

# The ORANGE

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT PARTY OF KENYA



*The National Students' Caucus and other lobby groups gather outside Milimani law courts for the judgement on the New University Funding Model last year. Photo/courtesy*

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### Neoliberal Assault on Education in Kenya

The Constitution places a duty on the state to make free and compulsory basic education available to all children, as well as to ensure quality and accessibility for everyone, regardless of background. >> Pg1



*The University of Nairobi which is currently under crisis. Photo/courtesy.*

### ODM NEWS

#### Homabay County Readies Itself for a Major National Fete on June 1st

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# Neoliberal Assault on Education in Kenya



Kenyan Students during a session in 2020. Photo/courtesy

At the dawn of Kenya's independence in 1963, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) stood on the shoulders of a hard-fought liberation struggle, promising a future free from the shackles of ignorance, disease, and poverty. KANU's declaration to fight ignorance, disease, and poverty was not just a slogan but a solemn pledge to uplift a nation long oppressed by colonial exploitation. The people believed in a Kenya where education would be a right, not a privilege; where healthcare would heal, not bankrupt; and where prosperity would be shared, not hoarded by a few.

Yet, decades later, the neoliberal assault on public goods, particularly education, stands as a stark betrayal to the people of Kenya.

Recent headlines in the daily papers about the crisis in the education sector such as the failure to remit student's capitation to schools timeously and the never-ending financial crises in our public universities are not just ordinary news. They are the latest chapters in a decades-long betrayal of this promise.

Kenya's education system, once envisioned as the great equalizer in the fight against ignorance, is now buckling under the weight of neoliberal policies that prioritize profit over people.

Public universities are on the brink of collapse, families are drowning in debt, and parents are forced to choose between feeding their families and paying school fees. This is not an accident. It is the direct result of a systematic neoliberal assault that has turned education from a public good into a commodity for sale.

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed by the World Bank and IMF in the 1980s and 1990s forced Kenya to slash education budgets, introduce cost-sharing, and privatize learning, locking out millions of poor children.

The once visionary dream of free universal education crumbled under the weight of foreign-imposed austerity policies, with school fees reintroduced and public universities commercialized. Today, as student debt soars and public schools struggle under dilapidated infrastructure, we must ask: What happened to the promise of eradicating ignorance? The betrayal extends beyond education. Neoliberal policies have deepened inequality, making healthcare inaccessible to the poor while enriching self-serving ruling cabals and their foreign patrons.

## The Betrayal of a Generation

The independence generation fought for equity, but their descendants now battle a system that prioritizes markets and profits

for a privileged few over lives and welfare of the majority.

This is not the Kenya they envisioned. It is time to reclaim that promise. It is time to resist the neoliberal assault and demand a return to the original vision of a Kenya where ignorance, disease, and poverty are not inevitable, but enemies to be vanquished.

**Education as a Constitutional Right**  
The right to education was included especially in Articles 43 and 53, among numerous others, of the Constitution of Kenya (CoK) 2010 to ensure that everyone, and particularly children, have access to quality education. This was a result of the historical struggles for an equitable society. It also reflects a commitment to meeting the country's obligations under international human rights instruments, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

**Article 43(1) (f)** guarantees the right to education for every person, reflecting the broad principle that education is a fundamental human right.

Additionally article 53(1) (b) specifically protects children's right to free and compulsory basic education, emphasizing the state's responsibility to make education accessible and for all children. The inclusion of the right to education also aims to address historical inequalities in access to education, particularly for marginalized groups.

The Constitution places a duty on the state to make free and compulsory basic education available to all children, as well as to ensure quality and accessibility for everyone, regardless of background.

## What is neoliberalism?

Neoliberalism is an economic and political ideology that emphasizes free-market capitalism, deregulation, privatization, and reduced government spending on social services. Emerging as a dominant global ideology in the late 20th century, it represents a return to classical liberal economic principles with a focus on individualism, market-driven solutions, and the retreat of the state from economic affairs that promotes the greater good of the majority working people in favour

of the interests of globalised finance capitalists.

At its core, liberalism promotes privatization of state-owned enterprises as well as advocating deregulation of markets around the world.

It also emphasizes fiscal austerity and reduced public spending on public services and shifts responsibility for social welfare from the state to individuals.

