

THE Weekly Review

For the Thinking Person

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UHURU'S WATERLOO

Nyamakima is Kenya's uncontested bootleg capital, where anything goes – from counterfeits to contraband goods that raise suspicion of tax evasion. This celebrated business hub also embodies outgoing President Kenyatta's political armageddon.

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letter from the editor

Kenya's next chapter: The promise and peril of a new era



Mutuma Mathiu

For humanity, cooperation is an evolutionary prerequisite. In his fascinating and eminently quotable book, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, Israeli scholar Yuval Noah Harari argues that following his emergence – the product of genetic mutations, our ancestor, *Homo erectus*, remained unchanged for close to two million years. Even the stone tools he made and the purpose for which he made them – to crack open bones to get at the marrow inside – remained the same for nearly two million years! Then between 70,000 and 30,000 years ago, a spark ignited in our ancestors' brains and we started to think, really think, and communicate with each other. The evolution of complex language during the so-called Cognitive Revolution of that era allowed us to pass not just functional information, such as warning each other of danger, which any animal can do, but information about each other, making it possible for us to interact in more stable ways. Language also allowed us to form concepts that had no concrete reality, things which existed only in our minds – Harari gives the example of limited liability companies and nations – creating phenomena around which large groups, millions of humans, could cooperate. A billion Chinese can commit allegiance and act collectively for China, a fig-

Ruto's challenge is to unite the whole country behind him. The highest calling for his administration is not revenge, petty vengeance and "ugly triumphalism" as one analyst termed it, but humility and gratitude in the face of the hard work ahead.

ment of their imagination. By cooperating in large groups, humanity has been able to establish dominion over other species and bend nature to its needs. Change in behaviour today does not require genetic change; it may well be that it is our behaviour which is now driving our genetic evolution. The limits of humanity's power arise from its inability to cooperate at a species level; if the entire species could act in concert, it would likely conquer mortality, the universe, perhaps even time itself. There are lessons from our ancestors to be learnt by the new government of President-elect William Ruto. It inherits serious challenges internally and externally. The old world order, characterised by Western domination, progressive growth, reasonable peace and order, is being turned on its head. Global pandemics and war in Europe have caused severe economic hardship. New economic powers are overtaking the established gi-

ants: India has overtaken Great Britain to become the world's fifth largest economy. New military powers such as China are almost certainly going to challenge modern Western empires for world dominion. These global dynamics affect Kenya's current well-being and future. Internally, expectations are sky-high. Millions of jobless and impoverished young people are expecting their lives to be transformed – overnight. Public workers such as the police and teachers are looking forward to fulfilment of payrise promises made during the campaigns. The long-suffering taxpayer awaits relief. Small business owners and the unemployed are standing at the door, looking out for the Hustler Fund. The so-called underclass is watching the road, expecting to be transported from the bottom up. These challenges can, of course, be met successfully. But it will take more than the seven million who voted for Kenya Kwanza. Ruto's challenge is to unite the whole country behind him. The highest calling for his administration is not revenge, petty vengeance and "ugly triumphalism" as one analyst termed it, but humility and gratitude in the face of the hard work ahead. The price of a contested victory is magnanimity. It is cooperation, not belligerence, that got us here as a nation – and species.

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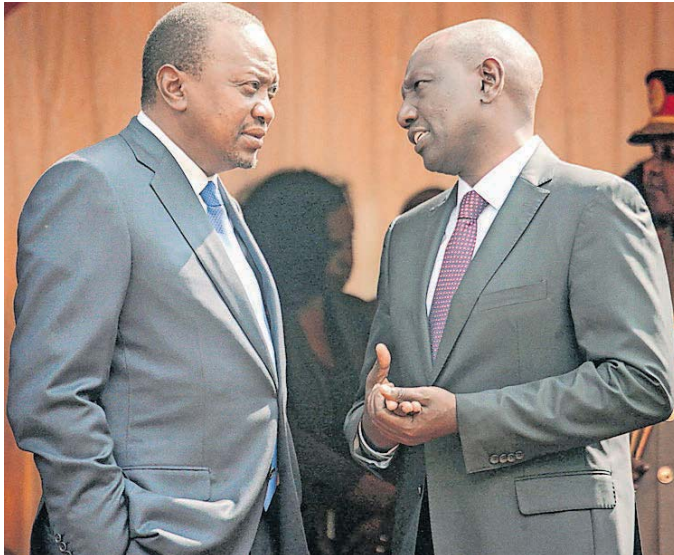
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the telescope

■ **President-elect Ruto ready to take the reins**



President Uhuru Kenyatta (left) chats with Deputy President William Ruto at the National Defence College in Karen on May 3, 2017. EVANS HABILI/NATION

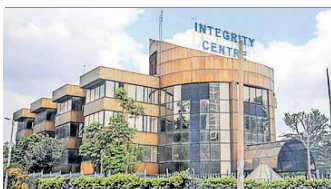
Succession: From Kenyatta to ‘The Fifth’

Preparations for William Ruto’s inauguration as the fifth President of the Republic of Kenya are in top gear. A communique from the Assumption of Office of the President team indicates the ceremony will be held on Tuesday at the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, between 10am and 2pm. About 40 Heads of State, including Uganda’s Yoweri Museveni, Burundi’s Evariste Ndayishimiye, Rwanda’s Paul Kagame and South Sudan’s Salvar Kiir, will grace the event. Article 141 of the Constitution states that the swearing-in of the Presi-

dent-elect shall be in public before the Chief Justice or the Deputy Chief Justice on the first Tuesday following the 14th day after the date of the declaration of the result of the presidential election if no petition has been filed. Or, in the event of a petition, the seventh day following the date on which the Supreme Court renders a decision declaring the election to be valid. After Dr Ruto takes the oath of office, President Kenyatta will hand over a sword to signify the change of guard as the Commander-in-Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces.

■ **EACC gives state officers 30 days to comply**

New leaders to declare their wealth



The anti-graft agency has directed newly appointed state officers to declare their wealth within 30 days. The declarations should cover the spouse and children. The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission

has cited the Public Officer Ethics Act, on the mandatory requirement to declare their wealth within 30 days of assuming office, and that failure to declare or making a false declaration amounts to a criminal offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding Sh1 million, or up to a year imprisonment, or both. Kenya is among the first countries to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, which led to the introduction of the Public Officer Ethics Act (POEA).

■ **In defence of American democracy**

Obamas get their White House portraits

Former US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama finally got their official White House portraits, after four years of being snubbed by Donald Trump, in an emotional ceremony doubling as a rousing defence of American democracy. The paintings, destined to hang alongside those of generations of previous first couples in the White House, were unveiled by the Obamas themselves. Deafening cheers sounded through the packed East Room as they pulled up the plain blue cloths covering the art works. Obama, the country’s first Black president, was depicted by Robert McCurdy looking straight out, hands in pockets, his dark

suit contrasting against a startlingly white background, and a shadow falling over half of his face. Michelle, who was painted by Sharon Sprung, posed in a light blue gown, seated on a red sofa. Obama joked that McCurdy’s signature precision and sharp lines meant he “refused to hide any of my grey hairs”, but said the directness of the style countered the tendency where presidents “often get air-brushed”, getting “mythical status, especially after you’ve gone and people forget all the stuff they didn’t like”. The cheers kept coming during President Joe Biden’s speech kicking off the event and the volume rose further when the Obamas took the podium.



Former US President Barack Obama kisses former First Lady Michelle Obama during a ceremony to unveil their official White House portraits in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC, on September 7.

■ **McIlroy admits to rift with team-mates**

LIV Golf defections create divisions



Rory McIlroy admits his relationships with a number of Ryder Cup team-mates have been significantly damaged by their defection to LIV Golf. Five members of the European team beaten at Whistling Straits last year

have joined the Saudi-funded breakaway, along with Henrik Stenson, whose decision resulted in him losing the captaincy for next year’s contest in Rome. Four of those five — Ian Poulter, Lee Westwood, Sergio Garcia and Bernd Wiesberger — were among the LIV contingent at the PGA Championship at Wentworth, near London, a factor McIlroy said he found “hard to stomach”.

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■ BURDEN OF PROOF

JUDGES SAY ‘NUMBERS DON’T LIE’

The Supreme Court upheld Ruto’s victory over Raila in the presidential poll. The petition failed on inability to present evidence of election count recording forms from polling stations disproving the results announced by Chebukati

● By MACHARIA GAITHO

The Supreme Court ruling on the presidential election petitions of 2013 and 2017 occasioned political reverberations that delved into how the judges reached their decisions and even raised threats against independence of the Judiciary.

The 2022 judgment on Monday upholding the victory of William Ruto over Raila Odinga is no different. It has already become the subject of intense debate, many taking issue with contemptuous language used by Chief Justice Martha Koome against the petitioners, as well as questions about whether the verdict was based on evidence placed before the judges or whether it was what some are describing as a political judgment.

Even before the judgment has been given in full and opened to scrutiny on the reasoning informing the unanimous verdict, Koome raised eyebrows by wading into public debate.

The CJ was addressing a funeral gathering on Wednesday when she diverted into defence of the Supreme Court, saying the judgment “was for the sake of independence of institutions, especially the Judiciary. It was not due to our might or power as a court, but because of the faithful God that we serve”.

Some might find curious reference to God in a secular society, where court judgments are supposed to be dictated by the law and evidence rather than allegiance to religious, political or other groupings.

Koome’s allusion to protecting independence of the Judiciary was not explained, but it could be an indication that beyond the arguments tendered in court by both the petitioners and respondents, the judges might have wanted to assert themselves against attempts to influence or intimidate them.

In this regard, it might be instructive that in remarks after delivery of the verdict, Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu hinted at attempts to reach the judges when they were sequestered writing the judgment, which were rebuffed.

Also in simi-

lar context can be seen explosive revelations during the Supreme Court hearing by Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission chairman Wafula Chebukati to the effect that members of the National Security Advisory Committee had tried to prevail upon him to ‘moderate’ the election results so that Raila was handed victory at Ruto’s expense.

In his affidavit, Chebukati had claimed that Principal Secretary in the Office of the President Kennedy Kihara, Vice-Chief of the Defence Forces Francis Ogolla, Inspector-General of Police Hilary Mutyambai and Solicitor-General Kennedy Ogeto had visited him in his office at the National Tally-

ing Centre, Bomas of Kenya, to urge him to change the election results on national security grounds.

He also claimed that staff of the commission had been harassed, intimidated and subjected to arbitrary arrests, and without offering any evidence, tried to link the killing of a returning officer to the elections.

Chebukati’s claims, many of them unverified, were seized upon by the Ruto camp to back their claims of attempts by the so-called ‘Deep State’ to halt his march to State House.

If it is true that the judges were also subjected to pressure, then it will be interesting to see how this pans out in terms of formal complaints and reports beyond vague references.

But right now Koome and her six colleagues, Mwilu, Mohamed Ibrahim, Smokin Wanjala, Njoki Ndung’u, Isaac Lenaola and William Ouko, should be girding themselves for intense scrutiny ahead of the September 26 delivery of the full reasoned ruling.

A sign of what is to come was provided by President Uhuru Kenyatta’s grudging acceptance after the ruling. Beyond the simple “I disagree with the verdict but accept it” responses of Raila and his running mate Martha Karua, Uhuru went on a convoluted tangent, taking issue with the court for ruling one way in 2017 and another this time round, and asking Kenyans to hold institutions to account for consistency and coherence.

“Is it about numbers or is it about processes?” he asked in his first address on the polls outcome.

Uhuru was referring to the historic 2017 annulment of his presidential election victory by the David Magara bench on account of processes that were so flawed that the election results could not be upheld.

On this petition, the Koome bench paid scant attention to evidence of processes, instead placing the premium on numbers. That is where the Raila petition failed: on inability to present evidence of election count recording forms from polling stations disproving the results announced by Chebukati.

If it is true that the judges were also subjected to pressure, then it will be interesting to see how this pans out in terms of formal complaints and reports beyond vague references.



DENNIS ONSONGO | NATION

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■ HOW TRADERS STOPPED UHURU PLAN

NYAMAKIMA KINGMAKERS

This vibrant trading hub in downtown Nairobi sandwiched between the lower extremities of River Road and Kirinyaga Road has become the stuff of legends for a bustling grey economy that in many ways is now used to define the Mt Kenya entrepreneurial spirit



Public Service Vehicles in Nyamakima, Nairobi, on September 7. The commercial hub played its role in loosening President Uhuru Kenyatta's grip on the Mt Kenya vote, and by extension securing William Ruto's victory over opposition leader Raila Odinga. FRANCIS NDERITU | NATION

● By MACHARIA GAITHO

A first-time customer at the New Madina Restaurant in the Xiaobei Lu area of China's bustling Guangzhou City might sometimes have to pinch himself to confirm that he has not landed at an eatery in the bustling backstreets of Nairobi CBD's Little Murang'a.

In some seasons, the predominant tongue heard will be Kikuyu from dozens of traders on package tours descending on a major source of goods for Kenya's retail markets. The restaurant is a popular meeting place for Kenyans and other African visitors not inclined to Cantonese cuisine. The familiar dishes of chicken curries, beef or mutton stews, served with rice or chapati, are dished out in humongous portions at very fair prices.

The New Madina, run by a Chinese Muslim family, is located in the Deng Feng complex, which hosts a hotel, several retail outlets and dozens of cargo companies specialised in shipping goods to Kenya and other East African countries, Nigeria, Mali, Senegal and the rest of West Africa.

After a hearty meal at New Madina, the traders might make their way to a cacophony of electronic shops in the Dashatou area, some 10 minutes' drive. Asked about the latest smart televisions on offer, a shop attendant will, in a high-pitched, rapid-fire tone, reel off a host of familiar Japanese,

South Korean and emerging Chinese brands: "Sony, Samsung, Panasonic, Hitachi, Haier, Toshiba, Hisense, You say . . ." "Say what?" "You say."

