grave of the first body he buried.

"The bodies were too decomposed and smelled and we had little means to carry them."

The UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, confirmed the discovery of one body and several fresh graves but said it could neither confirm the identity of those buried nor how they died.

The UNHCR, like other aid agencies, said in early August that it had "no access to the Ethiopian side of the border."

Humanitarian needs have swelled in Tigray with aid workers struggling to reach people who have become stranded by the conflict.

In July, the UN warned that 400,000 people had "crossed the threshold into famine", with another 1.8 million on the brink of following them.

Amnesty International this month accused forces allied with Addis Ababa of hundreds of cases of sexual violence and rape, some involving sexual slavery and mutilation.

Ethiopia accused Amnesty of bad methodology and waging "sensationalised attacks and smear campaigns" against it.

But Tigrayans living in Sudan fear the worst for their families trapped in the region.

"My family was unable to escape since they live in a village far from the border," says Legese Mallow who hails from Adigrat in Tigray.

"We just wish the war would stop so we can go there and see who died and who is still alive."

*End of In Sudan, Tigrayans fear the worst as bodies wash up in river*

## Zambia election: Edgar Lungu concedes defeat

*Michael Chawe / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Lusaka,

Zambian President Edgar Lungu on Monday conceded defeat in the elections held last Thursday, that opposition candidate Hakainde Hichilema won.

The Zambian leader said he accepts the results of the August 12 elections and that he will peacefully hand over power in line with the country's Constitution.

Lungu congratulated President-elect Hakainde Hichilema and wished him success.

I will comply with the Constitutions provision for a peaceful transfer of power. I wish to congratulate my brother, Hakainde Hichilema, on being elected the 7th President of Zambia, Mr Lungu said in a live broadcast on state radio and television.

He thanked people who voted for him and his party during the elections and urged them to continue supporting his party, briefly speaking about its successes.

Lungu thanked Zambians for giving him an opportunity to serve them.

"All I ever wanted to do was to serve my country to the best of my ability," he said. "Together with you we did score in many areas, of course, there were challenges on the way, but what I appreciate most was your support."

A man shows a poster while leaning out from the window of a minibus, as a long line of cars of supporters of Zambian presidential candidate Hakainde Hichilema parade in front of his residence, celebrating in Lusaka, on August 15, 2021.

Hichilema's promises

Zambia's electoral commission chairperson, Esau Chulu, declared the opposition candidate the winner after he garnered 2,810,757 votes (59.38 percent) against Mr Lungu 1,814,201 (38.33 percent).

He announced the results of 155 out of 156 constituencies, noting that those from the remaining constituency would not materially influence the outcome.

After the official announcement was made slightly before 2.35am, Mr Hichilema's supporters went into a frenzy, popping champagne in celebration.

They spent the better part of the morning honking their car horns and singing in the streets of the capital, Lusaka.

In his address, the President-elect, of the United Party for National Development, promised to run an inclusive government.

With the election behind us, let's get back together as Zambians and as a family because that's what we are, Mr Hichilema also told a live broadcast.

He further promised a balanced Cabinet representing the country's 10 regions.

He also thanked young voters who took part in the election and condemned electoral violence, saying there will be no retribution or witch-hunt.

Supporters of Zambian President elect for the opposition party United Party for National Development (UPND) Hakainde Hichilema gestures as they ride on a pick up truck in the streets of Lusaka on August 16, 2021.

Responsible celebrations

Meanwhile, Zambia's incoming governing party on Monday urged its supporters to celebrate their victory in a responsible manner instead of breaking the law.

Supporters of the United Party for National Development (UPND) have gone on wild celebrations after their leader, Hakainde Hichilema, was declared winner of last Thursday's presidential election in the early hours of Monday.

Shops owned by members of the former ruling Patriotic Front (PF) have been destroyed in some parts of the country while makeshift stalls in the central business district of Lusaka, the country's capital, have been razed down.

A popular mall, ECL Mall, in Kitwe city on the Copperbelt has had some of its shops looted, with pictures on social media showing shops with shattered windows.

Offices belonging to the former ruling party at one of the busy bus stations in the Zambian capital have been looted. Major trading places in the capital have since remained closed.



**Zambia election: Edgar Lungu concedes defeat**

*Michael Chawe / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Police have warned that they will not tolerate the lawlessness being perpetrated by few individuals and that anyone found wanting will be dealt with by the law.

Hichilema was declared Zambia's president-elect after beating incumbent President Edgar Lungu.

*End of Zambia election: Edgar Lungu concedes defeat*

## Nigeria gunmen kidnap 15 students in latest attack on schools

*AFP / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Gunmen have killed three people at an agricultural college in Nigeria's northwest Zamfara state and kidnapped 15 students among others, school officials and police said Monday, in the latest in a wave of mass abductions.

Armed kidnappings for ransom now make almost daily headlines in Africa's most populous country, seven years after Boko Haram extremists shocked the world by taking 276 girls from Chibok.

Schools targeted by criminal gangs in the north and centre of the West African country are usually in remote areas where students stay in dormitories with only watchmen for security.

On Sunday at the College of Agriculture and Animal Science in Bakura, "unknown gunmen attacked the school around 10 pm (2100 GMT)," registrar Aminu Khalid Maradun told AFP.

They killed a policeman and two security officers, "and abducted 20, including 15 students," he said.

The five other abductees are staff and family members, he added.

Another school official confirmed the attack.

"The gunmen forced themselves into the school through the pedestrian gate and took away the hostages," Abdullahi Aminu, in charge of accommodation at the school, told AFP.

"They killed three security personnel in a shootout."

The official said the school received a phone call early Monday from the kidnappers, saying they were holding 20 hostages.