As Susan George describes in her history of neoliberalism, what began as a marginal economic theory at the University of Chicago became "the major world religion with its dogmatic doctrine, its priesthood, and its law-giving institutions" through systematic ideological promotion by think tanks, foundations, and international financial institutions. Neoliberalism essentially seeks to capture and to repurpose the state to serve the interests of globalised finance capital at the expense of the majority especially in Africa and the Global South.

Neoliberal policies were formally introduced in Kenya in the early 1980s through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank as conditions for loans. Kenya received its first World Bank loan with neoliberal conditionalities in 1980. This was followed by an IMF loan that further entrenched these policies in 1982.

Successive periods saw the government fully embracing neoliberal reforms under pressure from international financial institutions.

The implementation continued across sectors including education, healthcare, and public services in the 1990s.

These reforms marked a dramatic shift from Kenya's post-independence mixed economy model that had included significant state, cooperative, and private sector participation. The SAPs required Kenya to implement austerity measures, privatize state enterprises, reduce public sector employment, and cut social spending - particularly in education and healthcare.

## Adverse Effects on Education

Neoliberalism has negatively impacted Kenyan education by shifting the focus from social



welfare and equal access to a market-driven model, leading to increased privatization, tuition fees, and a focus on vocationalising training over broader quality education.

The implementation of neoliberal policies has had profound and largely detrimental effects on education in Kenya across all levels, from early childhood to university education.

These impacts can be categorized into several key areas as follows:

#### Commodification of Education

Neoliberalism has transformed education from a public good into a market commodity. Universities are pressured to focus on "income generating activities" rather than their traditional role as centers of learning and critical thought.

Students are increasingly viewed as customers with preferences rather than as citizens with a right to an all-round education that is empowering and fulfilling. Moreover in this respect education is viewed merely as a means of producing labour as a factor of production; and instrumentally as a tool for imparting saleable skills, attitudes and knowledge for labouring in the market place.

The introduction of cost-sharing mechanisms shifted education costs from the state to families. This is rationalised on the basis of an unreasonable argument that education, especially higher education, is an investment with higher private returns than social returns and that therefore households rather than the state should bear that cost. This is a logic deliberately calculated to exclude the poor. Consequently public universities now operate under market-driven models that prioritize financial sustainability over educational quality.

This commodification is particularly evident in the new higher education funding model that categorizes students based on family income, creating barriers for low-income Kenyans to access university education.

#### Marginalising the Marginalised

Neoliberal reforms have dramatically increased educational inequality. The wealthy families can opt out of the public system into private international schools while the poor are left with underfunded public institutions. The 2024 higher education funding model has led to misclassification of students' economic status, leaving many unable to afford university. Of 862,782 secondary school graduates in 2022/23,

only 173,127 could enter university due to financial and academic barriers.

Public universities are chronically underfunded while private institutions proliferate, catering primarily to those who can pay.

It is clear that even though the Constitution guarantees free and compulsory basic education, financial barriers continue to impede many students' ability to advance from secondary school to university.

Neoliberalism has narrowed the curriculum in its search for and emphasis on "marketable skills". This has led to devaluation of humanities and social sciences in favor of the elusive Science, Technology, Engineer and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

This so-called preference for STEM is itself elusive for lack of the required public funding. Even though the Science, Technology and Innovation Act (No. 28 of 2013) at section 32(2a) stipulates that at least 2% of the GDP be dedicated to Research and Development (R&D) the country never dedicates more than 0.8% of the GDP to Research.

This narrative about "useless degrees" that undermines broad-based education resulted in rejection of 133 university courses in 2019 for not being "marketable".

Paradoxically a contradiction exists where medical graduates face unemployment despite shortages in public hospitals.

This narrow focus fails to account for the unpredictable nature of future job markets and the value of critical thinking skills developed through liberal arts education.

#### Underfunding and Infrastructure Decline

Neoliberalism has also imposed austerity measures that have reduced government spending on education at all levels and left public schools and universities without adequate facilities or teaching staff.

The effects are particularly stark in higher education, where the education crisis is evident in the growing difficulty that students from low-income families face in accessing quality education. Brain Drain and Endangered Academic Freedom By reducing opportunities neoliberal policies have contributed to emigration of qualified educators seeking better opportunities abroad. The emphasis on market-friendly programmes has the potential of

eroding academic freedom as universities prioritize income generating activities over critical thinking. This has led to the loss of critical intellectual traditions that challenge neoliberal orthodoxy.