The accompanying guide will gently explain that 'You Say' is not a specific brand, but an invitation for the customer to name brand he wants. The appropriate label will then be affixed on any of 'nameless' television sets on display. The traders will make their purchases, often in bulk, through a highly efficient logistics system. Kenyan cargo companies with branches Guangzhou and other major Chinese trading hubs will pick up the goods, pack them securely and ensure delivery by ship or air.

The trader picks up the goods at warehouses in Nairobi's Eastleigh area, or has them delivered direct to his own distribution or retail outlet.

The shipping companies, mostly owned by Kenyan Somalis with operations in China, Dubai, Turkey and anywhere else where Kenyan traders fre-

quent, operate with legendary efficiency, trust and honesty. Incidents of goods lost, misdirected or tampered with are almost unheard of. In most instances, no payment is required until the merchandise has been delivered.

The logistical magic extends to dealing withustoms. The cargo reaches the consignee exactly as packed, not having been opened by the Customs and Excise authorities for tax assessment. On delivery, the customer only pays the cost of shipping, with no receipts given for import duties, or documents for quality and standards inspections.

Welcome to the Nyamakima economy. This vibrant trading hub in downtown Nairobi, sandwiched between the lower extremities of River Road and Kirinyaga Road, has become the stuff of legend for a bustling grey economy that in many ways now used to define the Mt Kenya entrepreneurial spirit. It played its role in loosening President Uhuru Kenyatta's grip on the Mt Kenya vote, and by extension securing President-elect William Ruto's victory over opposition leader Raila Odinga.

It was the government crackdown on smuggling, beginning in 2017, that Deputy President Ruto's propaganda machinery deployed with devastating effect to brand President Kenyatta an enemy of the Kikuyu business community, Ruto's Hustler vs Dynasty narrative and Bottom-Up economic policy resonated with small-scale traders

SH1.5BN

The straw that broke the camel's back was an event in August 2018, when President Kenyatta witnessed a bonfire of seized illicit goods worth over Sh1.5 billion.

kenya lens



Businesses in Nyamakima on September 7.
FRANCIS NDERITU | NATION

and artisans, who bore the brunt of an economic meltdown. Ruto's camp blamed it on the President, despite the reality of factors such as the Covid 19 pandemic, skyrocketing international oil prices and the Russian invasion of Ukraine that were beyond his control. The straw that broke the camel's back, says Micro-Small Medium Enterprise Alliance CEO Sammy Karanja, was an event in August 2018, when President Kenyatta witnessed a bonfire of seized illicit goods worth over Sh1.5 billion.

The President at the time vowed to push on with action he said was aimed at protecting Kenyan industry and consumers, and warned against anyone politicising the crackdown, but he fell squarely into a narrative already being spun by Ruto and his Mt Kenya allies.

The Deputy President took to assailing the president for condemning ordinary Kenyans to Fuliza, which could have been taken as a general reference to any usurious mobile-lending app. It is now emerging that pointing the finger at the specific product linked to the Kenyatta family's NCBA bank running on the Safaricom platform was very deliberate and indicative of business wars in the offing. Still, a big question arises why the government crackdown on smuggling and tax evasion was reduced to a Kikuyu issue.

The majority custom at New Madina restaurant explains it. According to Karanja, the overwhelming number Kenyan traders who make the trips to China, Dubai and Turkey are from Mt Kenya. That is a simple fact dating back to the period in the early 2000s when traders from the region made their first excursions to China, saw the opportunities and began inviting their relatives and friends, leading to evolution of the organ-

ised package tours.

The Nyamakima area now hosts hundreds of retail shops selling electronics, bathroom and kitchen fittings, lighting fixtures, carpets, generators, automobile spare parts, shoes, mobile phones and accessories, and almost everything else. The area, now extended beyond the original Nyamakima matatu stage to all the adjoining streets, is also the distribution point for goods that fan out across the rest of Kenya.

The cheap trinkets sold by hawkers in Nairobi traffic or in bars and markets across the city come from Nyamakima. So do a lot of quality products in outlets at high-end shopping malls. This brings out another point. Not all the goods coming via Nyamakima are cheap, counterfeit or sub-standard. In China, you get what you pay for. One can get the highest quality and genuine European and American brand names, and also, at very competitive prices, Chinese products of similar quality.

One can also get the very obvious fakes of the 'You Say' label, or the ones that carry a label that approximates the original; Sumsang, for instance, instead of Samsung. Of course there are still issues around tax evasion and quality. According to Karanja, his association is not pushing for the right to avoid taxes or bring in counterfeits but only for predictability and common sense in enforcement. He points out that, even where importers do not pay import duties directly to the Kenya Revenue Authority, the taxes are covered under the shipping charges paid to the cargo agents.

Rather than tax items individually based on their value, KRA charges a flat minimum fee based on volume. The problem, he says, is when the taxman arbitrarily increases the rate from Sh1.3 million to Sh2.2 million per 20-foot container as, he says, happened last year.

In China, you get what you pay for. One can get the highest quality and genuine European and American brand names, and also get at very competitive prices Chinese products of similar quality. One can also get the very obvious fakes of the 'You Say' label, or the ones that carry a label that approximates the original; Sumsang, for instance, instead of Samsung.

Or when a trader clears his goods at Sh1 million and just the following week another trader with a similar consignment is charged Sh1.8 million.

These are the issues, he says, that the association raised with Ruto at three meetings and received a sympathetic ear.

He now hopes that once he assumes the presidency, Ruto will act on constraints to business and allow small and medium enterprises to thrive. He envisions the informal sector progressively being regulated so that it evolves from underground activity to a rightful place in the economic environment. However, many in the grey economy might not share his vision.

They would rather remain away from the clutches of the tax officials, the Kenya Bureau of Standards, the County inspector or any other authority. These are the ones who will have to learn in due course that installation of President Ruto's 'Hustler Nation' government will not be license for smuggling and tax evasion. Campaign rhetoric is one thing, governance quite another.

When Kuria danced with the devil

Former Gatundu South MP Moses Kuria was at the forefront of the campaign that accused President Uhuru Kenyatta of destroying Mt Kenya business people through the crackdown on tax evasion, smuggling and contraband goods.

At the end of April 2019, he publicly supported importation of counterfeit and sub-standard goods, demanding the sacking of then Cabinet Secretary for Trade Peter Munya after stringent quality checks on imported goods and seizure of several consignments from China.

He argued that the China economy had grown due to prowess in counterfeiting. "I am encouraging counterfeiting of anything that is not made locally. Down the road we will learn to produce genuine stuff," he said.

In September 2021, it was like a case of getting what you asked for. Mr Kuria was using an electric mat to treat numbness in his feet when the device malfunctioned.

"I am encouraging counterfeiting of anything that is not made locally. Down the road we will learn to produce genuine stuff."

By his own account, his feet exploded, leaving him with serious third-degree burns.

Treatment at the best hospitals in Kenya and India did not work, and he was not to get back on his feet until February this year following the most advanced stem cell surgery in Dubai.

In October last year, while still hospitalised in Nairobi, he gave testimony before a parliamentary committee grilling Ceragem Ltd, distributors of the gadget that burnt his feet.

He accused the firm of peddling dangerous products that had not passed Kenya Bureau of Standards qualifications, threatening to sue for the ordeal he had undergone.

kenya lens

■ THE PINNACLE OF POWER

‘RUTO-NATED’: YES, MR PRESIDENT

From a chicken seller to the Commander-in-Chief of the Kenya Defence Forces, William Ruto has seen it all. Having completed two terms as Deputy President and an entire working life near the pinnacle of power, he most likely already has a pretty good idea of what he wants to do, and how he wants to go about it

● By MACHARIA GAITHO

As he selects the outfit to don for the most momentous event of his life, William Samoei Ruto will not only be reflecting on the meteoric journey from barefoot villager to President of Kenya and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, but also looking ahead to what he needs to do to craft that office in his own image.

Having completed two terms as Deputy President and an entire working life near the pinnacle of power, Dr Ruto most likely already has a pretty good idea of what he wants to do, and how he wants to go about it.

He will probably have looked back at the four presidents who came before him — Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978), Daniel arap Moi (1978-2002), Mwai Kibaki (2002-2013) and Uhuru Kenyatta (2013-2022) — and picked lessons from each of those reigns.

All were men of single-minded determination in their quest for power and, once in office, in keeping threats at bay. They ruled at different times and different constitutional and political dispensations, from the stern one-party dictatorships of Jomo and Moi to the noisy, disorderly democracy of Kibaki and Uhuru.

There are still lessons to learn, and one thing that becomes instantly evident is that Ruto's ascension continues the power monopoly by the Kikuyu and Kalenjin elite that will again have potential to breed resentment from other communities.

There are also uncanny parallels to be drawn from his rise to power against that of the only predecessor he has constantly cited as a mentor and inspiration, Daniel arap Moi. The most obvious one is that of a Kalenjin leader deputising a Kikuyu, enduring mistreatment, and finally emerging triumphant.

The Moi and Ruto stories are actually accounts of Kalenjin-Kikuyu power dynamics. Denizens from the two communities have relied on each other to ascend to power while keeping other claimants at bay, and at the same time engaged in their own

feuds that ultimately are smoothed over for the baton to be handed over.

In the early years of Independence, Jomo Kenyatta needed Moi to help keep Oginga Odinga, the Luo hope, in check. The latter had largely been neutralised by the time Jomo died in 1978, leaving as the biggest threat to Moi's ascension the so-called Kiambu mafia. Moi was clever enough to have his own Kikuyu allies, led by Charles Njonjo, to ease his way into State House. Once in office, he adroitly used the Kikuyu administrative and security machinery controlled by Njonjo to neuter the remnants of the Kenyatta regime — the likes of Njoroge Mungai, Mbiyu Koinange, Njenga Karume and Kihika Kimani — that still thought he was a passing cloud. Mission accomplished, Moi then turned on Njonjo, on Kibaki and all other potential Kikuyu rivals as he set about placing his own Kalenjin Mafia at the heart of the political, economic, administrative and security machinery.

From Day One of his reign, Moi projected himself as a pious, Bible-toting leader who had no time for corruption or pursuit of wealth. One of his memorable sayings from that time is that a

golden bed would not buy sound sleep.

It soon became apparent, however, that one of his most urgent priorities was to accumulate wealth that would match or surpass that controlled by his rivals from the previous regime. That meant stripping public assets at a mad rate, and also working to destroy the economic bases of his rivals.

Ruto is not a Moi. He is better educated, much more exposed and reigning in an entirely different dispensation of strong constitutional safeguards against dictatorship and abuse of power.

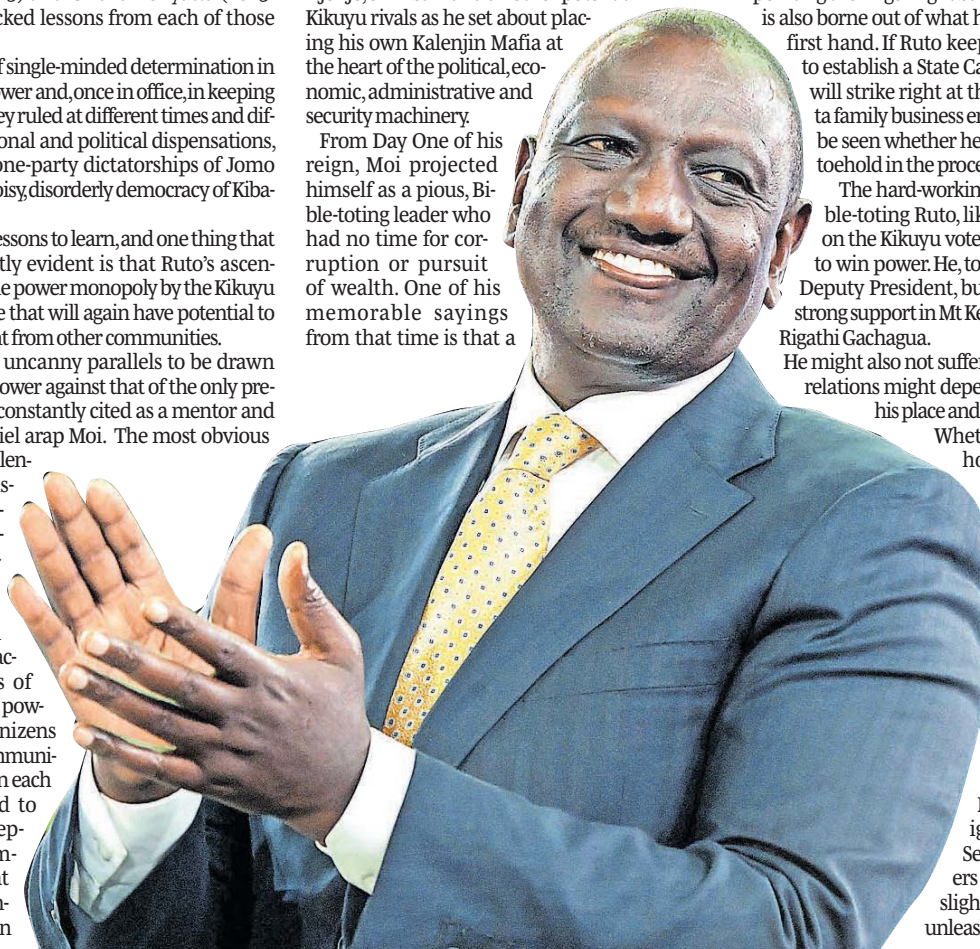
But even in this day and age, he has seen that a President so-inclined can use office for self-enrichment. His campaign rhetoric against State Capture is his reflex response to accusations of corruption, pointing the finger right back at his accusers. But it is also borne out of what he may have witnessed first hand. If Ruto keeps true to his promise to establish a State Capture commission, he will strike right at the heart of the Kenyatta family business empire, but it remains to be seen whether he will also be getting his toehold in the process.

