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NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT PARTY OF KENYA



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Delegates at a past Devolution Conference. Photo/courtesy.

Protecting Devolution

The ODM party Leader, Raila Odinga, has recently indicated that strong anti-devolution forces were working hard to derail and reverse devolution in Kenya. He indicated that there were attempts to resurrect the provincial administration to replace county governments. According to Raila, it was unconstitutional for MPs to demand control of the Sh105 billion Road Maintenance Levy Fund, one of the key issues that has led to the deadlock in talks to resolve the stalemate over the equitable revenue share for devolved units.

He explained that MPs' thirst to continue controlling the fund followed their 'successful anomaly' in gaining control over the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NGCDF) and the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), which, he argued, gives them the power to conceive, implement, and oversee projects at the same time — against the spirit of the Constitution. >> **Pg 2**



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga speaks at a past Devolution Conference. Photo/courtesy.

ODM NEWS

Kenya's candidate for the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Former Prime Minister Mr. Raila Odinga will participate in the upcoming Mjadala Afrika Leadership debate for the African Union Commission Chairperson position at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Friday December 13, 2024, >> **Pg 9**

Protecting Devolution



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga speaks at the launch of his AUC bid. Photo/courtesy.

The ODM party Leader, Raila Odinga, has recently indicated that strong anti-devolution forces were working hard to derail and reverse devolution in Kenya. He indicated that there were attempts to resurrect the provincial administration to replace county governments. According to Raila, it was unconstitutional for MPs to demand control of the Sh105 billion Road Maintenance Levy Fund, one of the key issues that has led to the deadlock in talks to resolve the stalemate over the equitable revenue share for devolved units.

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Since 2013 there have been, often vicious, fights on issues of devolution between county governments and the national government. The national

government, and the deep state, is dominated by centrists who do not see why funds should be sent to counties to be eaten by undeserving simpletons. Funds must be collected from all counties and consumed by its owners in Nairobi.

Article 174 of the constitution outlines the objects of the devolution of government. Two important parts of this article are to: Give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them; and to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development.

The constitution requires that there is devolution up to the village level in rural areas. In urban areas the principle devolution units are cities, municipalities, townships and market centres. Urban areas are required to further devolve themselves into smaller units. The County Governments Act and the Urban Areas and Cities Act outline how devolution is to be achieved beyond the county headquarters. Devolution requires

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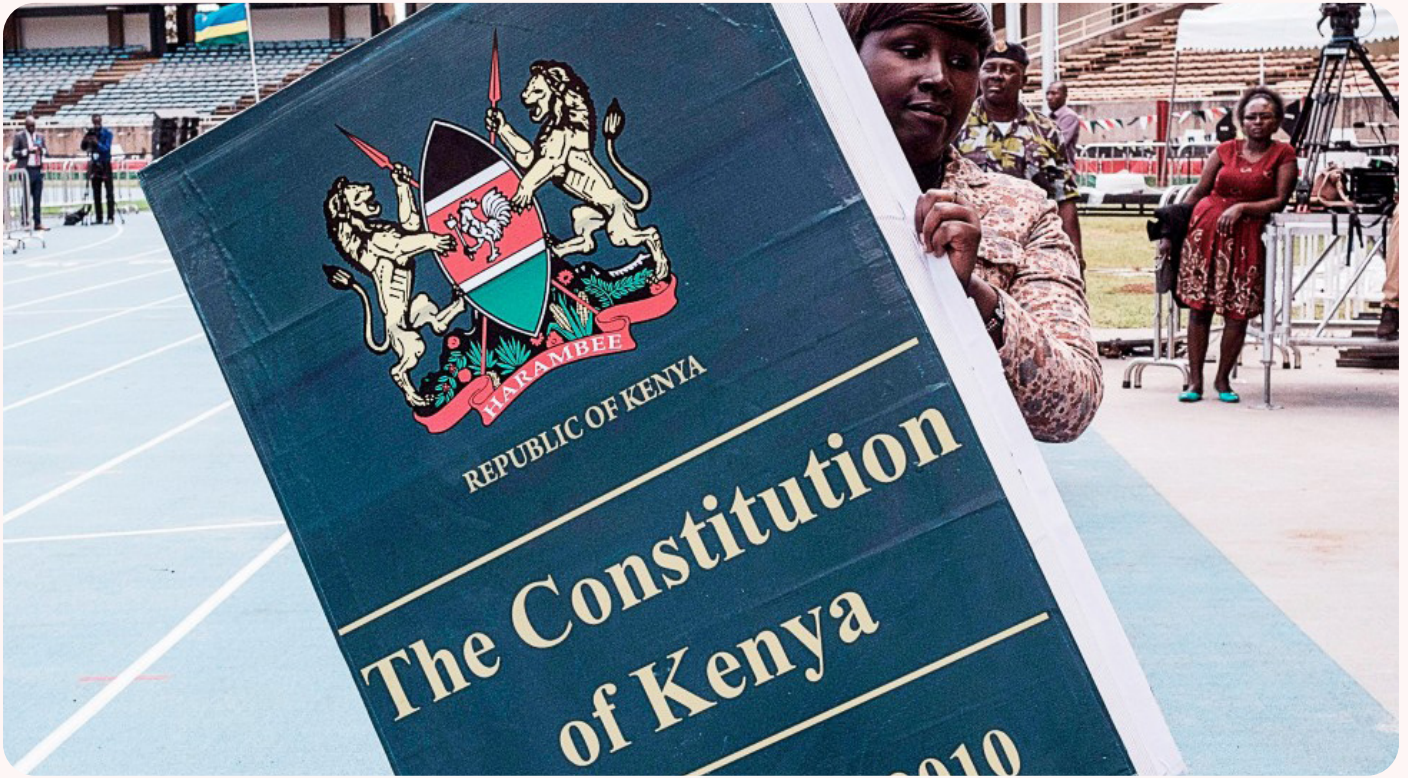
that representatives of the people at all levels should assume office after some electoral process.

