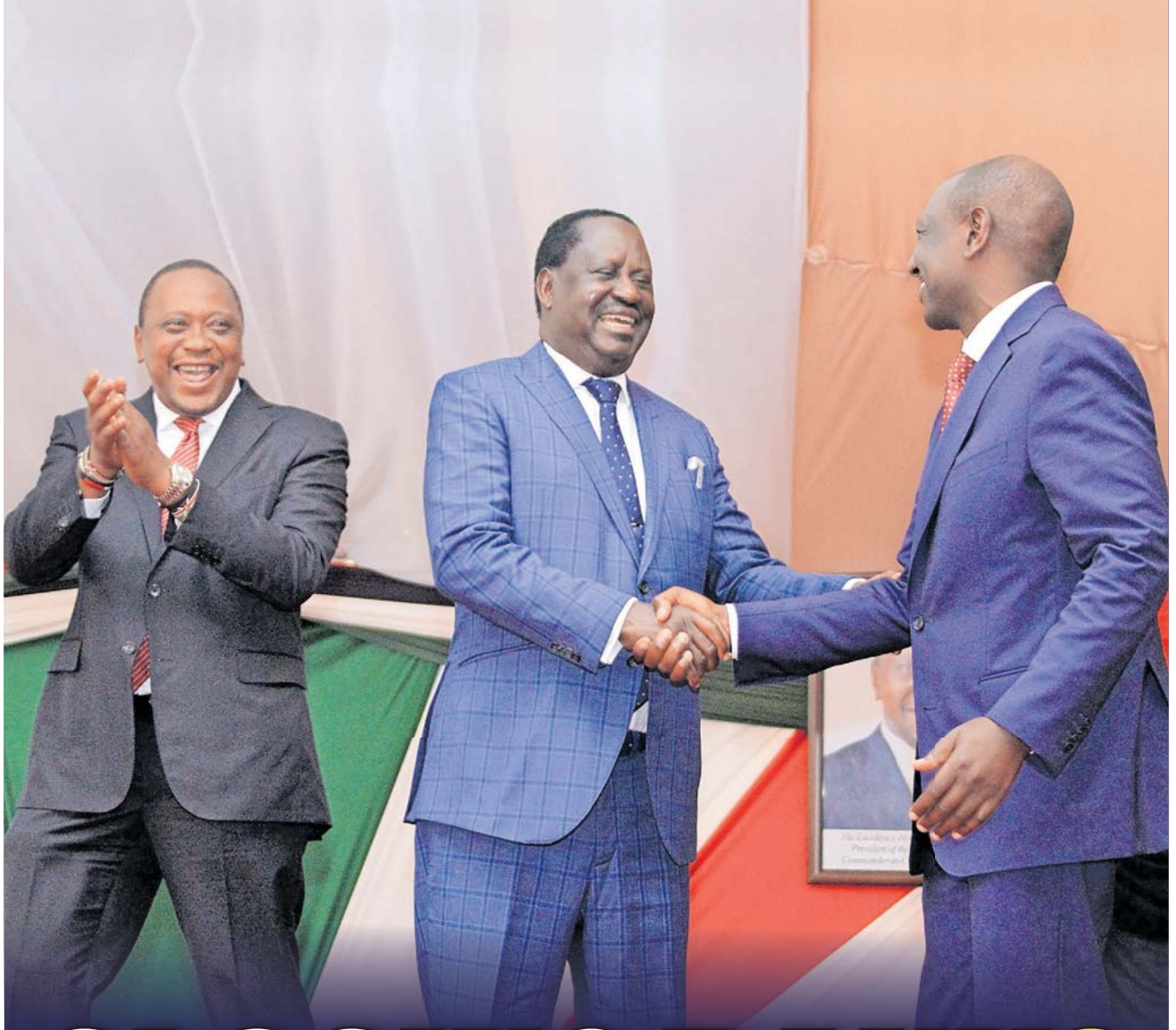


# THE Weekly Review

For the Thinking Person

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## CLOSING RANKS

**With the possibility of direct talks between Ruto and Raila to halt the deadly violence from opposition protests and police responses, 'The Weekly Review', in keeping with its agenda-setting mandate, takes the opportunity to dissect the issues and propose the way forward**



# SPORTS TV!

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letter from the editor

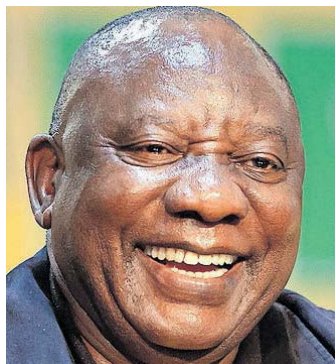
# Inside Hacktivism: We must urgently raise our game in cybersecurity

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A major hack into government systems on Thursday last week exposed the country's vulnerability to cyber-attacks. Kenyans could not access public services through eCitizen.

The outage of M-Pesa paralysed operations across many sectors, putting into question the country's readiness for a full shift towards digital payments. Some KSh29.55 trillion was transacted on M-Pesa in the financial year to March 2022, translating to about KSh81 billion daily, underlining the impact of the service's disruption to the economy.

A group calling itself 'Anonymous Sudan' claimed responsibility for the attack. It describes itself as a hacktivist group and says it is waging cyber strikes out of Africa on behalf of oppressed Muslims worldwide.

This attack has rudely opened our eyes to the dangers of digital technology and our total reliance on it. It has shown us the extent of our vulnerability to attacks on this new front that we have very scarce ability to fight. It has shown us the extent of our shakiness and lack of coherent action against such an elusive foe.

The attack came barely four weeks after President William Ruto launched thousands of government services on the e-Citizen platform to increase efficiency and minimise corruption. It exposed the risks of the digitisation plan, as any successful hacks could lead to the loss of huge amounts of sensitive data.

The government seemed powerless to stop it, given that the country's top cyber security team had last week warned various agencies that such an attack would happen. The National Computer and Cybercrime Coordination Committee (NC4) recently re-



Allan Buluku

**This is a cruel lesson for Kenya that must spur us into action. Future wars shall be fought on the cyber front, and we need to be prepared. The effects of hacking can be more damaging and demoralising than some cluster bombs. Hackers can stop the flow of essential services like electricity, water, general communication and economic transactions.**

vealed that it had observed a sharp increase in hacking attempts targeting critical information infrastructure.

A cyber-attack is any intentional effort to steal, expose, alter, disable or destroy data, applications or other assets through unauthorised access to a network, computer system or digital device.

Hackers launch cyber-attacks for all sorts of reasons, from petty theft to acts of war. They use a variety of tactics, like malware attacks, social engineering scams and password theft to gain unauthorised access to their target systems.

This is a cruel lesson for

Kenya that must spur us into action. Future wars shall be fought on the cyber front, and we need to be prepared. The effects of hacking can be more damaging and demoralising than some cluster bombs. Hackers can stop the flow of essential services like electricity, water, general communication and economic transactions.

The group that targeted Kenya issued a threat to do even more damage. It would be foolhardy for us to consider this an empty threat, nor should not be lame ducks, sitting pretty and waiting for an impending attack that we have no capacity to stem.

It is time we acted to protect our country's systems. We have moved too slowly in the field of cybercrime, considering that the NC4 was only constituted a short while ago. While this was a move in the right direction, we need to put more finances and energy into this extremely important sector of our security, including education of tech-savvy youth to help us fight this new brand of crime.

In just the same way that we recruit the police and Kenya Defence Forces personnel annually, we should be recruiting fresh graduates with strong backgrounds in computer technology to form the vanguard of our preparedness for cyberwarfare. We must create a stronger defence to meet attacks and eliminate them long before they have a chance to do any damage.

The attack on our systems should ignite determined effort to ensure that we build secure digital systems. It is a lesson that we ignore at our own peril.

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## the telescope

### ■ Legislators out to fight for compensation

## Senate case for bomb victims

Senators have opened a campaign to petition the United States government to compensate Kenyan victims of the 1998 US embassy terror attack in Nairobi. At 10.30am on August 7, 1998, a car bomb exploded in the rear parking lot of the US Embassy.

The aftermath of the blast left 213 people dead with an estimated 5,000 suffering injuries. After more than 20 years of search for justice, the US government announced compensation for American citizens at the time of the attack and those who were naturalised later.

The deal followed the Sudanese government agreeing to pay US\$335m (Sh36 billion) as compensation for victims of past attacks against US targets after being adversely mentioned as having aided the Al Qaeda attack. The US would lat-

er add \$150 million (Sh21.2 billion) in payouts to the victims of both Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The twin attacks claimed 224 lives.

Each American victim or family of the US embassy attacks were to receive \$3 million (Sh322 million), while locally employed staff \$400,000 (Sh43 million). In total, 85 survivors or families of victims will be compensated. But the deal only included compensation to families of victims or those injured who are US nationals or US embassy workers.

The majority of the estimated 5,000 people injured in the twin bombings will not get any money. Neither will the families of the more than 200 locals who died in the blasts. To correct the injustice, senators have revived the push for the US to compensate Kenyan victims.



Major General George Agoi (second left) led the multi-agency response team after the 1998 terrorist bomb attack at the US Embassy in Nairobi. He died on August 2, 2021.

### ■ Quarterly assembly for Christians

## EPIC Women meet in Nairobi

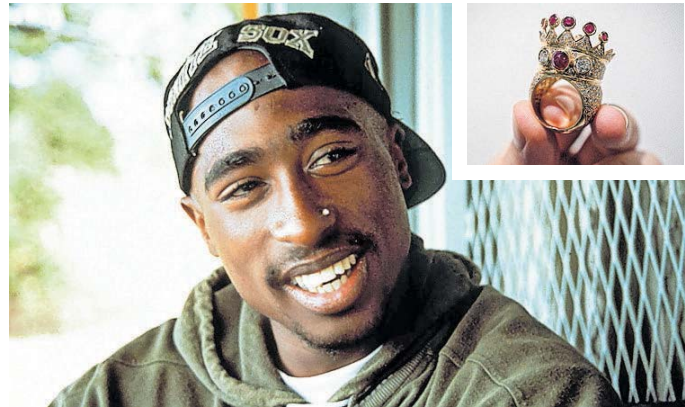


The next EPIC Women Assembly will be held at the Nairobi Cinema on August 5. It's a movement of unapologetically 'Christ-like women' navigating life, relationships and culture as modern women of faith.

It was founded by award-winning gospel musician, Joyce Omondi Waihiga. EPIC Women Assemblies are held every three months, and it's usually an afternoon of fun and fellowship as women come together to network.

It was founded from the conviction that biblical womanhood is God's desire for today's modern women of faith, regardless of their age, background, or marital status.

### ■ He was a central figure in the LA hip-hop scene



The gold, ruby and diamond crown ring (inset) worn by rap legend Tupac Shakur that sold for US\$ 1 million at an auction in New York.

## Tupac Shakur ring sells for record \$1m

A gold, ruby and diamond crown ring worn by rap legend Tupac Shakur during his last public appearance sold for \$1 million at auction in New York this week.

The winning bid was well above Sotheby's pre-sale estimate of between \$200,000 and \$300,000 and becomes the most valuable hip-hop artifact ever sold, the auction house said.

The New York-born rapper wore the ring during his final public appearance at the MTV Video Music Awards on September 4, 1996. He was shot dead by an unidentified assailant in a drive-by shooting in Las Vegas just days later on September 13. He was 25. Shakur, whose hits included "California Love", designed the ring over the course of a few months, Sotheby's said. He did so through his godmother Yaasmyn Fula, who put the ring up for sale.

Shakur was influenced by 16th century Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli's political manifesto "The Prince" which he read while in prison on sex abuse charges. He modeled the design on the crowns of the medieval kings of Europe, Sotheby's added. The ring is engraved "Pac & Dada 1996," a reference to his girlfriend Kidada Jones.

A gold circlet studded with a central cabochon ruby flanked by two pave-cut diamonds sits atop a diamond-encrusted gold band. The sale was part of a dedicated hip-hop auction to mark 50 years of the genre which falls in August this year. Shakur is considered one of the greatest rappers of all time, selling 75 million records.

He was a central figure in the Los Angeles-based West Coast hip-hop scene, which feuded with rival East Coast rappers in New York.