Police said on Monday afternoon that 15 students were kidnapped in the attack but said only four staff were taken -- and three were later "rescued".

"15 students and 4 staff were abducted by the bandits," local police spokesman Mohammed Shehu said in a statement, adding that police operatives rescued three staff while searching the area.

The bandits were "heavily confronted" by security officers during the Sunday night attack, Shehu added, but a "police inspector" and two "civilian guards lost their lives."

950 abducted since December

A recent school graduate, Usman Usman, also confirmed the incident.

"I left the school on Sunday around 5:30 pm... This morning my friend called me and said that some bandits attacked the school in the night. They killed people and kidnapped many," said Usman, 22.

The UN estimates that at least 950 students have been abducted across Nigeria since December.

Most have been released after negotiations with local officials, although some are still being held.

The latest mass abduction was in July, when gunmen kidnapped 121 students from the Bethel Baptist High School in Kaduna state.

Heavily armed criminal gangs known locally as bandits have terrorised communities in the region for years. They usually attack villages to loot, kill and steal cattle.

Military deployments and peace deals have failed to end the violence, and bandits who hide in camps in the Rugu forest straddling Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara and Niger states continue to launch attacks.

Since late last year, the gangs have increasingly targeted schools and colleges to squeeze out ransom cash.

Bandits chase financial gain and have no known ideological leanings, but there has been growing concern among security experts and officials over potential ties with jihadists in the northeast of the country.

Kidnappings are just one of the challenges facing Nigeria's security forces who are battling a grinding Islamist insurgency in the northeast and separatist tensions in parts of the south.

*End of Nigeria gunmen kidnap 15 students in latest attack on schools*

## Sao Tome President Evaristo Carvalho hospitalised

*Arnaldo Vieira / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Sao Tome and Principe President Evaristo Carvalho has been hospitalised since Saturday following an illness.

Local media confirmed that the president is admitted to Dr Ayres de Menezes Hospital.

VOA radio quoted sources saying that the head of state was operated on for an umbilical hernia.

The presidents hospitalisation comes at a time when the country is experiencing an electoral crisis due to the delay in holding the second round of the presidential elections.

President Carvalho is not a candidate and his term ends on September 3, 2021.

After the crisis generated by a request for a recount of votes in the first round by the current president of the national assembly Delfim Neves, who is a candidate, the countrys parliament has not yet set a new date for the second round of the presidential poll.

The largest countrys opposition party, ADI, which supports Carlos Vila Nova, the candidate with most votes in the first round of presidential election held on July 18, accuses Delfim Neves, who came in third of planning a coup in order to temporarily assume the presidency and indefinitely postpone the conclusion of the electoral process.

Mr Neves, who is also the parliamentary Speaker, declared on Friday that parliament will temporarily assume the countrys presidency after September 3, the day the current presidents term ends.

*End of Sao Tome President Evaristo Carvalho hospitalised*

## President Uhuru Kenyatta fetes Team Kenya after Tokyo heroics

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

President Uhuru Kenyatta Monday hosted members of Team Kenya for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games at State House, Mombasa.

Uhuru announced cash awards of Sh1 million, Sh750,000 and Sh500,000 for Gold, Silver and Bronze medallists respectively.

Among the medallists present were Emmanuel Korir (800m gold), Ferguson Rotich (800m silver), Peres Jepchirchir (marathon gold), Brigid Kosgei (marathon silver), Helen Obiri (5,000m silver), Timothy Cheruiyot (1500m silver), Benjamin Kigen (3,000m steeplechase bronze).

He further announced a uniform token of Shs 200,000 for all athletes and officials, including the Paralympics team, participating in delayed Summer Games.

President Uhuru Kenyatta (centre) addresses Team Kenya medallists from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at State House, Mombasa on August 16, 2021.

The President thanked the Olympians for their outstanding performances that saw Kenya top the African medal chart, and challenged the sporting fraternity to ensure the country continues to excel on the global stage.

Uhuru's token comes a week after Kenyans took to social media to express their disappointment at Sports Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed about poor reception accorded to marathon great Eliud Kipchoge and other Tokyo Olympics medallists.

President Uhuru Kenyatta (centre) poses for a photo with Team Kenya medallists from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at State House, Mombasa on August 16, 2021.

There was a huge outcry from Kenyans especially after Uganda's medalists got red carpet reception from President Yoweri Museveni.

Kenyans wondered why Team Kenya, top in Africa and 19th globally, with four gold, four silver and two bronze medals, would not be accorded same treatment or even better than Uganda who ranked 36th worldwide with only two gold and two bronze medals.

*End of President Uhuru Kenyatta fetes Team Kenya after Tokyo heroics*

## Organisers bar spectators from Tokyo Paralympics over virus

AFP / Monday, August 16, 2021

Tokyo

Spectators will be barred from the Tokyo Paralympics over coronavirus fears, organisers said Monday, as Japan battles record infections despite emergency measures in several parts of the country.

The Paralympics open on August 24, and some teams are already in the country at training camps.

But the Games come with Japan facing a new wave of virus cases and states of emergency in place in six regions.

"More stringent measures will be taken for competitions to be held in these prefectures, including no spectators," organisers said in a joint statement with local and national governments and the International Paralympic Committee.

The statement said an exception would be made to allow some school children to attend under a special programme.

But organisers emphasised children would only participate with "safety measures" and "where local authorities or school administrations request this in response to the wishes of parents and others".

The decision had been widely expected, and follows the same measures in place for the Olympics, which ended on August 8.

Virus cases are surging across Japan, with over 20,000 new daily infections recorded in recent days, driven by the more contagious Delta variant.