County level centrists have been averse to further devolution in counties since 2013. Kakamega seems to be the only county to effect village councils as devolved units in rural areas in the first 5 years of devolution. No county effected devolution in urban areas in the first 5 years of elected county governments. After the 2017 general elections, governors have been setting up urban areas

boards. The interest in setting up these boards has been sparked by the World Bank's Kenya Urban Support Programme, KUSP.

KUSP avails funds for development in Urban areas. The principle condition for accessing the funds is the existence of a governance board or committee for the urban area. The Urban Areas and Cities Act outlines the classification of areas as cities or urban areas. The latter category consisting of municipalities, townships or market centres. The classification criteria include population, infrastructure, revenue generation and collection capacity, capacity for waste management, residents' participation framework and seat of county government.

The boards of a cities and urban areas are appointed for a term of five years through a competitive process by the county governor, with the approval of the county assembly. The members of the board represent various interests including professional associations, private sector, informal sector, neighbourhood associations, gender equity, representation of persons with disability, youth and marginalised groups.



The Constitution of Kenya 2010 Photo/courtesy.

The struggles for devolution space between the national and county governments has been mirrored at the county level between the county executives, led by governors, and boards of urban areas. In the period 2013 to 2014, we witnessed bizarre struggles for office space between the county executives of Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu and the national executive.

In Nairobi, the Transitional Authority had earmarked the former prime minister's office as the office of the governor. The deputy president grabbed this office, forcing the governor to retreat to City Hall. In Mombasa, TA had identified the former provincial headquarters as the office of the governor. The county commissioner refused to allow the governor to occupy space in this building. In Kisumu, the governor occupied the former provincial headquarters and renamed it as "Prosperity House", the county commissioner issued orders for the governor to vacate the office on several occasions.

The above perverse office struggles are being repeated between county executives and boards of urban areas. These boards are in essence successors of the defunct local authorities including city and municipal councils. In as far as possible, infrastructure

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The struggles for division of the national cake between national and devolved governments has been intense. The national government has tried to trash lawful procedures of division of national revenues and its appropriation by the national and county governments.

developed to support work of the local authorities should be used by the current boards. The county executive has made this very difficult.

The country was subjected to infantile anti-governor debates in parliament at the inception of devolution. Members of the national assembly and senate debated motions to denigrate governors by stopping them from: Using the title "Excellency"; fly flags on their vehicles; and having convoys. We now see some members of county executive try to denigrate board members by

saying that the boards are "purely advisory" and executing projects in relevant areas without involvement or knowledge of boards.

The struggles for division of the national cake between national and devolved governments has been intense. The national government has tried to trash lawful procedures of division of national revenues and its appropriation by the national and county governments. This sad situation has been replicated at the county level between the county executives and boards.

With respect to budgeting for urban areas and cities, the annual estimates are to be prepared and submitted in line with the Urban Areas and Cities Act.

In line with section 45(1) of the urban Areas and Cities Act, the steps are as follows:

(1) Three months before the commencement of each financial year, a board or town committee shall cause to be prepared estimates of the revenue and expenditure of a board or town committee for that year; (2) The annual estimates shall make provision for all the estimated revenue and expenditure of the board for the financial year to which it relates; (3) The annual estimates shall be tabled before the board or town committee for adoption

and approval; and (4) The annual estimates approved by the board or town committee under subsection (3) shall be submitted to the county governor for submission to the county assembly for its approval.

Section 45(4) above is clear. It is expected that the budgeting process is to be participatory. This includes interactions with the governor and CEC. However, once the budget has been prepared by the board, then it is only the county assembly which can alter it. Some county executives have deliberately chosen to misinterpret the law and treat these devolved units as departments. They have then proceeded to unlawfully make budgets for the urban areas or cities.