### ■ China is North Korea's longtime ally

## Kim pays respect to Mao's eldest son



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited a cemetery commemorating Chinese troops who fought in the Korean War, including the grave of Mao Zedong's eldest son, state media said. Pyongyang commemorated the 70th anniversary of the sign-

ing of the July 27, 1953 Korean War armistice, which ended open hostilities and is marked as Victory Day in the North. China is North Korea's longtime ally and economic benefactor, with Mao Zedong — whose son Mao Anying was among those killed — having once described their relations as "close as lips and teeth".

A high-level Chinese delegation — led by Politburo member Li Hongzhong — visited the North last week for the festivities.

## kenya lens

## ■ MAANDAMANO: RESUMPTION OF DIALOGUE



Opposition supporters during the protests against the high cost of living in Nairobi on July 21.

# HOW TO END THE STALEMATE

**Whatever the nature of the approach or apprehension by hardliners in both camps that they may be left out in the cold, it should be almost certain now that a Ruto-Raila meeting might be in the offing**

● BY MACHARIA GAITHO

The Tweet from President William Ruto indicating willingness for a direct meeting with opposition leader Raila Odinga may have been casual, even derisory, but it opened up alluring possibilities for a discussion between two men it is widely acknowledged jointly have the power to make or break Kenya.

“My Friend @RailaOdinga” Ruto addressed his foe on Tuesday last week just before departing for a visit to neighbouring Tanzania, “I’m back tomorrow evening, and as you have always known, I’m available to meet one-on-one with you anytime of your convenience.”

Reference to ‘My friend’ was the first time Ruto has referred to Raila in endearing terms since the

‘My Brother’ address at the beginning of April, when he held out the olive branch with a statement from State House that opened the way for dialogue and halted the first wave of opposition protests.

The result was formation of a bipartisan parliamentary committee composed of seven representatives from each side to discuss some of the issues raised. But it never got going as the Raila team objected to the limited mandate, and eventually found an excuse in the government’s unpopular taxation measures to pull out of the talks and resume street protests. After the heightened acrimony between the governing Kenya Kwanza alliance and the opposition Azimio la Umoja-One Kenya coalition, and the escalating violence, Ruto’s tweet could only have been a very deliberate

effort to reach out once again.

It came just after Raila had told the international press corp based in Nairobi that he has always been willing to talk, and claiming that the President had kept his Tanzanian counterpart, Samia Suluhu, waiting in vain after she accepted an invitation to fly over and mediate.

Even though vocal hardliners in the Kenya Kwanza camp such as Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung’wah, Kericho Senator Samson Cherargei and social media propagandist Dennis Itumbi moved immediately to shoot down notions of dialogue that might accommodate Raila’s demands, the import of Ruto’s gesture cannot be wished away. From the Azimio camp, most key figures seemed to have

been taken by surprise, and the response was ambivalent. Raila himself dismissed the “PR stunt” nature of the offer through a Twitter message rather than a formal invite, noting that Ruto knew how to reach him directly as he had his telephone number and address.

Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka and former Defence Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa echoed the position that reaching out through Twitter was improper. Others such as ousted Jubilee Party Secretary-General Jeremiah Kioni cautioned against any deal that would give Raila or any other Azimio leaders positions while abandoning the cause of the protests.

Whatever the nature of the ap-

Continued on Page 6

## kenya lens

# What Raila and Ruto can do to move the country forward

Continued from Page 5

proach or apprehension by some in both camps that they may be left out in the cold, it should be almost certain now that a Ruto-Raila meeting might be in the offing. That should then set the stage for formal dialogue, whether that be through resumption of the abortive talks in Parliament or some other structure.

It is also time to revisit the issues that led to the crisis in the first place. All goes to January this year, when Raila came out with a startling claim that an Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission whistleblower had provided fresh evidence that he was the actual winner of the August 2022 presidential election. He published 'results' allegedly retrieved from the IEBC election count servers showing that he won the polls with 8,170,355 votes, 57.53 per cent, to Ruto's 5,915,973, representing 41.66 per cent. That contrasts markedly with the 7,176,141 (50.49 per cent) for Ruto and 6,942,930 (48.85 per cent) for Raila announced by then IEBC chairman Wafula Chebukati at the Bomas of Kenya National Tallying Centre.

From there came the launch of public demonstration to demand an audit of the IEBC election results platform to determine who the actual winner was. To the clamour for 'Electoral Justice or 'Fungua Server (Open the Server)' was added demands of a halt to an ongoing process of reconstitution of the IEBC following the exit of Chebukati and two other commissioners on expiry of their terms, and the government's ouster of the remaining four who had sided with Raila in a stand-off over the election results. To the public demonstrations was also added demands to bring down the cost of living as Azimio sought to exploit growing public discontent on the rising cost of food, fuel and other basic necessities, and the government's appetite for increased taxation.

It is now time to revisit the key original issues and others that have been added to the growing list of demands, and propose ways to break the deadlock and get Kenya back on the path of peace and justice:

## DIALOGUE

Talks usually start with 'talks about talks'. If Ruto and Raila do meet, the first order of business will be to reach agreement on

the shape, format and agenda of any discussions.

Ruto's simple acknowledgement in April that Kenya was sliding down a dangerous path and offer to hold talks resulted in Raila halting the increasingly destructive protests. The result was talks involving seven National Assembly members from either side, but they never really got going. Azimio was unhappy with the restrictive mandate prescribed by Ruto around agreement on reconstitution of the IEBC.

It follows that the same format of talks with limited mandate will not achieve much. Both parties should therefore agree on an expanded agenda to accommodate their respective priorities, as well as elevation to a more inclusive national dialogue to address all the social, economic, political and ethnic divides that make Kenya such a powder keg. The key word should be dialogue rather than negotiations. As a sign of good faith, Raila should call off the protests, while Ruto reciprocates by suspending implementation of the Finance Bill, or at least two of the more contentious issues, the Housing Tax and the doubling of VAT on petrol.

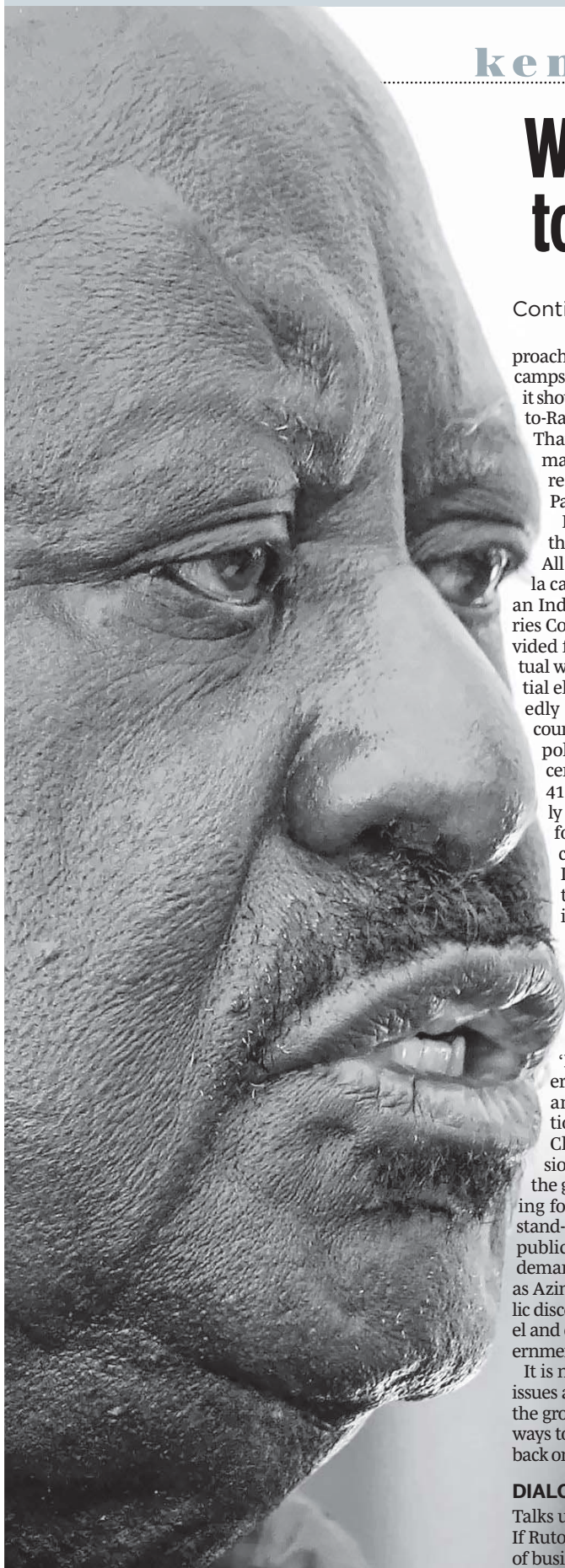
## HANDSHAKE

The Ruto camp has persistently accused Raila of always making trouble on losing elections so that he can force his way onto the high table. No evidence has been provided that that is his aim, but reference is always made to the 2008 Grand Coalition government, which he came into as Prime Minister in President Mwai Kibaki's administration, ending a murderous cycle of post-election violence.

Then there was the 2018 informal deal, hence the 'handshake' tag, that saw him bring the opposition onto President Uhuru Kenyatta's side, allowing the latter to sideline Ruto, his then Deputy President. If Ruto and Raila meet, they will presumably accord each other the courtesy of shaking hands, but it must be made clear that it is not a prelude to new political accommodation or any form of partnership or coalition. This should put at ease those who live in mortal terror that they might lose out. It should also reaffirm that talks are about Kenyans, rather than merely individuals and their political outfits bargaining for seats at the feeding trough.

## FUNGUA SERVER

The pursuit of electoral justice on purported fresh evidence that Raila actually beat Ruto at the presidential elections last Au-



gust was the trigger to mandamano. The IEBC has remained curiously silent about the allegations and the numbers published by Raila to back his claim. It has left it to Ruto and his Kenya Kwanza cohorts to rubbish the claims, which has both managed to indicate that the electoral agency is subservient to the ruling party, and that there is indeed something to hide.

To settle the matter once and for all, let the IEBC servers be 'opened' once modalities are worked out of what exactly that will entail, under the supervision of neutral and independent experts. That should come on condition that Raila agrees to withdraw his claim and recognise Ruto as President if the whistleblower numbers do not hold up. In turn, Ruto will have undertaken to resign as President and lead DP Gachagua out of office to pave way for fresh elections if it is found he was not the rightful winner of the polls.

### IEBC

Ruto had already appointed a panel to recruit fresh electoral commissioners by the time mandamano started. The terms of Chebukati and his allies, Yusuf Guliye and Boya Molu, had expired. Vice-chairperson Juliana Cherera and her clique of Justus Nyang'aya, Francis Wanderi and Irene Masit had been forced out as soon as the new government took office, having denounced the election results announced by Chebukati.

In extending his olive branch in April, Ruto specifically offered that reconstitution of the IEBC be suspended pending a broad agreement from the mooted talks. The selection panel, chaired by Nelson Makanda, duly suspended the exercise, but resumed when the bipartisan talks collapsed, and now says it is ready to publish a list of shortlisted applicants.

It should be obvious now that a process seen as one-sided can only result in the IEBC being seen as beholden to Ruto. The selection should be scrapped altogether until a mechanism that involves all interest groups and is sure to result in a trusted and independent body is agreed on. In the meantime, stakeholders, beyond just the Ruto-Raila political camps, can be invited to agree on formation of an interim electoral management body.

### COST OF LIVING

The Kenya Kwanza majority ramming through passage of the Finance Bill in June was the trigger for Raila to pull out of the bipartisan talks and resume street protests, obviously exploiting public anger over what is seen as punitive taxation. The cost of living, the general economic crisis and the governments inability to meet its extravagant campaign promises have since overtaken 'Fun-gua Server' as the main rationale for demonstrations.

As stated earlier, Ruto can make some gestures such as suspending the increased fuel tax and the Housing tax, and maybe a few other proposals that have earned him the Zakayo tag. But it return, the Azimio team must acknowledge that the prices of food and other basic necessities cannot be brought down presidential decree. There has to be recognition that in most cases, lo-

cal and international market pricing will be the biggest factor, even beyond the impact of high taxation.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

Heavy-handed police action, including what looks like deliberate bludgeoning of demonstrators to death and shooting to kill has raised the spectre of a return to dictatorship. But it also cannot be denied that opposition promises of peaceful protests ring hollow in the face of clear evidence of violent mobs on orgies of destruction, robbery, burning and looting. It can no longer be enough for protest organisers to blame all violence on police, nor for the authorities to absolve their men and women from blame. Both sides must agree to restrain their respective troops and hold them accountable for their actions.

