

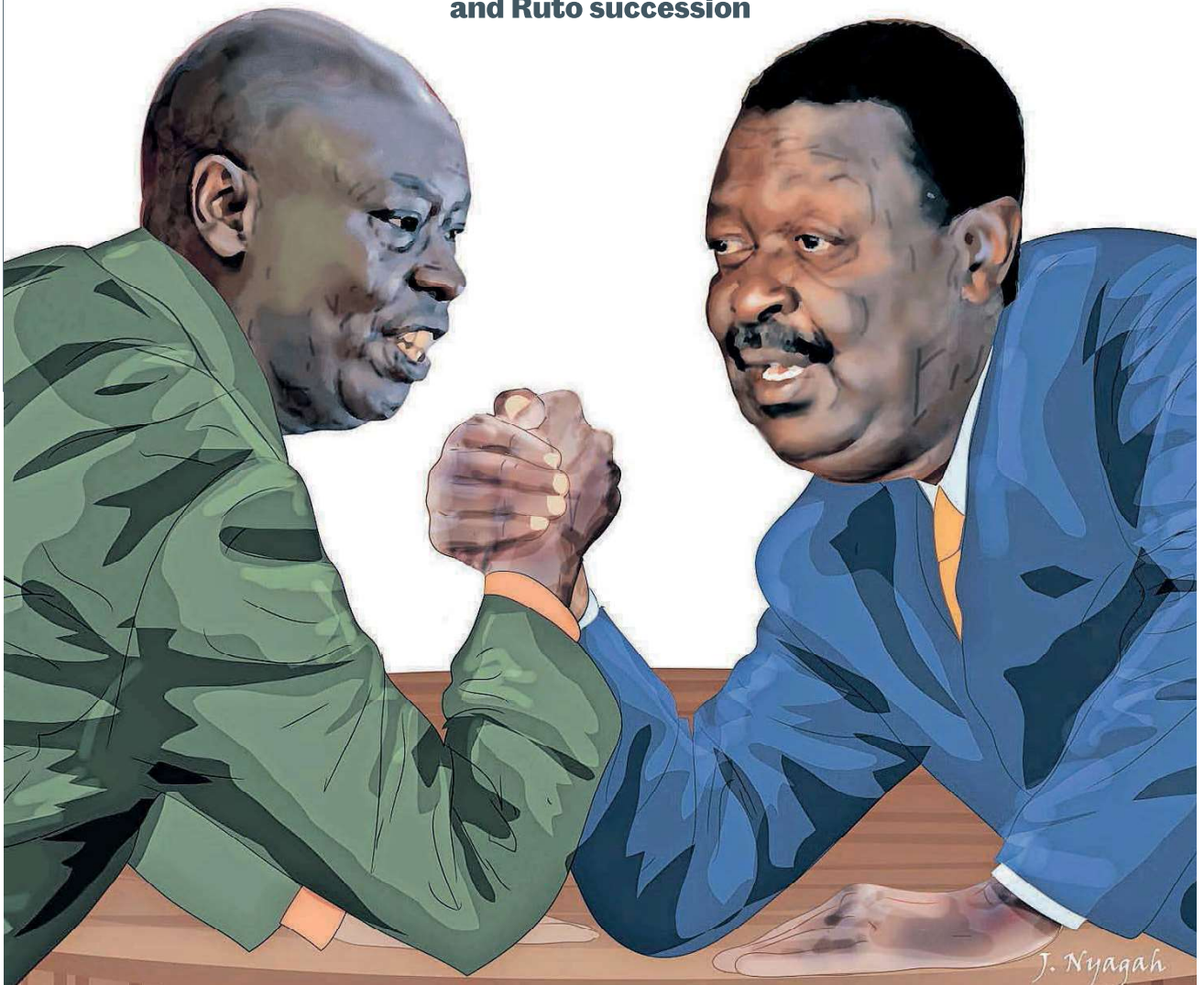
THE Weekly Review

For The Thinking Person

ISSUE NO. 19 | January 8, 2023 FREE WITH SUNDAY NATION

THE SILENT CLASH

The recent war of words between Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja and Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua is just a Trojan horse in simmering early campaigns for the 2027 polls and Ruto succession



The Nation ePaper NOW Available on the PlayStore anywhere, anytime.

Follow the link to subscribe

➤ epaper.nation.africa.

Scan to
Download



Or download from Google playstore



For customer support Tel: 0790 111 111
Email: epaper@ke.nationmedia.com

NATION 
→ ePaper

letter from the editor

Inside

6 KENYA'S DICEY OUTLOOK AT 60: Even as the IMF predicts that East Africa will record the fastest growth on the continent, Kenya is still faced with a myriad of challenges as it approaches its 60th anniversary.

9 SAKAJA SHOULD NOT BE COWED: Nairobi County boss has come under heavy criticism for issuing orders that have ruffled feathers in the Mt Kenya region, but he must stand firm and make it clear that he is answerable only to the people of Nairobi.

11 LIBYA PREMIER'S BIG GAMBLE: Prime minister Ddeibah bets on cooperation with the US as he hands over suspect of Lockerbie bombing.



13 BIBI SHIFTS TO THE FAR RIGHT: Return of Netanyahu at the helm of Israel's most right-wing government in history raised hackles all the way to the UN General Assembly and the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Early campaigns, political interests must not take precedence over public service

Endless politicking has been a major hindrance to Kenya's economic take-off.

Besides the political tensions – and sometimes violence – experienced before, during and after every General Election, the country is invariably thrown into campaign mode immediately the election results are out.

This has had a deleterious effect on economic growth.

In 2002, Kenyans were rated as the most optimistic people on earth after the Rainbow Coalition government headed by President Mwai Kibaki romped into office.

The goodwill the country enjoyed globally was, however, squandered as a fifth coalition emerged around the Presidency, sparking the hostilities that precipitated the 2007 post-election violence.

After the ill-fated 2007 elections, the country was in for another roller-coaster ride that put asunder the grand coalition government of Mr Kibaki and ODM leader Raila Odinga.

Things improved somewhat after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution, which ushered in the Supreme Court as a reliable arbiter of the falling-out that often follows every election. The apex court has, however, not managed to end these post-election hiccups.

Following the 2017 presidential election, for instance, the opposition boycotted a repeat exercise ordered by the Supreme Court and went ahead to declare its leader “the people's president”, in an escalation of political instability that took a heavy toll on the country's economy.

At the heart of this endless election tragedy is the fact that top government officials spend



Henry Munene

At the heart of this endless campaign tragedy is the fact that top government officials spend a lot of time on the campaign trail, often diverting public and official focus from the country's development agenda.

a lot of time on the campaign trail, often diverting public and official focus from the country's development agenda. This risk is even higher now, when, in a departure from the recent tradition of hiring technocrats for Cabinet dockets, politicians dominate the top slots in government. They obviously would want to use their current offices as stepping stones to high elective positions come the next elections.