Accountability and financial autonomy is a key requirement of boards. A reading of Section 46 together with Section 51 of the Urban Areas and Cities Act indicates clearly that boards must maintain and operate their own bank accounts. Indeed, the auditor general audits boards as separate entities.

The major purpose of devolution is self governance. That is to allow the people, generally through, their representatives to participate in making decisions on development issues and governance. Implicit



President William Ruto with delegates at a past devolution conference. Photo/courtesy.

in this principle is the right of the people to decide on who represents them in organs of governance. Generally, these representatives assume office after some electoral process.

Before 2013, the President would appoint all provincial and district commissioners. These commissioners would then govern their designated areas with delegated authority from the president. After 2013, we have been electing governors and members of county assemblies to govern county on our behalf. This way we are exercising our right to self determination in counties. Citizens in urban areas and cities must also get the right to determine who represents them in boards. Allowing the governor to nominate and appoint representatives in boards is not in line with the spirit of devolution.

Board members appointed by governors, like PCs and DCs before, are appointed to principally serve the interests of the governors. They are likely to be well selected pliant governor's poodles.

The Urban Areas and Cities Act must be amended to allow for election of board members by citizens. The elctions can either be be direct first the post in demarcated electoral areas or



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through proportional representation in party lists.

The County Governments Act provides for devolution upto the village level. The act provides for village councils as governace units of devolution at the grassroots level. The problem with the act is that it does not provide for election of members of the village councils. They are appointed by governors. This defeats the spirit of devolution- self determination. The act should be ammened to provide for election of members of village councils.

In most progressive countries in the world Education and Policing are devolved.

We have witnessed the perverse situation in which teachers



Former Council of Governors Chair Anne Waiguru at a past Devolution Conference. Photo/courtesy.

employed centrally by the Teachers Service Commission refuse to serve in some counties. Teachers interviewed and employed by counties would not act in this manner. Also the centralisation of school infrastructure development in Nairobi has led to absolutely no such development despite budgetary allocation for this purpose every year. Devolution of education would enable better citizen participation and oversight of school infrastructure development.

Our policing system is a relic of colonialism. The police force of an agent of colonial subjugation. Hence policemen were generally outsiders whose role was subjugation of natives. Police persons in the colonising countries were from the local community and interacted fairly humenaly with the public. Policing must be essentially a community issue. The community knows its thieves, liars and witches. Before colonialism policing was a community affair.

Therefore we need to devolve policing.

Our principle of devolution is that funds should follow fuction. Sadly the major part of funds for devolved functions such as agriculture, health and water are still heald unconstitutionally by the national government in Nairobi. This situation must be reversed.

Our Party Leader indicated that in Nigeria funds from the national budget are shred as follows: 45% to federal government; 25% to state governments; and 20% to municipal governments. In Kenya we currently share 85% to national government and 15% to county governmnets. This must be changed. We must also share 45% to national government, 25% to county governments and 20% to urban areas and cities.

We must protect devolution our survival and prosperity depend on it!

Sri Lanka: A New Promise



Protestors outside a government building in Sri Lanka Photo/courtesy.

The year 2024 has been significant to Sri Lanka. For the first time since the abolition of the monarchy in 1972 a Marxist- Leninist, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, was elected president. In the same year his party, Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) led, National People's Power (NPP) alliance secured a landslide victory in national parliamentary election.

With 159 seats, the JVP/ NPP has a two-thirds majority in the incoming 225-member parliament, giving it the legal power to make good on its pledge to amend the constitution unhindered by any parliamentary opposition.

History

Sri Lanka, historically known as **Ceylon**, and officially the **Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**, is an island country in South Asia. It lies in the Indian Ocean, southwest of the Bay of Bengal, separated from the Indian peninsula by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. It shares a maritime border with the Maldives in the southwest and India in the northwest.

Sri Lanka has a population of approximately 22 million and

is home to several cultures, languages and ethnicities. The Sinhalese people form the majority of the population, followed by the Sri Lankan Tamils, who are the largest minority group and are concentrated in northern Sri Lanka; both groups have played an influential role in the island's history. Other long-established groups include the Moors, Indian Tamils, Burghers, Malays, Chinese, and Vedda.

Sri Lanka's documented history goes back 3,000 years, with evidence of prehistoric human settlements dating back 125,000 years. The earliest known Buddhist writings of Sri Lanka, known collectively as the Pali Canon, date to the fourth Buddhist council, which took place in 29 BCE. Also called the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, or the Granary of the East, Sri Lanka's geographic location and deep harbours have made it of great strategic importance, from the earliest days of the ancient Silk Road trade route to today's so-called maritime Silk Road. Because its location made it a major trading hub, it was already known to both East Asians and Europeans as long ago as the Anuradhapura period. During a period of great political crisis in the Kingdom of Kotte, the Portuguese arrived in

