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Princess Diana

From Australia to Zimbabwe, from Austria to Zambia, the world still remembers Princess Diana with great emotion and fondness:



Tribute To Diana: The People's Princess Who Still Reigns In Our Hearts

By: Pragati Gupta

She has been gone for more than 28 years, but Princess Diana still rules our hearts as the world continues to remember her fondly. From Australia to Zimbabwe, from Austria to Zambia, the world still remembers Princess Diana with great emotion and fondness. Every year, when the world pauses to remember Princess Diana, I too find myself reflecting - not just as a royal admirer, but as an Indian



Princess Diana visits Halifax, Canada with enthusiastic crowds. Photo Courtesy Russ Quinlan.

Contd Page 10

JOHN DE SILVA	P 4
Awards	Page 8
Nobel Peace Prize Awarded to Venezuelan Maria Corina	
News	Backpage
"Madagascar's Military Pivot: General Zafisambo Named Prime Minister Amid Gen Z-Led Uprising"	



Developing Engineering Thinking And Creative Problem-Solving In Preschool Children Through Robotics

Abstract: This article explores the role of educational robotics in developing engineering thinking and creative problem-solving skills among preschool children. It examines how hands-on activities with robotic kits enhance cognitive development, spatial reasoning, and fine motor skills.

The study emphasizes the importance of integrating STEM concepts into early childhood education and demonstrates that robotics activities can stimulate curiosity, teamwork, and logical thinking in young learners. The article also provides practical examples of robotics activities

suitable for children aged 5–6, highlighting the benefits of a playful and interactive learning environment.

Keywords: Preschool education, robotics, STEM learning, engineering thinking, creative problem-solving, cognitive development, early childhood education, hands-on learning, teamwork, educational technology

Contd Page 14

From Nairobi to Moscow:
Kenya and Russia Forge Migration Pact to Shield Citizens from Irregular Conscription
[Russia - Kenya](#)



Page 12

White House blasts Nobel Committee for not awarding Peace Prize to Trump
[America](#)



Page 16

China's WTO shift is a bold bid for trade leadership
[World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#)
[Asia](#)



Page 18

Education Ministry Launches Bold Plan:
2,000 Fruit Trees Per School to Nourish Students and Restore Ecosystems
[Africa](#)



Page 20

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The Rising Voices of Uzbek Girls: Science, Culture, and Ambition

By: Xo'jyozova Dildora
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Worth
Noting:

- In music schools and art workshops, others paint the silk of atlas dresses, compose new songs blending maqom with jazz, or choreograph dances that speak both the language of their ancestors and of the present moment.
- Some, like a quiet yet determined geography student from Khorezm, embody the balance between these worlds. She competes in academic Olympiads, not for the medal's weight, but for the horizon it reveals. She steps onto cultural stages, wearing the colors of her homeland, knowing each note and stitch is a story worth telling.

In the vast tapestry of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is a jewel embroidered with the gold of history and the blue of endless skies. From the tiled minarets of Samarkand to the whispering reeds along the Amu Darya, the land carries centuries of poetry, trade, and quiet resilience. Yet today, another thread is being woven into this ancient fabric — the voices of its young women, clear and determined, ringing with both tradition and ambition. They are daughters of a land where grandmothers still recite epic poems by the firelight, and where the hum of sewing machines echoes with patterns inherited from ancestors. But these same daughters now open laptops at midnight, solving equations, drafting research proposals, and reading articles from far corners of the world. Their dreams are no longer bound by the city gates or the village roads; they stretch to international conferences, global collaborations, and careers unimaginable by the generations before them. In the lecture halls of Tashkent, Urgench, and Andijan, young women lean over microscopes, examine climate data, and design urban spaces for the cities of tomorrow. In music schools and art workshops, others paint the silk of atlas dresses, compose new songs blending maqom with jazz, or choreograph dances that speak both the language of their ancestors and of the present moment. Some, like a quiet yet determined geography student from Khorezm, embody the balance between these worlds. She competes in academic Olympiads, not for the medal's weight, but for the horizon it reveals. She steps onto cultural stages, wearing the colors of her homeland, knowing each note and stitch is a story worth telling. Her journey is her own, but it also be-



Xo'jyozova Dildora

longs to a thousand other girls — each with her own city, her own language, her own unstoppable momentum. These women are not without challenges. Rural schools often lack the resources found in the cities. Opportunities can be harder to grasp when weighed against expectations of early marriage or the subtle discouragement of “this is

not for girls.” Yet, like the Amu Darya carving its way through desert and rock, their persistence shapes a new landscape. They apply for scholarships, join environmental campaigns, start podcasts, and mentor younger girls in their communities. To see them is to understand that progress here is not a foreign import; it is a seed planted in local

soil. It grows alongside apricot trees, under the same sun that warmed caravans on the Silk Road. They are fluent in the ancient language of hospitality and the modern syntax of ambition. They do not choose between them — they weave them together into something uniquely their own. And so, the rising voices of Uzbek girls carry more

than their own names. They carry the lullabies of their grandmothers, the lessons of their teachers, the pride of their cities, and the stubborn hope that the world is big enough to hold all their dreams. In this rising chorus, there is no single melody; there is a symphony — and it is only just beginning.

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Newsmen in the news

Members of the Tanzania diaspora fraternity in London turned up on Tuesday, 7 October, to welcome prominent sports journalist, John De Silva, who was visiting the British capital from Canada with his wife, Roleena. John was the youngest Sports Reporter at the Tanzania Standard Newspapers, publishers of the Daily and Sunday News in the 1970s. Originally from Zanzibar, John retired in Canada. Members of the London Zanzibari diaspora welcomed John and his wife. They shared memories of their time in Tanzania,

In our photo right (below), John De Silva (left) also met his former colleagues on the Daily and Sunday News, Shamlal Puri, (centre), presently Senior Editor and Associate Publisher of Diaspora Times Global and Adarsh Nayar (right), renowned Chief Photographer of Tanzania Standard Newspapers.