This is exactly what seems to be happening in the Kenya Kwanza government, where the bigwigs, under the guise of rallying their people behind the Hustler movement, spend precious time strategising for higher offices and other totems of power and self-aggrandisement.

A case in point is the war of words between allies of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and those of Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja. A casual glance may pass the tiff off as a battle for the control of city business affairs.

But keen observers argue in this edition that the seemingly ethnic squabbles between Mt Kenya and Western Kenya leaders are telltale signs that early campaigns for the 2007 elections and 2032 Ruto succession may have begun in earnest.

The danger therein is as plain as a pikestaff.

In warning Sakaja to go slow on what are essentially laudable efforts to decongest the city, DP Gachagua, who is second-in-command in the Kenya Kwanza government, runs the risk of being accused of derailing a key government agenda, presumably in a bid to be seen to be championing the interests of the populous and therefore vote-rich Mt Kenya region ahead of the 2027 General Election.

If allowed to continue, this trend has the potential to sow seeds of political discord and derail President Ruto's ambitious development agenda.

To salvage the situation, the President, who this weekend had a working retreat with top government officials, must whip his Cabinet into line.

He must tell them in no uncertain terms that delivery of services must not be sacrificed at the altar of regional and personal interests.

hmunene@ke.nationmedia.com

the telescope

■ App to be investigated for illegal operations



Taiwan wary of TikTok security issues

TikTok's Chinese owner denied on Monday setting up a subsidiary company in Taiwan after the island's authorities said they were investigating the social media app for running "illegal operations".

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), Taiwan's top China policy-making body, said the cabinet had requested a multi-agency investigation during a meeting on security issues posed by TikTok earlier this month.

The case was also forwarded to prosecutors for investigation after a local company allegedly engaged in business activities in Taiwan on behalf of ByteDance, TikTok's Chinese parent firm, MAC said without elaborating.

Chinese internet and social media platforms are banned from operat-

ing businesses in Taiwan under local laws.

ByteDance said on Monday it had no presence in Taiwan.

"The recent reports suggesting ByteDance has set up a subsidiary in Taiwan are incorrect," a spokesperson told AFP.

"The company has not established any legal entities in Taiwan." TikTok is available in Taiwan but is not especially popular.

The Taiwanese newspaper Liberty Times reported on Monday that the subsidiary under investigation was a company set up in 2018 that changed its name to ByteDance Taiwan Ltd Co in November.

Taiwan has long warned that it is on the receiving end of huge Chinese disinformation and espionage campaigns.

■ He is the latest high-priced sporting jewel

Saudis scramble to buy Ronaldo tees

Only hours after Cristiano Ronaldo penned a two-year contract with Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr, crowds flocked to a football kit store in Riyadh to buy the five-time Ballon d'Or winner's new club jersey.

Abdulmohsen al-Ayyban, 41, and his nine-year-old son, Nayef, were among those queuing at Al Nassr club's official kit store on Saturday where clerks were busy pressing Ronaldo's name onto t-shirts.

"We are witnessing a historic moment," al-Ayyban told AFP of the deal, which he believes "will elevate the Saudi football league".

Ronaldo on Friday signed for Al Nassr until June 2025 in a deal believed to be worth more than 200 million euros.

A wide smile stretched across Nayef's face as he proudly held his new jersey aloft.

For the young Saudi, a dream has come true.

"I have always wanted Al Nassr to acquire the best player in the world," he said. "I will make sure to watch all his games at the stadium."

Ronaldo, 37, is expected to appear before fans next Thursday, an official from the Al Nassr club told AFP.

For Saudi Arabia, Ronaldo is the latest high-priced sporting jewel acquired to add lustre to their international image.

At home, the deal further fuelled national fervour that spiked after the kingdom defeated eventual winners Argentina in the early stages of the 2022 World Cup, a victory hailed as one of greatest shocks in the tournament's history.

An unprecedented rush at the Al Nassr kit store started as soon as reports of the deal were leaked to the local press on Friday night — hours before the official announcement.

Abdulqader, the store manager said queues snaked all the way outside the shop and have only grown since.

T-shirt stocks have nearly emptied, pushing customers to bring in their own to have the player's name printed on them — a process that will take up to two days.



Cristiano Ronaldo poses with Al Nassr's No 7 jersey in Madrid on December 30, 2022 upon signing for the club.

■ Committee sittings to resume this week

Lawmakers troop back after recess



MPs are set to resume committee sittings in Parliament this week after more than a month's break occasioned by the long December recess.

Both Houses — the National Assembly and the Senate — ad-

joined on December 2, 2022 and will resume normal plenary sittings on February 14, 2023, when the second session of Parliament restarts.

Committee meetings, which that were suspended on December 19, 2022 for the National Assembly and December 9 for the Senate will be back a month earlier than the plenaries. The committees are a vital tool in the legislate process and execution of governance.

■ Local chiefs will also be armed

Return of reservists to fight banditry



The government will this week begin reinstating national police reservists (NPR) who were withdrawn by the previous regime from 14 banditry-prone areas of the country. Interior and Coordination of Government Cabinet Secretary Ki-

thure Kindiki made the announcement last week following the killing of two people by armed bandits in Marakwet East sub-County.

The CS termed the withdrawal of the NPR as unfortunate as it left residents of the areas vulnerable of banditry attacks, causing them to live in fear.

Besides reservists, there are also plans to arm local chiefs and provide them with five armed policemen each to help them maintain security in those areas.

kenya lens

■ JOSTLING FOR POWER

SILENT BATTLE OF THE TITANS

Simmering hostilities between Western and Mt Kenya politicians point to a supremacy war

• BY COLLINS OMULO

The ongoing war of words between political leaders from Western and Mt Kenya regions continues to expose a silent political supremacy battle between Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi.

The public points to a major political cold war between the two de facto regional kingpins, both of whom harbour thinly veiled ambitions of leading the country in the coming years.

What started with the DP reading the riot act to Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja over his plans to relocate matatus from the city centre has now snowballed into a nasty political duel between leaders from the two regions.

The brewing ethnic contest and political chest-thumping is at the heart of a fierce battle for President Ruto's attention with 2027 elections in mind.

The row between the DP and the governor goes well beyond control of city affairs.

Gachagua is the second-in-command and the heir-apparent in the Ruto administration, while Amani National Congress (ANC) leader Mudavadi has made it clear that he has only deferred his presidential dream for the time being.

Political analyst Javas Bigambo opines that Gachagua is keen on filling the political leadership vacuum left in the Mt Kenya region with the exit of former President Uhuru Kenyatta from active politics.

This, he explains, is why the former Mathira MP wants to be seen as championing the economic and political interests of the region.

According to Bigambo, Gachagua's clash with Sakaja is part of a scheme to demonstrate that the DP has the interests of business moguls from the region at heart.

This, the analyst adds, is a clever strategy to win over even those who backed the Kenyatta-Raila Odinga alliance in the lead-up to the August 9 General Election.