Tokyo and five other areas are currently under a state of emergency that bans alcohol sales by bars and restaurants and limits their opening hours. The measure also caps event attendance at 5,000 people, or 50 percent capacity, whichever is less.

Japan's government has insisted the Paralympics will be held safely, and that it remains committed to hosting them, but it is under growing pressure over the virus.

Just 37 percent of Japan's population is fully vaccinated, after a slow start to the vaccine rollout.

The pace has recently picked up considerably, and the government says all adults who want a vaccine will be able to have one by the autumn.

But the Delta variant has outpaced the vaccination programme, as in many other places, and the emergency measures in place increasingly appear insufficient to curb the spread of infection.

The surge in cases comes with just over a week until the Paralympics open.

Around 4,400 athletes are expected to take part, and like their Olympic counterparts they will face daily testing and restrictions on their movement.

Despite the surge in virus cases in Japan during the Olympics, Games officials said there was no evidence of a link to the massive sporting event. Cases had been rising before the Games began, and a state of emergency was already in place in Tokyo as the Olympics opened.

Olympic organisers have reported 540 positive cases among athletes, officials and media, most of them among Japan-based employees and contractors.

Another three people have tested positive within 14 days of leaving Japan, all of them media, according to organisers.

And at least 31 people associated with the Paralympic Games have tested positive so far, with other cases reported among teams that arrived early for training camps.

International Paralympic Committee chief Andrew Parsons warned last week that participants should not let down their guard.

"While it is encouraging that the Olympic Games were delivered safely and successfully, those attending the Paralympic Games should not get complacent," he said.

"We cannot ignore the current case numbers in Japan and Tokyo, and I urge every single stakeholder for the Paralympic Games to be vigilant."

*End of Organisers bar spectators from Tokyo Paralympics over virus*

## England ace completes Roma switch from Chelsea

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Rome

Tammy Abraham has completed his move to Roma from Chelsea, the Serie A club announced on Monday, the England forward joined former Blues boss Jose Mourinho in the Italian capital in a deal worth 40 million euros (\$47 million, Sh5.2bn).

In a statement, Roma said that Abraham had signed a five-year contract and that Chelsea would "retain the right to a percentage of any future transfer fee involving the striker".

Italian media report that the 23-year-old, who will wear the number nine jersey left vacant by Edin Dzeko's transfer to Inter Milan, will earn 4.5 million euros net each season.

"You can sense when a club really wants you - and Roma made their interest clear immediately," said Abraham to the Rome website.

"Roma is a club that deserves to be fighting for titles and trophies. I've had the experience of winning major trophies and I want to be in those competitions again - so I want to help this team to achieve that and get to the level where Roma should be."

Abraham moves to Roma after Romelu Lukaku's return to Chelsea left him further down the pecking order at the club he joined as a young boy in 2004.

The European champions spent big money to lure Belgium striker Lukaku away from Inter as Thomas Tuchel largely ignored Abraham, who was brought into the senior team by previous coach Frank Lampard.

Abraham had scored 30 times for Chelsea in all competitions since breaking through in 2019 but his most prolific league season as a professional came on loan in the second-tier Championship with Aston Villa, where he scored 25 goals in 2018-19.

He has played six times for England since making his debut in 2017, scoring his only goal against Montenegro in 2019.

*End of England ace completes Roma switch from Chelsea*

## Tonga coach Kefu 'recovering well' after stabbing

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Brisbane, Australia

Tonga coach and former Wallabies star Toutai Kefu has undergone surgery and was "recovering well" Tuesday after being stabbed during an attempted burglary at his Brisbane home, his family said.

The 47-year-old was rushed to hospital in the early hours of Monday with his wife, a son and a daughter after three youths allegedly broke into their house.

Another of Kefu's daughters, Olivia, posted an update on social media after a 15-year-old boy was charged with attempted murder.

"Both Josh and Dad had their surgeries yesterday and are recovering well," she wrote, adding that her sister Madi and mother Rachel were due to be operated on Tuesday.

"Thank you to everyone for all the kind messages and support, it means the absolute world to us all."

Kefu was a powerful No.8 who played 60 times for Australia over a seven-year international career, helping them win the World Cup in 1999.

He was appointed head coach of the Tongan national side in 2016 and steered them to the 2019 World Cup in Japan.

Police on Monday described his condition as "critical" after he was stabbed in the stomach, while his wife had "very, very serious lacerations to her arm".

The 15-year-old suspect -- who was tackled by neighbours at the scene -- was charged with four counts of attempted murder, among a host of other offences.

A second 15-year-old was arrested after attending a Brisbane hospital with injuries, while a third person remains on the run.

*End of Tonga coach Kefu 'recovering well' after stabbing*



## Haiti earthquake aid a priority for emotional Naomi Osaka

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Cincinnati, United States

Naomi Osaka vowed on Monday to give more than just this week's Cincinnati Masters prize money in aid of the earthquake in her father's native Haiti.

The natural disaster which has claimed nearly 1,300 victims, prompted an immediate response from the world number two.

But Osaka, who had to leave a pre-tournament press conference for a few moments to compose herself after being queried about the Caribbean tragedy, then returned to spell out her personal action plan.

"I'm not really doing that much," the four-time Grand Slam champion said. "I could do more and I'm trying to figure out where to put my energy.

"The prize money was the first thing I thought of that would raise the most awareness."

The Japanese-Haitian player called the disaster "really scary. I see there was damage near my parent's former school."

Osaka was holding her first traditional press conference since May in Rome.

Her distaste for media questioning exploded at Roland Garros in May when she suggested the question-answer format was too intrusive, especially after losses, and said she would refrain from them in Paris.

After her first-round win, she answered a few questions on court but a day later quit the tournament before the second round.