The hard-working, ascetic, teetotaler, Bible-toting Ruto, like Moi, also depended on the Kikuyu vote, if not the Kikuyu elite, to win power. He, too, came with a Kikuyu Deputy President, but at least has his own strong support in Mt Kenya so is not hostage to Rigathi Gachagua.

He might also not suffer the Moi paranoia, but relations might depend on his DP knowing his place and betraying no ambition.

Whether he likes it or not, however, Gachagua as DP will be the natural magnet for Mt Kenya political aspirations, with eyes on the Ruto succession.

If Gachagua lets that get into his head, Ruto might well be prompted to look to Moi for ideas on how to tame an ambitious deputy who imagines he has the numbers. Musalia Mudavadi, designated Prime Cabinet Secretary, and many others will be looking for the slightest opportunity to be unleashed.



kenya lens

■ TRANSITION POLITICS

SCRAMBLE FOR POSITIONS

A transition and change of regime in Kenya can affect fortunes and political careers of public servants. Appointments to public positions is a key battleground where well-connected elites test their mettle. The first Jubilee administration came up with a very crass formula for sharing public appointments

● By JAINDI KISERO

One Tuesday morning in May 2019, the board of the Kenya Revenue Authority, chaired by Edward arap Sambili, convened a special meeting where the only agenda was to send the CEO, John Njiraini, on terminal leave and to appoint David Kiprop Yego in his place. That meeting had been ordered by Deputy President William Ruto.

In a raw display of power, President Uhuru Kenyatta hurriedly issued a special gazette notice the following Friday to announce the replacement of the whole board, including then chairman Edward Sambili, whose position was taken over by former Public Service head Francis Muthaura. Njiraini was to stay in office for a few more months until he was replaced by the current CEO, Mr James Githii Mburu.

In the pre-election agreement between Ruto and Uhuru, the National Treasury and key institutions that fall directly under it were supposed to be run the Kalenjin aristocracy appointed by the DP. The elite of the community had been grumbling that apart from former Treasury Cabinet Secretary Henry Rotich, the two key institutions under the ministry — KRA and the Central Bank of Kenya — remained under persons appointed by the Uhuru wing. Kiprop Yego did not get the job.

This episode illustrates how a transition and change of regime in Kenya can affect the fortunes and political careers of public servants. Appointments to public positions is a key battleground, where well-connected elites test their mettle.

The first Jubilee administration came up with a very crass formula for sharing public appointments. Though patronage appointments did not start with Jubilee administration in 2013, Uhuru and Ruto went overboard in crafting an unwritten formula, by which top positions in ministries and parastatals were neatly shared between members of the two ethnic communities that provided the core support of the party's election campaigns.

The consequence was that the administration ended up creating, within the public service, influential, rent-seeking constituencies opposed to any reforms they saw as threatening their control over patronage and self-advancement.

The country ended up with an indisciplined and unproductive civil service, proliferation of inefficient and debt-plagued state corporations, widespread financial distress in public universities, and enclaves of highly paid civil servants working alongside underpaid, inadequate-



One of notable phenomena in the incoming Ruto administration is the sheer number of elected leaders facing serious corruption charges.

ly trained colleagues who were prone to corruption.

President-elect Ruto has come to power to steer an administration where public contracts are awarded at inflated prices to insider contractors, where big, well-connected industrialists neither pay taxes nor electricity bills, and where declining revenues and spiralling debt service costs are the norm.

The evidence of all this is in the broad range of transactions that have been the subject of criminal prosecutions by the Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Noordin Haji.

From the National Cereals and Produce Board, Kenya Pipeline Company, Kenya Power and Kenya Bureau of Standards to the National Hospital Insurance Fund, the Ministry of Health, the National Youth Service, and Covid-19 billionaires' saga, Cabinet ministers and top officers of parastatals recklessly engage in manipulation and mismanagement of tenders.

Large infrastructure projects created with good intentions are turned into vessels for opening kickback opportunities for the political elite. Questionable procurements and budgets for projects are revised and contract variations and escalations implemented arbitrarily to allow the

release of billions of shillings to well-connected contractors.

One of notable phenomena in the incoming Ruto regime is the sheer number of elected leaders facing serious corruption charges. Kenya is surely evolving into what is now referred to as a 'wash' economy — the explosion of parallel business dealings in counterfeits, narcotics, arms and fake currency.

Every so often you hear about a bust by police on a fake currency printing syndicate, a gold-smuggling cartel or the impounding of billions worth of fake Kenya Revenue Authority excise duty stamps imported from somewhere.

But what is most worrisome is that the emerging trends point to deepening links between these syndicates and the political elite.

A few years ago, it was former Cabinet minister Rashid Echesa facing allegations of employing political influence to con Polish arms dealers. Last year, it was a group of Dubai-based gold merchants claiming that they had been conned by syndicates with links with top politicians in an episode that served to demonstrate just how corruption in this country had evolved into a complex nexus between influence peddlers and criminal gangs.

kenya lens

■ SEARCH FOR A NEW KINGPIN

RAILA: THE LAST HURRAH?

Questions arise about who would take over the former Prime Minister's leadership role in Luo Nyanza, as the people's watchman and party leader should he exit the political scene this year. The ODM supremo is reportedly concerned about the possibility of the democratic gains made so far being eroded by the upcoming Kenya Kwanza administration

● By OSCAR OBONYO

While he ponders his next political move after his fifth stab at the presidency came to naught, murmurs over Raila Odinga's succession are quickly gaining currency in his strongholds.

Even then, is there any succession plan within the Azimio la Umoja-One Kenya and Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) outfits should Raila exit the stage this year? How about in his Luo Nyanza backyard and within the larger Odinga family?

In a statement on September 5, soon after the Supreme Court dismissed his petition to overturn William Ruto's election, the Azimio presidential flag-bearer said he accepted the verdict but vowed to continue the struggle for accountability: "We will be communicating in the near future on our plans to continue our struggle for transparency, accountability and democracy."

According to sources close to Raila, retirement from (active) politics is not on his mind. His pursuit for the presidency may be waning but the ODM leader feels strongly about standing up for the interests of Kenyans. He is reportedly concerned about the possibility of the democratic gains made so far being eroded by the upcoming administration. On account of protecting such achievements alone, Raila is sticking in there as the people's watchman.

Opinion is divided on this front, however, as some of his allies, disappointed with the turn of events, want him to quit. This lot wants the former Prime Minister to let the "ungrateful" voters face the consequences – if any – of their choices. Raila, they advise, should take a rest and spend his sunset years in peace and comfort with family.

On the other hand, the thought of Raila's retirement is unpalatable to politicians who have over the years hung onto his coattails to remain politically afloat. Like his father, who enjoyed unparalleled loyalty

among members of the Luo community in the 1970s through to 1994, Raila enjoys fervent political support in the Luo Nyanza region, a wave on which many have ridden to rise to power.

For nearly three decades, Raila bestrode Kenya's political scene like a colossus. His loss in the recent presidential poll is already bad enough as it has ignited defections to Ruto's camp, and his exit would only make things worse by exposing his bases across the country to political overtures from rival camps and decimating his support.

Within Azimio, Raila was only the first among 20 equals on account of him being the presidential candidate, a status that could change now that the elections are over. Already, Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka has vowed to vie for the top seat in 2027.

In Raila's backyard of Luo Nyanza, the gubernatorial races were very competitive, in part because they were viewed as strategic positioning for politicians angling to suc-

ceed Raila. In Homa Bay County, for instance, former Nairobi Governor Evans Kidero put up a colourful show of might and even after being elbowed out in the ODM party primaries, staged an electrifying campaign, losing with a relatively small margin to Gladys Wanga.

Wanga was Raila's preferred candidate for obvious reasons that partly touch on the historic political rivalries between Central and South Nyanza, which in the 1960s pitted Jaramogi Oginga Odinga against Tom Mboya. Central Nyanza covers Siaya and Kisumu counties, while the South encompasses Migori and Homa Bay.

Kidero, whose relationship with Raila is rather lukewarm, has often – rightly or wrongly – been linked to schemes to undermining Raila or forcing him into political retirement. And while the Orange party leader has strived to retain unity in Luo Nyanza, Kidero has been viewed as quietly pursuing a strategy of emerging as leader of South Nyanza in the same way the late Tom Mboya of South Nyanza fought off Raila's father, Jaramogi, of the Central region. Instructively, Kidero-

ro is the late Mboya's son-in-law.

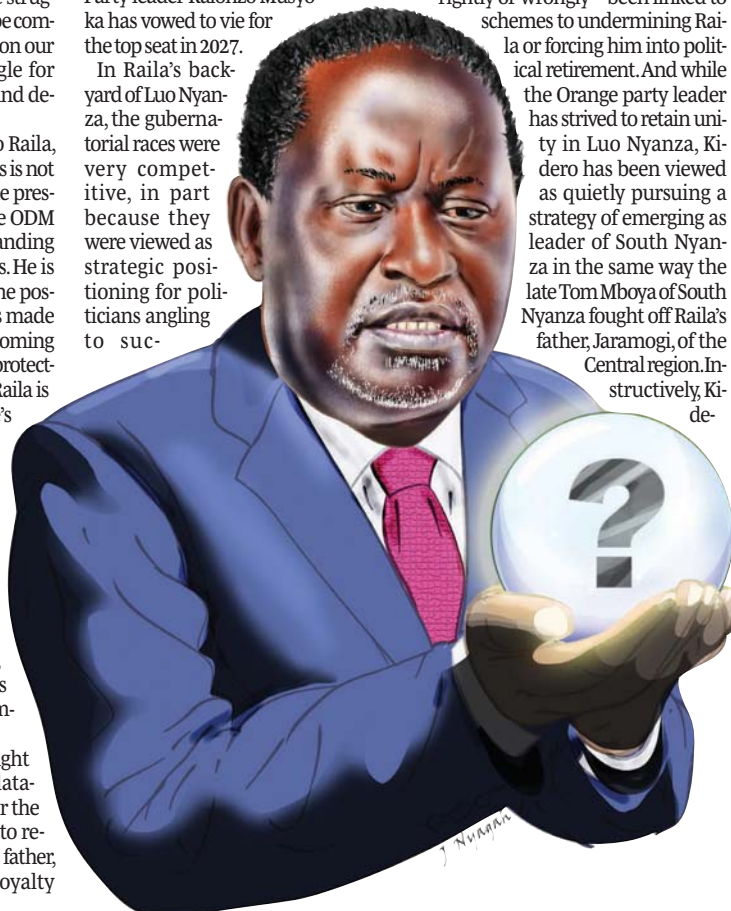
In Siaya, home to the Odingas, lawyer James Orenge was elected governor with spirited support from Raila, which places him ahead of the pack in the Raila succession race. Raila also has a soft spot for politicians with reform credentials, especially those who fought alongside him in the trenches in the late 1980s. Kisumu Governor Prof Anyang'Nyong'o falls in this category. In Nyanza politics, however, leadership is neither handed over nor received on a silver platter. It is fought for – sometimes viciously. This was the case between Mboya and Jaramogi in the 1960s, and Raila and Orenge in 1994.

Orenge, who was a personal lawyer and confidant of Jaramogi's, was the old man's choice. But Raila upstaged and outwitted Orenge in home turf battles that saw the younger Odinga exit Ford-Kenya to join the newly formed National Development Party (NDP). Raila similarly outfoxed other challengers, including Nyong'o and Shem Ochuodho, and managed to run off with the local support.

At family level, Raila's elder brother Ruth Odinga, who were elected in the August poll as Senator for Siaya County and Woman Representative for Kisumu County respectively, make the list of possible successors.

Other key areas of interest for Raila are western Kenya, where Azimio clinched four out of five governors' slots (in Busia, Vihiga, Kakamega and Trans Nzoia), and the coastal region, which is increasingly under political invasion from Ruto. Incidentally, outgoing governors Wycliffe Oparanya (Kakamega) and Hassan Joho (Mombasa) are Raila's deputy leaders in ODM but there has been no mention of a succession plan.

Having been caught flat-footed, Raila, who was confident of victory in the just ended presidential election, may be persuaded to hang in there just a little longer so that he can solidify his political bases and secure democratic gains made thus far before exiting the scene.



kenya lens

■ ODINGA WHO? GOING AGAINST THE GRAIN

THE RARIEDA REBELLION

The constituency was hived from the larger Bondo in 1988, and is the epitome of resistance to Odinga's political kingdom in Nyanza

● By OSCAR OBONYO

When he first vied for the presidency 24 years ago, Raila Amolo Odinga faced initial resistance from his rural backyard of Nyanza. Then, the revolt was spearheaded by Rarieda MP Achieng' Oneko. Ever since then, Rarieda politicians have remained a thorn in Odinga's flesh.

In the just-concluded elections, Eliud Owalo – a Nairobi-based politician from Rarieda – is among those who created avenues for the infiltration of Odinga's rural backyard of Luo Nyanza by his main rival, President-elect William Ruto.

Owalo's role is a political sting of sorts, considering the long-standing history between the politician and the former Prime Minister. The strategic planning expert, who served as Odinga's presidential campaign manager in 2013, was among the first key operatives from Luo Nyanza to jump to Ruto's side three years ago, at a time when it was considered politically risky to do so.

In Nyanza, Owalo and his ilk from Rarieda are not new to political rebellion, especially against Odinga. It would appear that Rarieda Constituency, which was hived from the larger Bondo in 1988, is the epitome of resistance to Odinga's political kingdom.