"It is not Sakaja who is DP Gacha-



Musalia Mudavadi

gua's bull's eye; it is his personal entrenchment and the interests that come with that," said Mr Bigambo.

Secondly, the analyst explained, the DP wants to leave President Ruto in no doubt that he is the person to go to for Kikuyu support.

In October last year, President Ruto declared himself the political supremo of the Mt Kenya region.

"I am welcoming them to the mountain, but as they come, let them know that *mlima ina wenyeji* (Mt Kenya has its owners). When they were away, I made several tours of the region, we built roads and initiated other development projects," said Ruto, speaking at Nyahururu DEB Primary School in Laikipia County.

Gachagua is now thought to be casting himself as indispensable as far as influence in the region is concerned.

"Governor Sakaja is just a red herring. The issue is that Ruto went to Central before he got Gachagua and so in 2027, will Ruto continue doing it the way he did it with peripheral support of his DP or will he consider him the inevitable running-mate because he would have strongly entrenched himself as the Central Kenya political supremo?" Bigambo said.

By virtue of his office, the DP is



Johnson Sakaja

the senior-most politician from the Mt Kenya region and has been traversing the region trying to bring together all elected leaders.

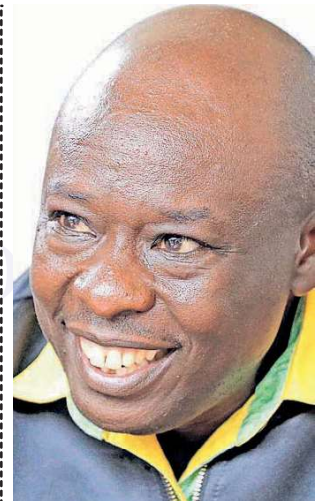
He has been reaching out to Azimio-allied leaders from the region to join his camp, vowing to ensure there are no political divisions between Mt Kenya East and West.

"We will unite our region, Mount Kenya, so that we speak in one voice," he said.

Gachagua also reached out to the Mount Kenya Foundation, a club of tycoons from Central Kenya who reportedly bankrolled Azimio leader Raila Odinga ahead of the August 9 elections, to rally behind the Kenya Kwanza administration.

In an interview with NTV last September, Gachagua said: "What is kingpin all about? What I know is that I am the Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya and I am the senior-most leader from the region. So, the way people perceive me, I leave it to them, but what I also know is that I talk to the people of Mount Kenya in their own language and they listen to me."

He has also been at the forefront of efforts to broker a political truce between Meru MCAs and their beleaguered governor, Kawira Mwan-gaza, in what many see as a strategy to stamp his authority in that



Rigathi Gachagua

part of the country.

On the other hand, Mudavadi has been keen on consolidating his Western backyard behind him. To that end, the former vice-president has recently held several meetings with elected leaders from the region, which have been interpreted as part of efforts to rally the region behind him ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Sirisia MP John Waluke, a Jubilee lawmaker who doubles up as chairman of Western Kenya Members of Parliament Caucus, said the caucus was keen on restoring Luhya unity, which has been elusive since Independence.

Central Organisation of Trade Union boss Francis Atwoli has also been warming up to the idea of having leaders coalesce around Mudavadi, who is regarded as the senior-most leader from the Western region and who, besides having served as the vice-president and held several ministerial positions, also vied for the presidency in 2013.

In 2017, Mudavadi endorsed Rail Odinga for the top seat on the defunct National Super Alliance (Nasa) ticket while in 2022, he shelved his presidential ambitions and cast his lot with Ruto.

Sakaja backed Mudavadi's pres-

Continued on Page 6.

kenya lens

Simmering tensions

Continued from Page 5

idential bid in the lead-up to the August 9, 2022 elections, before ANC joined hands with UDA.

A bullish Gachagua recently told the city governor that he instructed members of his community to vote for him. He further asked Sakaja to be consulting on matters that could negatively impact businesses in the city.

The silent rift between the DP and the Chief Cabinet Secretary has sucked in leaders from Mt Kenya and Western regions.

"With their new offices, their ambitions have been reignited because Rigathi perceives that he is not far from being president, while Musalia sees that he has a chance of becoming president perhaps in 2027 or 2032. They will want to use their positions to re-brand themselves," Prof Masibo Lumala of Moi University says.

The DP's caution to Sakaja has been met with condemnation by leaders from Western Kenya.

Bumula MP Jack Wamboka threatened to have Gachagua kicked out once MPs resume sittings on February 13: "I have collected the requisite signatures and immediately we resume next month, I will give notice of the impeachment motion. We cannot have a leader who is disenfranchising all Kenyans."

"Musalia is behaving better than the DP" opined Wamboka. "Every time Gachagua opens his mouth, you wonder whether he is the Deputy President [of Kenya] or he is the Deputy President of the Kikuyu republic. He is becoming a very big embarrassment to this country," the lawmaker said.

Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa weighed in: "DP Gachagua must respect the Constitution. Governor Sakaja is in charge of Nairobi County. Let him do his work without interference."

The impeachment threats stirred the political hornet's nest in the Mt Kenya region.

"If they cannot unite their region to vote as a bloc, how will they marshal support to impeach the Deputy President?" wondered Mathira MP Eric Wamumbi. "Yes, the DP is a national leader, but he also has a place where he comes from. As the Deputy President, he is the leader of the Kikuyu com-

munity. Therefore, when he feels that our people are threatened, he has to speak about it just the way Mudavadi can speak on the behalf of Western people."

Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga dared Mr Wamboka to table the censure motion, saying "we are more than ready".

For his part, Sakaja maintained that he would not back down on his reform agenda, saying he had President Ruto's backing.

"...I heard someone saying that ...' oohh Sakaja, hii Nairobi ilikuwa hivyo kabla uzaliwe, but that is why I am Governor...I cannot leave it to be how it was before I was born," Mr Sakaja said.

"Change is difficult but inevitable... we must change our city...to be that shining jewel on the African Continent," he added.

The silent war between DP Gachagua and Mr Mudavadi began immediately ANC teamed up with UDA and Ford-Kenya to form Kenya Kwanza Alliance.

"As far as I am concerned, Ruto is the presidential candidate, and the running mate will come from the Mountain at an appropriate time. Mr Mudavadi's position is subject to discussion. He will not be the running mate and that I can confirm," said Mr Gachagua in February 2022.

"When they (ANC and Ford-Kenya) came on board, we had had many discussions, and we were forthright with them because we are honest people," he added.

To defuse political tension, President Ruto created the office of the prime cabinet secretary, though some of the responsibilities of the two offices seem to overlap, with political pundits saying that was a deliberate move by the Head of State to keep the two "busy".

Both Mr Mudavadi and Mr Gachagua have been representing the President at various functions.

Kimilili MP Didmus Barasa said those saying Mr Mudavadi is eyeing DP Gachagua's position in 2027 are "reading too much" into the political ties between the two.