Osaka also skipped Wimbledon, saying she needed time to work on her mental health as a result of her post-match tennis stress level.

After lighting the Olympic flame in Tokyo, Osaka lost in the third round to Czech Marketa Vondrousova and left for the US.

"I feel sad about how I did," she said of the Games. "But I was glad for the experience, lighting the torch was fun.

"It will be a really big memory for me."

Osaka takes the second seeding at the joint ATP-WTA Cincinnati event behind Australian Ashleigh Barty.

*End of Haiti earthquake aid a priority for emotional Naomi Osaka*

## Stage set for grand opening as Kenya welcomes the world

*Ayumba Ayodi / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The long wait is finally over.

Postponed for one year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the opening ceremony of the 2021 World Athletics Under-20 Championships will take place Wednesday evening at the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani.

It will be a great honour and privilege for First Lady, Margaret Kenyatta, who will for the second time preside over the opening ceremony of the second largest track and field event to be held on African soil.

The First Lady presided over the opening ceremony of the 2017 World Athletics Under-18 Championships that were held from July 12 to 16 at the same venue, with 60,000 spectators attending the last day.

Over 10,000 fans were turned away and World Athletics declared the event one of the most successful events in its age-group competitions.

The 2017 World Athletics Under-18 Championships was the last edition to be held for the age group, and it was subsequently done away with.

It was the first major world track and field event to be staged in Africa.

Its from the huge success of the 2017 world youth event that World Athletics gave Kenya a chance to organise and stage the world junior competition this year. The championship will be held without fans, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, Africa has hosted four editions of the World Cross Country Championships - in 1996 (Stellenbosch, South Africa), 1998 (Marrakech, Morocco), 2007 (Mombasa, Kenya) and 2017 (Kampala, Uganda).

The First Lady will be accompanied by her guests, World Athletics President Sebastian Coe, among other guests at the ceremony that will start at 7pm.

Speeches will follow after the national anthem by Police Band and RedFourth Chorus.

First on the podium will be the Nairobi Governor, Anne Kananu followed by the World Athletics Under-20 Organising Committee chairman, Jack Tuwei and Coe.

The Cabinet Secretary for Sports, Amina Mohamed will then make her remarks before inviting the chief guest.

The official event Mascot, Jabari, will take to the field to get the show started with musical artist Nyashinski and his dance crew singing the championships theme song Keep Jogging.

Eight children selected from around the world will light flame of youth followed by the parade of countries that will be participating in the five-day event that starts officially Wednesday.

Athletics Heroes of Kenya, led by legendary Kipchoge Keino, will also be on parade with RedFourth Chorus choir entertaining those in attendance.

The Police Band will close with the national anthem with fireworks display ending the show.

Kenya will be represented at the global track and field championships by a team of 46 athletes who have been in a bio-secure training camp at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, for the past one month.

[email protected]

*End of Stage set for grand opening as Kenya welcomes the world*

## Mixed relay team eyes good start at junior event

*Bernard Rotich / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Team Kenya will start its medal hunt in the 2021 World Athletics Under-20 Championships when the 4x400 metres mixed relay team lines up for the heats at the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani Wednesday.

The relay event has attracted nine countries, and Kenya will field the team of Elkana Kiprotich, Kennedy Kimeu, Joshua Wanyonyi, Mercy Chebet, Sylvia Chelangat and Loice Morara.

The team has a best time of 3min,16.21sec.

The final entry list of athletes from the four participating countries will be out on the competition day, but the Kenyan athletes will face stiff competition from countries like Poland which will field a team with the fastest time in the field of 3:09.87.

The Polish team consists of Patryk Grezegorzewicz, Jakub Sobura Durma, Jakub Kozacki, Alicja Kaczmarek, Kornelia Lesiewicz and Olga Rzeszewska.

Ethiopians will also be in the mix, with Wegene Addisu, Melkenh Azeze, Nigist Getashew and Mihret Ashamo chasing the title.

The womens 100m race, which will also be run Wednesday, will feature Kenyas Mercy Chebet who will line up in the heats, hoping to qualify for the semi-finals.

The 100m races have attracted 41 athletes from 28 countries, with Chebet saying that she has improved on her performance, thanks to training in a bio-secure bubble for the last one month.

Her target is to fight and reach the final, and to fight for a medal from that point.

I did the time trials and I managed to run under 12 seconds which is a good improvement for me. I will be competing with some of the fastest athletes from other countries but I will do my best out there, Chebet, a Form Three student at Musaria High School in Kericho County, told Nation Sport yesterday.

Sylvester Simiyu will represent Kenya in the mens 100m race, hoping to leave a mark in the championships.

At the same time, Dominic Kiprotich will take to the field in the qualification round of the shot put competition.

With the exception of former world champion in the javelin Julius Yego, Kenya has not produced strong athletes in the field events in the past.

In the womens 400m race, Sylvia Chelangat will be Kenyas sole representative. Chelangats task is made particularly difficult by the fact that she will be the only Kenyan in the one-lap race.

Im happy I will be competing at home. My target is to get to the next round, and to reach the final from where I will fight for a medal. Its not easy but we shall try our best because we prepared well, Chelangat, a Form Four student at Lelu Secondary School, said.

Mens 400m race will also be run in the morning session. The race will see Kenyas Kennedy Kimeu and Elkanah Kiprotich come up against athletes with faster times.

Wendell Miller from the Bahama is the fastest athlete in the field, having clocked 45.81sec. Jamaicas Jeremy Bembridge with a personal best time of 45.94 will also be in the mix.

The last event of the day will be the 3,000m race where Daniel Kinyanjui and Bernard Kibet Yegon for medals.