#### The Competency Based Curriculum/Education

Recent educational changes reflect the intensification of the neoliberal priorities such as the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) now baptized as the Curriculum Based Education was implemented without adequate teacher training or resources for effective implementation.

This initiative seeking the vocationalization of education in the country is in conformity to a global division of labour that seeks to relegate our countries to the periphery of the global economy. In that arrangement, thinking, design, development and production is undertaken elsewhere in the developed countries while we act as a source of cheap labour and a market for foreign goods.

These reforms often follow World Bank and IMF prescriptions rather than local educational needs and Intensify fundamental inequalities in the society.

**Financing and Foreign Domination**  
In 1988 the World Bank released their influential report on African education, "Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalisation, and Expansion". This publication proposed introduction of user fees in education. It also encouraged liberalisation of education and adoption of SAPs. The GoK complied by immediately setting up a "Presidential Working Party on Education and Training for the Next Decade and Beyond" which released a report known as the Kamunge Report in the same year (1988).

This report institutionalised the cost-sharing policy in education in conformity to the World Bank report.

Among the changes introduced was the launch of the Universities Investment Project (UIP). According to the World Bank the objective of the project was to support the government to consolidate and develop universities by: (a) rationalising and strengthening the institutional framework for higher education in both public and private sectors; (b) limiting the growth of government budgetary resources devoted to public universities by promoting cost-sharing and improved investment planning; and (c) Improving the quality of the teaching and research delivered at public universities. The major achievement of the project.

was to stifle the growth of public universities because it included a condition that prohibited the GoK from admitting more than 10,000 new students per year to public universities even though the numbers qualifying were rising. The result was that public universities could only admit less than one third of eligible students. The GoK was forced to abandon its stated policy of widening access to higher education merely to meet World Bank conditions for borrowing.

A 2017 study on "The Influence of The World Bank on Kenya's Higher Education System" thus concluded that "the World Bank and its Neoliberal ideology significantly shaped Kenya's higher education system by Influencing major policy goals of the country. The World Bank was able to do so because it was the major controller and provider (with conditions) of the critical resources needed by Kenya's government to support its higher education.

It was also noted that future power relations between the World Bank and Kenya's government, as well as the future of Kenya's higher education, would largely depend on the presence or absence of strong alternative source of resources for the country's higher education"(Michael Emru Tadesse,2017).

This foreign domination of our public policy space in general and of the education sector policies in particular continues and shall persist until and unless we break these shackles by dedicated funding from public funds.

Neoliberalism has transformed Kenya's education from a liberation project into a stratified market. Kenya's post-colonial education story reveals a tragic gap between aspiration and reality. While enrollment numbers have improved quality and equity have lagged.

Without dismantling the neoliberal paradigm, Kenya's education will continue to reproduce inequality rather than empower citizens.

We must re-emphasize education as a democratic right and not merely a commodity. As a right, education must be viewed as a public good paid for out of public funds.

Education is a critical driver of national development, and therefore adequate investment in equitable quality education is absolutely essential. If the country is genuinely interested in achieving the Kenya Vision 2030 goal of "building a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment" we must be dedicated to providing publicly funded high quality inclusive education for all.

# Nationalism: A Lost Cause in Post-Independent Kenya

Kenyan nationalism was a powerful force in the fight for independence, but its post-independence legacy has been marked by challenges in achieving a unified and equitable nation.

The multi-racial nature of the then colony, with Africans at the bottom of the political and economic ladder, fueled the rise of nationalism. Kenyan nationalism thus emerged as a response to colonial rule and the economic and social inequalities faced by native Kenyans in their own country.

The Kenyan nationalism involved three main phases: from cautious demands for the improvement of conditions for Africans, to the rise of cultural and militant nationalism. The cautious demands entailed initial movements focused on improving conditions for the natives; while cultural nationalism was a period of cultural expression and affirmation. Militant nationalism, on the other hand, saw more radical and assertive movements emerge. Mau Mau Rebellion was a significant example of militant nationalism in the country originating among the Kikuyu people.