"The narrative of a cold war between the two is being perpetuated by Azimio orphans who want to remain relevant," said the MP.

comulo@ke.nationmedia.com

■ DIAMOND JUBILEE

Focus will be on the economy in 2023

KENYA'S DICEY OUTLOOK AT 60



● By KWENDO OPANGA

Kenya will be 60 years old this year. And while its birthday will come at the tail end of 2023, its leadership, in particular those who with every election cycle call for change, and the populace in general, may want to welcome this as a year of reflection on where the country stands since founding President Jomo Kenyatta ushered us into Independence.

Unsurprisingly, the economy may dominate the politics in 2023. Last week, the IMF revised its forecast of last July, by which it projected the global economy to grow by 2.9 per cent, downwards to 2.7 per cent.

Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva painted a gloomy picture of the global economy in which the USA, European Union and China could drag a third of the world into a recession.

Observers of the African economy, as did the rest of the world, fol-

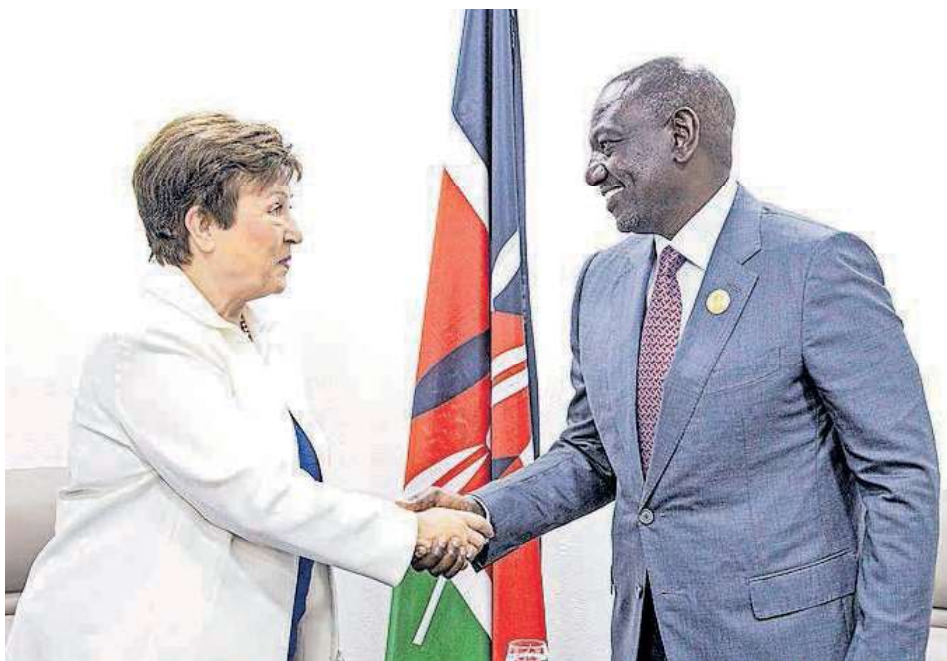
lowed the conversation with apprehension. The African Development Bank in November predicted that East Africa's economies will rebound as the world puts the Covid-19 pandemic in the rear-view mirror; countries open up, the global supply chain returns to normal and tourism recovers.

At 4.7 per cent, the bank says, East Africa will be the continent's fastest growing region. And the Economist Intelligence Unit reported that, as Kenya recovered from the uncertainties of the August General Election, it was expected to be one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, posting a real GDP growth in the region of 5 per cent.

With the world sliding into a recession, Nairobi, in particular, will be keeping a close watch on the conflicts in Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Escalation of either or both would jeopardise the region's hopes of economic recovery.

Nairobi has taken charge of the

kenya lens



President William Ruto meets with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of COP27 in Sharma El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. PHOTO/PC5

peace-seeking effort in the DRC on both diplomatic and military fronts. Military units from Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan have moved into the DRC while talks are held in the Kenyan capital, with immediate former President Uhuru Kenyatta, who started the Nairobi process, in the driver's seat. He has a similar role in the Ethiopian imbroglio.

Kenya will also keep a wary eye on the weather chiefly because some 31 of its 47 counties have been hit by drought and famine, leaving millions of citizens starving and thousands of their livestock dead. Rains have failed for four successive seasons and further failure will put paid to hopes of economic recovery.

President William Ruto will also keep in mind the fact that the World Bank in October reduced Kenya's growth projections from 5.5 per cent to 5 per cent, citing food insecurity and inflation as reasons for revision of its earlier prediction. It revised this again to 5.2 per cent in December. Already, the President had told Parliament to cut spending to help the government save money and spend it on keeping its campaign promises.

For a government which campaigned, and was elected, largely on a platform of economic and political empowerment of

the struggling masses or majority poor, or what have become known as hustler politics and bottom-up economics, a non-performing economy would spell political trouble. Ruto & Co will be watching inflation, which stands at 9.5 per cent, and food and fuel prices keenly.

The government has been keen to put to an end fears of political turbulence borne of post-poll uncertainties. These arise from disputed or inconclusive poll results and persistent rumours that President Ruto is a vengeful politician who could easily become a dictator. Failed presidential candidate Raila Odinga has helped fan these suspicions as he has hinted at leading street action against the government.

In the meantime, Odinga has made it clear that he intends to hold what he has called country-wide consultative fora with Kenyans on the state of the country to get their views before announcing the opposition's next steps. In an interview with *The Weekly Review*, Odinga's communications chief Dennis Onyango said mass action may likely follow these consultations.

Many observers expected that Odinga would retire after his fifth loss of a presidential ballot last August. But his emergence as a key player instead of former

Vice-President Kalonzo Musyoka, who supported his campaign, continues to confound friends and foes alike. It remains to be seen whether street action-shunning Musyoka will emerge from the older man's shadow and force him to retire or Odinga, as speculated, is preparing for a record sixth presidential poll bid.

However, it is evident that opposition to the government will be waged on two fronts, namely in Parliament, by the Minority, and on the streets, by Odinga & Co. The President is confident the former can be handled by the Majority, but worries that mass action could derail his agenda.

Street action, inflationary pressures, high cost of living or of basic commodities, and famine in more than 30 counties are a recipe for disaster in any jurisdiction in the world, especially because they could derail a struggling economy. And this will put into jeopardy Nairobi's search for regional peace which, incidentally, is driven by economic considerations.

In his first interview as Minister for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Dr Alfred Mutua told *The Weekly Review* that Kenya's diplomacy is anchored in the belief that peace in the DRC, with its proven vast mineral and potential agricultural and hydro electric power, for ex-

ample, would herald massive opportunities for the prosperity of the region and the continent.

Unsurprisingly, Ruto and Mutua ended their diplomatic year in Washington, where President Joe Biden hosted the US-Africa Leaders' Summit and pledged to give the continent \$55 billion over the next three years. But Mutua denied in his interview with *The Weekly Review* that Nairobi was reversing the Look East policy of President Mwai Kibaki and his successor, Uhuru.