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Melania Trump says Putin responded to her pleas about Ukrainian children

By: BBC
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First Lady Melania Trump says Russian President Vladimir Putin responded to her letter of concern about the child victims of the Russia-Ukraine war. She made the announcement on Friday, saying that after an “open channel of communication” with Putin, Ukrainian children displaced in the war had been reunited with families. The First Lady’s “peace letter” was hand delivered to Putin during his Alaska visit in August. President Donald Trump shared parts of the letter on social media. In it, the First Lady pleads with Putin to protect children, writing that doing so “will do more than serve Russia alone” and “will serve humanity itself”. Eight children have been rejoined with their families during the past 24 hours,” Mrs Trump said, flanked by American flags behind a podium in the White House. “Each child has lived in turmoil because of the war in Ukraine.” Of the eight children, the First Lady said three separated from their families were displaced to Russia because of front-line fighting. Another young girl displaced by the conflict has now been returned from

Ukraine to Russia, Mrs Trump says. The children’s reunification with their families was facilitated by both Ukraine and Russia, the First Lady said, adding that she was given a detailed report with photographs and the “identities and circumstances” of each child. The US government “confirmed the facts”, she said. Mrs Trump said she has “learned a lot about this matter” since her letter was first handed to Putin. She said he responded in writing. In her letter, the First Lady wrote: “Every child shares the same quiet dreams in their heart... They dream of love, possibility, and safety from danger.” The announcement marks a positive development in her advocacy for children from the White House, which began during President Trump’s first term. She launched the BE BEST initiative in January 2021, which the White House describes as an awareness campaign focused around the well-being of children globally. Earlier this year, the First Lady led an initiative for Congress to pass a bill banning revenge porn called the Take It Down Act. After the bill was signed, she said it was “a powerful statement that we stand united in protecting the dignity, privacy, and safety of our children”.



First Lady Melania Trump is to address the Republican National Convention

GAZA

Ceasefire comes into force as IDF pulls out of parts of Gaza

By: BBC
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The Israeli military says it has partially withdrawn troops from parts of Gaza after a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas came into effect on Friday morning. Israeli forces said they had pulled back to an agreed position within the territory – though troops still occupy half of the Strip. Footage shows thousands of Palestinians making their way to the north of Gaza, which has been heavily bombarded by Israeli forces in recent months. The ceasefire came into effect after the Israeli government approved the first phase of US President Donald Trump’s ceasefire and hostage return deal on Thursday. The next phases are still being negotiated. Under the deal, Hamas has until 12:00 local time (10:00 BST) on Monday to release all Israeli hostages – including 20 who are believed to be alive, and up to 28 hostages’ remains. Israel should also release about 250

Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences in Israeli jails. Israeli army radio said 100 will be released into the West Bank and five to East Jerusalem. More are expected to be deported. A further 1,700 Palestinians from Gaza who have been detained should also be released. Under the terms of the deal, aid trucks should also be allowed unrestricted into the Strip to bring desperately needed aid to Gaza’s population – many of whom have been repeatedly displaced during the two-year war. Around 600 aid trucks are expected to enter Gaza daily from Friday, though details of the rollout remain unclear and it has not yet been confirmed whether any increased aid has reached people since the ceasefire began. A famine was declared in part of the territory for the first time in August by UN-backed experts, who said more than half a million people were facing “catastrophic” conditions characterised by “starvation, destitution and death”. Israel has repeatedly denied that there is starvation in the territory.



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Awards

Nobel Peace Prize Awarded to Venezuelan Maria Corina Machado

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

- Machado’s political career gained momentum when she was elected to the National Assembly in 2010, securing a record number of votes. Her tenure was cut short in 2014 when the regime expelled her from office, a move widely condemned by human rights organizations. Undeterred, she founded the opposition party Vente Venezuela, which has since become a rallying point for citizens demanding change. Her leadership has been instrumental in unifying a fragmented opposition, fostering a collective vision for a democratic future, and inspiring millions through non-violent resistance.
- The Nobel Peace Prize announcement was made in Oslo, Norway, and was met with widespread acclaim. Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Jørgen Watne Frydnes, described Machado as “a brave and committed champion of peace,” highlighting her role in galvanizing a deeply divided political landscape around the shared goal of representative government.



Venezuelan Maria Corina Machado

In a historic and deeply symbolic moment for Venezuela and the global community, Maria Corina Machado has been awarded the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize for her unwavering commitment to democratic principles and her courageous struggle to restore civil liberties in a nation long gripped by authoritarian rule. The Norwegian Nobel Committee recognized Machado “for her tireless work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela and for her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy”. Born in 1967, Maria Corina Machado has spent decades at the forefront of Venezuela’s pro-democracy movement. Her journey began in earnest in 2002 when she co-founded Súmate, a civic organization dedicated to electoral

transparency and citizen participation. Through this platform, Machado became a vocal advocate for free and fair elections, often at great personal risk. Her activism drew international attention and domestic backlash, including threats, arrests, and political persecution. Despite these challenges, she remained in Venezuela, refusing exile and continuing to lead efforts for democratic reform from within the country. Machado’s political career gained momentum when she was elected to the National Assembly in 2010, securing a record number of votes. Her tenure was cut short in 2014 when the regime expelled her from office, a move widely condemned by human rights organizations. Undeterred, she founded the opposition party Vente Venezuela, which has since