The death of Ford-Kenya's pioneer party leader and Bondo MP, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga on January 20, 1994, exposed the younger Odinga to the initial rebellion. When Raila fell out with Jaramogi's successor, Michael Kijana Wamalwa, and formed the National Party of Kenya (NPK), Oneko led a resistance against migration into the new outfit.

The veteran politician and independence hero told Odinga to his face that he would not allow him to lead Luo Nyanza MPs allied to Ford-Kenya to the NPK. "I spent my youthful years in politics supporting your father and there is no way I am going to follow his son as well. You should follow me," Oneko, a member of the famed pre-independence "Kapenguria six", firmly stated.

As it turned out, Oneko and his allies were swept aside by the "Tinga" (symbol of the NPK party) political wave in the subsequent 1997 elections. He was replaced by NPK's George Odeng'Ngure. Like his father, Lwande Oneko would later join politics through the now Moses Wetangula-led Ford-Kenya. Lwande only defected early this year to the Democratic Action Party-Kenya (DAP-K), which is associated with Defence minister Eugene Wamalwa.

There has since been Raphael Tuju, area MP between 2002 and 2007, who fell out with Odinga and spearheaded the 2007 presidential campaigns of Mwai Kibaki in Nyanza. In 2017, as Secretary-General of Jubilee Party, Tuju secured Uhuru's re-election.



Achieng' Oneko

tion.

Tuju's successor in 2007, Nicholas Gumbo, concedes to having started off with Odinga on a positive note "only for things to change when I sought to become Siaya Governor". In both 2017 and this year, the politician says he fell out of favour with Odinga

2017

As secretary-general of the ruling Jubilee Party, Raphael Tuju secured President Uhuru Kenyatta's reelection.

ga and had to vie independently and with the United Democratic Movement (UDM) party, respectively. Gumbo shifted his allegiance to Ruto after UDM pulled out of Odinga's Azimio La Umoja-One Kenya coalition. For him, it is purely a case of fighting for his political space and which the two-time MP believes UDM will accord him that opportunity.

The presence of Gumbo, who narrowly lost to James Orengo, puts him on a collision course with the Azimio coalition. The import of this is that Gumbo is scheduled to offer a crucial political infiltration avenue for Kenya Kwanza into Odinga's backyard.

Unknown to outsiders, though, is the additional factor of clan pride and rivalries. The original Bondo constituency consisted of four major Luo clans of Sakwa, Imbo, Uyoma and Asembo. Political heat set in ahead of the 1988 elections, when President Daniel arap Moi split the constituency into two in a move believed to benefit his political allies. In the new arrangement, the Sakwa and Imbo clans fell under Bondo, while Uyoma and Asembo were in the newly created Rarieda.

Political wave

With opposition figure Jaramogi enjoying a firm hold on the lower side of Bondo, the creation of Rarieda was partly aimed at giving the establishment alternative and friendlier leadership. In a way, Rarieda was primarily a product of political opposition against the Odingas, and later-day politicians may be subconsciously following through this reality. Over the years, taking a firm position against the Odinga political wave has had its consequences. In 2007, for instance, Tuju says he had to airlift his mother to Nairobi to save her from marauding youth "who were hurling unprintable abuses at her in vernacular".

Owalo, too, acknowledges the danger of going against the grain. "I believe you cannot make any progress in life unless you are a risk-taker. Decision-making is an integral ingredient of leadership, yet that leadership entails both risk-taking and corresponding mitigation," says Owalo.

The UDA deputy secretary general nonetheless believes the perceived hostility of Rarieda politicians towards Raila is mere coincidence "because these differences are not geographical but ideological, based on prevailing circumstances".

This partly speaks to the momentary lukewarm relations between Raila and Dr Otiende Amolo, the current area MP. In May 2021, the lawyer appeared to have stepped on the toes of his boss over the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), after he threw in caution over a series of statutes and the manner the process was being executed.

The ODM party ejected him from the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, where he served as Vice Chairman, replacing him with Ruaraka MP Francis Tom Joseph Kajwang. Consequence maybe, or coincidence?

the limelight



Cyclists light candles as they wait for the body of Suleiman Kangangi at the Eldoret International Airport on September 6. Kangangi died in the US during the 'Vermo Overland' race after a high speed crash. JARED NYATAYA | NATION



Workers carry a painting at the Notre-Dame de Paris cathedral paintings' restoration site on the outskirts of Paris on September 6. PHOTO | AFP



Hindu devotees make an effort to drink wine as an offering from the statue of Sweta Bhairav, the god of protection, on the first day of the Indra Jatra festival in Kathmandu on September 7. PHOTO | AFP



A section of the forest near Hostens, in southwest France, which burned during the Landiras fires. The Gironde department has been marked by fires this summer, with more than 30,000 hectares of forest destroyed in July and August. PHOTO | AFP



Celebrations in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County, after the Supreme Court upheld the election of William Samoei Ruto as the President-elect on September 5. JARED NYATAYA | NATION



Children of workers living in a slum play around their waterlogged dwelling after heavy rains in Bangalore on September 7. PHOTO | AFP

The Arena



PHOTOS | KEVIN ODIT | NATION

UNCHARTERED WATERS

As Kenya seeks to exploit its marine resources, six young women have been trained in deep-sea fishing, until now a male-dominated territory

OPEN SPACE

HEAL A DIVIDED NATION

YOUTH VOICE The President is under obligation to foster national unity by embracing diversity in the appointment of office holders in all government ministries

• BY ERIC NAKHURENYA

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the election of Dr William Ruto as the fifth President of the Republic of Kenya. After months of protracted campaigns, Kenyans can now report to work and continue with their daily chores to support their families.



While it is very easy to say Kenyans are the winners in the just-concluded elections that were largely peaceful, we should all appreciate the words of the Deputy Chief Justice, Philomena Mwili, who said that in a legal battle, just like a political contest, there will always be a winner and a loser.

The big question is – what next for the new government if we are to build a cohesive and united country that offers a genuine promise of prosperity to all Kenyans?

The President is under obligation to foster national unity by embracing diversity in the appointment of office holders in all government ministries. A President keen to build true nationalism will not find it hard to carry out the delicate balancing act of government appointments that reflect our diversity, which is our strength.

The immediate task that awaits the new President is to assemble his Cabinet and other public officers who will assist the government in delivering on its numerous pledges.

As the appointing authority of the executive wing of government, the President holds the key to establishing a united

country or running a divided nation for the next five years or more.

It is an open secret that Kenyans have in the past registered their disapproval of how government appointments were skewed and marred by ethnic inclinations and nepotism.

It will be interesting to watch how Dr William Ruto will score on this parameter.

It falls upon every generation to chart a new path. Kenyans chose a peaceful election over violence, which would have watered down gains made over the years.

Therefore, the new government takes over a relatively peaceful country, albeit one divided along political lines.

This calls for genuine efforts towards the national healing process and building of an all-inclusive government.

There is a need to forge a closer working relationship between the counties and the national government.

The government holds a huge budget that requires fair and equitable distribution through the implementation of key state projects.

Regions that have in the past been confined to underdevelopment should be given attention if we hope to open up opportunities that will help Kenya address some of her most pressing needs, such as unemployment.

Are you young and ambitious? We would like to hear from you. Send your views and observations on topical issues to: weeklyview@ke.nationmedia.com

MIND SPEAK



Nellie Aoko
Despite losing the election, Raila Odinga remains a national hero. He is the President Kenya will never have. We celebrate him because we are where we are because of him. The freedom we are enjoying today is because of him.
— Digital marketer



Joan Muhongo
Elections are usually held for better governance. Even though Raila Odinga and William Ruto had different ideas on how to run the country, they should play their roles in building the nation. We need them to empower Kenyans.
— Psychologist



Mendy Hameda
Your quest for democracy inspires all Kenyans. The fight for good governance doesn't end with an election outcome but with your continued promotion of human rights. It's my hope that you will continue inspiring this nation.
— Student



Levi Lemayian
Raila Odinga is a good leader who has fought for our democracy. He should hold his head up high and work together with President-elect William Ruto. As an opposition leader, he can ensure the government serves Kenyans the right way.
— Photographer

DISPATCHES FROM THE DEEP SEA

A WHOLE NEW KETTLE OF FISH

GIRLS FISH TOO: In Mombasa, it's not business as usual. Six women have flipped traditional gender roles and entered the male-dominated world of deep-sea fishing

• By WINNIE ATIENO

It is a calm and breezy morning at the Sh318 million Liwatoni Fisheries Complex, Kenya's first fishing port located in Mombasa.

As six women board *The Jonas*, a deep sea fishing vessel, a heavy tide sweeps across the Indian Ocean. They glance pensively at the waters around them, thinking of the adventure ahead of them – ten days of training in deep sea fishing.

Aged between 23 to 25 years old, these are the first qualified female deep sea fisherfolk in Kenya. They were first trained in fisheries management by the Kenya Fisheries Service, and later deployed to the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), where they learnt fish identification, weighing, sampling and how to fish for the various species. Thereafter they enrolled at the Bandari Maritime Academy for a seafaring course.

The six women have flipped traditional gender roles as they enter the male-dominated world of deep-sea fishing.

Fatma Abdalla, 24, was working as a receptionist at a private hospital in Kwale when she saw an advert from the government recruiting young people aged between 18 to 35 to be trained in fishing. The young lady from Wasini island decided to give it a try.

"I am eying the Shimoni Fishing port. If I won't be among the beneficiaries of this major infrastructural project in my home area, who will? I am preparing myself for the future. Fortune favours the bold," quips Abdhalla.

Clad in a black *buibui*, she stares deeply into the Indian Ocean, and expresses optimism that the fishing sector will help to solve the unemployment crisis in the country.

"My parents were thrilled when I told them that I had been selected to train as a fisherwoman. Their support has encouraged me. I am their only daughter and the youngest of four children. My elder brother, who is a fisherman, is my role model. He inspired me to go for it," she adds.

Teresia Kitindi, 23, from Taita Taveta has always been fascinated by large masses of water. She could not find employment after completing her Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education at Voi Secondary School five years ago. In 2020, she decided to try her luck with the government-funded training in fishing.

"There are no jobs cut out for men or women. I urge young women to try their hand at



Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute researcher, Dr James Mwaluma, speaks to the press at the Liwatoni Fisheries Complex on September 6. KEVIN ODITI/NATION

any opportunities they get," she said.

Maxine Ogenda, 23, was studying Clearing and Forwarding at the Kenya School of Revenue Administration in Mombasa when she heard that the government was recruiting women to be trained in deep sea fishing. She did not hesitate to send in her application.

"Fishing is in my genetics. My parents have a small boat which I have been using to fish. I will be the best fisherwoman ever," she declares.

Najma Machuyu, 25, is in the same boat. The eldest of six girls from Tana River County has been fishing since she was six using small boats. She had always wanted to be a fisherwoman but did not have the right papers to seek employment. Instead, she had taken a computer course and was working at a cyber café when she came across the training opportunity in her dream career.

Vivian Obondo hails from Homabay County and decided to venture into the ocean to ex-

plore. The 23-year-old is excited about the future. "I have been eager to do this. I want to be exposed to the marine sector. I want to own my boats and employ fellow women," she gushes. Equally ambitious is Emily Doyo, 24, from Tana River who aspires to own a fishing vessel.

According to KMFRI Assistant Director for Fisheries, Dr Nina Wambiji, the government wants to build the capacity of youthful fisherfolk to understand the marine system so that they can engage in it productively.

She is proud of the six young women they have trained. "They have taken up the challenge to go and participate in the marine sector. Women do not normally engage in deep-sea fishing for cultural and religious reasons, and the long hours involved. The fact that their parents have allowed them to venture into this male-dominated industry is a major milestone," notes Wambiji.

Also sailing out on *The Jonas* are four young men, making a total of ten trainees. Pweza Fisheries' General Manager, Ms Jane Njeri, who owns the fishing vessel, decided to partner with the state to build capacity of women in the sector.

She is the first Kenyan woman to own a deep-sea fishing vessel. She and her two partners own two other boats. "These are factory

Sh1 bn

The government has set aside Sh1 billion to train 1,000 young people in deep-sea fishing annually.

vessels. The 10 young people will be trained in commercial fishing.

When they go to sea everything is done on board, including cleaning and packing, so that by the time they come back to shore the fish is ready for export to Europe and other markets," Njeri explains.

But it will not be easy for the new seafarers, she says. "We are expecting very rough seas and I know they will get seasick, but we have medication to help with that. It will be a new experience for them, far out in the ocean with no network, no sign of life except for the other people in the boat and, if they are lucky, another passing vessel."

She has never taken women out to sea before, but she is keen to create an environment where Kenya can have female captains and crew, just like in the aviation sector.

"Argentina is the only country I know that has whole crews of women going to sea to fish. There's money to be made in fishing – around US\$700 for the lowest cadre plus commission for every ton of fish caught," Njeri says.

The Jonas will go all the way to the Somali and Tanzania border, about 240 nautical miles. After the training, she will either employ them or recommend them to other companies.

Deep sea fishing in Kenya, she says, is uncharted territory. The maritime management expert

Kenya's annual fish production stands at 160,000 metric tonnes against a potential of 300,000 metric tonnes annually. Statistics show that there is a deficit of approximately 400,000 metric tonnes of fish in the country.

lived in Europe for 15 years before returning to Kenya to venture into fishing. She exports her catch to the EU, which is a very tough market to enter. She mainly sells swordfish, which is popular in Italy, Spain and the US, as well as tuna, the blue marines, kingfish, red snapper and lobster.

The government has trained 408 young people in deep sea fishing since 2020 following a presidential directive.

Kenyan fishers, notes Fisheries Service Officer Mwaka Saidi, have always been dependent on waters close to the shore and within the reefs as they lack both skills and equipment to look for catch in the deep sea.