He argued that Nairobi was taking Kenya to the world and not to the East (read China) or to the West. It may well be that it is Washington that is changing tune. *Africanews.com* quoted Florizelle Liser, Chief Executive Officer and President of the Washington-based charity, Corporate Council on Africa, thus:

"I think for the US we don't tend to take our private sector companies by the hand. You don't see an American president taking private sector companies anywhere in the world, whereas other countries, when they go, when (President Emmanuel) Macron goes, he takes French companies with him; they open up the doors for their businesses. I think for the US we are doing more of that now."

Macron may not have been on Biden's mind as he revived the Obama era summit because the more frequent visitor to Africa has not been from Paris, but from Beijing. And European leaders, including former UK Prime Minister David Cameron and Germany's Angela Merkel, famously led huge delegations of business people to Beijing.

Washington has joined the party because it has lagged behind Beijing, which has established and entrenched itself as a development partner for Africa — even though American diplomats, especially in Donald Trump's tenure, described its loans to African government's a death trap diplomacy. China, they said, aims to mire African countries in debt then confiscate their assets.

Kenya's debt, its repayment and effect on a struggling economy will be a feature of Kenya's politics in 2023 and, as Beijing and Washington lend, so will they, too, be a feature of Kenya's, the region's and, indeed Africa's economic and political landscapes.

kwendo58@gmail.com

opinion



■ **Lawmakers should stop abusing the ouster process**

Impeachment must be used as a last resort

The dust has not settled yet on the failed move by the Meru County Assembly to impeach Governor Kawira Mwangaza. Her August defeat of old warhorse Kiraitu Murungi sent shockwaves around Kenya last year. Now talk abounds of a plot to impeach Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, whose rise in national politics has been as meteoric as it has been controversial.

In 2014, just months after the general election of the previous year, MCAs in Makeni made it impossible for Governor Kivutha Kibwana to govern and then impeached the professor of law. Kibwana pitted the MCAs against the people. He asked President Kenyatta to dissolve the devolved unit. Long story short, Makeni wasted more than a year in sterile politicking.

And Kenyans will remember that in 2014, Mithika Linturi, then the MP for Igembe South and now Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture, introduced a motion in the National Assembly seeking the impeachment of then Cabinet Secretary for Devolution and now Governor for Kirinyaga, Anne Waiguru. Linturi absented himself from the House when he should have moved his own motion.

It is sad that the Meru MCAs had not done their homework. The 11-person Senate committee tasked to investigate the alleged failures of governance by Kawira found that none of the accusations against the Governor had been proven. But committee chairperson Senator Boni Khalwale, before the finding, made a telling statement from his desk.

“They don’t need you, but you need them.”



**KWENDO
OPANGA**

Khalwale was addressing Kawira directly as his committee finished its probe and retreated to write its report. “I don’t know what you will do,” he said, but, he concluded, “you must find a way of working with them.” The MCAs won, though they lost! They will still hunt, hound and haunt a popularly elected leader into toeing their line.

Kibwana, regarded by his peers as having succeeded as a governor, advised Kawira to work with MCAs. He knows what he is talking about. But Kawira must refuse to be led by the nose and cultivate a working relationship with the MCAs. She should also talk to Waiguru because she, too, was on the receiving end of a mass MCA offensive in her previous term.

How about MPs and Gachagua? MPs must not abuse the power of impeachment as did Linturi and as do MCAs. Moi was the last President to appoint and sack Kenya’s second-in-command at a whim. Per this constitution, the DP is elected and has a national constituency. Before taking on such a DP, plotters must prepare themselves and the land for the inevitable fault lines and tension.

The spat between Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja and Gachagua need not plunge Nairobi, let alone Kenya, into turmoil. Sakaja is right to take matatus out of the CBD. Gachagua is right to point out that he asked Agikuyu to vote for Sakaja. Mobilisation of tribes happened in the last general election as it has before. Both men are keen to consolidate their support bases.

The DP did not threaten to mobilise against Sakaja; he said he wants to meet him, but he appeared to order the governor of East Africa’s largest metropolis and business hub to stop taking on Kikuyu businesspeople. That is unacceptable. Businesspeople will not decide how business is run in Nairobi.

The county government will decide how business will be run in the city. When there are disputes between businesses and Sakaja & Co, there are private sector bodies, experienced technocrats, previous administrators and professionals to go into conference with City Hall and iron matters out. Impeachment must be used as a last recourse. Please tell MCAs and MPs that.

kwendo58@gmail.com

opinion

■ Nairobi is not a province of the Mt Kenya community but the face of Kenya

Sakaja should stand firm against ethnic blackmail



MACHARIA
GAIHO

More than just the capital city, the seat of government and the economic heartbeat of Kenya, Nairobi is also a microcosm of this country; a veritable melting pot of all ethnic groups, races, cultures, religious beliefs, nationalities and civilisations.

It is a regional and continental commercial and communications hub, and also the favoured base for multinational corporations, multilateral organisations and international development and non-governmental organisations operating within the greater eastern and central Africa region.

Nairobi is truly international, and its development must reflect that reality. Governor Johnson Sakaja was elected on the promise to transform the capital into the world-class metropolis it deserves to be. That means first of all fixing the simple things like garbage collection and disposal, clean piped water in every household, sewage systems, reliable and consistent power supply, storm water drainage, road construction and maintenance, health and education, public parks and other recreation areas, and a working public transport system.

Given the history of Nairobi and how it has been run down over the years by corrupt and clueless leadership, those might sound like insurmountable tasks.

Yet, with commitment and dedication, it can be done. None of the above is rocket science. Actually if the youthful governor has any institutional memory or a sense of history, he will realise that he doesn't need to create anything new but simply recreate what existed in the past, when the city actually worked.

Much of that is purely within his domain, while other tasks need coordination with national government institutions, neighbouring county administrations and national utility providers.

Sakaja can consult many people who remember when residents were assured of garbage collection at set times, and they did not have to make double payments to the city government and then to private contractors.

We remember when commuter buses ran like clockwork across the entire city before the chaos of unregulated pirate operators set in. We also recall fondly a distant past when water shortages and power cuts made for head-

line news, before system failures became the rule rather than the exception.

And a time when residents were assured of affordable quality education and healthcare at public facilities before the present reign of economic apartheid established separate systems for the rulers and the ruled.

Those are the things that must occupy Sakaja's every waking moment, but he will not deliver if distracted by petty politics of ethnic blackmail and intimidation.

He must stand firm and put it clearly to his detractors that Nairobi is not an appendage of Mathira constituency or any other rural outpost in central Kenya.

Members of Parliament from Nyeri, Kiambu, Nyandarua or any other Mt Kenya county who claim to be speaking on behalf of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua must cease and desist unwarranted attacks and threats directed at the Nairobi Governor and focus on developments in their own backyards.