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Sri Lanka and sought to control its maritime trade, with a part of Sri Lanka subsequently becoming a Portuguese possession. After the Sinhalese-Portuguese War, the Dutch colonial empire and the Kingdom of Kandy took control of those areas. Dutch Ceylon was taken by the British Empire, which extended control over the whole island, colonising it as British Ceylon from 1815 to 1948. A national movement for political independence arose in the early 20th century, and 1948, Ceylon became a dominion. It was succeeded by the republic of Sri Lanka in 1972. Sri Lanka's more recent history was marred by the

26-year Sri Lankan Civil War, which began in 1983 and ended in 2009, when the Sri Lanka Armed Forces defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka is a developing country, ranking 78th on the Human Development Index. It is the highest-ranked South Asian nation in terms of development and has the second-highest per capita income in South Asia. The country has had a long history of engagement with modern international groups; it is a founding member of the SAARC, the G77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as a member of the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations.

Political System

Sri Lanka is a democratic republic and a unitary state which is governed by a semi-presidential system. Sri Lanka is the oldest democracy in Asia.[199] Most provisions of the constitution can be amended by a two-thirds majority in parliament. The amendment of certain fundamental features, including clauses on national symbols, religion, term limits, the reference to Sri Lanka as a unitary state, and the entrenchment mechanism itself, requires both a



Legislature in session in Sri-Lanka. (Right) Coat of Arms of Sri Lanka Photo/courtesy.



two-thirds majority in Parliament and approval in a nationwide referendum. The Constitution of Sri Lanka officially declares it to be a socialist state.

In common with many democracies, the Sri Lankan government has three branches:

"Executive: The President of Sri Lanka is the head of state; the commander in chief of the armed forces; chief executive, and is popularly elected for a five-year term. The president heads the cabinet and appoints ministers from elected members of parliament. The president is immune from legal proceedings while in the office with respect to any acts done or omitted to be done by him or her in either an official or private capacity. Following the passage of the 19th amendment to the constitution in 2015, the president has two terms, which previously stood at no term limit.

"Legislative: The Parliament of Sri Lanka is a unicameral 225-member legislature with 196 members elected from 22 multi-seat constituencies and 29 elected by proportional representation. Members are elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term. The president may summon, suspend, or end a legislative session and dissolve Parliament at any time after four and a half years. The parliament reserves the power to make all laws. The president's deputy and head of government, the prime minister, leads the ruling



The president appoints judges to the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, and the High Courts. A judicial service commission, composed of the chief justice and two Supreme Court judges, appoints, transfers, and dismisses lower court judges.

party in parliament and shares many executive responsibilities, mainly in domestic affairs.

"Judicial: Sri Lanka's judiciary consists of a Supreme Court - the highest and final superior court of record, a Court of Appeal, High Courts and a number of subordinate courts. The highly complex legal system reflects diverse cultural influences. Criminal law is based almost entirely on British law. Basic civil law derives from Roman-Dutch law. Laws pertaining to marriage, divorce, and inheritance are communal. Because of ancient customary practices and religion, the Sinhala customary law (Kandyan law), the Thesavalamai, and Sharia law are followed in special cases. The president appoints judges to the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal,

and the High Courts. A judicial service commission, composed of the chief justice and two Supreme Court judges, appoints, transfers, and dismisses lower court judges.

Political Ping Pong

Until recently the political culture in Sri Lanka is a contest between two rival coalitions led by the centre-left and progressive United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), an offspring of Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), and the comparatively right-wing and pro-capitalist United National Party (UNP). After 2018, two major political parties have split from these two parties: The Samagi Jana Balawegaya split from the UNP, and the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna split from the UPFA. The third wing party Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna has gained popularity after 2022.

Sri Lanka is essentially a multi-party democracy with many smaller Buddhist, socialist, and Tamil nationalist political parties. As of July 2011, the number of registered political parties in the country is 67. Of these, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), established in 1935, is the oldest. The UNP, established by D. S. Senanayake in 1946, was until recently the largest single political party. It is the only political group which had representation in all parliaments since independence. SLFP was founded by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in July 1951. SLFP registered its first victory in 1956, defeating the ruling UNP in the

1956 Parliamentary election. Following the parliamentary election in July 1960, Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the prime minister and the world's first elected female head of government.

G. G. Ponnambalam, the Tamil nationalist counterpart of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, founded the All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) in 1944. Objecting to Ponnambalam's cooperation with D. S. Senanayake, a dissident group led by S.J.V. Chelvanayakam broke away in 1949 and formed the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK), also known as the Federal Party, becoming the main Tamil political party in Sri Lanka for next two decades. The Federal Party advocated a more aggressive stance toward the Sinhalese. With the constitutional reforms of 1972, the ACTC and ITAK created the Tamil United Front (later Tamil United Liberation Front). Following a period of turbulence as Tamil militants rose to power in the late 1970s, these Tamil political parties were succeeded in October 2001 by the Tamil National Alliance. Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, a Marxist-Leninist political party founded by Rohana Wijeweera in 1965, serves as a third force in the current political context. It endorses leftist policies which are more radical than the traditionalist leftist politics of the LSSP and the Communist Party. Founded in 1981, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress is the largest Muslim political party in Sri Lanka.