Team Kenya head coach, Robert Ngisirei, is confident that the team will do well and increase the medals tally despite the exclusion of mens 10,000m from the championships.

We have prepared the team well and the athletes are in high spirits, ready to take on the world. Our medal hunt starts tomorrow in the evening with the mens 3,000m race, he said.

Team manager Elizabeth Keitany said: The team is ready. We have a total of 46 athletes who will compete in various events, and they should perform well because they have been training for the last one month. The coaches have done their part, and we are looking forward to a better performance at the end of the championships, said Keitany.

*End of Mixed relay team eyes good start at junior event*

## Search on for Argentines born in 1981 and named after Maradona

*AFP / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Buenos Aires

A major sports manufacturer launched a campaign on Monday to find 1,703 Argentines named after football icon Diego Armando Maradona, who died last year following a heart attack.

German brand Adidas wants to offer a free replica jersey of Maradona's former team Boca Juniors to the people born and named "Diego Armando" in 1981, the same year the late great won the Argentine title with the Buenos Aires giants.

Last week, Boca and Adidas unveiled the club's strip for the new season, which was inspired by the one worn by Maradona, who was 21 at the time, and his teammates forty years ago.

That was the year in which authorities registered the largest number of new born babies named Diego Armando, said Adidas in a statement.

Maradona was a fanatical Boca fan after his retirement and even owned a private box at the club's Bombonera stadium.

He enjoyed two short stints with Boca at the beginning and end of his playing career.

His first spell at Boca was enough to earn him a move to Spanish giants Barcelona in 1982 and two years later he moved on to Italians Napoli where he enjoyed the best years of his career.

He inspired Argentina to World Cup glory in 1986 and then helped them reach the final again four years later, while Napoli won their only two Serie A titles while Maradona was their star.

He finished his career at Boca in 1997 and four years later returned to the Bombonera for his official retirement from football, uttering a memorable phrase about the substance addiction he suffered from.

"I made mistakes and I paid for them but the football was never stained," he said.

Maradona died of a heart attack on November 25, 2020 aged 60 while recovering from an operation to remove a blood clot from his head.

*End of Search on for Argentines born in 1981 and named after Maradona*

## Government to put U-20 athletes in training after competition

*Ayumba Ayodi / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

The government will put Team Kenya athletes who compete in the 2021 World Athletics Under-20 Championships on a special training programme after the event.

Sports Principal Secretary Joe Okudo has said that the government has held talks with Athletics Kenya with a view to adopting the 46 athletes, who will represent Kenya in the world junior event with the 2024 Paris Olympic Games in mind.

"I have held talks with AK President Jack Tuwei on Kenyas preparation for the 2024 Paris Olympics and the way to prepare well is to adopt these youngsters," Okudo said. "We shall ensure they receive good training and education, too, ahead of the Olympics."

During the 2017 World Athletics Under-18 Championships held in Nairobi, the government also promised to adopt the Kenyan team. The plan didnt materialise.

Only two athletes from the 2017 Under-18 team made the transition and competed at the just concluded 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. They are Mary Moraa and Edinah Jebitok, who reached the semi-finals of the 800m and 1,500m events respectively.

World Athletics Under-20 Chief Executive Officer, Mike Rabar is of the view that Ministry of Sports should take over the current team to ensure the athletes are supported both in school and in athletics.

"We now need to walk the talk as a country by taking it upon ourselves to make sure these juniors have a smooth and remarkable transition to the 2024 Paris Olympics," said Rabar. He said the onus is on the World Under-20 Local Organising Committee to ensure the plan bears fruit.

Rabar said the team has a huge potential which will work in favour the government and Athletics Kenya selectors.

"These are the juniors to build on and what we need to do is look for some support from outside. We only need to commit ourselves to the course and make sure they remain on track," said Rabar, adding that he has an idea about what it takes to invest in young talent by virtue of owning Homeboyz Rugby, one of the leading local rugby clubs.

Athletics Kenyas Director of Youth and Development, Barnaba Korir welcomed the governments move saying that the current junior team has the potential of producing medallists at the 2024 Paris Olympics if fully supported.

"We have held talks with the government and they have committed to the course fully this time around. They are willing to support and give us the required equipment for training," said Korir, adding that the juniors will be monitored at their respective schools.

*End of Government to put U-20 athletes in training after competition*

## Gor Mahia striker plots way out

*Cecil Odongo / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

South Sudanese striker Tito Okello could be on his way out of Gor Mahia due to unpaid dues.

Okello told Nation Sport that he will not remain at the club for another season after going for months without pay.

The lanky forward has been the subject of stick from fans this season who have criticised his performance despite his decent return of nine goals, a feat which has not been achieved by any other striker at K'Ogalo this season.

Im fed up with the situation Im in. The club owes me a lot of money and if they dont pay me, Im going to Uganda after our last game and won't come back again. They should just give my release letter when the season is done, he added.

The striker said he is a foreigner and should not be subjected to such suffering.

It is a huge amount of money and I know they cant pay it all. Im frustrated in a foreign land. I'm waiting for the league to end so that I can go back home and look for another option, he revealed.

The dreadlocked striker was blasted by fans last weekend for missing numerous chances in the league match against Bidco United.

*End of Gor Mahia striker plots way out*

## Denmark-based Ongwae's arrival uplifts Morans

*JOSEPH KANYI / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Kenya Morans camp is nearly full after Denmark-based guard Tylor Ongwae arrived on Sunday, while Derrick Ogech and Albert Onyango, both from the USA, jetted in a week ago in readiness for the mens AfroBasket Championship in Rwanda.

Rwanda-based Tom Bush Wamukota joined the team last Sunday after participating in the Basketball Africa League in Kigali. US-based Joel Awich and Desmond Blacio are expected in camp Wednesday.