Gachagua, of course, has every right to do whatever it takes to fill the leadership vacuum in the populous Mr Kenya region, and also to entrench himself as the principal assistant and presumed heir to President William Ruto, but instigating attacks against Sakaja and sabotaging efforts to clean up the capital city is not the way to go.

The lie that Sakaja's efforts to bring order to the chaotic public transport industry and

the informal trading sector undermine the Mt Kenya business community in the capital county must be called out for what it is: desperate and dangerous ethnic incitement that in itself can only work to sabotage devolution and the Kenya Kwanza government's development programme.

If the Deputy President is nervous about the role of Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi in the Ruto government, and presumed threats to his influence and presidential succession plans, he should not find a convenient punching bag in Sakaja but go directly for his principal target.

He can also, if he has the cojones, confront President Ruto and demand clarity on his role and functions vis-à-vis Mudavadi's, instead of inciting shadow boxing that only manages to expose a divided government.

Sakaja worked hard to be governor. He had to overcome serious questions about his credibility and honesty in the wake of a ruckus over suspect academic credentials from a Ugandan degree mill.

He had to cobble up a broad alliance that transcended petty ethnic mobilisation, and clearly is not beholden to purported support from Gachagua or any village politicians from faraway counties.

The governor must stand firm and make it clear that he is answerable to the people of Nairobi and nobody else. He does not report to Gachagua, Mudavadi or even Ruto.

He must also demonstrate that it is the 'cityzens' and leaders of Nairobi who will back him against unwarranted attacks, not barking dogs from Vihiga or elsewhere claiming to speak for Mudavadi or the mythical Luhya Nation.

It would also help a great deal if he got an unequivocal public show of support from President Ruto. The Kenya Kwanza administration at this time cannot afford to put on public shows of discord within its ranks.

There is nothing Sakaja is doing that was not outlined in his own election promises and also the Kenya Kwanza manifesto.

In any case, Nairobi is not a province of the Mt Kenya community, but the face of Kenya. Therefore no development initiative will impact a single ethnic group to the exclusion of others. This pathetic lie must be put to rest once and for all.

gaihomail@gmail.com



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja. PHOTO BY LUCY WANJIRU

the limelight



Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) shares a laugh in the House Chamber after the new Congress failed to elect a new Speaker at the US Capitol Building on January 3, 2023 in Washington, DC. PHOTO | AFP



BMW Board Chair Oliver Zipse introduces the BMW i Vision Digital Emotional Experience concept EV sport sedan in Las Vegas on January 04, 2023. PHOTO | AFP



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James dribbles during a game against the Charlotte Hornets at Spectrum Center on January 2, 2023. PHOTO | AFP



Fans of the late Brazilian football star Pele gather outside the Urbano Caldeira stadium as a firetruck transports his coffin to the Santos' Memorial Cemetery in Santos, Sao Paulo state, Brazil on January 3, 2023, before his interment in a special mausoleum. PHOTO | AFP



Patients infected with the Covid-19 coronavirus rest in beds at Fengyang People's Hospital in Fengyang County in east China's Anhui Province on January 5, 2023. PHOTO | AFP



A reveller takes part in a parade during the "Blacks and Whites" carnival in Pasto, Colombia, on January 4, 2023, celebrating the ethnic diversity in the region. PHOTO | AFP



A man gets out of a pool cut into the frozen Songhua river in Harbin, in China's Heilongjiang Province, on January 5, 2023. PHOTO | AFP

africa lens

■ PAN AM JET TRAGEDY

LIBYA PREMIER TAKES RISKY BET ON US GOODWILL FOR LOCKERBIE HANDOVER



Libya's Interim Prime Minister Abdelhamid Dbeibah. PHOTO | AFP

Dbeibah faces harsh criticism for handing bombing suspect to the US in what is seen as a seduction campaign for Washington's favour

• Tripoli

Libya's Tripoli-based leadership is facing a public backlash for handing Washington a suspect in the deadly 1988 Lockerbie attack, but is betting that the resulting US goodwill can strengthen its hand against rivals.

The attack on a Pan Am jet over Scotland killed 270 people, the deadliest-ever terror attack in Britain, which took place when Libya was under the rule of dictator Muammar Gaddafi.

Earlier this month, alleged former intelligence agent Abu Agila Mohammad Masud Kheir al-Marimi appeared in a US court on accusations he made the bomb used in the attack.

He could face life in prison if convicted of "destruction of an aircraft resulting in death" and two other related charges.

Masud's handover sparked a backlash against the government of Abdelhamid Dbeibah, which controls the west of the conflict-wracked country but is challenged by a rival authority and forces loyal to military

strongman Khalifa Haftar in the east.

Dbeibah has faced bitter criticism from political rivals, rights groups and relatives of Libyan detainees who fear being handed over themselves.

Khaled al-Montasser, a professor of international relations at Tripoli University, said Dbeibah "will probably not stop at extraditing one suspect – others will inevitably follow".

Dbeibah, after admitting that the handover had taken place, said he had acted "with full respect for Libyan sovereignty".

Continued on Page 12

africa lens

Continued from Page 11

He also denied rumours he was planning to hand over Abdallah Senoussi, who was Gaddafi's intelligence chief at the time of the attack. "Senoussi will not be handed to the United States; he's in his prison in Tripoli," Dbeibah told Saudi news channel *Al-Arabiya*.

Only one person has been convicted for the bombing, which killed all 259 people on the jumbo jet, including 190 Americans, and 11 people on the ground.

The Libyan state had considered the case closed since 2003, after Gaddafi's regime officially acknowledged its responsibility for the attack, paid \$2.7 billion in compensation and handed over two Libyan suspects.

Abdelbaset Ali Mohmet al-Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah were charged with the bombing and tried by a Scottish court in the Netherlands.

Megrahi spent seven years in a Scottish prison after his conviction in 2001 while Fhimah was acquitted.

Megrahi died in Libya in 2012, always maintaining his innocence.

But while a 2008 deal put an end to financial claims for compensation, "Washington never closes criminal cases" concerning its citizens, Montasser said.

He said the Biden administration was reviving the Lockerbie affair to "put pressure on Libya's political leaders".

"No Libyan authority could have refused" to hand over Masud, he said.

Libyan analyst Abdallah al-Rayes suspected Dbeibah had done a "political deal" with Washington with an eye to gaining its support to face down eastern rivals.

"Libyan leaders are hoping to repair their image" in the eyes of Washington and strengthen their position as possible elections approach in 2023, he said.

Tripoli hands over Lockerbie suspect

He added that Dbeibah's public justifications for the handover were "not convincing" and had put his administration on the back foot.

"It's seen as having done the bidding of a foreign country," he said.

Tripoli, however, needs international goodwill in order to get favours in return, according to analyst Jalel Harchaoui.

"These aren't clear and firm transactions, but the seduction campaign led by the Dbei-

bah family is certainly real," Harchaoui said.

"Dbeibah, whose popularity in Libya has been waning with time, has noticed that some foreign states are coming to terms with his continued existence from month to month."