Protestors in the streets of Sri Lanka. Photo/courtesy.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa lost the 2015 presidential elections, ending his ten-year presidency. However, his successor as Sri Lankan President, Maithripala Sirisena, decided not to seek re-election in 2019. The Rajapaksa family regained power in November 2019 presidential elections when Mahinda's younger brother and former wartime defence chief Gotabaya Rajapaksa won the election, and he was later sworn in as the new president of Sri Lanka. Their firm grip of power was consolidated in the parliamentary elections in August 2020. The family's political party, Sri Lanka People's Front (known by its Sinhala initials SLPP), obtained a landslide victory and a clear majority in the parliament. Five members of the Rajapaksa family won seats in the new parliament. Former president Mahinda Rajapaksa became the new prime minister. In 2022, a political crisis started due to the power struggle between President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the Parliament of Sri Lanka. The crisis was fuelled by anti-government protests and demonstrations by the public and also due to the worsening economy of Sri Lanka since 2019. The anti-government sentiment across various parts of Sri Lanka has triggered unprecedented political instability, creating shockwaves in the political arena.



In July 2022 Sri Lankans chased away their president as a culmination of months of anti-government protests fuelled by an unprecedented economic crisis that bankrupted the South Asian island nation, and fury over the ruling Rajapaksa clan's corruption.

On July 20, 2022, Ranil Wickremesinghe was elected as the ninth President via a parliamentary election. President Ranil Wickremesinghe was defeated by left-leaning Anura Kumara Dissanayake in 2024 presidential elections.

President Chased Away

In July 2022 Sri Lankans chased away their president as a culmination of months of anti-government protests fuelled by an unprecedented economic crisis that bankrupted the South Asian island nation, and fury over the ruling Rajapaksa clan's corruption.



Former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. Photo/courtesy.

Hundreds of thousands of people had massed in the capital, Colombo, to demand the government take responsibility for mismanaging the nation's finances, and for crippling food and fuel shortages. After storming the gates of the presidential palace, a throng of protesters walked through its rooms, with some among the boisterous crowd jumping into the compound's pool.

Others were seen laughing and lounging in the stately bedrooms of the residence, with one pulling out what he claimed was a pair of Rajapaksa's underwear.

After fleeing, Rajapaksa boarded a naval craft at the Colombo port and was taken to the island's southern waters, where he said would finally bow to demands for him to step down.

"To ensure a peaceful transition, the president said he will step down on July 13," parliamentary speaker Mahinda Abeywardana said in a televised statement.

Rajapaksa had to be extracted from his residence by troops who fired into the air to keep the crowd outside at bay.



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa (above and below) and military chiefs of Sri Lanka. Photo/courtesy.

Soon after the protesters stormed the presidential palace, Rajapaksa's nearby seafont office also fell into the hands of protesters.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, the first person in line to succeed Rajapaksa, called a meeting with political leaders and said he was willing to step down to pave the way for a unity government.

But that failed to placate protesters, who stormed the premier's private residence and set it alight after night fell.

Footage shared on social media showed a crowd cheering the blaze, which broke out shortly after a security detachment guarding Wickremesinghe attacked several journalists outside the home.

No casualties have been reported in the fire so far, and police said Wickremesinghe and his family were away at the time.

Rajapaksa's resignation announcement was set to trigger a power struggle.

The United States on Sunday urged Sri Lankan leaders to act quickly to seek long-term solutions.

The United States calls on "the Sri Lankan parliament to approach this juncture with a commitment to the betterment of the nation -- not any one political party," a State

Department spokesperson said Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Thailand.

Security forces attempted to disperse the huge crowds that had mobbed Colombo's administrative district earlier in the day, with dozens injured in the resulting clashes.

A spokeswoman for Colombo's main hospital said three people were being treated for gunshot wounds, along with 36 others suffering breathing difficulties after being caught up in tear gas barrages.

Sri Lanka has suffered through months of shortages of basic goods, lengthy blackouts and galloping inflation after running out of foreign currency to import necessities.

The government has defaulted on its \$51 billion external debt and is seeking an International Monetary Fund bailout.

Sri Lanka has nearly exhausted its already scarce supplies of petrol, and people unable to travel to the capital held protests in other cities across the island on Saturday.

Demonstrators had already maintained a months-long protest camp outside Rajapaksa's office demanding his resignation.

The camp was the scene of clashes in May when a gang of Rajapaksa



loyalists attacked peaceful protesters gathered there.

Nine people were killed and hundreds were wounded after the violence sparked reprisals against pro-government mobs and arson attacks on the homes of lawmakers. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as acting president after the speaker of the parliament accepted a resignation letter sent by embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa after he fled the country.

President Rajapaksa returned to Sri Lanka in September 2022.