An independent inquiry might be called for into the deaths, injuries and destruction of property witnessed during the demonstrations, and the direct perpetrators as well as those bearing command responsibility called to account. It is important that Raila agree he will not call demonstrations if he cannot keep them peaceful, and that he will bear responsibility if anything goes wrong.

Equally, Ruto should commit to respect for Constitutional rights to assembly and processions, as well as an end to police brutality when there is need to keep the peace. The government should also abandon moves to dilute civilian authority over the National Police Service, as witnessed in the contempt and defiance demonstrated towards the Police Service Commission and the Independent Policing Oversight Authority.

### GOVERNANCE

There are some issues which, though not directly canvassed, can still be put on the table. In April, Ruto floated a proposal for constitutional amendments to create an Office of the Leader of Official Opposition as one of the matters that could be up for discussion. Together with that could be ways to halt bastardisation of democratic systems through buying and wooing of opposition legislators. A simple device would be to bring back the requirement that any MP, governor or other elected leader who defects from or otherwise abandons the position of his or her sponsoring party be not only de-whipped, but removed and forced to seek a fresh mandate.

Also worth discussion could be ways of limiting presidential powers to create offices outside the existing constitutional regime and Public Service structures just to find room on the public payroll for political allies. The appointment of Chief Administrative Secretaries, presently suspended by the courts, comes to mind. Finally, there should be commitments from all sides to respect and uphold the law, respect court orders and demonstrate fidelity to oath of office by upholding, defending and protecting the Constitution.



## kenya lens

## ■ REGIONAL RELATIONS

# JITTERY NEIGHBOURS

Political turbulence in Kenya causes concern across the country's borders as neighbouring economies feel its effects

● BY OSCAR OBONYO

Two interesting developments unfolded in quick succession last Tuesday. Opposition chief Raila Odinga lifted the lid on a tightly guarded secret – Tanzania President Samia Suluhu's visit to Kenya two weeks earlier – and accused President William Ruto of snubbing his counterpart. In a quick rejoinder, the Kenyan Head of State responded through a tweet that he was available for a one-on-one meeting with “my friend”.

It turns out that on that very day, President Suluhu was playing host to the Kenyan leader at an African Union (AU) conference on human capital in Tanzania's commercial capital, Dar es Salaam.

According to Odinga, the Tanzanian leader had jetted into the country to mediate between the two political rivals on the ongoing crisis in the country but had been kept waiting in an undisclosed hotel for two nights.

With the visit still surrounded in mystery, opinion is divided on whether or not the Ruto administration is interested in an externally-driven political resolution to the ongoing impasse. Politicians privy to the happenings within the Kenya Kwanza alliance opine that the ruling coalition is divided right down the middle on how to govern this country within the context of a well organised, resilient and popular opposition. Disagreements on how to relate with the opposition, and in particular how to bridge hostilities between President Ruto and Azimio leader Odinga, are even deeper.

On one side is a team led by the President and Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi that is ready to embrace dialogue with the opposition. On the other is a group led by Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah, who have reportedly sworn that such talks will never happen.

The latter, according to the Sen-

ate's deputy Minority Leader Enoch Wambua, seems to be the team in charge of the real levers of statecraft. “They hold a very minimalist view of any suggestions of talks between Ruto and Raila. For them this only means ‘outsiders’ would join the Executive ranks and dilute the ‘soup’. They would rather exit the Ruto administration than share the table with ‘non-stakeholders.’”

A member of the Parliamentary Bipartisan Committee whose talks to bridge differences between government and opposition recently collapsed, Wambua says divided attention and lack of uniformity in the Kenya Kwanza side was evident even at the talks. According to the Ki-tui Senator, the real impediment to resolving Kenya's current crisis lies with Kenya Kwanza and not Azimio.

Wambua holds that the first and real handshake needs to happen between Ruto and Gachagua to set Kenya free. Only then can efforts to reconcile Ruto and Odinga by world leaders, including Suluhu, bear fruit.

Maintaining that Ruto was duly elected as Kenya's fifth President, Mudavadi often reminds the opposition to stop wasting its time on the question of the current government's legitimacy. Even former President Uhuru Kenyatta, he says, recognises Ruto's regime.

Speaking at a funeral in Ikolomani Constituency in Kakamega County early this month, the Prime CS revealed that he had been with the former President in peacekeeping engagements in Abuja and Bujumbura, where Uhuru reportedly told him that he recognised Ruto's presidency, having peacefully handed him power and all the legal instruments of leadership. Indeed, Kenyatta reinforced this fact last week at the Nairobi residence of his son, Jomo, following an alleged raid by police.

The Prime CS's reconciliatory stance contradicts that of the DP and Ichung'wah, who have sustained attacks against Kenyatta. Right from the day he took his oath as Kenya's second in command last

Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni





## kenya lens

September, Gachagua has been highly critical of the former President, publicly lambasting him over his association with Odinga and for allegedly funding street protests called by the opposition.

The DP and his close allies within Kenya Kwanza seem particularly uncomfortable with the notion of a truce between Ruto and Odinga. Speaking at an event in Murang'a County last Friday, where he shared a platform with the President, the DP castigated the clergy for pushing the President to dialogue with the opposition chief to end countrywide demos.

"If you ask the President to sit down with a blackmailer, you are asking the President of Kenya to commit a crime," he asserted, adding that the former PM had consistently led demonstrations throughout his political life "aimed at blackmailing government to share power".

Similarly, Ichung'wah on Wednesday poured cold water on the President's gesture to meet the Azimio leader: "Now William Ruto, suddenly everyone wants to meet with you, even the one who 11 months ago didn't even want to shake your hand nor talk to you now wants to and calls you 'his President'," he tweeted, a clear jibe at Odinga and Kenyatta.

Ichung'wah also posted a sarcastic comment on Mrs Suluhu's reconciliation mission to Kenya as claimed by Odinga: "Happy that Baba has recovered from the flu, but when did he start working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or as a state house spokesperson?" *The Weekly Review* followed through this development with a set of questions to the Kikuyu MP, to which he did not respond.

The economies of neighbouring countries are intrinsically intertwined with the political economy and stability of Kenya, which explains why leaders from these nations are keen on happenings in the country and restoring political and economic stability within. In a way, as Senator Wambua aptly observes, the neighbours are also, and especially, acting in self-interest.

This explains why Tanzanian leaders have over the last 17 years dominated peace initiatives in the country. Following the botched 2007 polls that triggered post-election violence in

Kenya, former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa rushed to Kenya's aid alongside former United Nations Secretary-General Dr Kofi Annan and Graca Machel, wife of former South Africa President Nelson Mandela, under the aegis of "Africa's Team of Eminent Persons".

Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, who was the sitting President in Tanzania, also featured prominently in the consultations, which led to a pact between Mwai Kibaki and Odinga on creation of a Grand Coalition government.

Kikwete's successor, John Pombe Magufuli, might not have played a publicly known reconciliatory role, but he hosted Odinga – his political buddy of many years – in Tanzania, after the highly emotive 2013 presidential polls, whose result Odinga's Coalition for Reforms and Democracy contested in the Supreme Court. For a couple of years, though, there was a cold war between the two countries until the Tanzanian leader visited Kenya in 2016 and was host-

ed to a state banquet by then President Kenyatta. But Magufuli, nevertheless, still took a jibe at Kenyatta's government for allegedly perpetuating tribalism and corruption. Suluhu, too, has been accused of mocking her neighbour.

Recently, the Executive Director of the Tanzania Investment Centre, Gilead Teri, reported a sharp increase in foreign investment in Tanzania, which Suluhu attributed to the fact that "a neighbour's house is on fire" – a presumed reference to recent street protests in Kenya. A report in the *Business Daily* recently stated that traders from Central Africa and the East African hinterland were shifting from the port of Mombasa to Dar es Salaam because of delays caused by protests and damage to cargo and trucks.

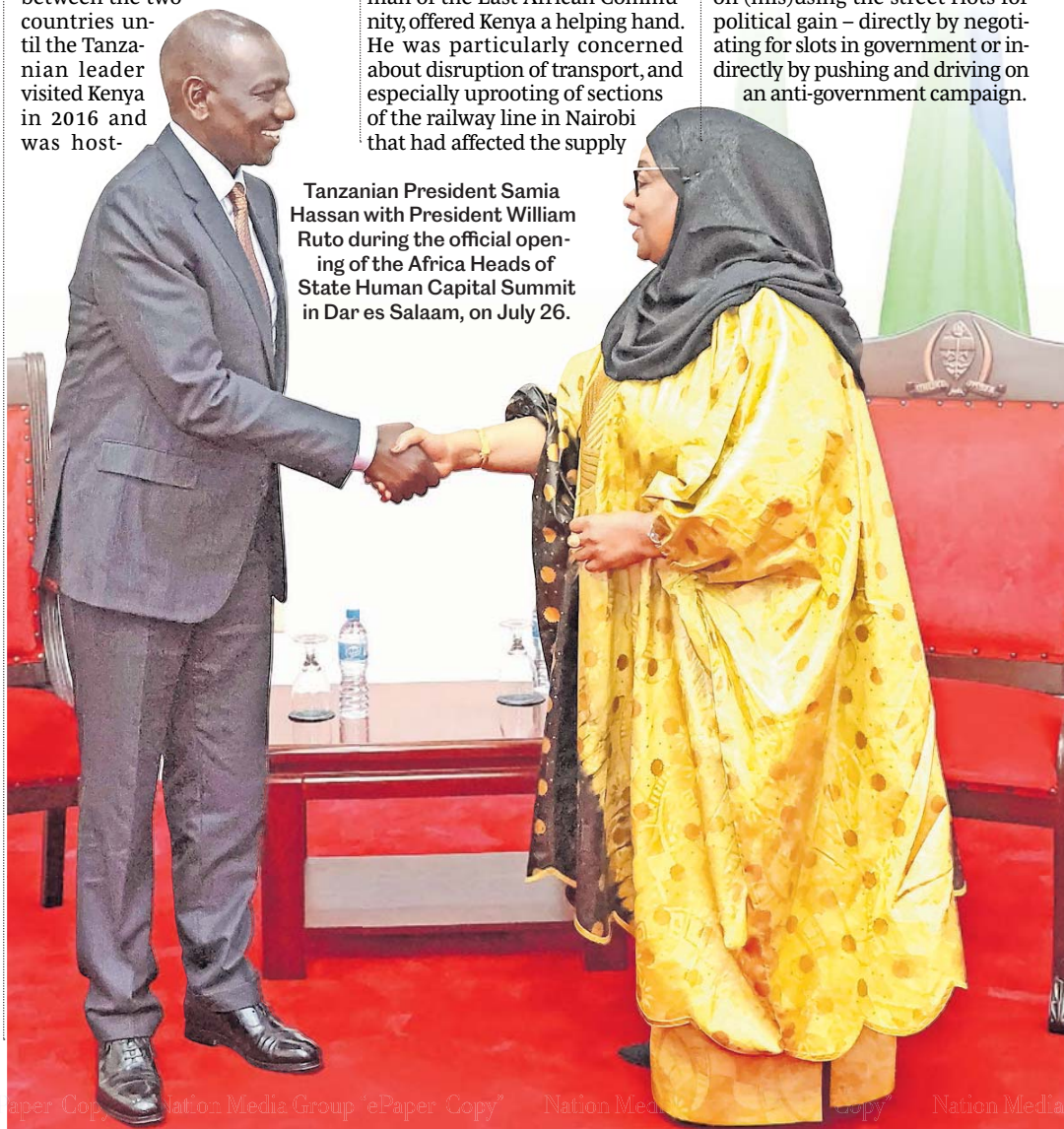
It is, indeed, for the same reasons that, during the post-election violence in 2007, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, then the Chairman of the East African Community, offered Kenya a helping hand. He was particularly concerned about disruption of transport, and especially uprooting of sections of the railway line in Nairobi that had affected the supply

of goods to his country.

The situation is no different this time round, as businessmen in Uganda and South Sudan decry transportation hitches on the Northern Corridor, which links Kenya to the rest of eastern Africa. Uganda is Kenya's biggest trading partner, with US\$800 million worth of exports to Uganda annually.

Back home, however, prospects of a Ruto-Odinga reconciliation are more politically driven than economical. The sustained attacks on Odinga's and Kenyatta's characters, for instance, are geared at neutralising them politically.