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to conquer Freedom. We are on the threshold of victory and today, more than ever, we must persevere” Mint. Her award comes at a time when Venezuela continues to grapple with economic collapse, widespread poverty, and political repression. For many, Machado’s recognition is not just a personal triumph but a validation of the broader struggle for human rights and democratic governance in the country. It sends a powerful message to authoritarian regimes worldwide: that peaceful resistance, even in the face of overwhelming adversity, can earn global respect and catalyze change. The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize also sparked international political reactions. Notably, U.S. President Donald Trump, who had been nominated for the prize, claimed that Machado accepted the

award “in his honor,” referencing a phone call between the two. While the veracity of this claim remains unconfirmed, it underscores the geopolitical significance of the award and the attention it has drawn from global leaders. Machado’s recognition by the Nobel Committee places her among a distinguished lineage of peace laureates who have championed justice, freedom, and human dignity. Her story is a testament to the enduring power of conviction and the resilience of those who dare to challenge tyranny. As Venezuela stands at a crossroads, the world watches with renewed hope, inspired by the courage of a woman who refused to be silenced and who now carries the mantle of peace on behalf of her nation.

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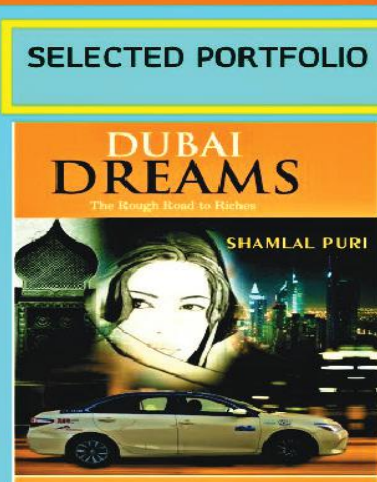
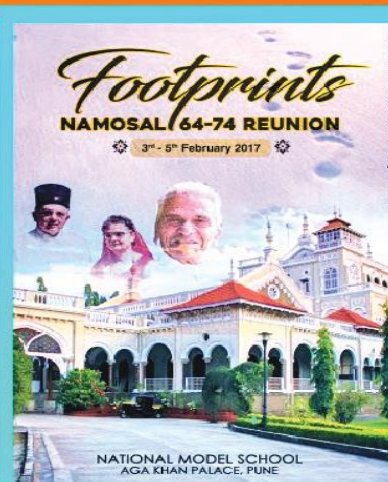
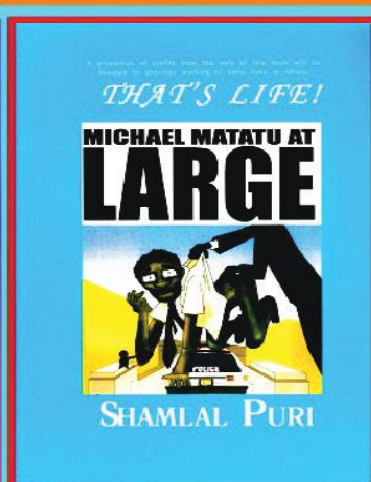
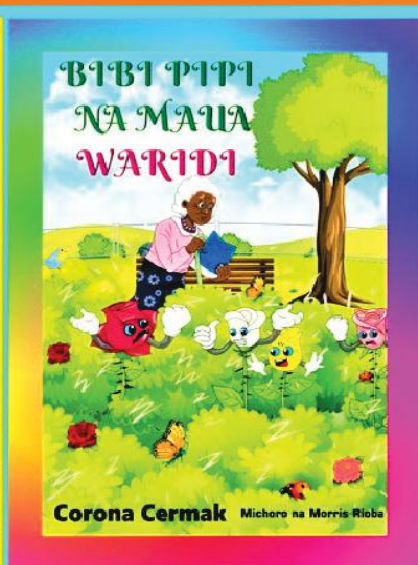
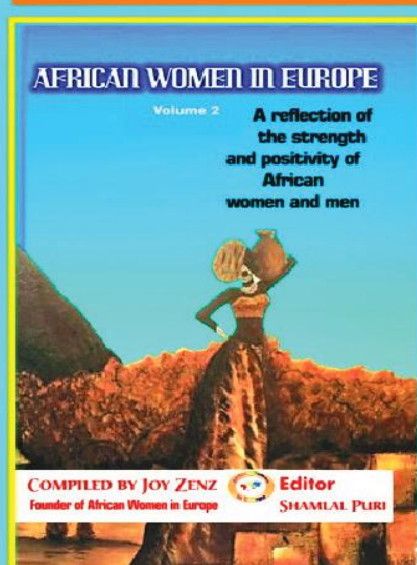
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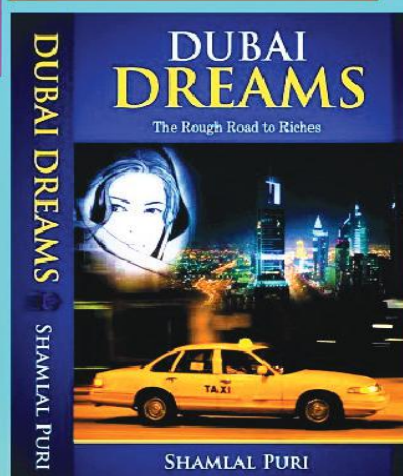
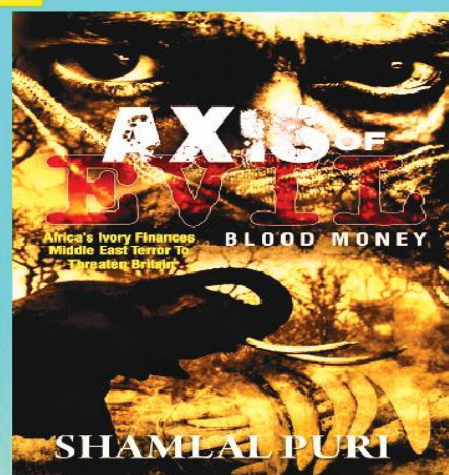
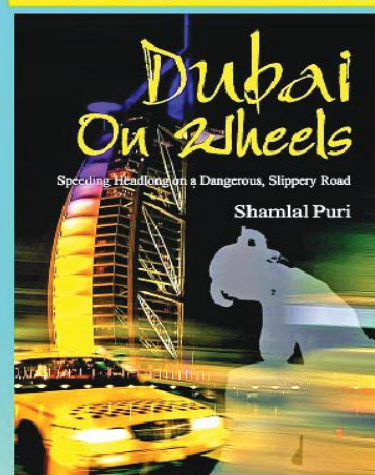
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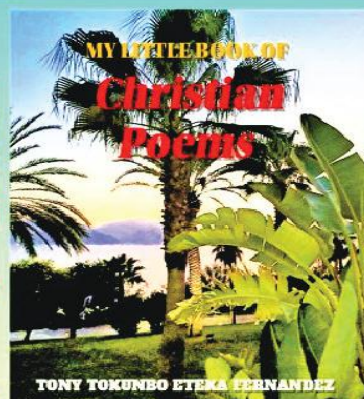
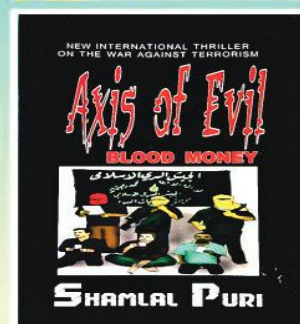
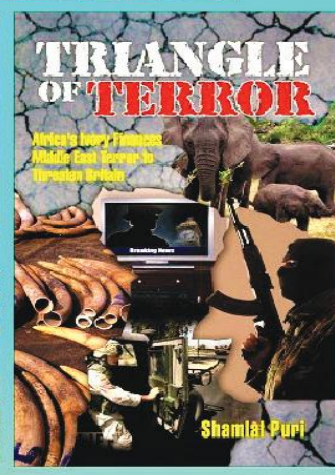
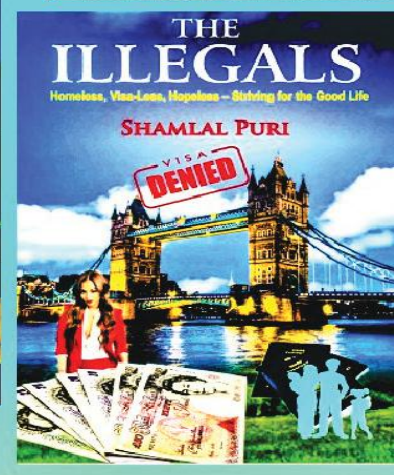
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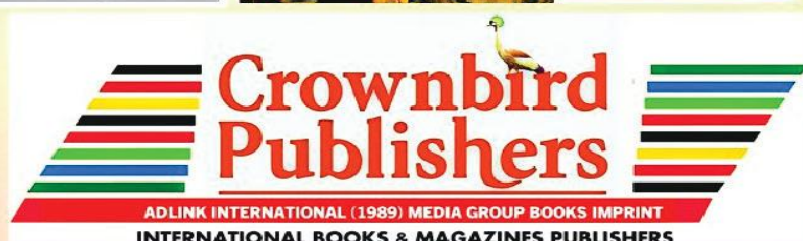