Elections and New Promise

Ranil Wickremesinghe continued as president until 2024 presidential election in which for the first time since the abolition of the monarchy in 1972 a Marxist- Leninist, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, was elected

president. In the same year his party, Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) led, National People's Power (NPP) alliance secured a landslide victory in national parliamentary election.

With 159 seats, the JVP/ NPP has a two-thirds majority in the incoming 225-member parliament, giving it the legal power to make good on its pledge to amend the constitution unhindered by any parliamentary opposition.

Anura Kumara Dissanayake and his ruling NPP alliance have promised to liberate Sri Lanka for bad governance. The promise is to eradicate corruption, inequality, discrimination, and dependence on foreign nations. The new promise also includes economic growth and prosperity.

We wish Anura Kumara Dissanayake and his ruling NPP all the best.

Investors Invade the Quiet Kilifi County with Investment Opportunities



President William Ruto joins Kilifi Governor Gideon Mung'aro, investors during Kilifi Investment Conference Photo/courtesy.

Last week, Kilifi County was host to tens of Investors keen on investing their money in the county for prosperity.

The Kilifi County International Investment Conference (KCIIC-2024), one is its kind in the country was held at the Vipingo Ridge, a posh forest view area, situated a few miles from Kilifi town from the 4th to the 6th of December, with investors promising to work closely with the County Government to foster the local economy and creating employment opportunities for the youth.

The Conference was opened by President William Ruto on Thursday 5th, who pledged his government's support to County Government of Kilifi to achieve its objective of an industrialized county and live up to the new trends in the digital economy.

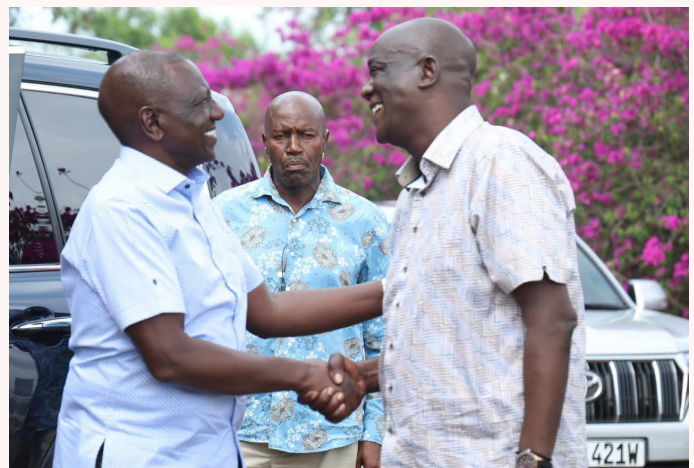
"I want to congratulate my friend Governor (Gideon) Mung'aro for this noble idea. It is a well-organized conference, with enthusiastic exhibitors", said the President.

"My brother Mung'aro, you have set the bar too high for your

colleagues in the Council of Governors. This is quite impressive. We shall support you to achieve your goals for the people of this great county of Kilifi", he added.

The objectives of this year's Kilifi County International Investment Conference (KCIIC-2024) included; enhancement of industrial growth and agricultural value chains, investment in critical infrastructure such as roads, water supply and sanitation, prioritization of investment in health, education and social protection, provision of sustainable resource management practices to mitigate the impact of climate change through environmental conservation initiatives, fostering of community engagement in decision-making processes to ensure transparency and accountability in development initiatives and enhancing skills training programmes for youth and women to empower them economically.

The Governor of Kilifi County Mr. Gideon Mung'aro said he was impressed by the high turnout of investors and partners to the conference saying this was encouraging and had put Kilifi County on the global map.



"We have signed agreements with twenty investors both local and international who are all keen on putting their money on investment programmes/projects here in Kilifi", he said.

"My main objective is to see the people of Kilifi benefit directly from these investments. I want by the time my tenure as Governor ends in the next eight years, God willing, meaningful change is seen in all corners of the county", he added.

He said that some of the agreements were signed with the USAID, UKAID and Tech Organizations like the Open Institute to enhance Technological skills among the youth. He said a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) at

Kayafungo in Kaloleni in a couple of months where over three thousand acres of land has been set aside for the industrial park.

Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs Mr. Ali Hassan Joho said his Ministry will work closely with the County Government of Kilifi especially in all sectors of the ministry, Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs to ensure the locals benefit from their own natural resources.

"Kilifi has a big potential of being self-sustaining owing to the many natural resources here and we shall help them tap into this by providing incentives and expertise in the various sectors to boost the local economy", said Mr. Joho.

Raila to Participate in the AUC Candidates' Debate



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga

Kenya's candidate for the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Former Prime Minister Mr. Raila Odinga will participate in the upcoming Mjadala Afrika Leadership debate for the African Union Commission Chairperson position at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Friday December 13, 2024,

During the debate, Mr. Odinga will face off with two other candidates Mr. Mahmoud Ali Yousouf (Djibouti) and Mr. Richard Randriamandrato (Madagascar). The debate will set the pace for the election that will take place in February 2025.