On paper, DP Gachagua is the new political kingpin in the Mt Kenya region, a position he has to guard strategically and firmly. He is probably afraid of being elbowed out from the centre of political power like Kalonzo and Ruto in 2007 and 2017 respectively. Similarly, pundits believe Azimio is keen on (mis)using the street riots for political gain – directly by negotiating for slots in government or indirectly by pushing and driving on an anti-government campaign.



Tanzanian President Samia Hassan with President William Ruto during the official opening of the Africa Heads of State Human Capital Summit in Dar es Salaam, on July 26.

kenya lens

■ **ECONOMIC GROWTH**

# BREAKING FREE OF FINANCIAL SHACKLES

SWFs are crucial in unlocking non-debt-creating capital inflows, de-risking projects and partnering with external bodies for investments.



An SWF hugely makes sense for Kenya in place of borrowing. Kenya's concept and pledge on SWF were embedded in the Jubilee Manifesto, 2013, and in the revised version of 2017.



Norway's SWF surpasses US\$1trillion in assets under management. It owns 1.4 per cent of global stocks in over 9,000 firms, wealth from saving and investing earnings in commodities, mainly oil.



Estimates from a survey show 970 types of minerals in Kenya, including copper, graphite, manganese, iron ore, coltan, base metals, nickel chromite, lead, zinc, rare earth elements, uranium, thorium and nickel cobalt.



Kwale County (home of base titanium and one of the five top rare earth deposits in the world, with niobium valued at US\$35 billion, also has rutile, ilmenite and zircon. Turkana County has oil.

Counties are entitled to specific locational amounts from mining revenues in line with the Mining Act (2016): ratios are 70 per cent to the national government, 20 per cent to counties and 10 per cent to communities.



Africa's SWFs have formed the African Sovereign Investors Forum, driving debate on partnering and non-debt-creating investments to unlock capital flows. ASIF held its first Annual Meeting in Morocco (2022) and the Second in Rwanda (2023).

## The mentality of Africa as a graveyard for capital can be turned on its head through Sovereign Wealth Funds

● BY MBUI WAGACHA

**K**enya's SWF Proposals: Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) are special-purpose, state-owned mechanisms used to enhance national savings and development by making strategic wealth-creating investments on super-long-term plans. Norway's SWF surpasses US\$1trillion in assets under management (AUM). It owns 1.4 per cent of global stocks in over 9,000 firms, wealth from saving and investing earnings in commodities, mainly oil. A SWF hugely makes sense for Kenya in place of borrowing.

Kenya's concept and pledge on SWF were embedded in the Jubilee

Manifesto, 2013, and in the revised version of 2017. The Parastatal Reforms Implementation Committee undertook its work in 2013-2014 under the SWF sub-Committee that I chaired at the Office of the President.

In the wake of new reappraisals of Kenya's natural resources, such as titanium in Kwale and oil in Turkana, it took a deep dive into potentials for a Kenya National Sovereign Wealth Fund (KNSWF), culminating in the KNSWF Bill (2014). The expert team of the National Treasury Cabinet Secretary and Principal Secretary, Central Bank of Kenya, Office of the Attorney-General, and the Kenya Revenue Authority ran validation sessions with the IMF and World

Bank.

The IMF contributed to the development of the Santiago Principles, the international yardstick harmonising SWFs' legal, governance and institutional structures. The team engaged reputed SWFs – Singapore, Malaysia, Qatar, Mauritius and Dubai. After scrutiny by the Commission on the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC), under Articles 201 and 206 (1) (a) of the Constitution, the Bill's publication garnered widespread attention. At a joint NASDAQ Stock Market/Africa Investor Conference in New York in 2016, it won a global award as Africa's Sovereign Wealth Fund Initiative of the Year. The proposals highlighted

SWFs as the ultimate bridge for unlocking non-debt-creating capital inflows, de-risking projects and partnering with external SWFs and pension funds to invest in Africa. The Kenyan model has been in vogue, featured at conferences, roundtables and panels of experts in Washington, New York, London and Singapore, probing new frontiers for SWFs.

Franklin Templeton of the United States, the world's largest SWF Funds Manager – with AUM of US\$1.53 trillion – teamed up with the International Forum of Sovereign Wealth Funds (IFSWF) in London in 2020, inviting a world-wide forum anchored in its Dubai Office, where the au-

## kenya lens

thor provided a deep dive into Kenya's framework (<https://www.ifswf.org/general-news/sovereign-wealth-fund-kenya-why-why-now>).

A high-level panel I attended in August 2022 at the Woodrow Wilson Centre in Washington DC, a top US think-tank, brought together the who's-who of SWFs under the banner 'Strengthening the Role of African Sovereign Wealth Funds in the International Financial System: Interplay between Policy, Governance, and Sustainability'.

Surprisingly, KNSWF remains on paper. Potential beneficiaries complain periodically, specifically poverty-ridden counties like Kwale and Turkana with notable mineral resources. Yet, the dynamic of potential savings, investment and developmental opportunities of SWF would drive growth and employment. Why are we lethargic towards implementing solutions to our debt crunch and sub-par growth? Estimates from a survey show 970 types of minerals in Kenya, including copper, graphite, manganese, iron ore, coltan, base metals, nickel chromite, lead, zinc, rare earth elements, uranium, thorium and nickel cobalt. Turkana County (home of base titanium and one of the five top rare earth deposits in the world, with niobium valued at US\$35 billion, also has rutile, ilmenite and zircon. Turkana County has oil.

Counties are entitled to specific locational amounts from mining revenues in line with the Mining Act (2016): ratios are 70 per cent to the national government, 20 per cent to counties and 10 per cent to communities. Kenya, nearing fiscal collapse and taking dictation from the IMF, is the main loser of the unimplemented KNSWF. Even the revenues under the Mining Act (2016), remitted to the exchequer (KSh14.7 billion to date) notably lack an allocative mechanism to drive development and financial soundness, either at national or county level.

### SWF Concepts

A key facet of SWFs is to spread consumption and economic transformation from natural resources over generations. Natural resources such as oil, titanium and gas are finite, providing countries a runway to transform and diversify their economies. Under SWF rules, skilled funds managers invest the revenues for targeted returns, at targeted uses and risk tolerance for the

investments (conservative-to-high), and apply disbursements, liabilities matching and liquidity concerns.

SWFs re-invest the revenues and earnings, acting as a bridge to diversification and a richer future. They grow wealth in shares, bonds and property, and strongly influence global financial markets in investment and capital flows. They are often in the spotlight as they search for returns on their management of investment portfolios. Significant, Central Bank changes in interest rate policies trigger re-alignments in asset holdings. SWFs now co-invest and partner in domestic or foreign projects.

Kenya's start-up initially envisaged allocations from the exchequer in the annual budget. After set-up, the KNSWF law and institution would transition to funding from several sources: (a) capital from privatisation proceeds; (b) oil, gas, and mineral revenues due to the national government from the Mining Act (2016); (c) dividends from state corporations; (d) revenue from other natural resources; and (e) funds from any other source.

It proposed three operating windows: Stabilisation – insulating the budget and economy from commodity price volatility and external shocks; Infrastructure and Development – allocating resources that promote inward investment and growth of sectors, targeting diversification with investment partners; and Future Generations – sharing

wealth across generations.

### Africa's SWFs: The challenge of Geopolitics

Kenya's proposal joins a growing number of African countries recognising the multiple defects of the global financial system, against the non-debt-creating benefits of SWFs in circumventing them, as a bridge and mechanism for global saving, investment and growth. Africa holds about 30 per cent of the remaining global supplies of mineral reserves, 40 per cent of gold and 90 per cent of chromium and platinum. Curiously, rich industrial countries and even scholars of SWF potential in Africa exert peculiar direct and indirect pressures that Africa should conserve its natural resources, leaving them untouched in the name of climate change. Critics often conclude glibly that poor governance and shortfalls in Africa's financial and investment skills preclude SWFs.

It is a diversionary concealment avoiding eminent research into illicit flows that former South Africa President Thabo Mbeki revealed at the Africa Union summit in 2015. He cited US\$1trillion (equal to Norway's SWF assets) siphoned from exploiting Africa over 50 years by foreign interests in commercial, tax evasion, trafficking and mining activities. This exceeds by far the assets held by Africa's SWFs.

In climate change metrics, a brutal paradox is perpetuated. Though estimates show little cumulative impact attributable to Africa, rich countries exploit their mineral resources at maximum speeds (such as Norway or Saudi Arabia for oil) and grow their SWFs with massive accumulations and economic diversification domestically and abroad, unshackled by climate change. The takedown on Africa not to engage their natural resources and SWFs to pull out of poverty mixes disingenuous standards with inequality. Recent cases of the Uganda-Tanzania oil pipeline and DRC projects highlight the paradox: the DRC's plans to exploit 30 oil and gas blocks to fight underdevelopment raised a

storm by rich countries powering their economies to an even richer future with mining wealth and growth of SWFs already at commanding heights. Pressure takes extreme forms, with the rich north funding African lobby groups and NGOs to hog placards, marching against projects with an African face.

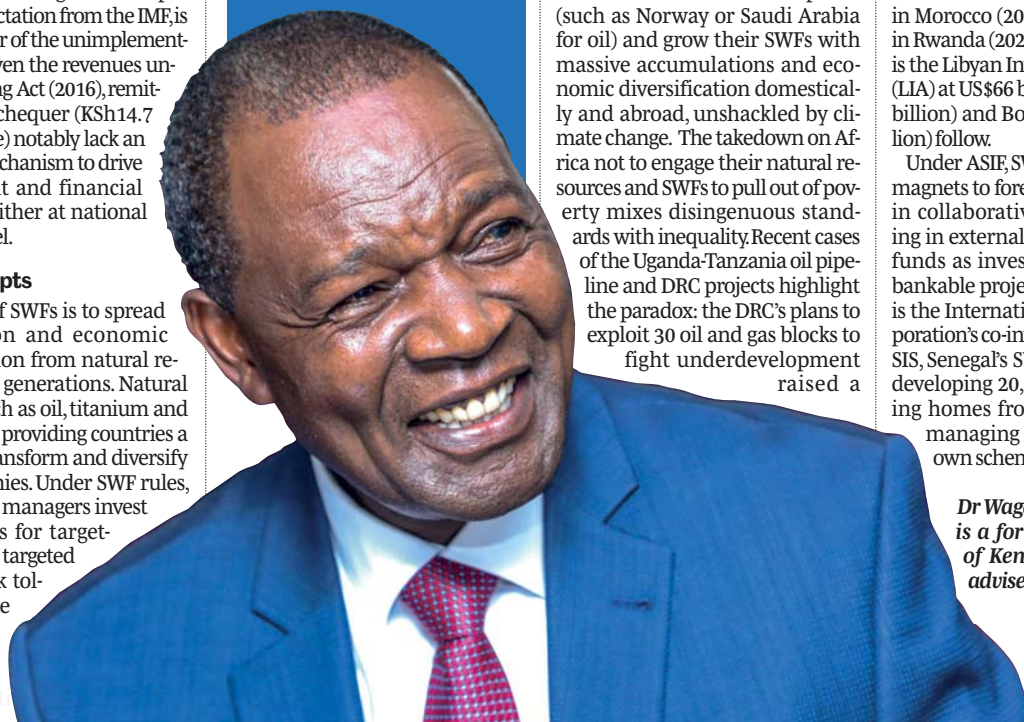
A final puzzle suggests Africa is held captive in the geopolitics of savings and investment. An asymmetry in financial calculations is perpetuated on investing in Africa's projects versus the rich world. With Africa's domestic savings low, scarcity of capital ensures financial rates of returns are high in successful projects. Yet, the continent is painted as high-risk in business perceptions, branding African projects with high returns or elevated risk profiles. Investments in rich countries are profiled with lower returns (based on greater availability of capital)/lower risk profiles.

This mentality of Africa as a graveyard for capital can be turned on its head through SWFs. It allows for pivotal strategies that should: (a) de-risk investments in Africa with SWFs as catalysts of capital flows, anchoring external partners who speak the skilled language of SWFs into bankable projects; and (b) create pipelines of bankable projects and become co-funding frontrunners in funding and implementing them. Africa's SWFs have formed the African Sovereign Investors Forum (ASIF), driving debate on partnering and non-debt-creating investments to unlock capital flows. ASIF held its first Annual Meeting in Morocco (2022) and the Second in Rwanda (2023). The largest by far is the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) at US\$66 billion. Angola (US\$5 billion) and Botswana (US\$4.9 billion) follow.