The US embassy in Tripoli tweeted last week that Masud's "transfer... to US custody to stand trial on charges related to the bombing of Pan Am 103 was lawful and conducted in cooperation with Libyan authorities".

It insisted it was not re-opening the 2008 deal, which had put an end to legal pursuit of financial compensation in US courts.

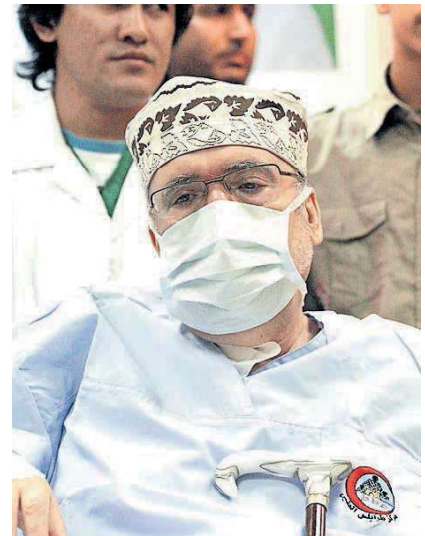
However, the deal in "no way restricts our law enforcement cooperation or has any bearing on criminal charges against those responsible for the attack", the embassy said.



Libyans gather at the Martyrs' Square in Libya's capital, Tripoli, on February 18, 2022, as they commemorate the 11th anniversary of the uprising that toppled longtime strongman Muammar Gaddafi. PHOTO | AFP



Former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. PHOTO | GEOFFREY SSERUYANGE



Abdelbaset Ali Mohmet al-Megrahi in Tripoli, the only person ever convicted of the bombing of an airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988. AFPI PHOTO

global lens

■ BENJAMIN NETANYAHU BACK IN POWER

BIBI SHIFTS TO THE FAR RIGHT



Israel's Prime Minister and leader of the Likud party, Benjamin Netanyahu, addresses supporters at campaign headquarters in Jerusalem early on November 2, 2022, after the end of voting for national elections. PHOTO | AFP

Global concern has been raised over what analysts describe as the most right-wing government in Israel's history

• Jerusalem

After a stint in opposition, Benjamin 'Bibi' Netanyahu has returned to power in Israel, leading what analysts have described as the most right-wing government in the country's history.

Senior security and law enforcement officials have already voiced concern over its direction, as have Palestinians.

"It becomes for Netanyahu's

partners a dream government," Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute think-tank, told *AFP*.

"And one side's dream is the other side's nightmare," he said, adding: "This government is expected to take the country in a completely new trajectory."

And just a day after Bibi's administration took over, the UN General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice to consider consequences for Israel

over its occupation of Palestinian territories.

The General Assembly voted 87-26, with 53 abstentions on the resolution, with Western nations split but virtually unanimous support in the Islamic world — including Arab states that have normalised relations with Israel — and backing from Russia and China.

The resolution calls on the UN court in The Hague to determine the "legal consequences arising

from the ongoing violation by Israel of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination" as well as of its measures "aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status" of the holy city of Jerusalem.

The Palestinian ambassador to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, said the vote sent a signal to the new government of Prime Minister Benjamin

Continued on Page 14

global lens

Concern over Israel's new direction

Continued from Page 13

Netanyahu over its efforts to “accelerate colonial and racist policies” and hailed nations that were “undeterred by threats and pressure”.

“We trust that regardless of your vote today, if you believe in international law and peace, you will uphold the opinion of the International Court of Justice when delivered,” Mansour said.

Speaking ahead of the vote, the Israeli ambassador, Gilad Erdan, called the resolution “a moral stain on the UN”.

“No international body can decide that the Jewish people are occupiers in their own homeland,” Erdan said.

“Any decision from a judicial body which receives its mandate from the morally bankrupt and politicised UN is completely illegitimate,” he said.

The resolution also demands that Israel cease settlements, but General Assembly votes have no legal force — unlike those in the Security Council, where Israel ally US wields veto power.

The United States, Britain and Germany opposed the resolution, while France abstained. “We do not feel that a referral to the International Court of Justice is helpful in bringing the parties back to dialogue,” British diplomat Thomas Phipps said.

“It is also the position of the UK that it is inappropriate without the consent of both parties to ask the court to give an advisory opinion in what is essentially a bilateral dispute.”

Among Western nations that backed the resolution was Portugal, whose representative acknowledged the “risk of over-judicialising international relations” but said the world court “underpins the international rules-based order which we seek to preserve”.

Netanyahu, 73, who is fighting corruption



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.
PHOTO: IAFP

allegations in court, already served as prime minister longer than anyone in Israeli history, including a record 12-year tenure from 2009 to 2021 and a three-year period in the late 90s.

He was ousted from power in the spring of 2021 by a motley coalition of leftists, centrists and Arab parties headed by Naftali Bennett and former TV news anchor Yair Lapid.

It didn't take him long to come back.

Netanyahu presented his new government to the Israeli parliament for a ratification vote following the election on November 1.

Netanyahu entered into negotiations with ultra-Orthodox and extreme-right parties, among them Bezalel Smotrich's Religious Zionism formation and Itamar Ben Gvir's Jewish Power party.

Both have a history of inflammatory remarks about the Palestinians.

They will now take charge respectively of Israeli settlement policy in the West Bank, and of the Israeli police, which also operate in the territory occupied by Israel since 1967.

Even before the government was sworn in, the majority parties passed laws that would allow Aryeh Deri, a key ally from the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, to serve as a minister despite a previous guilty plea to tax offences.

They also voted to expand powers of the national security minister, a portfolio set to be handed to Ben Gvir, who will have authority over the police.

The assignment comes despite Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara's warning against the “politicisation of law enforcement”.

On Monday, in a phone call to Netanyahu, armed forces chief Aviv Kochavi expressed his concerns regarding the creation of a second ministerial post in the defence ministry for Smotrich, who will oversee management of civilian affairs in the West Bank.

The US also spoke out. Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned that Washington would oppose settlement expansion as well as any bid to annex the West Bank.

But in a statement of policy priorities released on Wednesday, Netanyahu's Likud party said the government would pursue settlement expansion. About 475,000 Jewish settlers — among them Smotrich and Ben Gvir — live there, now in settlements considered illegal under international law.

Analysts said Netanyahu offered the extreme-right vast concessions in the hope he might obtain judicial immunity or cancellation of his corruption trial. He is charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust, allegations he denies.

Denis Charbit, professor of political science at Israel's Open University, told *AFP* the government “is the addition of Netanyahu's political weakness, linked to his age and his trial, and the fact that you have a new political family of the revolutionary right that we had never seen with this strength in Israel”. —*AFP*

Colourful cast in Tel Aviv government

• Jerusalem

Led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who returns to power after an absence of less than two years, the most right-wing government in Israel's history includes a politician who late last year admitted to tax evasion and a clutch of far-right personalities, including one who once kept a portrait in his home of a man who massacred scores of Palestinian worshippers.