Ongwae played for a few minutes during Morans friendly match against Kenyan champions Ulinzi Warriors in which the team won 75-72 at Nyayo Indoor Gymnasium Tuesday evening.

Assistant coach Sadat Gaya said that that game exposed areas of improvement that need to be adjusted before the national team leaves for Kigali.

This game is not about scoring but how the team is playing, he said. Morans will miss the services of Australia-based small forward Preston Bungei.

The American-born player, 26, asked to be excused from the team because he is seeking Australian residency and so he is required to stay in that country continuously for six months.

Bungei is not coming. He is seeking Australian residency. He has just done three months and he needs to have lived there for six months to be cleared. If he comes to Kenya now he will have to go back to square one in his application for residency, Kenya Basketball Federation Secretary General Ambrose Kisoi told Nation Sport.

Bungei, who turned out for Danish top-tier side Randers Cimbria last season, was part of the Morans squad that stunned heavyweights Angola 74-73 in Group B in the second and final qualifier in February.

Kenya will be returning to the continental championship for the first time in 28 years since the country hosted the event in 1993.

The team, coached by Australian Liz Mills, is expected to play three warm-up matches.

Morans are expected to face Senegal in a friendly match at Kigali Indoor Arena in Rwanda on Sunday, just two days before the continental event.

Morans are drawn in Group C together with 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games participants Nigeria, the rising Mali and two-time continental champions Ivory Coast.

On the other hand, Senegal will be battling Fiba AfroBasket 2007 runners-up Cameroon, the Silverbacks of Uganda and the showpieces newest entrants South Sudan.

*End of Denmark-based Ongwae's arrival uplifts Morans*



## Morans down Ulinzi Warriors in Nyayo friendly

*JOSEPH KANYI / Monday, August 16, 2021*

Kenya Morans posted a narrow 75-72 win in their first friendly match against Ulinzi Warriors on Monday at the Nyayo National Stadium gymnasium.

The game started at a low pace with the Morans opening a double digit lead in the first 10 minutes.

However, the brave Warriors stepped up their game by the end of the quarter to trail 17-12 at the buzzer.

In the second quarter, Morans paced up the game after assistant head coach Sadat Gaya did a rotation of the players including forward Fidel Okoth and centre Tom Wamukota pushing the lead to 19-18.

The national team maintained their dominance over Ulinzi in the third quarter widening the lead by seven points to 17-10.

Determined to stop their opponents scoring rhythm, the premier league champions scaled up their offensive tactics in the last quarter.

Gaya said that that game revealed areas of improvement that need to be adjusted before the national team leave for Kigali for the Afrobasket championship.

."This game is not about the score, but how the players are playing," he said.

The national team is scheduled to face Uganda and Senegal in friendly matches at Kigali arena before the championship tips off.

*End of Morans down Ulinzi Warriors in Nyayo friendly*

## Why you should try Co-op Banks Pay-By-Link system

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

By Evans Ongwae

Kenyans are an enterprising lot. Whenever they see an opportunity, they seize it. Hence the prevalence of micro and small enterprises in the country.

Some of these budding enterprises operate from unlikely places. It could be a tiny shop, a cramped garage, a small office with a miniature table and a laptop or a desktop. But they deliver goods and services, some even impressing customers with the incredible quality of work.

Naturally, they must be paid for the goods and services they deliver. How will they receive their payments? As hard cash or as virtual deductions?

In this digital era, e-commerce is taking root faster than ever before. And the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic is deepening the exchange of goods and services, as well as payments, through online platforms. This is the new reality as more people and enterprises avoid handling physical money and opt for contactless payments.

Consequently, e-commerce is expanding, giving rise to online merchants who conduct business via social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and various other online market places.

Some of these merchants might be missing out on customers who prefer to pay remotely via card. Some merchants do not have a physical location that a customer can visit and pay via a point of sale (POS) terminal. Moreover, some customers prefer goods to be delivered to them at home. They also want the option of paying remotely via card.

Enhanced e-commerce solution

The Co-operative Bank, a major provider of payments solutions, understands this challenge that merchants and customers face. The bank has therefore enhanced its e-commerce solution, making it possible for business owners without a website or an app to receive payment via card.

How does this solution, named Pay-By-Link, work?

Once the customer and the merchant agree on the pricing, the merchant sends the payment link to the customers email address. The customer will click on the link, which will direct them to a portal where they will insert their card details and the amount they are to pay. Once the payment goes through, the merchant will receive a payment confirmation via email and SMS. The customer will also receive a notification via SMS in the event they have subscribed to SMS alert with their card provider.

What are the advantages of the Pay-By-Link solution?

The merchant does not incur any cost to obtain the solution. It is FREE to get onboarded. The solution is 3D secure, with two-factor authentication for all card payments. In the event a customer makes a wrong payment, the merchant can reverse it without involving the bank. The customer cannot reverse a payment. This reduces the risks of merchants losing money through dubious characters. Payment reconciliation is easy for the merchant since they can track transactions and view them from a single dashboard.

Co-operative Bank offers its customers several other contactless solutions as follows:

E-commerce solution: This enables businesses to receive card payment through their websites or app. POS solution: Merchants don't need to handle cash. The customers can pay for their goods and services via card at a Co-op Bank POS terminal. M-Pesa Paybill 400200: Customers can pay directly into the merchants Co-op Bank account via M-Pesa Paybill number 400200. M-Pesa Paybill 400222: With Co-op Banks Paybill 400222, reconciling of payments done via M-Pesa into your account is easy. The statements include the customers name, student number or house number and their phone number. This solution is ideal for school, merchants that receive bulk payments, and landlords/landladies. And now the Pay-By-Link solution that enables business owners without a website or an app to also receive payment via card.