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi noted that Raila's credentials were suitable to succeed the incumbent Moussa Faki from Chad whose term ends early next year. Mudavadi, who also doubles up as the Foreign Affairs CS, noted that through Raila's candidature, Kenya will maintain its record in humanitarian support and becoming a voice for change.

"Kenya has maintained its impeccable record in humanitarian support including refugee welfare, peace and security initiative regionally and globally," Mudavadi said during the 60 Years of Kenya's Diplomatic Journey Celebrations in Nairobi.

"Indeed, Kenya's commitment to strengthen this leadership role is demonstrated by its candidature for the AUC." "Kenya has fronted one of its sons, Raila Odinga. We thank him for graciously joining us in this historic celebration of our 60 years diplomatic journey," he added.

He expressed confidence that Kenya will seize the position in the upcoming elections. "We have no doubt that his pan African credentials and leadership experience will immensely contribute to the continent's shared prosperity and champion the courses of peace and unity," stated Mudavadi.

Kenya has a Strong Candidate for AU Post, Speaker Wetang'ula says

Kenya has a strong candidate for AU post, Speaker Wetang'ula says as he lobbies Pan-African Parliament Reps to support Hon Raila Odinga

National Assembly Speaker Hon. (Dr.) Moses Wetang'ula has once again mounted a strong campaign for former Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga in his African Union Commission (AUC) Chairmanship bid.

He stated that Hon Odinga was the most suitable candidate to defend the interests of African Nations and facilitate attainment of meaningful reforms.

Hon Odinga is seeking to succeed Moussa Faki Mahamat, whose term is coming to an end.

The elections are slated for February 25, 2025.

Hon Wetang'ula spoke during the courtesy call by the representatives of the Pan African Parliament in his office, Wednesday.

Hon Wetang'ula said: "Kenya has a strong candidate for AUC Chairperson. When you go back home, ask your Foreign Ministers and Presidents to support him."

The team was composed of representatives from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Uganda, Zambia, Tunisia and Kenya.

They are in the country on a fact finding mission for remedies to counter climate change and desertification so as to ensure effective soil management to enhance food sufficiency.

"Everything is being done on the soil, among them mining, agriculture among others. The question of soil management is a matter that needs urgent redress," stated Hon. Sakata Garry, the Chairman.

Wetang'ula noted that while Africa was resource rich and had great potential, its population was still largely poor and yet to reap the benefits of its sub - soil resources, hence an urgent need to develop strategies that will turn the tide.

"Africa lives on the soils. However we produce what we don't consume and consume what we don't produce," he stressed.

Though the Pan African Parliaments' role is largely advisory, Speaker Wetang'ula lauded the team for taking the lead in initiating the development of legislation on soil management in



Speaker of National Assembly Hon. Moses Wetang'ula Photo/ courtesy.

Africa to highlight the need for effective soil management for food security and climate change mitigation.

"Over the last 30 months or so, our country has been lucky as there has been constant rain in the food basket, we are sugar-sufficient, we are sufficient in cereal (maize) but when the rain stops, we are back to the drawing board. We need to move away from rain-fed agriculture and go back to storing rain and

storm water and embrace engineered agriculture," Wetang'ula added

Assuring the delegation of his support, the National Assembly Speaker who is among the pioneers of the Pan African Parliament, went on to stress the need to focus on soil resuscitation proposing management of challenges such as wind and water erosion, high acidity and general poor soil management habits.

Leaders Endorse Osotsi for Vihiga Governor's Seat



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga at homecoming of Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi. Photo/courtesy.

Thousands of wananchi including party supporters and dignitaries from all walks of life thronged the Chavakali Boys High School grounds for ODM Deputy Party Leader Godfrey Osotsi's Thanksgiving ceremony, an event that was filled with political undertones and celebrations.

From politicians from different formations to party supporters and the general public, the venue was filled to capacity, a sign of the party's popularity in the region.

ODM Party Leader Mr. Raila Odinga, Deputy Party Leader Mr. Simba Arati, National Chairperson Mrs. Gladys Wanga and other top party officials, members of parliament from both the Senate and the National Assembly, Members of various County Assemblies, Governors, members of the Clergy, Cabinet Secretary for Co-Operatives and MSMEs Development Mr. Wycliffe Oparanya and COTU Secretary General Mr. Francis Atwoli graced the occasion.

Mr. Osotsi used the occasion to declare his candidature for the Vihiga County gubernatorial seat in the August 2027 general election saying he had matured politically

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“Mumekuwa mkiniuliza kama nitawania hiki kiti. Leo wacha nitangaze hapa waziwazi kwamba, wakati Gavana Ottichilo anaondoka, mimi nitajitosa kiwanjani kuwania hiki kiti ili tujenge Vihiga yetu” he said to a cheering crowd. (You have been asking me if I will vie for the seat.

and gained enough experience to transform the county to another level.