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WORLD

Tribute To Diana: The People's Princess Who Still Reigns In Our Hearts

By: Pragati Gupta
@themkenyetimes

Contd from Page 1

Worth Noting:

- People do not forget to recount her story and the love she generated globally.
- On the morning of July 1, 1961, a tender cry echoed through the quiet halls of Park House, on the Sandringham Estate in Norfolk, England. This was Diana Frances Spencer, the fourth child of John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, and Frances Roche. She came into their lives as a ray of light.
- Just weeks later, on August 30, 1961, Diana was christened at St. Mary Magdalene Church. It was as though destiny had already chosen her for a remarkable path.
- As a child, she played freely in the gardens of Park House, often alongside Prince Andrew and Prince Edward, sons of Queen Elizabeth II. No one could have imagined then that this playful little girl would one day become England's beloved Princess.

woman who has always seen her as a symbol of dignity, courage, and compassion. Diana was not only Britain's "The People's Princess," but her presence in India left behind emotions, memories, and a deep well of inspiration.

From her arrival in India to the way she touched ordinary lives with her extraordinary kindness, Diana did not become history; she became a living ideal. Even today, her story crosses borders and connects hearts, including mine.

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Diana first studied at Riddlesworth Hall, later attending West Heath Boarding School. Though she was not considered academically gifted, her soul blossomed through music and dance. Her eyes often sparkled with dreams—dreams of becoming someone different, someone unique.

In 1977, she was sent to a finishing school in Switzerland, where she learned French, skiing, cooking, and sewing. Outwardly, she seemed cheerful, but within, she wrestled with a profound sense of isolation. After completing school, Diana moved to London, sharing a flat with friends in South Kensington.

She worked as a nanny and later became a kindergarten teacher at the Young England School in Pimlico. Among the children, she found real joy, as if their in-

nocence and laughter healed pieces of her own broken childhood.