Under ASIF, SWFs will function as magnets to foreign direct investors in collaborative projects, crowding in external SWFs and pension funds as investment partners in bankable projects. A lead example is the International Financial Corporation's co-investment with FON-SIS, Senegal's SWF. Their project is developing 20,000 houses, acquiring homes from developers and managing them on a rent-to-own scheme.

*Dr Wagacha, an economist, is a former Central Bank of Kenya chairman and adviser of the Presidency*

National Treasury CS  
Prof Njuguna Ndungu



# the limelight



Cody Gribble of the United States plays his shot from the fourth tee during the second round of the 3M Open at TPC Twin Cities in Blaine, Minnesota, on July 28. PHOTO | AFP



A Shiite Muslim woman with child during a Muharram procession on the ninth day of Ashura in the interiors of Dal Lake in Kashmir, on July 28. Ashura is a period of mourning in remembrance of the martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Hussein, who was killed in the battle of Karbala in modern-day Iraq, in 680 AD.



Protesters run for cover as Turkish soldiers of the Gendarmerie General Command use water cannons to push back demonstrators during clashes in Ikizkoy, in the Milas district of the Province of Mugla, on July 28. PHOTO | AFP



A farmer harvests salt from their field in Sidoarjo on July 28. PHOTO | AFP



Red Bull's Max Verstappen competes during the qualifying session of the Formula One Belgian Grand Prix at the Spa-Francorchamps Circuit in Spa on July 28. PHOTO | AFP



Potato traders wait for customers at the Elburgon open air market in Nakuru County on July 28. A 17kg container retails at Sh300, down from Sh1,000. JOHN NJORGE | NATION



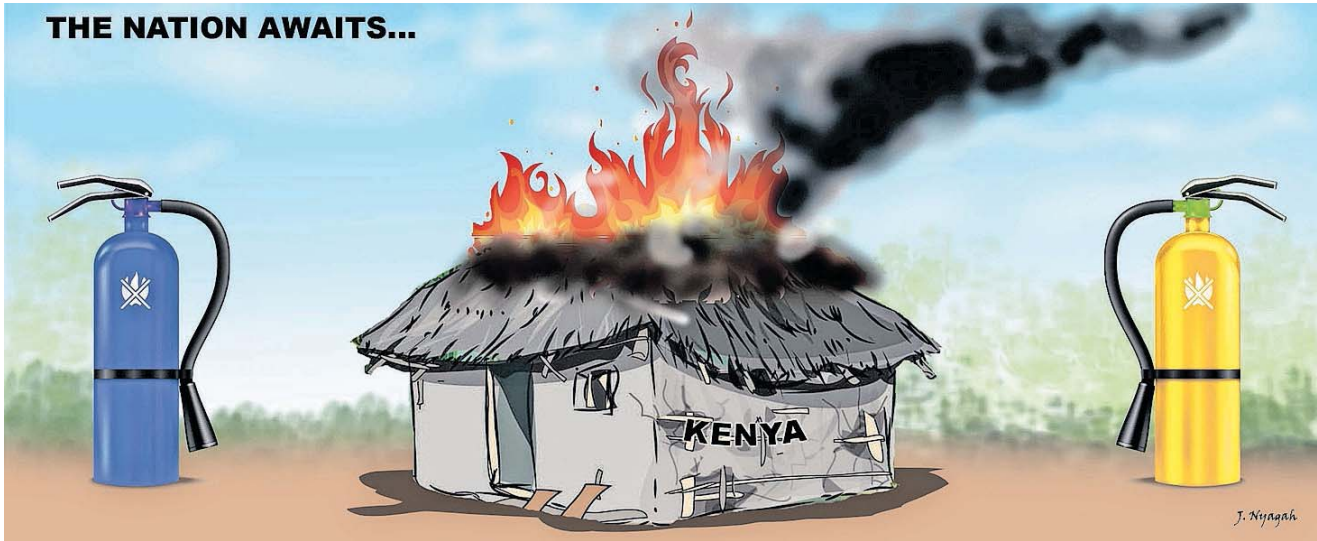
US President Joe Biden salutes as he boards Air Force One at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland on July 28. PHOTO | AFP



Motorcyclists drive by burning tires during a police demonstration after a gang attack on a police station, which left six officers dead, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, January 26. PHOTO | AFP

## opinion

### THE NATION AWAITS...



■ There is gridlock and chaos on the streets, on the pavements, in the alleys – everywhere

# Absolutely no order in downtown Nairobi

If you drive or commute into Nairobi, you may appreciate the fact that the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) station is in Syokimau and not in the CBD. If you are a motorist and can afford it, you will also like the Expressway, from where you can survey the queues and gridlocks below as you drive swiftly by. That oil tankers and all sorts of haulage trucks used to use Uhuru Highway is a matter that's forgotten.

The SGR did not just end at Syokimau. Captains of industry and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers were involved in lobbying the authorities to spare the CBD more traffic snarl-ups by keeping the station on the outskirts of the capital. The Expressway was conceived and executed with a singular aim – to help ease congestion into, out of and in the CBD.

Trucks bound for western, the Rift Valley, Uganda and beyond make a diversion that takes them past the Ole Sereni Hotel, the Nairobi National Park, the edges of Karen and therefore avoid the city centre, into which Uhuru Highway would have taken them. It was a deliberate effort to decongest the city that resulted in this.

But if the authorities can achieve these three feats, why cannot Nairobi, Kenya's capital and the business, industrial and communications hub of the region, have traffic lights control the movement of vehicles? Decongestion is meant to create order on the roads and ensure smooth flow of traffic.

Decongesting a city suggests bringing discipline to road use.

When he was elected Governor of Nairobi in 2013, Dr Evans Kidero installed traffic lights



**KWENDO  
OPANGA**

in the CBD. Many a Nairobiian marvelled at how the lights at the junction of the Haile Selassie and Uhuru Highway roundabout, for example, worked during the trial period. Indeed, a headline to one news piece talked about the lights soon putting traffic police out of commission in the city.

Kidero's brilliant dream remains unrealised. Even at junctions where the lights are working, traffic is controlled by traffic police and by traffic marshals from the County Government.

The lights will be red and these men and women will wave traffic to move on; they will turn yellow and they will signal the motorist to speed up. Then they stop the motorist when the lights go green.

In a flash, the police and marshals will disappear to follow a motorist who will have made a wrong turn at an intersection and chaos will erupt behind them.

Matatus have taken over what used to be parking lots in most parts of downtown Nairobi. They have also taken over alleys and getting into and out of them causes gridlocks

in that part of the city.

Then there are the motorcyclists, better known as boda boda.

They ride on the wrong side of the road and against oncoming traffic. They don't stop when marshals and police stop motorists when lights are green.

They don't stop when they are stopped when the lights are yellow; they stop to pick up passengers and swivel around whenever they opt to. They ride on footpaths.

Neither marshals nor police bother with them. And, of course, the hawkers have taken over the pavements. Therefore, there is gridlock and chaos on the streets, on the pavements, in the alleys, everywhere. Decongesting means reducing the number of vehicles and humans in a place and therefore bringing order to it. There is absolutely no order in downtown Nairobi.

First, it's past time traffic lights worked and controlled vehicular and human traffic in the CBD. Second, Nairobi needs a mass transit system of trains and buses asap.

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## opinion

■ His caution to Ruto that power is transient is valid, for two wrongs never make a right

# Uhuru woes: When the shoe is on the other foot



MACHARIA  
GITHO

President Uhuru Kenyatta obviously learnt many lessons during his ten years as Head of State and Government. It was from those lessons that he is now ready to become, in retirement, Kenya's foremost advocate of media freedom, defender of the whole array of human rights, and a warrior against the excesses of a potentially dictatorial regime.

While in office he coined and popularised the derisive “gazeti ni ya kufunga nyama (a newspaper is for wrapping meat)” reference to the media. Apart from the initial honeymoon not long after he was first elected in 2013 and invited editors for a State House breakfast, the rest of his tenure was marked by undisguised contempt and scorn for the press.

Ironically, he could have himself have qualified as a member of the Media Owners' Association through family interests in the Media Max Network, one of the industry majors running the People Daily free newspaper, K24 and Kameme TV channels, and Milele, Kameme, Mayian, Emoo, Msenangu and Meru FM radio stations.

Perhaps that indicates his was not a hatred for the media in general, but specific to outlets out of his control that did not bow and scrape before His Excellency.

Uhuru is now out of State House, and experiencing first hand the harassment and bullying ordinary citizens go through at the hands of rogue bureaucracies. And he is suddenly discovering the crucial role of free and independent media as a watchdog of society and voice of the voiceless.

That was the immediate impression one got when Uhuru rushed to the house of his eldest son, Jomo, on July 21 after getting the alarm call on a police raid mounted allegedly to recover firearms supposedly used in opposition protests. For now, that pathetic lie from the incumbent government's political apparatus is not the issue.

An angry Uhuru, bemoaning harassment by the administration of his successor, William Ruto, pointedly appealed to the assembled media – which had been helpfully alerted in advance of his arrival – for protection.

Then the following Monday, Uhuru hosted a large posse of editors for the first ever such gathering at his residence next to State House, where he dwelt more deeply into the animosity between him and his former deputy-turned-unwanted heir.

Apart from his take on why the once famous UhuRuto bromance faded so dramatically to the extent that he is now treated as an enemy of the State, a key take-away from the briefing was his warning to Ruto that “Power is fleeting... power is temporary”.

That is an apt and timely caution for a President not yet one year in office, but already exhibiting all the signs of that disease that afflicts African leaders and makes them think they are eternal, infallible omnipotent.

The tragedy is that as Uhuru, out of office, has digested and can now preach that simple fact, he never realised it during the period he wielded untrammelled power.

It was not only the media he treated with utter contempt. It was the period the police, and particularly the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, was diverted from the core mandate of fighting crime and used, or misused, to instead harass and intimidate political foes. Many are those who were arrested, or abducted, locked up in cells over weekends without bail, and then hauled to court on trumped-up charges. Ruto, even as Deputy President, was one of the main victims of the security establishment's excesses, if not directly through harassment directed at his political allies.

One could say it was fortunate Uhuru did not have at his disposal the tools that allowed

**It was not only the media he treated with utter contempt. It was the period the police, and particularly the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, was diverted from the core mandate of fighting crime and used, or misused, to instead harass and intimidate political foes. Many are those who were arrested, or abducted, locked up in cells over weekends without bail, and then hauled to court on trumped-up charges.**

one-party dictatorships of the ancien régime to lock up opponents without trial and subject them to unspeakable torture.

If Uhuru is now being subjected to payback by Ruto, the petty, vindictive and feeble-minded might say he is only getting his just desserts. But the caution that power is transient remains valid, for two wrongs never make a right.

This is a lesson from Uhuru that Ruto must take to heart, for he, too, is exhibiting dangerous tendencies in recreating an oppressive police machinery to terrorise foes. He was elected on the promise to, unlike his predecessor, always faithfully respect and obey court orders, and never to weaponise the police, the prosecution and other arms of the criminal justice system for political purposes. He is emulating Uhuru on those blatant violations of the rule of law, as well as undisguised contempt for media, civil society and independent organs that act as society watchdogs.

Today it is Uhuru crying for protection from excesses of the police state, but tomorrow it might be Ruto reduced to seeking refuge in the media if the next government goes rogue.

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I was shopping for eggs at my local dukas. The first shop I enquired quoted KSh600 for a tray. I thought that was rather steep, and turned to walk away when the lady called me back. I thought she wanted to lower her price, but instead, she helpfully directed me to another shop across the road where I might get a better price.

So barely 20 metres away I got a tray at KSh450, which was even lower than the usual price of between KSh470 and KSh500 in the neighbourhood.

Purchase done, I passed by the first shop and the lady spotted me and cheerily waved a goodbye. My thoughts were that some people just shouldn't be in business. But on further reflection I marveled at her kindness, generosity and selflessness in directing me to a business rival. Made a mental note to patronise her shop next time.