“Mumekuwa mkiniuliza kama nitawania hiki kiti. Leo wacha nitangaze hapa waziwazi kwamba, wakati Gavana Ottichilo anaondoka, mimi nitajitosa kiwanjani kuwania hiki kiti ili tujenge Vihiga yetu” he said to a cheering crowd. (You have been asking me if I will vie for the

seat. Let me make it clear here today that, when Governor Ottichilo leaves at the end of his tenure, I will in the field to vie for the seat so that together we can build our country).

COTU Secretary General Mr. Francis Atwoli threw his weight behind Mr. Osotsi by declaring his unwavering support for the Senator of Vihiga County. “Osotsi ndiye anaweza kufanya kazi nzuri hapa Vihiga. Yeye ndiye anatosha. Wengine ni punda tu”, he said. (Osotsi is capable of making Vihiga County great. He has proved that he can do it. The rest are just jokers).

The Senator of Vihiga County and ODM Trustee Dr. Oburu Oginga told other leaders eyeing the seat to consider going for other seats or retaining those they hold saying Mr. Osotsi had proved beyond any reasonable doubts that he has the qualities to transform Vihiga County.

Party Leader Mr. Odinga said he has full confidence in Mr. Osotsi whom he said was loyal and committed to the party.

Governor of Bungoma County Mr. Ken Lusaka hailed Mr. Odinga for good leadership skills which he said have saved Kenya from collapsing

on numerous occasions. “Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, you are a great son of the soil, we love you and wish you all the best in your bid to become the next Chairman of the African Union Commission (AUC)”, he said.

His Siaya counterpart Mr. James Orenge urged ODM members to remain steadfast in the party as it prepares for the 2027 general election. “This is the most solid political party in Kenya. Let us remain united in it, build it and make it stronger”. He said.

His sentiments were echoed by the Deputy Party Leader Mr. Simba Arati and the National Chairperson Ms. Gladys Wanga who said ODM will be on the ballot in the 2027 general election.

“We just held our grassroots elections at the polling centre level and the exercise was very successful” said Ms. Wanga.

Leaders from other political formations who attended the ceremony included Kenya Kwanza legislators Mr. Didmus Barasa, Sen. Samson Cherargei, Sen. Karen Nyamu, Sen. William Kisang', Sen. Tabitha Mutinda and Sen. Miraj Abdulrahman among others.

Gachagua Laid his Own Traps, says Raila



Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga

ODM Leader Raila Odinga on Sunday 1st of December castigated former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua over his remarks that he had laid traps in State House to block him from accessing the house on the hill.

Addressing thousands of wananchi and dignitaries at the Thanksgiving ceremony organized by the ODM Deputy Party Leader Godfrey Osotsi at Chavakali High School grounds in Vihiga County, Raila could not resist poking fun at Gachagua's previous claims that he had set traps at State House to prevent him from collaborating with the Kenya Kwanza regime.

Speaking sarcastically, Mr. Odinga remarked that instead of keeping him away from State House, Gachagua's traps led to his own ousting. "Nimeona juji mtu mwingine

anabweka kule ati tumeweka mitego kila mahali, huwezi kupenya. Mitego ya aina gani? Ati aliwekea baba mitego, eti hakuna mambo ya handshake, ya nusu mkate. Akowapi sasa Gachagua? Mjinga sana," Odinga said.

Loosely translated, Odinga mocked: "Recently, I heard someone barking about how they set traps everywhere to prevent me from entering. What kind of trap is that? He claimed to set a trap for Baba, saying there would be no handshake or share of power. Where is Gachagua now? Very foolish." "A trap was set to catch a mouse, but the one who set it was the one who fell into it," Odinga added.

In August 2024, Gachagua boasted that his "traps" had been so effective that the first meeting between President

Ruto and Raila Odinga post-elections took place abroad, limiting Odinga's influence.

"My boss and I had agreed we set up traps so that Raila does not join the government through the backdoor, I would check the traps every morning and evening. I would constantly check the traps to see whether they had captured anything" Gachagua claimed. Speaking from his Karen home during an interview with Kikuyu radio stations, Gachagua claimed that he removed the traps after noticing his boss, Ruto, seemed to be reconciling with Odinga.

"My traps were working very well because even that time they decided to meet, they did so in Uganda as they watched Museveni's big horned cattle," Rigathi added.

President Ruto Visits Former President Kenyatta in Gatundu

President William Ruto visited his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta, at his family home in Gatundu on Monday, December 9.

During the meeting, the two leaders deliberated on key national matters, including the resolution of court cases related to the constitution of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC).

They emphasized the importance of fostering a harmonious working relationship among all Kenyans and stakeholders, with a shared commitment to national unity.

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Additionally, they jointly called on Kenyans and the international community to support the candidacy of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga for the position of Chair of the African Union Commission.



President Ruto visits former President Kenyatta in Gatundu Photo/ courtesy.