On July 29, 1981, the world witnessed what was called a "fairy-tale wedding," as Lady Diana Spencer walked down the aisle of St. Paul's Cathedral to marry Prince Charles.

In her ivory silk taffeta gown, with a 25-foot train, she looked like a vision straight from a dream. Yet behind the dazzling crown and smiles, Diana's heart carried silent fears and unspoken loneliness. She had already sensed that her marriage would not be the perfect love story the world imagined.

But Diana was never one to simply follow the royal script. She broke traditions with quiet courage—choosing her engagement ring from a catalogue instead of crown jewels, refusing to vow "to obey" in her wedding ceremony, and later, holding her sons in her arms in a public hospital rather than inside palace walls.

These small rebellions made her human, real, and closer to the people.

Motherhood became her greatest joy. With Prince William's birth in 1982 and Prince Harry's in 1984, Diana poured all her love into raising them with warmth, hugs, and normal childhood moments—something rarely seen in royal life.

She wanted her sons to know life beyond palace gates, taking them to amusement parks, McDonald's, and even the homeless shelters where she worked. Diana proved that being a Princess was not about a crown on the head, but about love in the heart.

While Diana's wedding had been the picture of a fairy tale, the years that followed revealed a far more painful reality.

By the mid-1980s, cracks in the royal marriage had become visible to the public eye.

Charles's long-standing relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles cast a dark shadow over Diana's life as a wife. In 1995, during her historic BBC Panorama interview with Martin Bashir, Diana spoke with a rare honesty that shook the monarchy. It was here that she uttered the unforgettable words: "Well, there were three of us in

this marriage, so it was a bit crowded." With this single sentence, she not only confirmed the betrayal but also showed the world her courage to speak the truth.

The following year, in 1996, Diana and Charles officially divorced.

Though she lost the title "Her Royal Highness," she retained the title "Princess of Wales" and, more importantly, she kept her role as a mother to Prince William and Prince Harry at the very centre of her life.

Diana's dignity through heartbreak and her decision to bear her wounds before the world became a turning point. She transformed from being merely a royal figure to becoming a symbol of resilience, honesty, and the power of vulnerability.

"Years later, Diana confessed that her childhood had been 'very unhappy' and 'very unstable.'"

She often sought comfort in the warmth of house staff and pets. Maybe it was this very emptiness that shaped her greatest gift—the ability to feel the unspoken pain of others and to connect with people at the deepest human level.

In February 1992, when Princess Diana visited India, the world saw a moment that would become timeless. At the Taj Mahal, the eternal symbol of love, Diana arrived wearing a simple yet elegant bright pink-and-purple suit. The colours reflected warmth and grace, yet behind her gentle smile, her eyes carried a quiet sadness.

On that day, she chose to sit alone on the marble bench in front of the monument of love. Traditionally, couples sat there to capture their togetherness, but Diana sat alone - her figure delicate, her gaze soft, yet heavy with unspoken emotions. The photograph that emerged was more than just an image; it was a story of a woman whose marriage was silently crumbling, and whose heart longed for affection that never truly came.

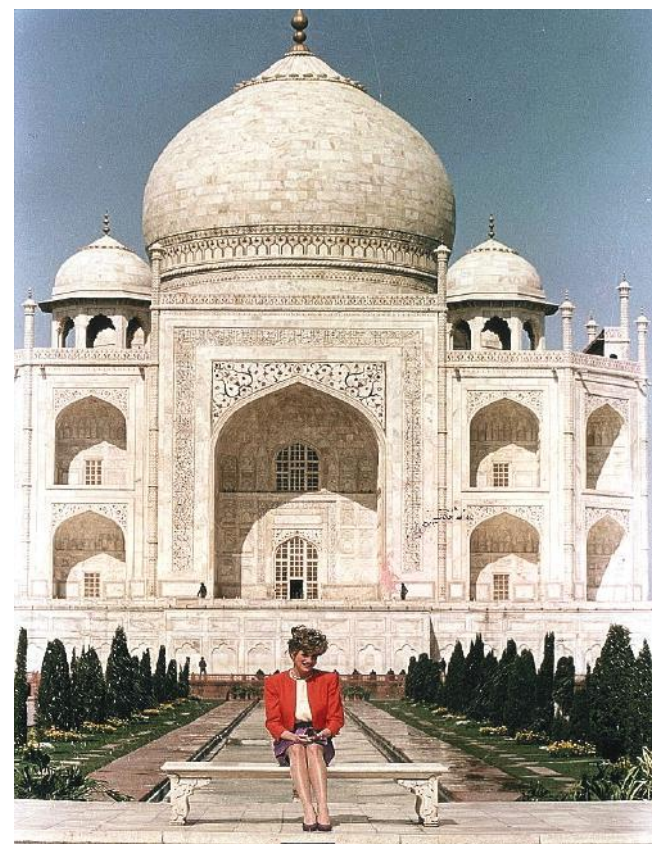
That bench, since then, came to be known not just as a seat before the Taj Mahal, but as "The Diana Bench." Millions saw in that photo not a royal



Prince Charles, then The Prince of Wales, and The Princess of Wales on their official visit to Australia in 1983.



Princess Diana visits Halifax, Canada with enthusiastic crowds. Photo Courtesy Russ Quinlan.



Princess Diana was at the famed bench when she went alone to Taj Mahal at a time when the fairy tale Royal Marriage with Prince Charles was on the brink of collapse.