Kenya's annual fish production stands at 160,000 metric tonnes against a potential of 300,000 metric tonnes annually. Statistics from KMFRI show that there is a deficit of approximately 400,000 metric tonnes of fish in the country.

Kenya aims to train 5,000 fisherfolk to address unemployment and export labour "After training, there are ready job opportunities. Currently, the vessels fishing within our territory are manned by foreigners from West Africa, Seychelles and other places. We want them to employ our people," says Mwaka.

Although the country is allowed to license around 70 fishing vessels in its deep sea territory, Kenyan fishermen lack the technology and industrial equipment needed for deep sea fishing.

Now, with the country having set aside Sh1 billion to train 1,000 young people yearly in deep-sea fishing, the country can look forward to benefiting fully from its rich marine supplies.

My parents were thrilled when I told them that I had been selected to train as a fisherwoman. Their support has encouraged me. I am their only daughter and the youngest of four children. My elder brother, who is a fisherman, is my role model. He inspired me to go for it.

Fatma Abdalla



Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute assistant director, Dr Nina Wambiji (second left), with the young women who have flipped traditional gender roles to dive into the world of deep-sea fishing. KEVIN ODITI | NATION

THE BIG INTERVIEW

BUMPY ROAD TO PARLIAMENT

HONOURABLE MEMBER: With no money and no family of his own, Peter Salasya managed to win the Mumias East Constituency seat with good humour, sheer honesty and a solid belief in his cause

• BY AMINA WAKO

He was mocked for not having a wife and family, but as he canvassed for a parliamentary seat in the 2022 General Election, Peter Salasya laughed off the criticism in his seemingly carefree and humorous manner, gently moving his audience's attention to his campaign agenda.

Salasya, 32, had the last laugh on August 9, when he was elected Member of Parliament for Mumias East, making him one of the youngest legislators in the country.

Born in 1989, the second of seven children, Salasya

was raised in Kisumu Ndogo in Kakamega County, attending Shianderema Primary School and Lubija Boys' High School. His father died when he was in Form Two, leaving the family financially strained as his jobless mother became the sole breadwinner.

"It was by the grace of God that I managed to complete school. I was sent away countless times for unpaid fees, and I sometimes stayed home for many days; as my mother looked for money to send me back," he recalls. When he was called to Egerton University for a Bachelor of Commerce degree course, his brother,



Defence Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa campaigns with DAP-K's Peter Salasya at Shikanda market in Kakamega on August 5. ISAAC WALE | NATION

The FLIP SIDE
With John Niyaganangah
jnyaga@ke.nationmedia.com

ALL EYES ON HIM

BRAND NEW GOVERNOR OF NAIROBI JOHNSON SAKAJA HAS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING SINCE TAKING OFFICE ON 25TH OF AUGUST. HE HAS SINCE STRIPPED THE NAIROBI METROPOLITAN SERVICES OF REVENUE COLLECTION AMONG OTHER ROLES, ORDERED RELEASE OF ALL IMPOUNDED MOTORCYCLES AND WITHDRAWAL OF CASES AGAINST RIDERS. HE HAS ALSO VOWED TO DEAL ONCE AND FOR ALL WITH THE PERPETUAL GARBAGE MENACE IN NAIROBI 'IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS' ACCORDING TO HIS SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES.
ALL THE BEST YOUR EXCELLENCY!!

STAR OF THE WEEK

LINET CHEPKORIR AKA 'TOTO' HAS EARNED HERSELF A PAGE IN HISTORY BOOKS BY BECOMING THE YOUNGEST WOMAN REPRESENTATIVE AFTER THE AUGUST 9 GENERAL ELECTIONS.

MS CHEPKORIR, 24, IS AN APRIL 2021 GRADUATE OF CHUKA UNIVERSITY. SHE FLOORED EIGHT OLDER CANDIDATES TO BECOME THE THIRD WOMAN REPRESENTATIVE IN BOMET COUNTY.

AS HER COMPETITORS TRAVERSED THE COUNTY WITH FUEL-GUZZLING VEHICLES, MS CHEPKORIR WALKED TO CAMPAIGN VENUES WHILE ALSO SOMETIMES TAKING FREE MOTORCYCLE RIDES PROVIDED BY WELL-WISHERS. TALK ABOUT DETERMINATION!!

12,140

Votes Peter Salasya garnered to win the Mumias East parliamentary seat. David Wamatsi of ANC got 9,403 votes, while Benson Mapwoni of UDA had 5,118.

James Salasia, promised to pay for his studies. But three months after Peter joined the university, James lost his job.

“My only option was to go back home to the village. It was very humiliating after bragging about how I made it to university,” he concedes. He decided to ask his Member of Parliament for a recommendation to receive a scholarship from the constituency development fund.

“He declared he would do no such thing. Instead he advised me to organise a fundraiser and promised to donate Sh5,000 towards my education. I left feeling sorry for myself and went home crying, because I thought that was the end of my education,” says Salasya.

Inflexible office hours

Eventually the university allowed him to study for free. But the incident with his MP had stirred in him a desire to vie for leadership so that he could make a difference in other people’s lives. In his third year, he vied for vice-chair of the student’s union and won.

After his graduation in 2013, Salasya got a job as a bicycle salesperson, which allowed him to move around Mumias East constituency. As he interacted with people from all walks of life, his dream of representing his people was rekindled. He decided to go for the MP’s seat.

“It was like a very big joke, You see, the Luhya culture dictates that a leader must have a house, a wife and a family of his own. I had nothing,” he recalls.

At the beginning of election year 2017, Salasya got a job as a banker. The inflexible office hours left no time for him to campaign and he failed miserably at the polls, emerging third with only 254 votes.

“It was painful. I felt embarrassed



Mumias East MP Peter Salasya at Parliament Buildings on September 8. JEFF ANGOTE | NATION

and rejected by my own community, but I decided to pick up the pieces and move on.” He set his sights on the 2022 general election and began preparing early by attending as many local events as he could, including burials and weddings. He also took up the cause of revival of the collapsed Mumias Sugar company, which had once been the economic fulcrum for hundreds of sugarcane farmers.

“With my Bachelor of Commerce

background, I understood what was happening with the company and kept people informed. My fight to get it revived put me in good standing with the community,” Salasya explains.

Lack of funds

He was also honest about his lack of finances. “I told the people that I did not have money, and I was encouraged because they still bought into my ideas and agenda. To make up for lack of funds for rallies, I knocked on the door of almost every household in the constituency and asked for their votes.” Things slowly began to fall into place. For advertising, he opted to brand as many stones as he could with his campaign

It was by the grace of God that I managed to complete school. I was sent away countless times for unpaid fees, and I sometimes stayed home for many days as my mother looked for money to send me back.

Peter Salasya



posters, boosting his visibility. His supporters surprised him by collecting money and building him a house, to satisfy at least one community expectation.

He still had no wife, though, but not for lack of trying: a girlfriend he had been living with left him for a wealthy man before the elections because ‘I could not afford her lifestyle’.

Salasya joined the DAP-Kenya party after failing to get an ODM nomination. As it turned out, this was a smart move. He won the seat with 12,140 votes, becoming the only MP elected on the DAP-Kenya ticket. He floored David Wamatsi of ANC (9,403 votes) and Benson Mapwoni of UDA, who garnered 5,118 votes.

As he had promised, his agenda is to ensure equitable bursary allocation to all needy students in the constituency, raise the education standards in the constituency, empower youth and women and get the Mumias Sugar Company back on its feet.

He advises young people who are planning to go into politics: “Put God first, have a dream and be yourself. Don’t change to fit in. Talk to the people you want to represent and be consistent.”

Born in 1989, the second of seven children, Salasya was raised in Kisumu Ndogo in Kakamega County, attending Shianderema Primary School and Lubinu Boys’ High School. His father died when he was in Form Two, leaving the family financially strained as his jobless mother became the sole breadwinner.

opinion



■ Urgent action needed: Bitterness or revenge will only cloud Ruto’s head and vision

Mr President, it’s time to unite the nation

Deputy President William Ruto, a man vilified as thief-in-chief, plunderer of public coffers and purveyor of perversion from the campaign stump, will on Tuesday be sworn in as the fifth President of Kenya.

Ruto, who was rejected by President Kenyatta and against whom the President unapologetically campaigned, dismissing him as unfit to lead, was declared winner of the presidential poll of August 8 and upheld as such by the Supreme Court on Monday. The President, who has yet to congratulate Ruto, did not even refer to him by name when commenting on the apex court’s validation of his election. Miffed, he wondered why the court would rule one way in one election and another way in the next.

The DP, who was sneered at by juniors in the governing party and scolded in public and private by ministers of government, will shortly be the holder of the highest office in the land. But when Ruto is sworn in as President, he must remember that bitterness never made a man better nor does vengeance make a leader’s head clearer. He must be humbled by that ill-tempered, four-year-long campaign he and rivals waged and turn the other cheek.

It was Mario Cuomo, the late three-time Democratic governor of New York, who said that you campaign in poetry and govern in prose. There was nothing lofty or inspiring in the speeches or

Ruto will be aware that there are many among the political and moneyed classes who have absolutely no time for him. They hear his hustler narrative of a son of a peasant who came good (poetry). But they are suspicious of his class and source of riches.



**KWENDO
OPANGA**

songs of the just-concluded electioneering. They were putrid and insipid. But as President, Ruto must bring class (poetry) to the difficult business (prose) of governing. President Ruto must carry with him his Bible, especially the New Testament (forgive those who trespass against us), and not the Old Testament (an eye for an eye). In a classic example of misrepresentation of the Arabian tale, Ruto was branded Ali Baba where his rival Raila Odinga was affectionately called Baba. Ali Baba was cast as a thief and the leader of a gang of 40 thieves ready to pillage Kenya.

Plundered public coffers

Ali Baba was no thief; he led no gang of thieves. He was a humble wood-cutter who stumbled upon a cave in which 40 thieves had hidden their treasure. He eavesdropped on their conversation and learned the password to the magical door. Open Sesame!

President Ruto must prove those who accused him of plundering public coffers wrong by running a tight ship, protecting public resources, keeping public offices accountable, and ensuring law enforcement and the judicial system serve the citizens of this country fairly and expeditiously.

Therefore, while Ruto in his acceptance speech said the criminal justice system will never be weaponised nor unleashed on political rivals, he must similarly ensure that it will never be used to protect those who would sweep crimes against the people under the carpet. Ruto will be aware that there are many among the political and moneyed classes who have absolutely no time for him. They hear his hustler narrative of a son of a peasant who came good (poetry). But they are suspicious of his class and source of riches.

The hustlers want Ruto to make them rich. The moneyed want him to protect their wealth. Some believe it’s their turn to eat. Most, however, just want the government to work and Ruto to keep his promises so that they can improve their lives.

None of the above is poetry. It is prose, especially when Ruto will look at his in-tray and read this caption. Urgent Action Needed: economy ravaged by Covid-19, strangled by debt and threatened by a looming global recession. Bitterness or revenge will only serve to cloud President Ruto’s head and vision. He must make it a priority to bring together and unite Kenyans, whom he and his rivals divided.

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opinion

■ The ultimate recognition for a freedom fighter is not just in merely becoming President

Despite Raila's defeat, his name is firmly etched in the African roll of honour



MACHARIA
GAITHO

Raila Odinga has the option to shuffle out in defeat; broken, angry, embittered and consumed by the sense of betrayal. For any ordinary mortal, losing an election for a fifth time, especially on the back of such an illustrious career so fully deserving of the ultimate public recognition, would be heartbreaking.

It is therefore encouraging to see that he is taking it all in his stride. It would be terrible to see him bring an end to a remarkable public life by slinking off into a deep, dark hole. At the age of 77, he will obviously have to contemplate the likelihood that he is done with running for President. But he has already indicated that a fifth electoral loss, including being victim of blatant rigging on two occasions, is not the end of the world.

Raila still has a lot to do, especially when he realises that being President is not always the ultimate goal. Without ever sitting in State House, he has contributed more to the political and social development of Kenya than any other individual since the stalwarts who led the fight for Independence from British colonial rule.

He can look back at a long list of champions of freedom and justice across the world who never became president, but whose accomplishments and sacrifices dwarf in the annals those who rode on their backs to the ultimate prize.

Indeed, ultimate recognition for a freedom fighter is not just in merely becoming President,

but in leading a people to unshackle themselves from the chains of political, economic and mental subjugation. If it was not for the likes of Dedan Kimathi, Jomo Kenyatta, Oginga Odinga, Bildad Kaggia, Harry Thuku, Achieng' Ouko and others who were at the forefront in challenging the might of the British Empire, Kenyans would never have realised that they were an enslaved, subjugated, oppressed people.

The yearning for freedom would never have been sparked in the minds of the people were it not for the brave pioneers who showed the way. Kenya would probably have remained a British colony for many more years.

It also took the likes of Raila — alongside fellow heroes Kenneth Matiba, Charles Rubia, Masinde Muliro, Paul Muite, Henry Okullu, Gitobu Imanjara, Timothy Njoya, and Oginga Odinga, again — to pick up the cudgels in the fight against one-party dictatorship. The freedoms we enjoy today are directly owed to those who led the fight for a Second Liberation. Not all the heroes lived to see the fruits of their labour. Many died in battle, or on the cusp of victory were shoved aside by others who might have played safe or even consorted with the oppressors.

Such is the nature of life, which also reminds us that those who lead the fight for freedom do so not so that they can replace the oppressor in the seat of power, but so that their people can be free.

Raila's name is firmly and indelibly etched in

the Kenyan and African roll of honour. As a liberator, a campaigner for social, economic and political transformation, a thinker and visionary, he stands head and shoulders above President-elect William Ruto, outgoing president Uhuru Kenyatta and their two predecessors, Mwai Kibaki and Daniel arap Moi.