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## kenya lens

## ■ GACHAGUA IS THE MAN BEHIND THE CRISIS

**BITTER TASTE OF COFFEE**

## Suspension of coffee licences leaves farmers with stockpiles of unsold Kenyan produce, unpaid loans and an uncertain future amidst shifts in the international market

● BY JOHN KAMAU

**F**or the first time, Kenyan farmers are stuck with coffee worth millions of dollars they cannot sell. Reason? The William Ruto government, in its bid to get rid of the market of cartels, suspended all licences, leaving the market in a crisis.

As a result, Kenya has locked herself out of the international market when blend changes are happening in the consumer markets, and estate and smallholder farmers are facing uncertainty. More so, the indecision comes

when the industry is increasing Robusta use to escape the price spikes in Arabica, Kenya's main export.

The current coffee crisis started on July 6, after a two-day meeting in Meru led by Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua threw the entire market into a spin by recommending the suspension of all coffee licences.

While the Agriculture Food Authority (AFA) had warned Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi that the revocation of the buyers' licences would affect the coffee trade at the Nairobi

Coffee Exchange, the CS vowed to revoke the licences. "I do not care if they take me to court or not," he said. The ramifications have been dire for both the smallholder and estate farmers – the unsold coffee owners. "Coffee is now stockpiling. If more coffee ends up in the market, the prices will drop sharply, and we are all going to lose," a large-scale farmer told *The Weekly Review*.

It is estimated that there are upward of 250,000 bags of coffee of 60kg each in the warehouses – equivalent to 15 million kilograms of Arabica coffee. More

coffee is lying in the stores, and farmers are now forced to hire security to protect it from thieves. More so, estate farmers who were farming under contract are now eyeing losses running into millions of shillings since they cannot deliver to the international market.

Unlike yesteryears, when Kenya was a significant player in the coffee industry, today it contributes less than one per cent of coffee to the world market, and farmers fear that their buyers could quickly turn elsewhere. Buyers know, for instance, that

## kenya lens

Rwanda has the same coffee profile as Kenya.

The farmers' fears are compounded by the International Coffee Organisation's report early this month, which indicated that demand for high-quality coffees was falling as buyers sought lower-priced alternatives such as Robusta coffee to reduce cost and maintain profit margins.

According to the ICO, the high-interest rates in Europe and the US have forced buyers to switch to cheaper coffees. The rates "limit how big purchasing budgets can be, with buyers focusing on more competitive origins and shying away from the more expensive growths". By closing its entire market rather than targetting the known cartel networks, Kenya has created a storm that the regulator, AFA, foresaw. The regulator had warned against such a move, arguing that it would disrupt the market.

Unknown to many local farmers, the global market is focussing on the cheaper Robusta beans, which have shown higher traded volumes in the 2022/23 season. The surge in Robusta prices has also put pressure on Arabica beans, which are the mainstay of local farmers. The ICO has reported that the difference between current prices for Arabica and Robusta beans is the smallest since October 2020. Approximately 95 per cent of coffee produced in Kenya is exported mainly to the United States, Belgium, Germany and South Korea, meaning there is no local market for coffee. While international roasters value Kenya's coffee for its acidic blending, some shifts in blending could hurt the Kenyan farmer if the closure is prolonged.

Before the disruption, Kenya's coffee production and exports were expected to grow by about 6.7 per cent and 5.5 per cent respectively due to improved rain conditions, government subsidies on fertiliser, and high prices. But the shutting down of the market might tamper with sales projections. It had been estimated that in the marketing year 2023/24, Kenya would export 760,000 bags.

"If more bags are dumped into the market at the same time, the prices will drop," says an estate farmer.

A Reuters poll early in the year had projected that Arabica coffee prices were expected to drop 13 per cent this year due to an alleged increase in Brazilian coffee, which should lead to a global surplus of beans in the 2023/2024 season. According to the survey's median forecast, prices are expected to end at US\$1.48 per pound in 2023. Last month, Citi Research, the market research unit of US bank Citi, cut its outlook for Arabica coffee by 5 cents to US\$1.85 per pound at



Nelson Wanjohi in his coffee farm in Ichamara village, Nyeri County, on June 30. Below is Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. JOSEPH KANYI | NATION

the end of 2023.

Whether Gachagua and Linturi know the import of the closure is not clear. While Kenya has high-quality Arabica coffee, it has, over the years, failed to streamline the market or engage with other producers in Africa

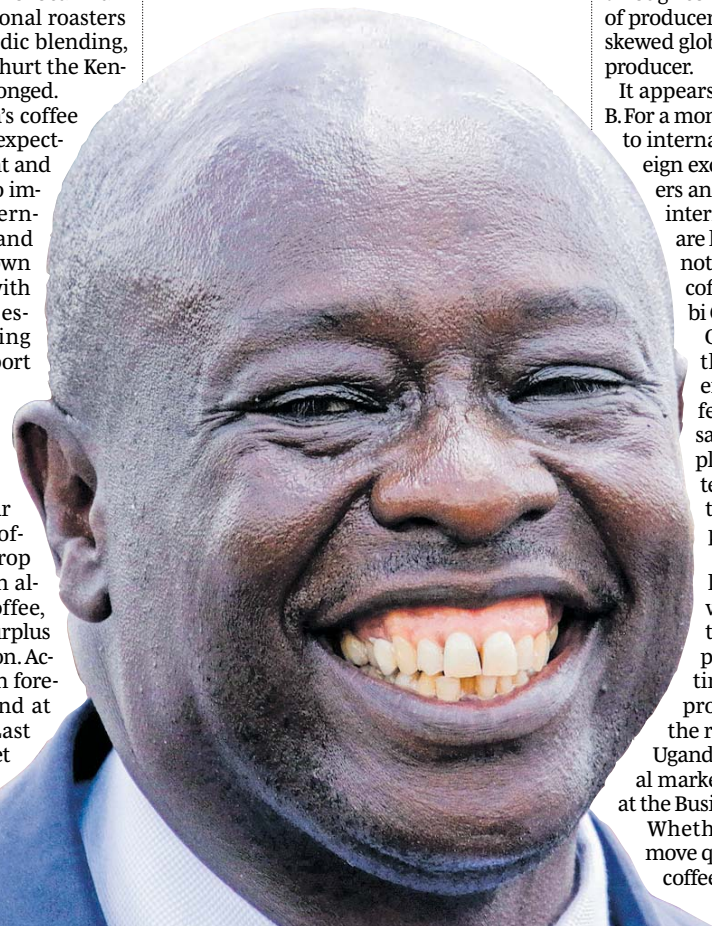
to overhaul international trading. The coffee crop is still highly regulated at home, and 90 per cent of coffee sales have to go through the Nairobi Coffee Exchange, an old bureaucratic spot market and auction platform. Remaining purchases are arranged via direct sales through contracts negotiated between agents of producers and exporters. There is also the skewed global trade that does not favour the producer.

It appears that Linturi did not have a plan B. For a month now, Kenya has not sold coffee to international buyers, denying itself foreign exchange and leaving farmers, millers and marketers in limbo. Meanwhile, international buyers of Kenyan coffee are left in a quandary since they have not been told where they can buy the coffee after the closure of the Nairobi Coffee Exchange.

Coffee left in stores is prone to theft. "The good intentions have ended up affecting the entire coffee value chain," a coffee grower says. Smallholder farmers, the people the government wanted to protect from the cartels within the sector, now have to hire security to protect their coffee beans.

Moreover, if this stalemate lasts longer, farmers with bank loans will not be able to repay them, yet they will need more money to prepare for the next season. And ultimately, lack of movement of the produce could open illicit trade in the region, similar to the 1970s, when Uganda was shut out of the international market, leading to smuggling of coffee at the Busia border.

Whether Gachagua and Linturi will move quickly to sort out the chaos in the coffee market remains to be seen.





## SCIENCE &amp; TECH

# NASA SEEKS TO FIND CLUES ON FORMATION OF SOLAR SYSTEM



Moon rocks that were gathered during the Apollo missions, are displayed in the Lunar Lab at Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, on July 24.

## • LONDON

**E**ager scientists and a gleaming lab awaits.

A sample from the asteroid Bennu, which could be key to understanding the formation of the solar system and our own planet, is set to be analysed at Nasa's Johnson Space Center in Houston after it reaches Earth in late September.

The precious cargo is currently aboard OSIRIS-REx, a US space probe launched in 2016 to Bennu, which orbits the Sun at an average distance of about 105 million miles (168 million kilometers). Long white sleeves hang from the huge metal and glass box in which the sample will be handled.

Scientists will separate pieces of the rock and dust for study now, while carefully storing away the rest for future generations equipped with better technology — a practice first started during the Apollo missions to the Moon.

"We don't expect there to be anything living but (rather) the building blocks of life," Nicole Lunning, lead OSIRIS-REx sample curator, told AFP.

"That's really what motivated going to this type of asteroid, to

understand what the precursors were that may have fostered life in our solar system and on Earth." Once the return vessel arrives at the Texas "cleanroom," Lunning's job will be to carefully disassemble it and separate the contents, all while keeping the material pure and uncontaminated.

The spacecraft is scheduled to land in the Utah desert on September 24, carrying an estimated 8.8 ounces, or 250 grams of material — just over a cupful. Obtaining it involved a high-risk operation in October 2020: the probe came into contact with the asteroid for a few seconds, and a blast of compressed nitrogen was emitted to raise the dust sample which was then captured.

The whole mission was imperiled when NASA realized a few days later that the valve of the collection compartment was failing to close, letting fragments escape into space. But the precious cargo was finally secured after being transferred to a capsule fixed in the spacecraft's center.

The first samples brought to Earth by asteroids were carried out by Japanese probes in 2010 and 2020, with the latter

found to contain uracil, one of the building blocks of RNA. The finding lent weight to a longstanding theory that life on Earth may have been seeded from outer space when asteroids crashed into our planet carrying fundamental elements.

Cosmochemist Eve Berger can't wait to get to work on the Bennu material. "These samples haven't hit the Earth. They haven't been exposed to our atmosphere. They haven't been exposed to really anything except harsh space for billions of years," she said.

Ultimately they "will help us to determine whether what we really think is true, is true," said Berger. Not only might the Bennu sample add to our knowledge of the ingredients that brought life to our world, but "if we can figure out what happened here on the Earth, that helps us to extrapolate to other bodies where we might look or how we might interpret what we're seeing," she added.

Could Bennu bring back something that's never been seen before? "You never know," said Berger. "Bennu is a trickster, so we'll know more in a few months when the sample comes back — that would be exciting!"

## Now tech giants form AI group to manage risks

Four US leaders in artificial intelligence (AI) have announced the formation of an industry group devoted to addressing risks that cutting edge versions of the technology may pose. Anthropic, Google, Microsoft, and ChatGPT-maker OpenAI said the newly created Frontier Model Forum will draw on the expertise of its members to minimize AI risks and support industry standards.

The companies pledged to share best practices with each other, lawmakers and researchers. "Frontier" models refer to nascent, large-scale machine-learning platforms that take AI to new levels of sophistication — and also have capabilities that could be dangerous.

"Companies creating AI technology have a responsibility to ensure that it is safe, secure, and remains under human control," Microsoft president Brad Smith said in a statement. "This initiative is a vital step to bring the tech sector together in advancing AI responsibly and tackling the challenges so that it benefits all of humanity."

US President Joe Biden evoked AI's "enormous" risks and promises at a White House meeting last week with tech leaders who committed to guarding against everything from cyberattacks to fraud as the sector grows. Standing alongside top representatives from Amazon, Anthropic, Google, Inflection, Meta, Microsoft and OpenAI, Biden said the companies had made commitments to "guide responsible innovation" as AI spreads ever deeper into personal and business life.

Ahead of the meeting, the seven AI giants committed to a series of self-regulated safeguards that the White House said would "underscore three principles that must be fundamental to the future of AI: safety, security and trust." In their pledge, the companies agreed to develop "robust technical mechanisms", such as watermarking systems, to ensure users know when content is from AI and not humans.

# africa lens

■ NEW LAW HAS ENRAGED SOME ORGANISATIONS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES

# RACE QUOTAS IN SA



South African police watch as disgruntled South African job seekers belonging to the anti-foreigners movement called “Operation Dudula” march through Alexandra township, on March 7, 2022.