Contd Page 11

WORLD

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Contd from Page 14
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- She worked as a nanny and later became a kindergarten teacher at the Young England School in Pimlico. Among the children, she found real joy, as if their innocence and laughter healed pieces of her own broken childhood.
- On July 29, 1981, the world witnessed what was called a "fairy-tale wedding," as Lady Diana Spencer walked down the aisle of St. Paul's Cathedral to marry Prince Charles.
- In her ivory silk taffeta gown, with a 25-foot train, she looked like a vision straight from a dream. Yet behind the dazzling crown and smiles, Diana's heart carried silent fears and unspoken loneliness. She had already sensed that her marriage would not be the perfect love story the world imagined.

smile, but an unfinished tale of love and loneliness.

Years later, when her son, Prince William, visited India and stood before the very same bench, emotions overwhelmed him.

It wasn't just a piece of stone anymore - it was a reminder of his mother's solitude, her pain hidden behind a graceful smile.

Witnesses say his eyes moistened, as if the silence of that marble had whispered back the memories of his mother's sorrow.

Even today, couples who visit the Taj Mahal sit on that bench and take photographs. But in every picture, there lingers the shadow of Diana's loneliness.

That seat doesn't just belong to love stories—it belongs to a princess who taught the world that sometimes even the brightest crowns cannot light up the emptiness of a heart.

It has been decades since Princess Diana left this world, yet her name continues to live on with the same freshness, grace, and pain – as if it were only yesterday. The question is not why she is remembered, but how she could ever be forgotten.

Diana taught us that true royalty does not come from crowns or palaces, but from wiping the tears of strangers. At a time when the world kept its distance from AIDS patients, she held their hands without hesitation. In war zones, where wounded children cried in despair, Diana carried them in her arms as if they were her own. Compassion like this cannot be learned from books—it comes from the heart. And it is this compassion that keeps her alive in the hearts of millions even today.

For modern royals and women leaders, she remains a guiding light. She proved that true strength does not lie in appearing unshakable or distant, but in being tender, sensitive, and deeply human. Her life whispered a timeless message to women everywhere: "Being fragile is not weakness, it is courage." And this courage is the torch that continues to inspire every young woman who dares to break society's chains and stand up for herself and for others.

But perhaps Diana's greatest relevance lies in the duality of her existence—her fairy-



My mum, Mrs. Kiran Gupta, used to tell me stories of Princess Diana when I was a young schoolgirl.

tale public image on one side, and her silent private battles on the other.

And isn't that what today's generation faces, too? In the age of social media, where everyone is busy presenting a perfect picture, Diana reminds us that real strength is not in hiding scars, but in living with them and rising above them.

Diana is still, and will always be, "The People's Princess." Because she showed us that humanity, courage, and truth are treasures that never fade with time.

And maybe that is her greatest gift to us—a legacy that forces every generation to pause and ask: "What are we doing for the people around us?"

My Personal Reflection – A Dream Connected to Princess Diana

Sometimes life connects us to people we have never seen, never touched, and yet, they become a part of our soul. For me, that person was Princess Diana.

I still remember—when I was a little girl and my grandmother told me the

story of a princess. She was not a fairy-tale princess, but the real Princess Diana.

My grandmother often shared how Diana came to India, how she gave her love and support to people here, and how she showed that being a woman was not just an identity, but a strength - a responsibility. My grandmother had only seen her on television, and in those days, not every household even had a TV. People often searched for her glimpse in the blurry images of newspapers.

Every time I listened to Diana's stories, a dream was born inside me—that one day I would go to London and meet her.

This dream inspired me to study hard, to learn English, and to prepare myself for that moment.

But then, one day, came the news that broke my heart—"Diana's tragic car crash." A silence spread across India that day. Every eye was



Our writer Pragati Gupta holds a Princess Diana autograph at a local library.

Contd Page 13

Nairobi to Moscow

From Nairobi to Moscow: Kenya and Russia Forge Migration Pact to Shield Citizens from Irregular Conscription”

In a significant diplomatic stride, Kenya and Russia are moving swiftly to formalize a bilateral framework on migration, a development that comes amid rising concerns over the irregular conscription of foreign nationals, including Kenyans, into Russia’s security forces.

By: Gail Phill
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Worth Noting:

- Dr. Sing’Oei, speaking after the bilateral meeting, underscored the urgency of the matter. “We both agreed to work together towards the conclusion of a framework to facilitate regular migration between our two countries,” he stated, adding that the agreement would serve as a safeguard for Kenyan nationals seeking opportunities in Russia. He also expressed appreciation for Russia’s historical solidarity with Africa and its continued support for Kenya in multilateral forums.
- The Russian envoy, Ambassador Tkachenko, reaffirmed his country’s commitment to upholding international norms regarding the treatment of foreign nationals. He assured the Kenyan government that Russia maintains a strict policy against the forced recruitment of non-citizens into its military or security apparatus. “There is no policy or practice of conscripting foreign nationals into our armed forces,” he reportedly told Kenyan officials, seeking to allay fears and reinforce trust between the two governments.



Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary (PS) Korir Sing’Oei with the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Kenya, Vsevolod Tkachenko, in Nairobi.

In a significant diplomatic stride, Kenya and Russia are moving swiftly to formalize a bilateral framework on migration, a development that comes amid rising concerns over the irregular conscription of foreign nationals, including Kenyans, into Russia’s security forces. The move, announced following high-level talks in Nairobi between Kenya’s Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Dr. Korir Sing’Oei and Russian Ambassador Vsevolod Tkachenko, marks a pivotal moment in the evolving relationship between the two nations.