Even if he does not run again for President, Raila has a lot of work to do in leading dispirited forces that must stand up and continue the battle. The next phase is not merely about opposing the new Ruto regime, but about the continuing struggle for social and economic emancipation, and also eternal vigilance in protection of the rights and freedoms we so often take for granted. We have already seen how hungry quislings are betraying their voters by abandoning the Azimio coalition in pursuit of dregs from Ruto's Kenya Kwanza buffet table.

It will take strong leadership to instill order, discipline and commitment if the Azimio ranks in the Parliament of Kenya and the county governments are to play effective watchdog roles.

Any government not properly held to account will be tempted to take us back to the dark days of both untrammelled violations of human rights and grand theft of public resources. Raila cannot ride off into the sunset just yet, and in the meantime also needs to nurture a new generation of leaders to eventually step into his giant shoes.

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From Solomonic wisdom to 'Inky Pinky Ponky', it's done and dusted

The nation was on almost literal judicial pins and needles last week as senior lawyers sparred in the Supreme Court over the outcome of the presidential election. Top legal minds wowed laymen with their grasp of the law. The judges, to their credit, stayed sober throughout the ping-pong between the rival parties, with some nursery school rhymes coming in handy.

Many things have been said about the 'seven wise men and women' since the judgment on Monday, but the one charge that cannot honestly be laid against them is that they lack charisma. Dressed in their red-and-black flow-



ALLAN
BULUKU

ing robes, the Supreme Court judges did not disappoint. From Justice Smokin Wanjala's Biblical adventures to Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwili's Solomonic wisdom, 'The Seven' dazzled the nation with brilliance.

Some lawyers embarrassed themselves with lame-duck answers while others presented 'evidence' that turned out to be "no more than hot air and a wild goose chase

that yielded nothing of value", in the bench's words — terminology that has sparked furore among a section of commentators.

In the end, a decision had to be made. Those sympathetic to the petitioners took offence with the 'flowery' language employed by Chief Justice Martha Koome in her abridged judgment. But the celebrated judge, a warm-hearted lady who wouldn't hurt a fly, said it was the "work of God". While the judgment ended a long-drawn-out battle for State House between President-elect William Ruto and Azimio la Umoja-One Kenya flag bearer Raila Odinga, it left one half of the country

dejected. Indeed, the words of Justice Mwili summed it up very well when she said: "More than six million of the voters shall be overjoyed while another almost of the same number shall be thoroughly disappointed. However, that is the nature of our job." That, too, came to pass.

In 2000, something similar happened in the United States. In one of the closest and most controversial polls in American history, the Supreme Court decided in favour of the Republican George W. Bush after a statistical deadlock with Democratic candidate Al Gore in the state of Florida.

Bush claimed Florida by a measly 537 votes. Here, Pres-

ident-elect Ruto avoided a run-off by about 69,000 votes. Well, Kenya is slowly winning back some trust for its election counting.

The Supreme Court has done its job and the likes of *The New York Times*, who were of the base opinion that in Kenya the people vote and wait for the apex court to 'pick' the President, should be treated with the contempt of which only Kenyans are capable.

The dust is gradually settling and this week, we shall inaugurate the new President as per the 2010 Constitution. It's a new dawn for the nation. We must do that with our heads held high.

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kenya lens

■ RISE AND FALL OF THE MOIS

GIDEON DROPS THE BATON

The Moi political dynasty in the Rift Valley appears to have become the first casualty of Ruto's rise to Kenya's presidency

● By JOHN KAMAU

Unlike his father, who grew up herding goats, Gideon Moi grew up playing polo. With a wealthy billionaire father, President Daniel arap Moi, and a powerful godfather, Attorney-General Charles Njonjo, Gideon was the ultimate pedigree – but not in politics.

While his eldest brother Jonathan was in motorsports, Gideon was a breeder of polo ponies, a hobby that he turned into a business. In his privileged life, however, Gideon has had more horses than political friends. In fact, only Kanu Secretary-General, Nick Salat, could be counted as his close political ally.

But Nick's fortunes were buried together with those of Gideon and the Moi dynasty when President-elect William Ruto's crushing wave swept through the Rift Valley in the just-concluded General Election.

For the last 67 years – since 1955 – the Moi family has had at least one of its members in Kenya's parliament, both colonial and independent. In the past two decades, two of Moi's sons, Gideon and Raymond, have been members of parliament – though neither has emerged to command a national constituency like their father did.

Before he entered politics, Gideon was only known in polo and wheeler-dealing circles. The public knew little of him. His name began to be mentioned in the prelude to the 1997 General Election, when he brought together his Asian friends to raise funds for Kanu's campaigns. Unlike the previous elections in 1992, when looted Goldenberg funds financed the campaigns, the ruling party now turned to tycoons who had benefited from the 'magnanimity' that came with state capture for support.

The Salford University graduate



The dwindling fortunes of the cockerel party: Where he fell short in politics, Gideon Moi more than made up for in business and polo.

was closer to his father than his other siblings. Moi's biographer, Andrew Morton, made this observation, too. "Moi had little joy from his family... With the possible exception of Gideon and June, the President feels disappointed and rather let down by his children. It is noticeable that, in contrast to the days when Kenyatta was President, his family rarely appears at formal public functions, such as Madaraka Day, to give him support."

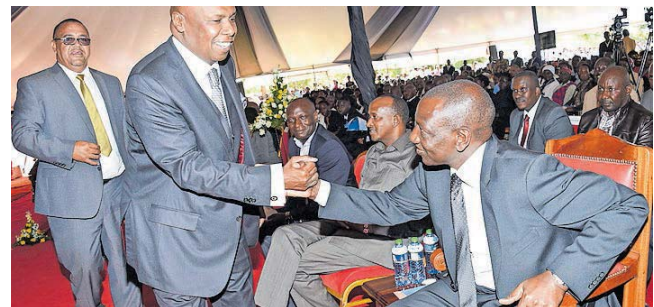
Initially touted to succeed the former President for the Baringo Central seat was Cooperative Bank chairman Hoseah Kiplagat, a powerful Moi-era baron. But during a November 2002 meeting held at Gideon's expansive Alphega Sisal Farm in Koibatek at which Kiplagat was present, Gideon was endorsed by 3,000 Kanu delegates to inherit his father's seat. In those days, the Salford University graduate had only a smattering of the Swahili language, certainly not enough to address a pub-

lic rally. According to media accounts, his acceptance address to the meeting was tortured and peppered with a faux British accent. Gideon's 2002 entry into the Baringo Central parliamentary race complicated the contest – especially for those opposed to the rise of a Moi dynasty. His five opponents issued a joint statement at a press conference in Nakuru, promising to fight Gideon and criticising Moi for "entrenching his son to take over from him. It is un-

democratic", they declared. The five were Safina Party secretary-general Juma Kiplenge; Moi critic and Social Democratic Party (SDP) aspirant Amos Kandie, who had vied for the seat against Moi in 1997 and managed a paltry 210 votes to the President's 38,015; lawyer Thomas Lantangu running on a National Rainbow Coalition tickets; and two neophytes, Raymond Kenei and Isaiiah Cherutich.

It remains a mystery what happened between that press conference and the December 27, 2002, General Election, when they all withdrew from the race, leaving Gideon as the only aspirant to enter parliament unopposed. But Gideon Moi was a disappointment in parliament; he hardly ever spoke. He began on a loud note, attacking Kibaki's presidency, but lay low after he was adversely mentioned in the Goldenberg inquiry. In 2020, he was among the senators described as "silent MPs" by a parliamentary watchdog for their minimal contributions in the House. Last year, Gideon was again one of the three worst performing Senators, according to a report by Mzalendo Trust, based on the number of times he spoke in the House as per Hansard records.

Where he fell short in politics Gideon more than made up for in business and polo. After a day of wheeler-dealing, he would team up with Laikipia rancher Cindy Voorspuy, long-time acquaintance Anthony Kegode, Maasai herdsman-turned international polo legend Simon Kusayo, now deceased, and businessman Phillip Arunga for a game of polo. At one point in 1997, Gideon was



Kanu chairman Gideon Moi with President-elect William Ruto.

kenya lens

a member of an all-African team, the Black Rhinos, which won the inaugural Kitemela Birthday Cup started by German hotelier and chef Rolf Schmid, whose Red Bull restaurant was the dining corner of city elite.

While the construction of a Moi political dynasty might have seemed possible with the entry of Gideon and Raymond into national politics, Raila Odinga's Orange Democratic Party's raid on Moi's territory in 2007 decimated Kanu's hold in the Rift Valley, an assault from which the party never recovered. Ruto's United Democratic Alliance (UDA) completely disrupted the party in the Rift Valley, where only Julius Sunkuli and William Kamket survived the UDA onslaught in Kilgoris and Tiaty respectively.

Gideon had harboured presidential ambitions, though he lacked the powerful personality and ruthlessness of a politico. When he spoke, it was soft, and his words were measured. Locals thought he was aloof, perhaps too detached from their problems. When Moi was ailing, Gideon emerged as the family spokesman – determining who would visit the old man at Kabarak, and who would be locked out. Ruto was allegedly denied opportunity to see Moi. Lee Njiru, the former President's spokesman, said Ruto's visits "coincided with the time of Mzee Moi's routine physical exercise with his doctors".

Following the death of his father in February 2020, Gideon was given the 'rod of correction' – a symbolic baton for political leadership – which seemed to signal that a Moi dynasty was about to be created with a Rift Valley power base. That dream is no longer valid. Just as well, considering that Moi was not keen on creating a political dynasty, and had told his biographer as much: "Unlike the Kenyatta clan, there is little sense that Moi is using his position to create a family dynasty or to encourage his offspring to follow him into politics." The former president, he wrote, had remarked that his boys "do not have the toughness or stamina for the hurly-burly of Kenyan political life".

The Moi dynasty appears to have become the first casualty of Ruto's rise to Kenya's presidency. A pity, because Gideon had at last mastered the art of public speaking in Swahili. But he still has his first love, and has recruited his two sons, Kigen and Kimoi, into the polo circles these days. He is also likely to spend more time in the Moi family business, including Kabarak University, which in December 2017 awarded him an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters for his "exemplary service to humanity during his time in government and in his political career".

■ MBOYA DID IT FIRST, NOW IT'S GONE

The death of the campaign T-shirt

● By JOHN KAMAU

Branded campaign T-shirts used to be the ultimate election winner; not any more as pricing and other brand visibility options emerge.

In the just concluded General Election, with a branded T-shirt costing an average of Sh200, aspirants found they had to switch to either billboards or the comfort of digital space. The use of the T-shirt as a campaign utility is coming to a close.

Popularised by US soldiers during the Second World War as an undergarment, the T-shirt would later emerge as a working class garment for some years. It was first featured in Thomas Dewey's 1948 presidential campaign in the US when he used the T-shirt as a medium of communication, public display and endorsement.

Though Dewey, a Republican, lost the race to Harry Truman – meaning the T-shirt magic did not work – it emerged as favourite casual wear.

In Kenya, Tom Mboya was the first politician to don a T-shirt in public when he appeared in a largely forgotten 1958 criminal libel trial against seven African elected members of parliament.

His appearance in court wearing the American T-shirt and a Ghanaian toga of kente cloth got him media attention. Some revolutionaries had started wearing T-shirts with images of famous radical leaders, and the T-shirt emerged as a garment to brand a youth culture of resistance and campaign.

In the 1961 elections, Mboya printed T-shirts bearing the portrait of Jomo Kenyatta, the jailed political leader. This branding was the first time the garment featured in Kenyan elections. Mboya was campaigning for the release of Kenyatta from house arrest, and the printed T-shirt was his form of lobbying.

In the 1960s, parliamentary candidates printed their portraits on T-shirts to distinguish their supporters in the joint Kanu campaigns. The media reported that in the 1974 elections, candidates used as

much as Sh15 to brand a T-shirt. There were no color T-shirts then, and the branding was either done in black and white or was a two-colour job for the rich.

But even after the collapse of the joint campaigns in the 1979 general elections, various candidates printed T-shirts to promote their separate symbols. The entry of Daniel Arap Moi with the motto "Nyayo" led to the printing of various T-shirts emblazoned with footstep symbols and the words "Fuata Nyayo." But this commercialisation of a political slogan was short-lived after Attorney-General Charles Njonjo gazetted the word Nyayo as a protected name under the National Flag, Emblems and Names Act.

The rise of T-shirts reached a crescendo with the multi-party drive when the country was awash with Kanu T-shirts, thanks to Youth for Kanu 92 and the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Ford) parties – Ford-Kenya and Ford-Asili. Kenneth Matiba's wing of Ford (before the breakup) had surprised the other Ford members when it transported thousands of youth wearing T-shirts emblazoned with Matiba's portraits.

Mwai Kibaki's Democratic Party also had T-shirts for the youth identified as "Young Democrats", and many others bearing the lantern symbol.

During the first Jubilee Coalition campaign, containers of T-shirts arrived from China in a campaign that was overflowing with merchandise – more than any other. Not only were T-shirts printed abroad; local printers openly complained that even campaign posters were sourced from foreign printers.

With the rise of Bodabodas as an avenue of branding, the mighty T-shirt has been replaced by the reflector jacket, which is mandatory wear for the riders.

In previous years, the candidate's likeness was printed on virtually anything: buttons, matchboxes, caps, umbrellas, and lesos. But these days, the candidate's visual imagery is brought live on social media, which helps to reinforce brand personality.



In the 1960s, parliamentary candidates printed their portraits on T-shirts to distinguish their supporters in the joint Kanu campaigns.