**Despite the government’s intention to promote diversity and equality, the legislation has faced backlash from businesses and liberals who argue that it may lead to qualified workers losing their jobs**

● JOHANNESBURG

Three decades after the end of apartheid, South Africa remains one of the world’s most unequal countries, according to the World Bank. The unemployment rate is significantly higher among black South Africans, with nearly one in two unemployed in the first quarter of 2023. In contrast, the jobless rate among white people stands

at only 9.5 per cent, highlighting the stark disparities that persist in the country’s labour market. In an attempt to address these inequalities, the South African government passed the controversial “race quotas” Bill. Under this law, companies with more than 50 employees are required to submit equity plans reflecting the demographic makeup of the regions in which they operate. These plans must outline the

strategies they intend to implement to achieve increased representation of black employees in their workforce. The Bill also empowers the Labour Minister to set numerical targets for specific economic sectors, potentially leading to companies facing legal requirements to meet certain racial employment quotas. The leading opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has

expressed strong opposition to the law, terming it the “race quotas” Bill. The DA argues that implementing this legislation could result in about 600,000 qualified workers losing their jobs solely based on their skin colour or the areas in which they live and work. The DA, which has traditionally appealed to a predominantly white electorate, has taken le-

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## africa lens

# Storm over controversial labour law in S. Africa

Continued from Page 18

gal action to have parts of the new law to be struck down arguing it violates South Africa's constitutional principle of non-racialism. The principle of non-racialism was a cornerstone of the post-apartheid era and seeks to promote equality for all citizens, irrespective of their race.

DA leader John Steenhuisen charged that thousands risk losing their job "because they have the 'wrong' skin colour or live and work in the 'wrong' areas". The government has, however, rebuffed the criticism, saying the Bill is not going to result in job losses and only seeks to promote diversity.

Gareth Ackerman, chairperson of Pick n Pay, one of South Africa's largest grocery retailers, has expressed concern that the Bill could lead to the replacement of qualified workers with unqualified individuals, potentially harming private employers.

"This would have the effect of making large numbers of qualified people unemployed and substituting them with unqualified people," he said this month. But others disagree.

"It does not mean that the white people are going to be removed in order to create space for the disadvantaged groups," Labour Minister Thulas Nxesi told a local broadcaster.

Commenting on the law in May, legal firm Baker McKenzie said that fostering diversity has "proven to be good business practice" and "equal representation in the workforce is seen as a positive by investors".

The South African government says the Bill seeks to promote diversity and equality in the workforce. Nxesi has refuted claims that the law would lead to the removal of white employees to make room for disadvantaged groups, emphasizing that the



A member of Operation Dudula waves the South African national flag as others chant anti-foreigners slogans at the Durban City Hall on April 10, 2022. Below is President Cyril Ramaphosa.

goal is to foster a more inclusive job market.

While the Bill has faced strong criticism, the country's largest trade union, Cosatu, has supported the legislation, considering it a rational approach to address the employment disparities in the country. According to the union's spokesperson, Matthew Parks, the bill is not the "big monster" that the DA portrays it to be.

"It is a rational Bill and not this big monster the DA is making it to be," Cosatu's spokesman Matthew Parks said. White people account for less than 10 per cent of South Africa's 60 million population, but hold more than 60 per cent of top management roles according to a recent study, he said.

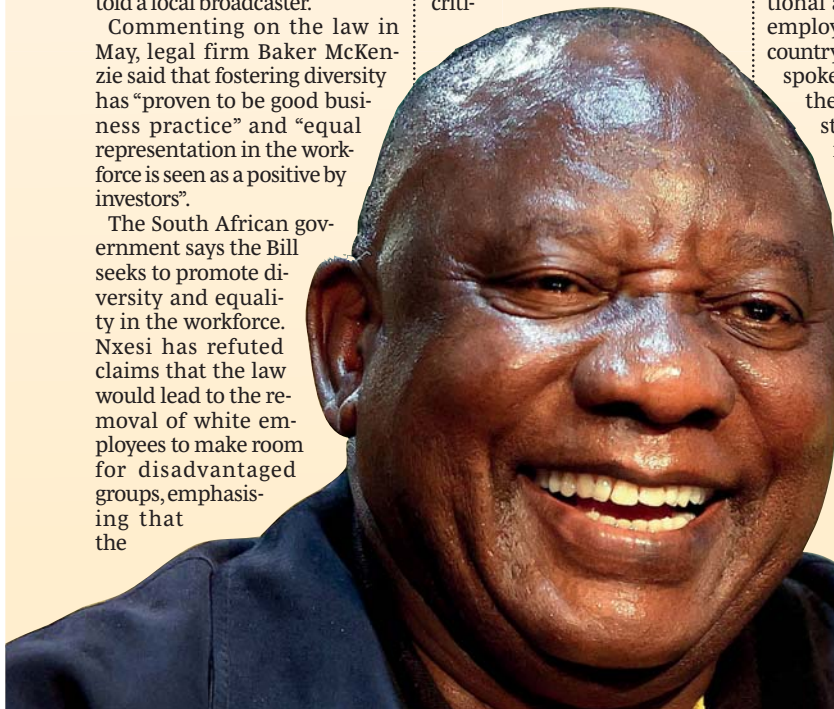
The Bill, which amends pre-existing legislation, was signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa in April and is expected to come into operation in the coming months.

The debate comes as South Africa heads towards national elections next year. Polls suggest the ruling African National Congress, in power since the end of white rule in 1994, risks seeing its share of the vote drop below 50 per cent.

While the government insists on its commitment to promoting diversity and equality, critics argue that the law may have unintended consequences, leading to job losses for qualified workers. As the legislation is expected to come into force in the coming months, its implementation and impact on the workforce and economy will be closely monitored by all stakeholders involved. The quest for a more inclusive and equitable job market remains a complex challenge that necessitates thoughtful and balanced policy-making.

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# global lens

■ MANY CATHOLICS BELIEVE THE LADY HAS BEEN HEALING THE SICK

## MIRACLE OF THE PIZZAS

**An Italian claims a statue of Virgin Mary at her home is responsible for a modern twist on Christ's miracle of the loaves and fishes, feeding visitors to her home in Trevignano Romano from a never diminishing pizza**



A statue depicting Virgin Mary, on the square, in front of St. Jacob church in Southern-Bosnian town of Medjugorje.

### ● CIVITAVECCHIA, ITALY

**O**n the third of every month, hundreds of the faithful gather in a windswept field in a village near Rome where they believe a statue of the Virgin Mary is crying tears of blood.

They also come to see the 53-year-old woman who they believe has been performing miracles and healing the sick since she brought the statuette home from a pilgrimage to Medjugorje in Bosnia Herzegovina, where many Catholics believe the Virgin Mary has been appearing since 1981.

Gisella Cardia claims the statue was responsible for a modern twist on Christ's miracle of the loaves and fishes, feeding visitors to her home in Trevignano Romano from a never diminishing pizza.

"It was a pizza for four and 25 of us ate from it. It never got any smaller," she told an Italian YouTube channel. "We were shocked!" On another occasion Cardia claimed to have fed others with leftover gnocchi that never ran out no matter how much she dished out.

Believers say Cardia is a visionary, claiming she predicted the war in Ukraine and the Covid

pandemic, her body marked by the stigmata of Christ's wounds from the crucifixion.

In a country where three-quarters of the population still identify as Catholic, the case has rekindled public fascination with the supernatural — even more so since it has echoes of a hit television series, "The Miracle".

But many in wealthy, picturesque Trevignano are deeply sceptical of what they call a "giant scam", with some almost coming to blows with droves of pilgrims who turn up every month.

"If it's not true — which I believe is probably the case — people's

weakness will have been abused when so many people are fragile," pensioner Maria-Alessandra Conti said. "And that angers me. There are lots of troubling elements," the 72-year-old added.

Chief among them is Cardia's conviction for bankruptcy fraud in 2013 and the charity the former businesswoman has set up to help the sick.

Although it has been swollen by donations — one man giving \$134,000 — some say their generosity has been abused. Then in March a private detective said tests showed the statue's tears

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## global lens

## Italy's 'miracle' spurs Vatican to action

Continued from Page 20

were of pig's blood. Prosecutors are now investigating Cardia, and the shrine she set up on a hill outside the village overlooking Lake Bracciano is threatened with demolition. The local Catholic bishop, Monsignor Marco Salvi, has ordered his clergy to have nothing to do with the shrine, and has asked the faithful to stay away.

A Church commission of inquiry composed of independent experts is now looking into the phenomena. But Father Salvatore Perrella, the influential head of a theological group in Rome dedicated to studying the Virgin Mary, did not hide his hostility. "We have known for a while that this so-called visionary was absolutely not reliable," he told AFP. "Trevignano should not be counted among the apparitions" of the Virgin Mary.

Yet the faithful continue to flock to Cardia's hilltop shrine with its altar, large blue cross and almost life-sized statue of the Virgin.

Since the "Virgin of the Tears" in Syracuse, Sicily began to cry in 1953 — the only weeping statue acknowledged by a pope — Italy has seen countless strange or unexplained phenomena around religious statues. The oldest and most celebrated is the cult of San Gennaro, the patron saint of Naples, an ampoule of whose blood liquifies three times a year by popular tradition.

Beyond Italy statues have been reported to secrete water, oil or perfume as far afield as Akita in Japan and Naju in South Korea.

The Catholic Church says some are "inexplicable scientifically".

Scientists say many have rational explanations like condensation, varnish coming off or chemical reactions between paint and the air. However, "science cannot shake faith," said Romy Sauvayre, a sociologist from France's CRNS who specialises in belief. "Scientists can say whatever they want and (the faithful) will not believe them because they have felt and seen it with their own eyes."

While Pope Francis warned against certain "apparitions" in June in a thinly veiled reference to the "Virgin of Trevignano",



A statue depicting Virgin Mary, next to a traffic sign, on an access road near Southern-Bosnian town of Medjugorje.

some of his predecessors have not been so reticent. John Paul II was supportive of another "miraculous" plaster statuette from Medjugorje which has been drawing crowds to Civitavecchia, an hour's drive from Trevignano, since 1995. A family there claims to have witnessed it crying tears of blood on 14 separate occasions.

Although never officially recognised by the Vatican, fervour around the statue has not dampened over the years, with the statuette housed in a church on the edge of port city north of Rome.

Photos displayed inside show her cheeks red with blood, with tents outside to welcome visitors, and vendors selling religious icons and effigies of the Virgin. However, analysis of the blood has shown it came from a man. However, the men of the family who own the statue stubbornly refuse to take DNA tests. On the other side of the Adriatic in Medjugorje, where both statues were made, locals firmly believe in the apparitions that have been happening there since 1981. Every day Ivan Perutina's 20 workers make around 400 statues from a mix of powdered stone and synthetic resins renowned for their resistance to all weathers.

In the two decades he has been making them, Perutina told AFP that he has heard of "some things that were out of the ordinary".

Like the clients in Portugal who reported that a statuette smelled of roses and lavender even though "we had not added anything to it," he insisted. The little statues are solid, so nothing can be put inside them, a worker explained. Asked if there was any way in which they could be tampered with, Perutina replied, "Oh no! God preserve us from that!"

The Catholic Church tends to be wary of these cases, leaving its dioceses to pronounce. "One absolutely cannot base faith on people's credulity," said Father Perrella. "Precisely because of its experience in these situations, the Vatican is very rigorous and asks bishops to be just as rigorous in their investigations."

In April, the Vatican created the Observatory for Apparitions and Mystical Phenomena Related to the Figure of the Virgin Mary to help bishops, because "many do not know how to deal with the subject," its president, Father Stefano Cecchin, said. There is a whole protocol to follow, said its director Sister Daniela del Gaudio.

Before deciding on a case,

"the commission (of inquiry) questions the protagonists... Its members, who are doctors and lawyers etc, have their own competences and it proceeds in a scientific manner. You also have to look at the morality of the visionaries, as well as their physical and psychological state. "The Church believes in the supernatural, but it also has to be very prudent," she added.

These kinds of phenomena also tend to multiply in times of war and crisis, flourishing alongside conspiracy theories and disinformation, experts say.

Professor Roberto Francesco Scalon, a religions specialist at the University of Turin, said some people are always convinced that "they are living in prophetic times." "When there is a lot of uncertainty because of a pandemic or economic problems, people look for answers and for hope," said fellow sociologist Sauvayre.