The proposed framework aims to regulate and facilitate safe, legal, and transparent migration between Kenya and Russia, with a strong emphasis on protecting Kenyan citizens from exploitation and unlawful recruitment practices. This initiative follows growing unease over reports—circulating in diplomatic and media circles—of foreign nationals being lured or coerced into military service in foreign conflicts, often under the guise of employment or educational opportunities.

Dr. Sing’Oei, speaking after the bilateral meeting, underscored the urgency of the matter. “We both agreed to work together towards the conclusion of a framework to facilitate regular migration between our two countries,” he stated, adding that the agreement would serve as a safeguard for Kenyan nationals seeking opportunities in Russia. He also expressed appreciation for Russia’s historical solidarity with Africa and its continued support for Kenya in multilateral forums.

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This diplomatic engagement is not occurring in a vacuum. It reflects a broader recalibration of Kenya’s foreign policy, which increasingly seeks to diversify partnerships beyond traditional Western allies. Russia, for its part, has been deepening its outreach to African nations, offering economic cooperation, military training, and educational scholarships. However, this growing engagement has not been without controversy, particularly as reports of African nationals appearing in foreign conflict zones have sparked alarm across the continent.

The migration framework under discussion is expected to include provisions for labor mobility, student exchanges, and professional placements, all underpinned by clear legal protections and oversight mechanisms. Kenyan officials are particularly keen to ensure that any migration to Russia is voluntary, informed, and free from coercion. The framework will also likely establish channels for consular support, legal recourse, and repatriation in cases of abuse or rights violations.

Civil society organizations and human rights advocates have welcomed the move as a step in the right direction. Many have long called for greater transparency and regulation in overseas employment schemes, especially in countries where legal protections for migrants are weak or inconsistently enforced. The Kenya-Russia agreement, once finalized, could serve as a model for similar bilateral arrangements with other nations.

At the heart of this initiative is a recognition that migration, when managed responsibly, can be a powerful engine for development and cross-cultural exchange. But when left unregulated, it can expose vulnerable populations to exploitation, trafficking, and even forced conscription. By taking proactive steps to formalize migration pathways, Kenya and Russia are signaling their intent to uphold the dignity and rights of individuals while strengthening bilateral ties.

As negotiations continue, both governments have pledged to expedite the process and keep the public informed. The final framework is expected to be signed in the coming months, potentially opening a new chapter in Kenya-Russia relations—one grounded in mutual respect, legal clarity, and the shared goal of protecting human rights in an increasingly interconnected world.

WORLD

Tribute To Diana: The People's Princess Who Still Reigns In Our Hearts

Contd from Page 13
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Worth Noting:

- **Motherhood became her greatest joy. With Prince William's birth in 1982 and Prince Harry's in 1984, Diana poured all her love into raising them with warmth, hugs, and normal childhood moments—something rarely seen in royal life.**
- **She wanted her sons to know life beyond palace gates, taking them to amusement parks, McDonald's, and even the homeless shelters where she worked. Diana proved that being a Princess was not about a crown on the head, but about love in the heart.**
- **While Diana's wedding had been the picture of a fairy tale, the years that followed revealed a far more painful reality.**
- **By the mid-1980s, cracks in the royal marriage had become visible to the public eye.**
- **Charles's long-standing relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles cast a dark shadow over Diana's life as a wife.**

moist, as if time itself had paused. And with that moment, my childhood dream was shattered too.

Still, I carried her reflection within me. I wanted to look like her, to have a smile like hers. My family could not afford expensive dresses, but my mother always tried to buy clothes for me that matched Diana's style. She would say, "For me, you are no less than a princess." From her, I learned that the true crown of a princess is not made of gold or diamonds—it is made of a mother's faith.

Time moved on, and today, I am a journalist. One of the most memorable moments of my career was when my first article was published through the senior London journalist Shamlal Puri. That day, it felt as if my dream had been given wings toward London. The journey from Kashi to London was never easy, but through social media and my writings, I feel connected. Even today, I remain deeply grateful to Mr Puri, who taught me that journalism is not just about words - it is about truth written with the soul.

On my travel Wishlist, Britain remains at the top. I know that one day I will go there, and perhaps, I may even get a chance to meet the royal family. Meeting Diana will remain an unfulfilled dream, but connecting with her spirit continues to be my journey. In 2020, I won a state-level beauty contest and was crowned "Miss Queen". When I wore that crown, I instantly thought of Diana's tiara. The difference was clear—my crown symbolised victory, while hers carried thousands of untold stories and silent pain. I have never seen another woman so strong, yet so fragile at the same time. From Diana, I learned that spreading happiness does not require expecting anything in return. "Only do what your heart tells you"—this line of hers became the mantra of my life. And when she said, "I'd like to be a queen in people's hearts," I understood that the real crown is not of jewels, but of people's love. Even today, whenever I pick up my pen or raise my voice on any platform, I remind myself of this: I, too, want to find a place in people's hearts—just as Diana did. Perhaps I know that I will never meet her in this life, but my writings, my voice, and my courage will always stand as proof that one princess once inspired a little girl from Kashi to dream of becoming a queen in her own way.

Princess Diana's story is not just the tale of a royal figure—it is the story of every human being who longs for love, compassion, and understanding. She showed the world that true power does not lie in crowns or titles, but in the courage to wipe away a stranger's tears. As I write these words, I realise that boundaries, languages, and cultures fade away when humanity is alive in the heart. Diana broke those walls and proved that love knows no borders. Perhaps this is why she is still remembered as "The People's Princess." She no longer belongs only to Britain, but to the world—she has become the princess of every heart. And today, when I see Prince William's wife, Catherine, the Princess of Wales, I often feel Diana's presence once again. Kate's simplicity, her grace, her warmth while meeting people—all remind me of Diana's unfinished story of love and humanity. It feels as though Diana's spirit still lives on, flowing through the next generation.