Here is a run-down of key office holders in Israel's 37th government.

Eli Cohen is a father of four children and entered political life in 2015 with the now-defunct centre-right party, Kulanu. He joined Likud four years later and Netanyahu appointed him intelligence minister in 2020.

Cohen was an architect of Israel's normalisation agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco that year, collectively known as the Abraham Accords.

Israel's new defence minister Yoav Galant is a former general, a staunch ally of Netanyahu and a vocal advocate of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.

During a long career in the military, the 64-year-old oversaw Israel's 2005 withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and later commanded “Operation Cast Lead”, an offensive against the enclave's rulers Hamas in 2008-2009.

In 2015, Galant served as housing minister as part of the Kulanu party, though he later joined Netanyahu's right-wing Likud in 2019.

Galant served as both immigration and education minister between 2019 and 2021.

Born in Morocco, Aryeh Deri is a political veteran who co-founded the ultra-Orthodox Shas party and has held a Knesset seat almost uninterrupted for 30 years, as well as several ministerial posts.

Late last year, Deri admitted tax evasion, subsequently promised to pay a fine of 180,000 shekels (\$50,000) and relinquished his seat. He had previously been jailed for fraud. But he won a seat in November's legislative election and on Tuesday parliament passed a new law allowing anyone convicted of offences but not given a custodial sentence to serve as a minister. —*AFP*

SCIENCE & TECH

Sanctions-hit Huawei roars back to life



• Beijing

Chinese tech giant Huawei said on Friday it had returned to “business as usual” despite US sanctions as it estimated annual revenues to remain flat for 2022.

A leading supplier of telecom gear, smartphones and other advanced equipment, Huawei was hammered during a crackdown by the administration of previous US president Donald Trump over cybersecurity and espionage concerns.

His successor, Joe Biden, has added to that pressure with regulations that threaten Huawei’s access to global semiconductor supply chains.

But Huawei’s chairman Eric Xu sounded a positive note in a New Year’s message.

“In 2022, we successfully pulled ourselves out of crisis mode. US restrictions are now our new normal,” he said in the letter.

“We’re back to business as usual.”

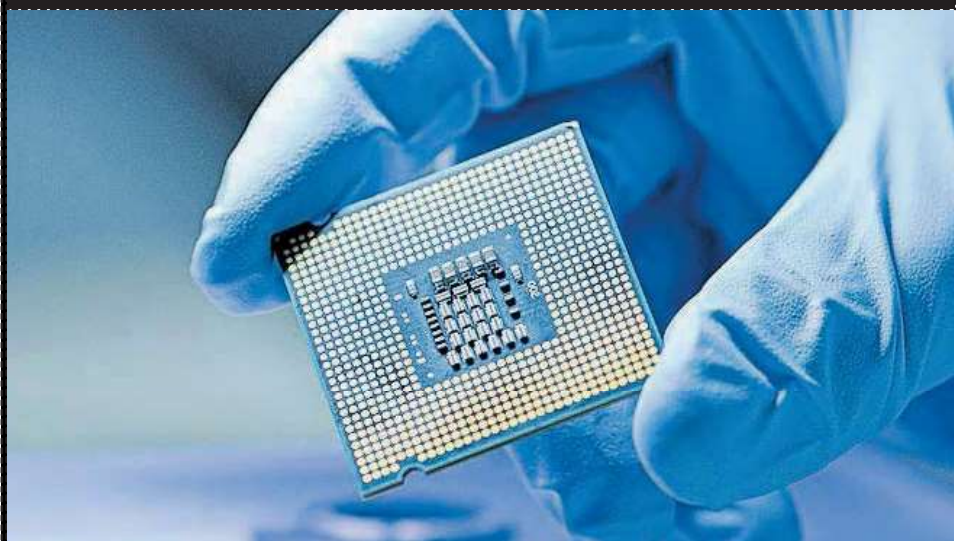
The company estimated annual revenue for 2022 at 636.9 billion yuan (\$92 billion), up only slightly from the 636.8 billion yuan in 2021.

Huawei has moved to diversify revenue streams after US-led sanctions took a major chunk out of its telecom equipment and smartphone businesses.

Its 5G gear has been blocked in major markets, including the United States, Britain and Japan, over security concerns. Huawei has denied allegations that its equipment carries risks of sabotage and spying.

And the company — once the world’s top smartphone maker — has seen sales slump after the United States cut off access to key parts and also barred it from using Google’s Android operating system. — AFP

TAIWAN BEGINS MASS ASSEMBLY OF NEO CHIP



• Tainan

Taiwanese tech giant TSMC said Thursday it had started mass production of its 3-nanometre chips, among the most advanced to come to market.

The Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) operates the world’s largest silicon wafer factories and produces high-performance chips used in everything from smartphones and cars to missiles.

It is also Apple’s primary chip supplier.

Its 3nm-process chips are expected to have more processing power while using less power, boosting battery performance.

“Our 3nm technology will be used massively in future state-of-the-art technological products, including super computers, cloud servers, high speed internet and many mobile devices,” TSMC chairman Mark Liu said at a ceremony announcing mass production at a plant in the south-western city of Tainan.

He added that the company

plans to build even smaller 2nm plants in the Taiwanese cities of Hsinchu and Taichung.

TSMC’s South Korean rival, Samsung, began mass production of its 3nm chips in June.

Taiwan plays an outsized role in the global chip industry.

TSMC alone accounts for nearly 50 per cent of the world’s production of chips below 10nm.

The concentration of such a crucial industry in one place has begun to cause geopolitical jitters, especially as China increasingly threatens Taiwan, a self-ruled democracy that the Chinese Communist Party claims and has vowed to one day seize.

The global chip shortage during the coronavirus pandemic deepened those concerns.

TSMC has been lobbied by western powers to build more foundries overseas, which it has agreed to do.

The company is building a huge \$40 billion plant in Arizona that will eventually produce its own 4nm and 3nm chips, part of US efforts to ensure a stable supply of semiconductors on its soil.

President Joe Biden attended a ceremony earlier this month to announce a mammoth expansion of the Arizona plant, which is one of the largest foreign investments in the United States.

TSMC has also agreed to build foundries in Japan and is exploring Germany as a possible location.

At the same time, Taiwan’s tech companies and its government are keen to ensure the majority of state-of-the-art production remains at home.

This is in part because the industry affords the island some protection.

Any invasion or blockade of Taiwan by China would have catastrophic consequences for the global economy because so many crucial semiconductors are made there — a buffer that analysts call Taiwan’s “Silicon Shield”.

President Tsai Ing-wen has played down concerns that Taiwan risks losing that shield — and jobs — by building foundries overseas and instead has portrayed the investments as a sign of the island’s technological prowess. — AFP



SPORTS!

JAMES
WOKABI

BERNARD
NDONG

HOSTS



NATIONFM 96.3^{FM}
WHERE GOOD MUSIC LIVES

SATURDAYS 3PM