The fight for independence initially involved multiple social forces united by a shared anti-colonial sentiment, but this unity was short-lived, and the "nation-building" objective largely betrayed after the country gained independence. Thus in post-Independence Kenya, what was a rallying focus on nation-building, turned into the rise of populist, ethnonationalism, and separatist movements, hence perpetuating inequalities and tensions. The "Harambee" philosophy coined by the founding father of the nation the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta aimed at uniting Kenyans to spur development by emphasising unity and self-reliance among the citizenry, was itself abandoned. The spirit of nationalism was as a result beset by many challenges and the initial sense of unity and purpose among anti-colonial nationalists dissipated quickly after independence.

Among the challenges has been the unequal distribution of resources as a result of the colonial legacy of land and labour policies that continued to shape post-colonial Kenya, thus contributing to inequalities and fueling further disharmony among the people.

Similarly, ethnic and regional tensions emerged as a result of the absence of a strong, inclusive national identity and these tensions have persisted unabated. A case in point is the post-election violence of 2007-2008, which was the epitome of division along ethnic and class lines.

Therefore, the need to restore Kenyan nationalism is not only necessary, but of paramount importance especially among the current generation of the Kenyan youth. But how can this be achieved? For one, it requires fostering a stronger sense of national unity and pride, which can be done through education, cultural preservation, and promotion of a shared national identity.

The emphasis here should be put on our shared history, culture; and values that unite Kenyans; and equally addressing the historical and social factors that have contributed to the current division and fragmentation.

As aforementioned, education is one viable avenue of restoring nationalism, especially with a strong focus on national identity. This requires incorporating Kenyan history, culture, and values into the curriculum, as well as promoting the use of national languages and fostering a sense of shared heritage among the youth.

Thus the decision to embed nationalism in the Kenyan education curriculum in a bid to foster a sense of nationhood, patriotism, and unity among the youth is a move in the right direction. It equips students (youth) with the knowledge and skills to enable them contribute positively to nation building, while also fostering a sense of shared identity and responsibility among them. It entails incorporating national history, values, and culture into the curriculum; promoting civic engagement; and encouraging positive attitudes towards other cultures.

The Kenyan history includes the struggle for independence, the achievements of the nation, and the cultural heritage. This will enable the youth understand the country's journey and to develop a sense of belonging.

The thematic area incorporates

civics education in which students are taught about the structure of the government, the importance of democracy, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. The cultural aspect, on its part, entails the study of various ethnic groups, their customs, traditions, and languages, thus promoting understanding and appreciation of Kenya's diverse cultures.

There is also the aspect of national values and morality, whereby the curriculum promotes moral and religious values, with emphasis on principles like honesty, integrity, and respect for others.

Another aspect is national unity; in which it aims to instill a sense of unity among the youth from different backgrounds, promoting tolerance, respect, and peaceful coexistence. The curriculum equally fosters social responsibility aspect which encourages the youth to take responsibility for their actions and to contribute positively to their communities and the nation as a whole.

On the aspect of patriotism and civic engagement, the curriculum fosters a love for the country, its achievements, and its people; while the civic engagement aspect encourages students to participate in school activities, community projects, and national events, thus fostering a sense of belonging and involvement.

The curriculum equally focuses on national development, in which it puts emphasis on the importance of contributing to the nation's social, economic, and technological development.

Apart from education, cultural preservation as previously mentioned is another aspect that can be used in the bid to restore the Kenyan nationalism. This can be done by promoting cultural heritage preservation through cultural hubs, community centers, and art markets. This can help

foster a sense of national pride and identity. There is also the need to address historical grievances and injustices, by recognising and addressing these grievances, which include land issues. This can help heal divisions and foster a more inclusive sense of national belonging.

## Promoting national unity

As aforementioned in the education curriculum is another viable strategy in the restoration of Kenyan nationalism. In this regard, efforts should be made to promote national cohesion and discourage ethnic divisions - by fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and inclusive governance. Issues of social inequality and injustice should be addressed to promote a sense of fairness and responsibility among the citizenry. This will help build a stronger and more cohesive nation.

Economic development is another crucial aspect. This entails addressing economic inequalities and promoting equitable development. In so doing, it can help create a sense of shared prosperity and belonging, which can further strengthen national unity.

Political stability is also a key aspect in the restoration of our nationalism. A stable and democratic political system that ensures fair representation and protects the rights of all citizens is crucial for fostering national unity and a sense of belonging. This can only be realised through a stable and democratic leadership of the country. A strong and unifying leadership undoubtedly plays a crucial role in fostering nationalism and promoting national unity.

It is hence important to note that by implementing these outlined strategies, Kenya can strive to restore a stronger sense of nationalism and create a more unified and prosperous nation!