Despite the scandal surrounding it, the group behind Virgin of Trevignano is still calling on the faithful to gather at the shrine on the third of every month, even if numbers were down in July. "Don't listen to the rumours," one of its leaders told AFP. "Today fake news is everywhere."

global lens

■ THERE'S A STRONG CASE FOR DEPLOYING AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE

# HAITI IN TURMOIL

While countries like Kenya and Jamaica have said they would consider staffing a mission supported by the UN, no one has stepped up to lead it

● UNITED NATIONS

**H** haunted by previous failures in Haiti and worried about getting stuck in a deadly quagmire, the international community is reluctant to answer a UN call for a special intervention force, experts say.

“There is a strong case for deploying an international force to Haiti, but it could be a very risky mission,” said Richard Gowan, an analyst at the International Crisis Group. “The gangs are well-armed and there is no clear exit strategy if a mission does deploy,” he told AFP.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres, relaying a request from Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry, began calling in October 2022 for an international, non-UN deployment to help support police who have been overwhelmed by gangs.

Months later, in mid-July, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution urging the international community “to provide security support to the Haitian National Police,” including through “the deployment of a specialised force,” but stopped there.

But while countries like Kenya and Jamaica have said they would consider staffing such a mission, no one has stepped up to lead it. Not the United States, with its checkered history of intervention in the country, and which has firmly said it doesn't want to put Americans in danger. Canada too is out, though it had at one point considered taking the lead, as had Brazil.

“We continue to work with partner nations to identify a lead nation for a police-driven multinational force,” State Department spokesman Matt Miller said. “It is urgently needed.”

Previous failures by the international community in



Haitian citizens cross the gate at the border that divides the Dominican Republic and Haiti in Dajabon, Dominican Republic, on February 20, 2022. Below: Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry.

Haiti hang over calls for an intervention. At the same time, Haiti's gangs — which control up to 80 percent of Port-au-Prince — would be formidable opponents.

“They're afraid of the gangs, that they would have to confront the gangs with armed force,” said Walter Dorn, a professor of defense studies at the Royal Military College of Canada and the Canadian Forces College.

Another fear: casualties among intervention forces, and collateral damage. “Urban warfare is very difficult,” Dorn added. “And the danger of killing innocent civilians would be great.” “However, I think that it's possible” an international force could prevail against the gangs, Dorn said, estimating it would take at least 7,000 soldiers and as many police officers — roughly the same amount of people deployed in the UN's last peacekeeping force in Haiti, from 2004 to 2017.

William

O'Neil, an independent UN expert on Haiti, estimated 1,000-2,000 people would be needed — numbers Guterres said “do not reflect any exaggeration.”

But huge parts of any mission remain unknown, experts say, such as a precise mandate or what would happen if a proper economic revival and political transition are not carried out in parallel.

In a country where elections haven't been held since 2016, and the last president, Jovenel Moise, was assassinated in 2021, many Haitians don't consider Prime Minister Henry legitimate. Those in the opposition argue that an intervention would be tantamount to support for

“a government that is illegitimate,” said Robert Fatton, of the University of Virginia. Previous interventions have left a bitter taste among the Haitian population. During the last UN peacekeeping force's deployment, 10,000 people died from cholera, brought by Nepalese peacekeepers.

While Guterres has called for a non-UN force, the Security Council has asked him to present by mid-August a report on all possible options, including a UN-led mission.

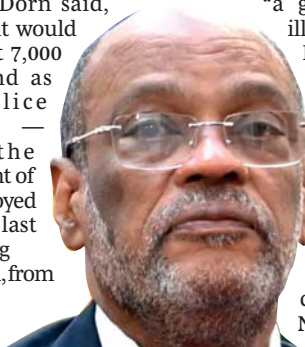
But “there is unlikely to be a return to a traditional form of peacekeeping in Haiti,” a UN source told AFP. If it ended up being a UN force, “it would be a police force and it wouldn't look like anything we have on the books today.”

“There is still some hope member states will make a decision on a non-UN force, which still remains the preferred option,” the source said.

In any case, an intervention would need a green light from the Security Council, where China remains skeptical, insisting instead on stopping the flow of arms trafficked to Haiti from the southern US state of Florida.

“I think the Chinese are quite pleased to see the US grappling with a problem on America's doorstep at the UN,” said Gowan of the International Crisis Group.

Though when — or if — the time comes to vote on an intervention, he doubts Beijing would actually use its veto.



## OBIT

### ■ HE WAS A SOURCE OF COMIC RELIEF WITHOUT TRYING TOO HARD TO BE FUNNY

● BY BILLIE ODIDI

**T**he death of Omari Salim, popularly known by his TV moniker, Baba Zero, is a reminder of a generation of actors who left families gathered around their television sets roaring with laughter, thanks to their unique ability to turn mundane situations into outrageous comedy.

From his role as the wily chief in the sitcom, *Kinyonga*, to his courtroom theatrics in *Vioja Mahakamani*, Baba Zero was a source of comic relief without trying too hard to be funny. His on-screen movements and gestures, the adopted western Kenya accent and frequent times he burst into song, all seemed effortless.

Nahashon Nabwayo, who played Baba Zero's son, Shikwekwe, in *Kinyonga*, paid tribute to a father figure who was fun to work alongside and offered forthright feedback when the cameras stopped rolling.

"He advised me not to let fame go to my head, but instead to remain humble and focus on the job. I treated whatever he said as one would treat the wisdom of a parent," he says. The pair acted as father and son for more than 30 years, up to their last TV gig on the cast of *Je, Huu Ni Ungwana?* in 2011.

Salim was born in Nairobi's Pumwani in 1938 to parents who were originally from Machakos and his grandfather is still revered in the community for providing funds towards the construction of the Riyadha mosque in Majengo in 1935.

Hassan Athmani, an agemate of the late actor's and a neighbour in California Estate, Nairobi, is among the few people alive who know the background of the man who would go on to become among the country's best loved TV comedians. Both attended Government African School, later known as Pumwani Boys' Secondary School, and were footballers. "He played as a defender for Young Muslims while I was with the 11 Icelanders when we met in the final of the Hassan Cup in 1960 and they won 2-1," recalls Hassan.

They were also among a group of young people recruited by Kanu Secretary-General Tom Mboya to campaign for the par-



Omari Salim, who was popularly known by his TV moniker, Baba Zero.

# BABA ZERO'S FINAL ACT

**His on-screen movements, gestures, the adopted western Kenya accent and frequent times he burst into song all seemed effortless**

ty in the lead-up to the 1963 elections. "We met Mboya at Solidarity Building in Nairobi to plan for the polls and our group also campaigned successfully for Mwai Kibaki to win the Bahati seat in Nairobi. It was Omari who drove us around during the campaigns because he had acquired a driver's license in the late 1950s."

After independence, Salim was

employed as a driver by Chloride Exide Batteries Company to ferry goods and staff from their firm's factory. At the same time, he took a keen interest in acting and was mentored by two of the first generation of Kenyan comedians, Kipanga Athman and Omari Suleiman Mwajambia (Mzee Pembe). In 1968, he landed his first major acting role in the film *Mrem-*

bo, which was a big box office hit for Kenyan audiences not used to watching local actors on the big screen.

Omari was a member of a group of artists known as the Black Golden Star that performed music and comedy at the social halls in Nairobi in the 1970s and most members of this group eventually joined the Voice of Kenya (VOK) as actors, according to Lucy Wangui, famous for her role as the magistrate in *Vioja Mahakamani*.

It was actually Omari's idol, the legendary Kipanga, who introduced him to television after years of acting in social halls and other venues.

"He possessed a unique talent and didn't try to imitate other actors. That is what made him successful as a comedian," says Wangui. "It was hard to keep a straight face whenever either Baba Zero or Tamaa bin Tamaa (Peter Lukoye) were the accused in the dock."

Salim acted in various VOK (and later, KBC) comedies, notably *Vioja Mahakamani* and *Kinyonga*, where his depiction of a humorous but conniving chief resonated with viewers.

"The role was a satirical reflection of the Provincial Administration, which at the time was infamous for harassment and corruption. Baba Zero played the role superbly," recalls Wafula Nyongesa, who produced the comedy.

"He was the central figure but was surrounded by fantastic characters like his son, Shikwekwe, Nyundo wa Komeo, Maindunda and Poko Yoyo," recalls Nyongesa, who now teaches media and drama at the Masinde Muliro University. *Kinyonga* was a fixture on KBC from 1998 to 2006, and Omari often singled out his role in it as the one he enjoyed most.

"He was a quiet man but once he got into character then he would transform into one of the most creative people I worked with. His Luhya accent fooled everyone into believing he was from western Kenya," says Nyongesa.

Besides his popular TV roles, Omari also appeared in two major films shot in Kenya, *The Rise and The Fall of Idi Amin* (1981) and *Out of Africa* (1985).

Omari Salim died on July 23 and was buried the following day at Kariokor Muslim Cemetery. He is survived by two sons, Yusuf Buju and Salim Hassan Salim.

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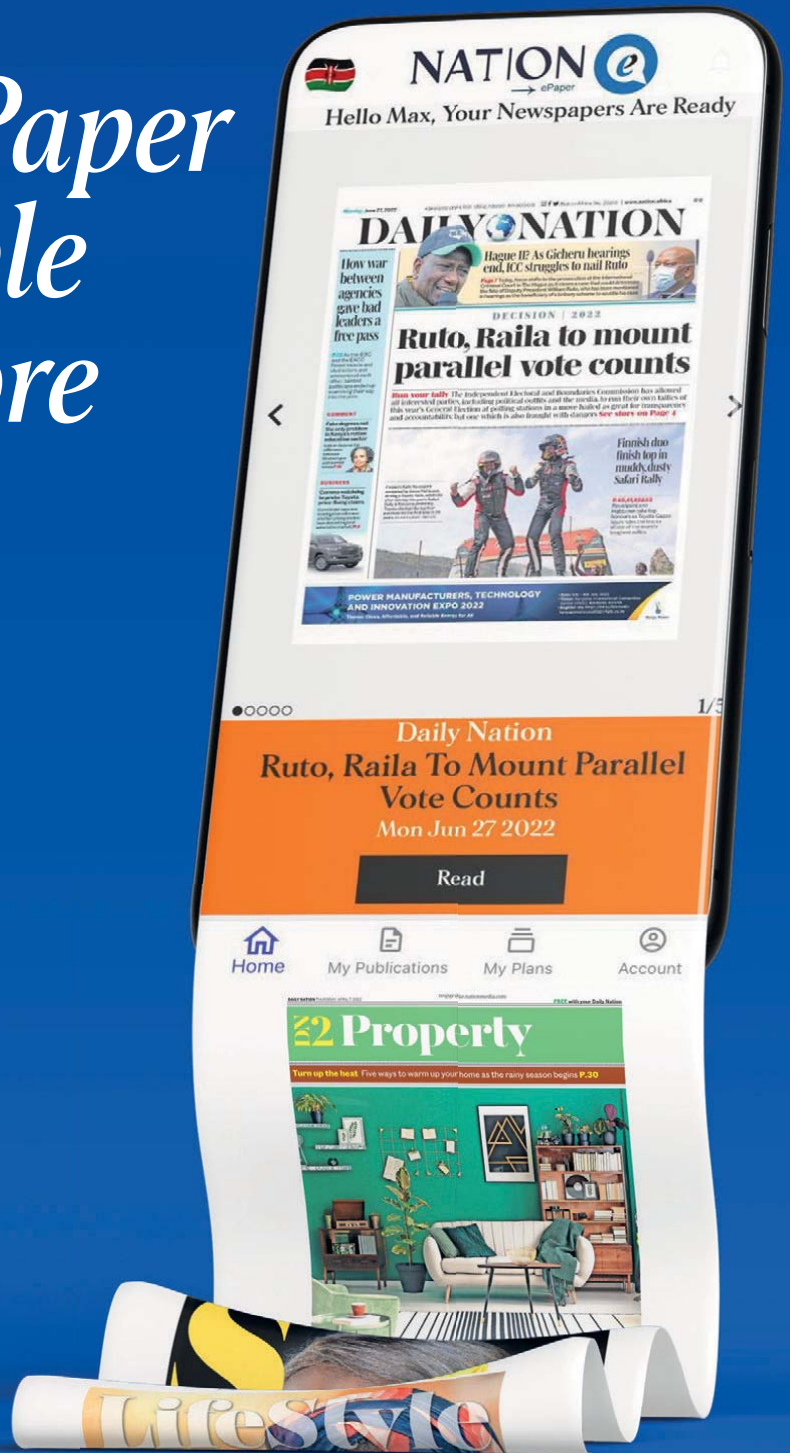
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