To get the Pay-By-Link solution, email [email protected]. For more information, visit <https://campaign.co-opbank.co.ke/ecommerce/>.

[email protected]

*End of Why you should try Co-op Banks Pay-By-Link system*

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

While the lockdowns and border closures associated with the Covid-19 pandemic halted the importation of food items, the period also served to reintroduce consumers to healthy traditional African foods. This is according to Prof Ruth Oniango, the founder of the non-profit Rural Outreach Africa, who observed an increase in the demand for such items as arrow roots, sweet potatoes and cassava during the lockdown.

We went back to our own foods. People were looking around for their traditional foods, which were even making their way into supermarkets, said Professor Oniango during a Farmers Forum on resilience in food systems, organised by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) on August 12, 2021.

Prof Oniango, however, expressed the concern that the gains for Africa's food and agricultural systems were short-lived because markets resorted to the popular exotic food once the lockdowns were lifted.

The traditional African foods that Prof Onyango advocates for are important for both nutritional and biodiversity benefits. A project on resilience by AGRA found that training farmers to increase the production of marketable traditional African vegetables (TAVs) like Managu (black nightshade), Terere (amaranth), and Mrenda (jute mallow) helped reduce the loss of biodiversity in Kakamega Forest.

The project was initiated after research showed that communities neighbouring the forest were gradually seeking new lands for cultivation after their old ones were drained off the nutrients required to sustain the production of regional staples, maize and beans.

In addition, other farmers, unable to make meaningful harvests from their lands, started raiding the forest for herbs, like the popular local aphrodisiac, Mukhombero, firewood and timber, for sale in markets, to supplement their dwindling agricultural incomes.

However, a reduction in the forest's destruction was reported after farmers in the area were taught how to plan and maintain their cultivation of TAVs in line with market demand, for increased incomes.

So far, the project has been a success with targeted farmer incomes reporting a 17 percent increase since 2017.

Additionally, as a result of the improved financial bearing for the farming communities, there is evidence of agroecological landscapes being restored, said John Macharia, AGRA's lead programme officer for Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda.

Evelyn Imasia is one such beneficiary, whose life has been transformed after she doubled her production of TAVs. Today, Imasia can adequately cater for her family's needs through her income from TAV sales, which has increased to Ksh50,000 in three growing seasons, up from Ksh7,500 over a similar period previously. I can now comfortably feed and educate my children from my vegetable sales, Imasia testified.

The promotion of TAVs in Western Kenya is just one of the many strategies that can be used to promote resilience in Kenya's agricultural and food systems. Others include interventions that increase the nutritional output of depleted soils, irrigation, and the development of steadfast market linkages.

For market development, Prof Joshua Oendo, an associate professor of agriculture at Egerton University, said the Kenyan government needs to review its agricultural policies to favour local smallholder producers. Citing the grains market, Prof Oendo said the high costs of production accrued from taxes on agricultural inputs, make Kenyan farmers unable to compete with their peers in Uganda and Tanzania, who produce at lower costs.

You can see a lot of grains getting into Kenya from Tanzania and Uganda, which shows you that those two countries have policies that make production cost-effective, therefore giving them a comparative advantage over Kenya, he explained.

Prof Ogembo was one of the panellists at the Farmers Forum, which according to AGRA, was designed to give agricultural stakeholders a chance to contribute ideas for quickening the pace to Africa's agricultural transformation.

The Forum served to address farmers' priorities for increasing agricultural output and strategies for transforming their agricultural work into sustainable businesses that will eradicate poverty from the continent.

*End of Popularising traditional vegetables in Kenya: Experts say they are key to building agricultural and food systems*

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

The University of Global Health Equity (UGHE), a global health sciences university based in Rwanda, has formed an African Advisory Board, co-chaired by Her Excellency Mrs Jeannette Kagame, First Lady of the Republic of Rwanda, and Professor Senait Fisseha, the Director of Global Programmes at Buffett Foundation.

The Advisory Board will be instrumental to UGHE's ambitious mission: Building a robust healthcare workforce in Africa to provide equitable, quality health services to all, and supporting the continent's path to self-reliance in health by advancing its human resource potential.

Additional to providing guidance on the institution's strategic development and implementation, the Advisory Board will support UGHE's efforts to expand its academic programmes in line with the needs of Africa.

Photo credit: UGHE

Spearheaded by African leadership and leveraging African expertise

The Advisory Board will bring together eminent African leaders and global health champions from diverse fields, sectors, genders and geographies; people whose respective careers have helped advance both human and socio-economic development on the continent. The Advisory Board will also invite selected global leaders to share their knowledge and expertise gained from their work.

Responding to the urgent needs of African health systems

Many African populations face significant geographic and financial barriers to accessing basic health care. The delivery of health services is compromised by a scarcity of facilities, modern equipment, and skilled professionals. The Covid-19 pandemic has especially highlighted the need for increased research and manufacturing capacity in Africa to bolster the development of life-saving drugs, equipment, and vaccines. To achieve this, the training of more skilled professionals is needed.

Supporting UGHE's mission towards equitable health care

By educating generations of global health leaders to provide equitable, quality health services, UGHE aims to improve healthcare delivery in Africa and beyond and provide lessons that can be implemented worldwide.

To provide innovative solutions to health's pressing challenges, students are equipped with the skills to carry out clinical and global health research, as well as the expertise and know-how to build, strengthen and manage resilient healthcare systems prepared to respond to emerging health threats like Covid-19.