Kenyan flag. Photo/courtesy



# Guinea: A Nation in Flux



*Guinea's head of the transitional government Mamady Doumbouya with Rwanda's President Paul Kagame. Photo/courtesy*

Guinea is an archetype of the resource-rich yet underdeveloped country in the neoliberal globalised economy. It holds the world's largest reserves of bauxite, a critical component of aluminum. Major multinational corporations—including Rio Tinto, RUSAL, and the China Hongqiao Group—have invested heavily in mining and export infrastructure. Yet, the benefits of globalisation remain unequally distributed.

Guinea's political landscape has been characterised by fragility and intermittent military interventions. The most recent upheaval occurred in September 2021 when Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, head of the elite Special Forces Group, led a coup that ousted President Alpha Condé. Condé's controversial third-term bid, enabled by a constitutional referendum in 2020, had already polarised the country and sparked violent protests.

Doumbouya, now head of the transitional government, promised to restore civilian rule and combat endemic corruption. However, critics argue that the junta has been slow to implement democratic reforms. The military-led transition has extended timelines for elections, citing the need for institutional reforms and the redrafting of the constitution. Meanwhile, opposition parties and civil society organisations express growing concerns about shrinking civic space and the military's intentions to entrench itself in power.

Despite some improvements in infrastructure and mining investment under Condé's administration, Guinea continues to face high poverty rates, unemployment, and inequality. Political instability further undermines economic progress and investor confidence. Guinea's relationship with France is

unique among former French colonies. In 1958, Sékou Touré famously rejected General Charles de Gaulle's offer of inclusion in the French Community, declaring, "We prefer poverty in freedom to riches in slavery." Guinea became the only French colony to vote "No" in the referendum, instantly severing ties with the colonial metropole. France responded with punitive economic and administrative withdrawal, leaving Guinea isolated. That rupture sowed decades of mutual suspicion. While diplomatic relations have since normalised, the bilateral relationship lacks the intimacy seen between France and countries like Senegal or Côte d'Ivoire.

The recent wave of Francophone African states reassessing their relationships with France—particularly Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger—resonates deeply in Guinea.

Under Doumbouya, Guinea has joined this chorus of sovereignist rhetoric, advocating for less Western interference and seeking diversified partnerships. French companies remain active, especially in the mining sector, but political relations are no longer marked by dependency or deference.

## Guinea and the West: A Tilt Toward Multipolarity

Beyond France, Guinea's relations with the broader West are defined by conditional engagement. Institutions like the World Bank and IMF have pushed structural adjustment and fiscal austerity since the 1980s, leading to liberalisation policies that often failed to benefit the poor. Guinea's political elite, however, have generally welcomed Western-backed investments in the extractive industries, particularly bauxite and gold.

In the current context, Guinea's transitional government faces growing pressure from ECOWAS and Western powers to return to constitutional rule. Sanctions and diplomatic rebukes have followed the junta's delays in holding elections. Yet Doumbouya's government has also played a balancing act, engaging with non-Western powers such as China, Russia, and Turkey. These partnerships often come with fewer governance conditions, allowing Guinea greater policy flexibility.

Russia's growing footprint in Guinea, particularly in mining and security cooperation, reflects a broader recalibration toward a multipolar global order. Similarly, China's involvement in infrastructure development and mining signals a pivot that challenges Western hegemony.

#### Guinea in the Age of Globalisation

The enclave nature of the mining economy means that most of the value added accrues outside Guinea. Despite billions of dollars in bauxite exports, local communities often see little impact in terms of jobs, environmental protection,

**“***Nonetheless, Touré's insistence on national dignity and independence resonates today. In an era where many African countries remain beholden to foreign interests, Touré's vision of sovereignty continues to inspire nationalist discourse.*

or public services. Global value chains have locked Guinea into the role of a primary commodity exporter, with minimal industrialisation.

At the same time, globalisation has brought increased connectivity, urbanisation, and diaspora engagement. Remittances from Guineans abroad form a significant part of the economy. Civil society

networks and digital media have enhanced transparency and accountability, empowering citizens to demand more from their leaders. But the global economic architecture still constrains Guinea's ability to define its own development path.