SCIENCE & TECH

Nasa's Webb telescope captures the majestic 'Tarantula Nebula'

A stellar nursery nicknamed the Tarantula Nebula has been captured in crisp detail by Nasa's Webb telescope, revealing hitherto unseen features that deepen scientific understanding. Officially known as 30 Doradus, the region of space is characterised by its dusty filaments that resemble the legs of a hairy spider,

and has long been a favorite for astronomers interested in star formation.

Thousands of young stars, distant background galaxies, and the detailed structure of the nebula's gas and dust structures were viewable for the first time, thanks to Webb's high resolution infrared instruments.

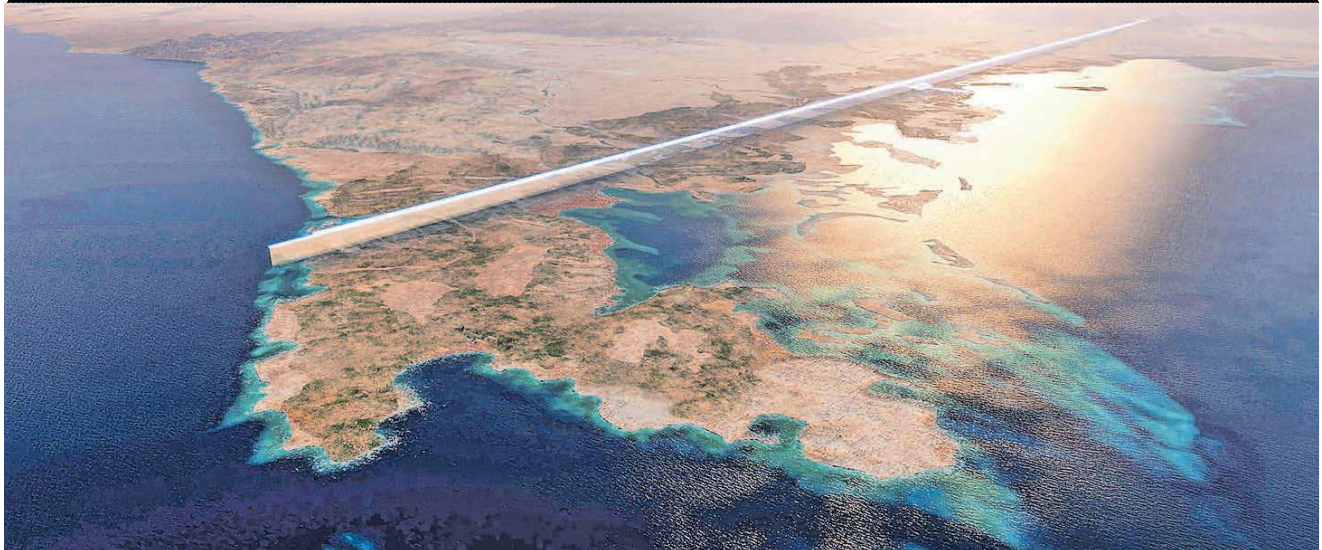
Webb operates primarily in the infrared spectrum, because light from objects in the distant cosmos has been stretched into this wavelength over the course of the universe's expansion.

The telescope's primary imager, Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam), found the cavity in the centre of the nebula was hollowed out by

radiation carried on stellar winds emanating from a cluster of massive young stars, which appear as pale blue dots.

Webb's Near-Infrared Spectrograph (NIRSpec), which analyses light patterns to determine the composition of objects, caught one young star in the act of shedding a cloud of dust from around itself.

A VERTICAL CITY IN THE DESERT



LONDON

Glow-in-the-dark beaches. Billions of trees planted in a country dominated by the desert. Levitating trains. A fake moon. A car-free, carbon-free city built in a straight line over 100 miles long in the desert. These are some of the plans for Neom — a futuristic eco-city that is part of Saudi Arabia's pivot to go green. But is it all too good to be true?

Neom claims to be a “blueprint for tomorrow in which humanity progresses without compromise to the health of the planet”. It's a \$500bn project, part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan to wean the country off oil — the industry that made it rich.

Covering a total area of over 26,500 sq-km — larger than Kuwait or Israel — Neom will, developers claim, exist entirely outside the confines of the current Saudi judicial system, governed by an autonomous legal system that will be drafted up by investors. Ali Shihabi, a former banker now on Neom's advisory board, says the mega-territory will include a 170km (105m) long city, called *The Line*, which will run in a straight line through the desert.

If that sounds unlikely, Shihabi explains that



Renderings depicted in planning documents for 'The Line' show a structure that runs from the Gulf of Aqaba and bisects a mountain range that moves alongside the coast. 'The Line' is a proposed smart linear city in Saudi Arabia in Neom, Tabuk, currently under construction, which is designed to have no cars, streets or carbon emissions.

The Line will be built in stages, block by block. “People say this is some crazy project that's going to cost gazillions, but it's going to be built module by module, in a manner that meets demand,” he says.

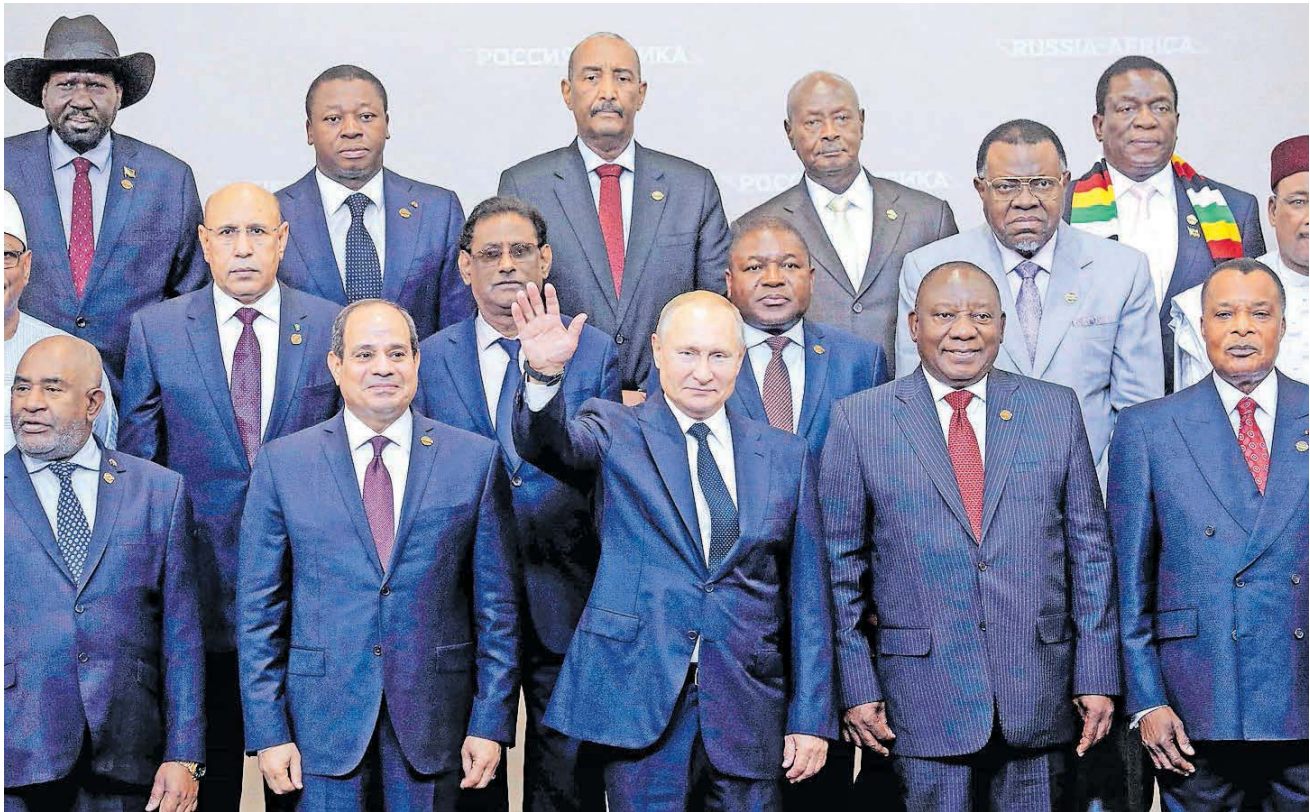
Much like Barcelona's traffic-free “superblocks”, he explains that each square will be self-sufficient and contain amenities such as shops and schools so that anything people need will be a five-minute walk or cycle away.

When complete, travel along *The Line* will be via hyper-speed trains, with the longest journey “never more than 20 minutes”, the developers claim. What's more, Neom will be home to Oxagon, a city floating on water spanning 7km — making it the largest floating structure in the world. Neom's chief executive, Nadhmi al-Nasr, has said the port city will “welcome its first manufacturing tenants at the beginning of 2022”. Further up the Red Sea coast from this “industrial hub”, Neom has announced plans for the world's largest coral reef restoration project.

Its website, which sometimes sounds like something out of a sci-fi novel, claims that the first phase of the mega-territory will be completed by 2025. That's the vision. The reality, for now, is more modest. —**BBC**

africa lens

■ UKRAINE WAR CHANGES CONTINENTAL AGENDA



Russian President Vladimir Putin (centre) poses with African leaders attending the Russia-Africa Summit and Economic Forum in Sochi, on October 24, 2019. PHOTO | AFP

RESET OF RUSSIA-AFRICA TIES

Since 2019, Moscow has been on a charm offensive to revive the channels it used to woo Africa during the Cold War that lasted between 1947 and 1991. Apart from the looming food crisis and high commodity prices, recent international sanctions have raised questions about Moscow's ability to maintain or meet commitments it had made to certain African countries

● By LEVIN OPIYO

Russia's plan to establish its influence in Africa could face headwinds as it sustains its military operation in Ukraine. Apart from the looming food crisis and high commodity prices, recent international sanctions have raised questions on Moscow's ability to maintain or meet commitments it had made to certain African countries.

Since 2019, Moscow has been on a charm offensive to revive the channels it used to woo Africa during the Cold War that lasted between 1947 and 1991. During that time, Russia pursued an

opportunistic and pragmatic policy aimed at building its influence in Africa by discrediting the west. It presented itself as supporter of Black interests and aspirations and took advantage of Africa's hostility towards colonialism to disparage motives of western countries on the continent.

In this regard, it supported African liberation struggles and provided extensive aid to cover key areas where Africans still lagged behind because of colonial disenfranchisement. Such aid used to be channeled through a particular group or individual, not necessarily because of their ideology but in the expectation that, with the assis-

tance, they could help the Soviet Union achieve influence.

In Kenya, such assistance was channeled through Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, who had established contacts with Russia in 1960, just after the First Lancaster Conference in London. Through him, Russia provided hundreds of scholarship to Kenyans and funded Kanu activities.

Later, after independence on May 11, 1964, Oginga led a delegation to Moscow, where he secured aid worth £18,500,000, shocking Western

...Continued on Page 26

africa lens

Ukraine war redefines continental business

...Continued from Page 25

nations, which took every step to counter it.

The aid included a gift of a 200-bed, fully equipped hospital, now known as Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital Kisumu, and agricultural projects basic to Kenya's development. Most of the projects never took off, however, after they were sabotaged by the West, which maintained a tight grip on Kenya.

The isolation of Oginga as ideological intrigues incited by the West rocked the Kenyan government finally brought to an end the Soviet Union's ambition to build its influence in Nairobi.

But it continued to enjoy good relations in countries across Africa—such as Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Egypt.

As the Cold War came to an end in 1991, these relationships also came to an abrupt end. A post-Soviet Russia had serious economic and political problems to deal with after the collapse of the Soviet Union and could not afford to maintain such links. Russia's activities in Africa consequently became negligible as it shifted its focus to issues only in its periphery.

Almost three decades later, sanctions and isolation following annexation of Crimea from Ukraine forced Russia to turn back to Africa to revive the old ties. The Kremlin saw the continent as a place where Russia could project itself as a global power. The importance of Africa to Russia was symbolised by the Russia-Africa Summit hosted by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in October 2019 in the resort city of Sochi, attended by heads of state and government from 43 African countries.

To Russia, exploiting new trade opportunities with these countries and securing their diplomatic support, especially at the UN, was key to achieving its strategy. However, its recent war in Ukraine has resulted in another round of sanctions, presenting economic and diplomatic hurdles that could strain its relations with Africa. Economically, due to sanctions and other factors related to the Ukraine crisis, African countries have resorted to other sources for commodities, resulting in inflation, while on the diplo-



Firefighters extinguish a fire after an apartment was hit by a missile strike in Kharkiv, on September 6, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. PHOTO | AFP

matic front most have sided with Ukraine.

This was evident at the United Nations, where 28 African countries voted in favour of sanctions, while 17 abstained. Nigeria and Kenya were among the countries that took a firm stand, with the latter's envoy comparing the crisis to Africa's colonial past.

Perhaps this explains why Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov chose to skip the two West and East Africa powerhouses on his recent tour of the continent. But the two countries were visited by Samantha Power, the head of United States Agency for International Aid, who was also in Africa in what is widely seen as an attempt to win the continent's support against Russia on the war in Ukraine.

While in Kenya, Power blamed Russia's Vladimir Putin for "inflicting pain on the people of Kenya and other countries by restricting trade of Russia's fertilizer and blocking Ukraine's grain export."

The accusations were denied in the neighbouring Uganda by Lavrov, who stated that the food crisis was not due to Russia's operation in Ukraine but due to "inadequate reaction of the West which

announced sanctions".

Lavrov called for more powers for African states at the United Nations and accused the West of displaying a colonial mindset by demanding that Africa adopts an anti-Russia stance.

The extent to which the Ukraine war has reset Russian relation with Africa is likely to be seen in November, when Putin hosts the Russia-Africa summit.