Rwanda's First Lady, H.E Mrs Jeannette Kagame, says: To afford all human beings access to the quality health services and care they need, when they need them, is to afford them dignity and control over their own lives. To achieve this, however, we need more than strong policies, laws and mechanisms in the health sector. We need the right people in the right places, making the right decisions at the right time, to guarantee every individual's right to health.

Prof Senait Fisseha, Director of Global Programmes at Buffett Foundation and Co-Chair of the African Advisory Board of UGHE, adds: To begin to advance the human resource potential and self-reliance in African health systems, we need global health institutions like UGHE that train clinicians, passionate and compassionate global health leaders, innovative researchers, scientists and implementers, health entrepreneurs, and managers on the continent.

He continues: Our UGHE's new African Advisory Board of prominent leaders and experts will support our institute in driving a human-centred resource development agenda. We are proud to unite their visions, actions, exhibited competency and commitment to help move this health equity forward.

About UGHE

UGHE focuses on quality, innovation and science-based learning, and requires that students study from and live within the communities facing the aforementioned constraints to healthcare access.

By situating the university in the rural North of Rwanda, it provides proximate education that exposes students to the challenges that they will be tasked to address.

Through a community-based learning approach that leverages community members as teachers, students are equipped with a deep understanding of the needs of the vulnerable, positioning them to adequately address them in their future professional life.

*Unknown Author / UnKnown Date*

By applying these principles, UGHE breaks down traditional boundaries between academic disciplines, fostering inter-professional teaching and learning.

For more information, email [email protected], call +250-791590286 or visit [www.ughe.org](http://www.ughe.org)

*End of UGHE launches African Advisory Board to help chart continent's path to self-reliance in health*

## Money Talks: Land as a financial investment

*Bett Florence-Kinyatti / Tuesday, August 17, 2021*

Land in Kenya has always been an emotional and political asset.

Understandably so. It became emotional when the white man landed on our shores in the 18th century and took it from us. Our people were driven away from their homes, and blood was shed to claim the land back.

I suppose that we still cry freedom to this day because we are somehow still fighting that war. That we must all own land.

There is also the political talk of Who owns Kenya?

This is taken in the literal sense in that the chaps who own Kenya, the ones who swing the pendulum of our political landscape, hold expansive swathes of land. They own the country because they own the land within its border.

Step away from this thinking

As modern-day investors, we need to step away from this archaic emotional thinking and approach the investment of land with as much pragmatism as we can.

Land is a financial asset.

Hear this from me, as well your investment portfolio is not incomplete because you have not bought land. Holding the title deed is not the quintessential mark of an intelligent investor.

You put your money in the investment products you understand, in what satisfies your risk appetite and in what you can afford to finance. Everything else outside of that is noise you can shut your ears to.

Right.

If you are looking to buy land in Kenya as a financial investment, buy it for one of these four reasons:

1. You plan to build a home and settle there

Before 2020, most employed folks were buying land in the outskirts of the city and out of town to build their retirement homes.

A place to settle during their sunset years. They were waiting to reach 65 before they packed whatever was left of their lives into the back of a truck and moved.

All of that changed in 2020. COVID-19 made it the new normal (ha!) for just about everyone to work remotely and not just from home, you can pretty much work from anywhere you have a laptop and a reliable Internet connection.

Working remotely liberated the working class and cracked open the choices because the decision of where we chose to live is no longer informed by how convenient it is from our places of work.

Now we can live in the outskirts of the city and out of town while still on the payroll of employers who are based in the town. I want to say its a win-win, but I wont. Although it truly is, ha-ha.

Live in Syokimau and work for an employer in Westlands. Live in Juja while working for someone in Karen. In Naivasha for a boss in the CBD.

And so, buy land if you plan to become a homeowner now or sometime in the foreseeable future.

2. You are holding on to it for speculative purposes

Land as an asset appreciates over time (a car is an asset, for example, that depreciates its value goes down as you use it/over the years).

The value of land goes up over the years, no matter if you are using it or not. The market determines this value.

Other developmental factors access roads, availability of electricity and water, other residential properties, a budding commercial hub, et cetera increase the value even more.

You could appreciate your land in your books of accounts but engage a professional valuer every five to seven years to assess it for its market value.

The difference between the purchase price and this market value is the gain.

Say you bought a quarter acre in Kitengela in 2002 for Sh180,000. In 2021, a professional valuer values it at Sh900,000. This difference is the gain, thats Sh720,000.

If you sell the land to somebody else, this Sh720,000 will be your profit on the investment.

## Money Talks: Land as a financial investment

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Invest in land and hold on to it, being aware that its market value will go up, and you will sell it at some point in the future to make a profit.

3. You intend to lease it out

You can buy land and lease it out at a fee for investors to set up and run their projects.

Let me give you an example. There are some ancestral landowners in a budding neighbourhood, such as Ruaka, who hold acres of land.

These landowners don't want to sell it, but they don't have the money to develop it. So what do they do? They enter a contract with folk who have money.

The contract says that they will lease the land out to you for 10 years, you engage in whatever investment project you want to engage in.

You will only pay a leasing fee (annually, bi-annually or quarterly), and after 10 years, the leasing contract will lapse, and you will give me back the land as I had given it to you.

Leasing out land is another long-term option for getting a return on your land investment.

4. You plan to put up investment projects

Instead of buying land and leasing it out for other investors to run projects, you can set up the investment projects yourself and make some money.

You can build and let out rentals (residential or commercial rentals). Or put up a greenhouse for farming.

Maybe a farm itself. Or a hotel and restaurant. A school, perhaps.

Probably set up grounds for hire; for weddings, photoshoots and other events. Or a playground with bouncy castles, the works. Maybe even a recreational park.

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Do you have questions for the writer? Email to [email protected]

*End of Money Talks: Land as a financial investment*