#### The Enduring Legacy of Sékou Touré

No discussion of Guinea's political economy is complete without examining the legacy of Ahmed Sékou Touré, the country's first president and a giant of African anti-colonial nationalism. Touré's 26-year rule (1958–1984) was marked by a fervent commitment to Pan-Africanism, economic self-reliance, and cultural authenticity. He was one of the few African leaders to openly resist neo-colonialism and imperialism.

Touré nationalised key industries, pursued a state-led development model, and sought to root governance in African socialist values. His regime established diplomatic ties with the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War and hosted numerous liberation movements from across Africa. However, his legacy is double-edged. The same revolutionary zeal that inspired Pan-African solidarity also justified authoritarianism. Political repression, a pervasive security apparatus, and a culture of fear marred his rule.

Nonetheless, Touré's insistence on national dignity and independence resonates today. In an era where many African countries remain beholden to foreign interests,

Touré's vision of sovereignty continues to inspire nationalist discourse. Current leaders often invoke his name when asserting autonomy, even if their policies fall short of his radical ethos.

#### Between Memory and Modernity

Guinea's political economy is a study in contradictions. It is a land of great wealth and deep poverty, of proud independence and structural dependence, of radical history and uncertain futures. The legacy of Sékou Touré looms large, reminding the nation of its once audacious commitment to freedom. But translating that legacy into meaningful development in the 21st century requires more than rhetoric.

As Guinea navigates a difficult political transition and redefines its place in a shifting global order, it must grapple with old and new questions: Can sovereignty coexist with global integration? Can resource wealth be harnessed for public good rather than elite enrichment? Can the state reconcile revolutionary ideals with democratic governance?

The answers lie in the choices made today by Guinea's leaders and citizens. The road is uncertain, but the stakes are undeniable.



# Nathif Jama Adam: Garissa's Technocrat in Politics



*Incumbent Garissa governor Nathif Jama Adam. Source:X*

Governor Nathif Jama Adam is a reformer credited with introducing Islamic banking principles into Kenyan governance. As a governor, he prioritizes fiscal discipline, sharia-compliant budgeting and ethical governance. Nathif Adam has continually advocated for public-private partnerships in health and infrastructure. His governance, deeply shaped by Islamic finance ethics, puts transparency, equity and fairness at the core of his governance. The governor has also pushed for education reforms linking madrasa and formal schooling. Additionally, governor Nathif champions for youth entrepreneurship through microfinance.

While many governors focus on construction, he focuses on sustainable systems. Nathif Jama Adam is the governor of Garissa County as of 2022.

A current member of the Orange Democratic Movement, Nathif was elected under the Azimio coalition. It is second term having first been elected in 2013. However, he lost his gubernatorial seat in 2017 but regrouped and reclaimed his seat five years later. Governor Nathif Adam commands strong grassroots loyalty in Garissa. His 2022 comeback is a win for the ODM in the tough northern battleground.

Nathif hails from the Aulihan clan of the Somali Ogaden Darod making him a community leader by tradition. He was born in Northern Kenya. In the 80s he started his banking career at Kenta Commercial Bank. In 1985, he left for Saudi Arabia, and joined Al-Rajhi Bank, rising through Islamic finance ranks. He later worked at Qatar Islamic Bank for over a decade managing global

investments.

In 2002, he helped convert the National Bank of Sharjah into a fully Islamic bank becoming a senior VP at Sharjah Islamic bank where he oversaw investments of more than Ksh 40 billion before his return to Kenya.

In 2007, Nathif co-founded First Community Bank, the first Sharia compliant bank in Kenya. He became the first Managing Director of the bank which went ahead to have 18 branches. Academically, Nathif holds a Master's degree in Islamic Banking from Gloucestershire and an MBA module from Herriot-Watt.

A thought leader, he wrote the first global guide on Islamic bond. Nathif first entered the political scene in 2013 under the Wiper Democratic Movement Party.

He ran for governor and won becoming Garissa's first governor. In 2013, he joined the Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD), led by Raila Odinga. His initial win was contested and later nullified by the Court of Appeal. However, he was later reinstated by the Supreme Court. In 2017, Governor Nathif lost his seat to Ali Bunow Korane. However, he did not quit the political battlefield and in 2022, he made a comeback winning Garissa again.

Governor Nathif has avoided mainstream drama. The governor is one of the few technocrats on the political scene. Even in politics, Nathif remains a banker at heart. While Garissa still lags in comparison with other countries economically, there is hope that that will change under Governor Adam.