This will take place just weeks before US President Joe Biden hosts

The isolation of Oginga as ideological intrigues incited by the West rocked the Kenyan government, finally brought to an end the Soviet Union's ambition to build its influence in Nairobi.

the US-Africa Leaders' Summit in December. To downplay Putin's ambitions in Africa, the West might use the Ukraine crisis to convince some African leaders to avoid the Russian summit.



A woman examines a Kalashnikov sniper rifle during the Russia-Africa Economic Forum Exhibition in the Black Sea resort of Sochi on October 24, 2019. PHOTO | AFP

global lens

■ WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS IN INDIA



Indian fire fighters spray water to extinguish a fire in a chemical warehouse near Howrah Bridge in Kolkata on June 8, 2019. PHOTO IAFP

‘FACTORIES OF DEATH’

India is aiming to become an industrial powerhouse, with government schemes and reforms tailored to encourage more investments and innovation. But tragedies are common, with desperate and vulnerable workers often paying the price.

● DELHI

This is a factory of deaths.” Ismail Khan’s hand trembles as he points towards the second floor of a burnt building in India’s capital, Delhi. That was where he last saw his younger sister — trapped and suffocating, desperate to find a way out as the building was consumed by smoke and fire.

Muskan, 21, was among 27 people killed in the massive fire, which broke out in May at an electronics manufacturing unit in the four-storey building. In the days after the fire, a top police official told media that the building’s owner had

not obtained clearance certificates from the fire department and police before subletting three floors of the building to two brothers who ran the manufacturing unit. The Delhi police’s public relations officer said the unit did not have the “requisite licences” for operation.

We phoned the factory owners several times but did not receive an answer. We also tried to contact their lawyer but he refused to share his details where we could send queries. India is aiming to become an industrial powerhouse, with government schemes and reforms tailored to encourage investments and innovation. But tragedies like the Delhi fire are all too common, with desperate and

vulnerable workers often paying the price. Industrial accidents kill hundreds of people and permanently disable thousands every year. A federal minister told Parliament in 2021 that at least 6,500 workers had died while working in factories, ports, mines and construction sites in five years. Labour activists, who have worked in the field for years, said the figures could be higher as many incidents are not reported or recorded. According to data collected by global workers’ union Industri-All, sectors such as manufacturing, chemicals and construction report the most fatalities in India. In

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global lens

Inside India's deadly industrial sites



Indian firefighters attempt to douse flames after a fire broke out in an oil factory in Ajmer, Rajasthan, India on June 2. PHOTO IAFP

3,955

There is no official data on workers left disabled by industrial accidents but a recent survey by an NGO shows there were 3,955 cases between 2016 and 2022.

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2021 alone, it said an average of seven accidents were reported every month in manufacturing industries, killing more than 162 workers. Over the years, news reports have flagged that workers in “small, unregistered factories” are often most affected by industrial accidents. The victims are usually poor workers or migrants whose families don’t have the resources to fight legal battles. Rakesh Kumar often wakes up screaming in the middle of the night. He lost three of his daughters in the fire at the Delhi factory, where they assembled Wi-Fi routers for 8,000 rupees (\$100) a month each. “My daughters must have suffered so much,” he says. The family waited for news about them for days after the fire, until the police called them for a DNA test to identify their charred remains. His daughters were eventually cremated a month after the fire. “I want justice

According to the Delhi police, 663 factory accidents were registered just in the capital over the past five years, in which 245 people died. Around 84 people were arrested in connection with these accidents.

for them,” says Kumar. In August, the Delhi police filed charges in court against five accused in the case. They include attempt to commit culpable homicide and causing death by negligence.

Changed protocols

Rajesh Kashyap, a trade union activist in Delhi, alleges that many factories in the capital and its suburbs flout at least one industrial or safety law, but action is rarely taken. He and other labour activists allege that in many industrial accidents, cases languish for years while the accused are released on bail. According to the Delhi police, 663 factory accidents were registered just in the capital over the past five years, in which 245 people died. Around 84 people were arrested in connection with these accidents. In response to allegations from labour activists that the initial investigation in these kinds of cases is often flawed, police say they try to ensure “immediate action against the culprits”. But, they add, convictions may not occur in many cases due to a number of reasons, including delay in getting forensic results and opinions from technical experts, among others. We met several fami-

lies who are still grappling with the loss of their loved ones, many of whom were the only breadwinners. But legal red tape and a mix of factors can make it hard to access compensation from the companies. A senior lawyer, who has worked on several worker compensation cases, said such legal proceedings usually ran on for years. Often, the government itself announces a lump-sum payment to the families, shifting focus away from demanding compensation from companies. And by the time a case is taken up, the families of the migrant workers — hurt and broken by their loss — may have moved back to their village or another city in search of jobs. “Workers don’t have much faith in the legal system due to the long, complex processes. So, they take whatever money they get as settlement or ex-gratia from the government and leave,” says Chandan Kumar, who is part of a civil society organisation that assists informal workers. We tried to contact families of the victims of a 2018 factory fire in Delhi in which 17 workers died, but almost all of them had left the city. The case is similar for those maimed by these accidents. Sangeeta Roy, 50, lost an arm while

using a cardboard-cutting machine at her company three years ago. She says she didn’t receive any compensation from her employers and had to wait for three years to get a government pension for injured workers. There is no official national data on workers left disabled by industrial accidents. But a recent survey by non-profit Safe in India Foundation — done mainly in the vehicle parts manufacturing factories in northern India — says 3,955 serious accidents took place between 2016 and 2022. Seventy-per cent of the injured had lost their fingers or crushed their hands while using a metal pressing machine. India is a major auto manufacturing hub in South Asia, employing an estimated 10 million workers. A large part of the manufacturing is contracted and subcontracted to smaller companies. India has begun reforming its labour laws through four new labour codes that include provisions for occupational safety, health and working conditions. But activists are concerned that the new laws might set the compliance bar even lower. While the earlier law said that any company with 10 workers or more should have a safety committee, the proposed new law raises the number to 250. Desperation for jobs has also made workers hesitant to join unions. The government has also changed protocols for workplace inspections in an effort to make the process easier for companies. While currently, labour officers are responsible for inspecting and ensuring the implementation of safety rules, their role will change to that of mediators under the new codes. Labour experts say this makes it even less likely for factory owners to prioritise workers’ safety or social security. “Workers’ safety will eventually be nobody’s responsibility,” says Sidheshwar Prasad Shukla, an academic and labour activist. —**BBC**

global lens

■ ISOLATION AND CONFINEMENT OF POPULATIONS

● By KWENDO OPANGA

The world's leading economic powerhouses, the United States of America and China, do not see eye to eye on much, not even when it comes to tackling a global pandemic. The former, with a population of 300 million, has been harder hit by the coronavirus pandemic than the latter, with a population of 1.4 billion.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), by September 5, China had reported 6,588,896 cases of coronavirus infections, with 25,019 deaths since January 2020.

And WHO reported that the US had between the same times reported 93,332,054 infections and 1,035,674 deaths. But Washington's and Beijing's strategies for tackling the coronavirus are diametrically opposed.

A week ago today, Chinese authorities placed Chengdu, the South West metropolis of 21 million people, under lockdown. Some 157 new infections of the coronavirus had been reported four days earlier. Chengdu thus became the latest Chinese city to go into lockdown in line with Beijing's zero Covid policy.

On Monday, CNN reported that more than 70 Chinese cities had been placed under full or partial Covid lockdowns since late August, "impacting more than 300 million people as local authorities rush to stamp out infections at all cost in the final countdown to leader Xi Jinping's expected third term".

Strict lockdowns

The network, quoting a Chinese financial publication Caixin, also reported that at least 33 cities are currently under partial or total lockdowns and that more may follow suit in the coming days. This would appear to suggest that China is not ready yet to pivot to living with Covid-19, unlike Europe, America and most of the world.

China is the only country in the world which is still pursuing a policy of strict lockdowns in its fight against Covid-19. The rest of the world has moved to the phase of living with the disease and eased or ceased altogether the strict curbs that greeted the coronavirus when it broke out in China three years ago.

Beijing's zero Covid policy comprises isolation and confinement of populations in areas where a spike



Aerial photo shows air-inflated testing labs in Chengdu in China. The city of Chengdu has built five air-inflated laboratories for Covid-19 nucleic acid testing, providing a daily testing capacity of 250,000 tubes. INSET: A health worker takes a swab sample from a man to be tested for Covid-19. PHOTOS IAFF

CHINA'S COVID CRISIS

More than 70 cities have been placed under full or partial Covid lockdowns since late August, impacting more than 300 million people as local authorities rush to stamp out infections at all cost in the final countdown to leader Xi Jinping's expected third term

in Covid cases is found, mass testing for the virus, contact-tracing, allowing only one person from each household to go out for essential shopping and closing down of entertainment establishments.

Most of the world chose a vaccine-anchored approach to dealing with the coronavirus when it was declared a pandemic in 2020 before easing restrictions upon realising that Covid-19 is going to be around for years to come and is therefore a scourge to live with. But Beijing appears ready to persist with the lockdown-centred zero Covid strategy

The rest of the world has moved to the phase of living with the disease and eased or ceased altogether the strict curbs that greeted the coronavirus when it broke out in China three years ago.

into the foreseeable future.

However, opposition to the policy is growing. On August 28, the Anbound Research Centre, a Chinese think tank, published a rare disagreement with Beijing and the Communist Party in which it argued that zero Covid curbs that shut down cities and disrupted trade must change to prevent an economic stall.

Failed strategy

In the dispatch titled, 'It's Time for China to Adjust Its Virus Control and Prevention Policies', the think-tank advised that preventing an economic stall should be the priority task for Beijing as have the US, Japan and Europe.

Anbound Research Centre's statement, WION TV reported, was posted on its accounts on the popular WeChat messaging platform and

the Sina Weibo microblog service, but was deleted from both by Monday afternoon. Clearly, Beijing, even if it is contemplating a change in its Covid strategy, did not take kindly to the advice from Anbound.

It is important to note that Anbound grounded its argument against lockdowns in China's slowing economic growth and the country's pivotal link in global trade. While experts have blamed China's shrinking economy on anti-virus lockdowns, Beijing blames the virus and not the strategy for fighting it for the slowed growth.

Observers in the West Point to the fact that there are outbreaks of the coronavirus in different parts of China and in those which have experienced lockdowns before as evidence that Beijing's zero Covid strategy has failed or that lockdowns do not work.

OBIT■ **A LONG LIFE MARKED BY A SENSE OF DUTY**

The long reign of Queen Elizabeth II was marked by her strong sense of duty and her determination to dedicate her life to her throne and to her people.

She became for many the one constant point in a rapidly changing world as British influence declined, society changed beyond recognition and the role of the monarchy itself came into question.

Her success in maintaining the monarchy through such turbulent times was even more remarkable given that, at the time of her birth, no-one could have foreseen that the throne would be her destiny. Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was born on April 21, 1926, in a house just off Berkeley Square in London, the first child of Albert, Duke of York, second son of George V, and his duchess, the former Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.

Both Elizabeth and her sister, Margaret Rose, who was born in 1930, were educated at home and brought up in a loving family atmosphere. Elizabeth was extremely close to both her father and her grandfather, George V.

At the age of six, Elizabeth told her riding instructor that she wanted to become a “country lady with lots of horses and dogs”.

She was said to have shown a remarkable sense of responsibility from a very early age. Winston Churchill, the future prime minister, was quoted as saying that she possessed “an air of authority that was astonishing in an infant”. Despite not attending school, Elizabeth proved adept at languages and made a detailed study of constitutional history.

A special Girl Guides company, the 1st Buckingham Palace, was formed so that she could socialise with girls of her own age. On the death of George V in 1936, his eldest son, known as David, became Edward VIII.

However, his choice of wife, the twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, was deemed to be unacceptable on political and religious grounds. At the end of the year he abdicated. A reluctant Duke of York became King George VI. His Coronation gave Elizabeth a foretaste of what lay in store for her and she later wrote that she had found the service “very, very wonderful”. Against a background of increasing tension in Europe, the new King, together with his wife, Queen Elizabeth, set out to restore public faith in the monarchy. Their example was not lost on their elder daughter. In 1939, the 13-year-old princess accompanied the King and Queen to the Royal Naval College



at Dartmouth. Together with her sister Margaret, she was escorted by one of the cadets, her third cousin, Prince Philip of Greece. It was not the first time they had met, but it was the first time she took an interest in him.

Prince Philip called on his royal relatives when on leave from the navy, and by 1944, when she was 18, Elizabeth was clearly in love with him. She kept his picture in her room and they exchanged letters. The young princess briefly joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) towards the end of the war, learning to drive and service a lorry. On VE Day she joined the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace as thousands gathered in The Mall to cel-

ebate the end of the war in Europe. “We asked my parents if we could go out and see for ourselves,” she later recalled. “I remember we were terrified of being recognised. I remember lines of unknown people linking arms and walking down Whitehall, all of us just swept along on a tide of happiness and relief.” After the war, her desire to marry Prince Philip faced a number of obstacles. The King was reluctant to lose a daughter on whom he doted, and Philip had to overcome the prejudice of an establishment that could not accept his foreign ancestry.

But the wishes of the couple prevailed and on 20 November 1947 the couple married in Westminster Abbey. The

Duke of Edinburgh, as Philip had become, remained a serving naval officer. For a short time, a posting to Malta meant the young couple could enjoy a relatively normal life.

Their first child, Charles, was born in 1948, followed by a sister, Anne, who arrived in 1950. But the King, having suffered considerable stress during the war years, was terminally ill with lung cancer, brought about by a lifetime of heavy smoking. In January 1952, Elizabeth, then 25, set off with Philip for an overseas tour. The King, against medical advice, went to the airport to see the couple off. It was to be the last time Elizabeth would see her father. —**BBC**

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