Hailing from an ASAL region, the governor's key focus in Islamic finance is governance, education reforms and climate resilience. He has actively pursued the digitalization of the county's financial systems to improve transparency and prevent misappropriation of funds. One significant initiative in this regard is the launch of the County Geospatial Strategy, introducing an integrated Geographic Information System (GIS) to streamline planning, decision making and monitoring across various departments.

Critics of the governor claim he over-focuses on financial systems and that the county's growth is slow. Despite criticisms, there are however no scandals linked to the governor.

Governor Nathif remains the father of Sharia Finance in East Africa. He is a representation of clean financial governance, policy depth and soft-spoken leadership. His leadership focuses on transparency, technology and inclusive development. Nathif's efforts to digitize county funds have aimed at reducing corruption and promoting efficient service delivery.

The hope for Garissa through Governor Nathif lies in continued digital reforms, youth inclusion and peaceful coexistence. Garissa has the potential to become a model for frontier counties in people-first governance.

# Homabay County Readies Itself for a Major National Fete on June 1st



Madaraka day preparations ongoing at Raila Odinga Stadium in Homabay. Photo/courtesy

The Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay town is now officially ready to host this year's Madaraka Day celebrations, following extensive renovations and upgrades that have transformed the facility into a state-of-the-art, multi-purpose sports and events venue.

In a ceremonial event on Monday, Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga led a delegation of key national and county leaders in handing over the 12,000-seater stadium to the National Celebrations Steering Committee.

Present at the event were Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy, and Sports Salim Mvurya; Cabinet Secretary for Petroleum and Energy Opiyo

Wandayi; several Members of Parliament from Homabay County, Principal Secretaries representing different State Departments and representatives from Sports Kenya.

The leaders lauded the efforts made to upgrade the stadium to meet national event standards.

"The Raila Odinga Stadium is not just a venue—it's a symbol of our commitment to nurturing talent and developing sports infrastructure in the region," said Governor. "We are proud to hand over a facility that reflects our collective vision for progress and national pride."

Principal Secretary for Interior and National Administration Dr.

Raymond Omollo hailed the County Government of Homabay for their co-operation with the National Government to make this year's 62nd Madaraka Day celebrations.

"We are happy that this year's Madaraka Day will be celebrated in Homabay County. This is the first ever national celebration to be held here and we urge wananchi from Homabaya and neighbouring counties to turn out in large numbers to celebrate this day", he said.

For the past two months, Homabay county has been a beehive of activity as various groups participating in Madaraka Day celebrations do their rehearsals

while contractors do the final touches on the stadium. Military personnel, police officers and NYS officers have been holding their daily drills at the stadium in preparation for the day.

On Monday, the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) General Charles Kahariri and Chairman of the National Steering Committee of the celebrations Dr. Omollo were by Governor Wanga at the stadium to oversee the final Madaraka Day rehearsals.

The climax of the celebrations will be President William Ruto's speech to the nation. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Prime Minister Raila Odinga are the dignitaries expected to grace the celebrations.



# 'Jo'Homabay' Are Ready to Host Guests this Weekend, says Wanga



Homabay governor Gladys Wanga with other leaders during the handing over ceremony of the facility for future engagements. Photo/courtesy

The Governor of Homabay County Gladys Wanga is upbeat about her county hosting the first ever National Celebrations to be held in Homabay County and the 2nd in Southern Nyanza region. The first was in October 2020 when Kisii County hosted Mashujaa day. The Government and the staff the County and officials from the national government have been working round the clock to ensure the day is marked with pomp and colour.

"We are ready. Homabay is ready for this day. We have good people around here and the food too is good. Our visitors will enjoy their stay in Homabay", said the Governor.

She said the upgraded Raila Odinga Stadium-Homabay (ROSH) is fully prepared to host this year's Madaraka Day celebrations. "Following

significant upgrades, this 12,000-seater facility now features essential amenities, positioning

ROSH as more than just a venue for celebrations but also a central hub for sports", she added.

On Monday, Wanga hosted senior government officials who included Cabinet Secretaries Salim Mvurya (Sports, Youth Affairs and Creative Economy) and Opiyo Wandayi (Energy and Petroleum), Chairman of the National Celebrations Steering Committee Dr. Raymond Omollo who is also the Principal Secretary for Interior and National Administration and officials from Sports Kenya for the handing over ceremony of the facility for future engagements.

Wanga who is also the National Chairperson of the ODM Party urged the locals to turn out in their numbers for the celebrations.

## Our Hospitals Should Have Proper Medicine for Patients, Osotsi

Vihiga County Senator Godfrey Osotsi has called for urgent reforms of the policies guiding procurement, stocking and distribution of drugs in public hospitals.

Osotsi who is also the Deputy Party Leader of the ODM party said that the reforms will end situations where public institutions stock expired drugs that compromises the safety of patients and the efficiency of inventory management in public healthcare systems.

"The presence of expired drugs in our hospitals points to a glaring failure in the healthcare supply chain that needs to be addressed and urgently," he said.

He said that well-defined guidelines would help prevent overstocking that leads to wastage of public resources and improve service delivery.

He said that County governments must be compelled to implement clear and consistent policies governing procurement and distribution of drugs. Osotsi requested a formal statement from the Senate Health Committee on Tuesday regarding

the findings of a recent audit by the regulatory authorities which uncovered large quantities of expired drugs and medical supplies worth millions of shillings stored in public hospitals, particularly Level 5 and Level 6 facilities.

The senator wants the committee to come up with the total value of expired drugs in public hospitals for the last three financial years and address the gaps in the supply chain at Kemsu that could be the cause of the supply and delivery of drugs with a shorter lifespan.

Osotsi also wants the committee to address reasons why facilities continue to stock expire drugs, including possible involvement of county staff and other private health facilities in pilferage of medicines supplied to public health facilities.

National regulatory bodies - including the Pharmacy and Poisons Board (PPB), the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Kenya have initiated a nationwide campaign for the safe disposal of expired medications.



Senator of Vihiga County Godfrey Osotsi addressing the media. Photo/courtesy

# Homabay to Host the Country's Biggest Football Match, 'Mashemeji Derby', on Monday June 2nd



Kenya Premier league rivals Gor Mahia FC and AFC Leopards during a heated FKF Premier League clash at a packed Kasarani Stadium..  
Photo/courtesy

For many years, football fans in Kenya been treated to exciting, yet very competitive and ill-tempered football match between the country's two oldest football clubs, AFC Leopards and Gor Mahia.

AFC Leopards has its roots in Western Kenya, the land of Mulembe while Gor Mahia has its roots in Nyanza and particularly in Ndiwa Sub-County of Homabay County.

The two football clubs have been arch-rivals for decades, making their encounter the most thrilling and watched football fixture in the calendar of FKF League.

According to Dr. Mahmoud Abbas, one of the country's most

"celebrated shot stopper who played for AFC Leopards in the 1980's and early 1990's, football fans waited with bated breath the encounter between the two clubs.

The encounter between AFC Leopards and Gor Mahia was always the talk of town before and after the match" he told a local journalist in a past interview. "The media could hype the match and it attracted thousands of football fans, the rivalry was real", he said.

Another football legend Bobby Ogolla who played for Gor Mahia and also featured for Harambee Stars just like Abbas said that the rivalry between the two football giants attracted a lot of fans and the fan bases grew because of the rivalry. "It had nothing to do with

politics but just football. The rivalry made the two clubs stronger", he was quoted by one of the local dailies a couple of years ago.

The national broadcaster, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) then could hype the fixture between the two clubs, two to three weeks prior and those who could not make it to Nyayo National Stadium for the derby stayed put in their living rooms to listen to live commentary by great broadcasters like the late Billy Omala, the late Leonard Mambo Mbotela, the late Nick Okanga Naftali, Ali Salim M'manga, the late Said Ali Matano, Stephen Mwita Kooroso, Elnathan Yiembe, Salim Mohammed among others.

The second late of the Mashemeji

Derby in this season's campaign will be staged at the newly refurbished Raila Odinga Stadium-Homabay (ROSH) on Monday 2nd June 2025, a day after Madaraka Day celebrations which will be held at the same stadium. The first led was staged at the Nyayo National Stadium in April this year, attracting an estimated crowd of over 22,000 fans.

The Mashemeji Derby is the second biggest in the East African Region after the Young Africans FC (Yanga) and Simba FC in Tanzania. Other major derbies on the continent are between Orlando Pirates FC vs Kaizer Chiefs FC (South Africa), Zamalek FC vs Al Ahly (Egypt) and Rangers FC vs Enyimba FC – the Oriental Derby (Nigeria).