And for me? Diana will always remain that unfinished dream that continues to inspire me to write, to learn, and to connect with hearts across the world. If my words or my voice can ever touch someone the way Diana touched millions, then that would be the greatest crown I could ever wear. Diana may have left the world, but she never left our hearts—she remains the Queen of Humanity.



My grandmother Mrs Shivdulan was always fascinated to read Prince Diana's stories in the media and narrate them to us



Seychelles issued a stamp to commerrate the Royal Wedding in 1981

Asian News

Developing Engineering Thinking And Creative Problem-Solving In Preschool Children Through Robotics



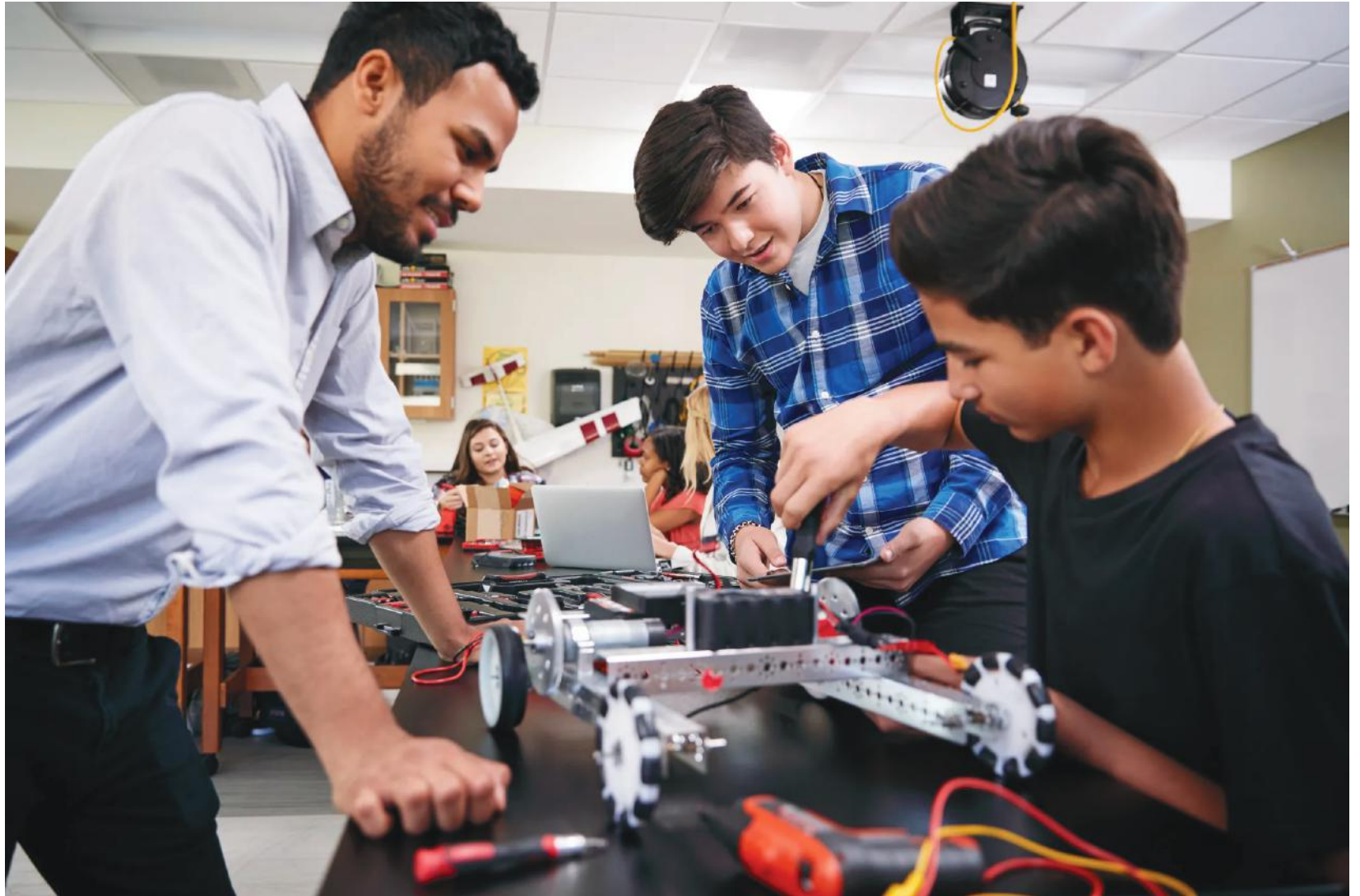
By: Ismoilova Gulmira Erkin
@themtkenyatimes

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Worth Noting:

• In recent years, robotics has emerged as a powerful tool in early childhood education, offering unique opportunities to develop essential cognitive and technical skills. Preschool children, typically aged 5–6, are at a crucial stage of intellectual and creative development, making it an ideal period to introduce concepts of engineering, problem-solving, and logical thinking. Educational robotics combines play-based learning with foundational STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) principles, allowing children to engage in hands-on activities that foster curiosity and innovation.

• Through constructing and programming simple robotic models, children not only learn about mechanisms, motors, and sensors, but also develop fine motor skills, spatial awareness, and teamwork abilities. This approach transforms abstract concepts into tangible experiences, enhancing understanding and retention. By integrating robotics into preschool curricula, educators can create an engaging and interactive learning environment that stimulates creative thinking, nurtures early engineering skills, and prepares children for future academic challenges.



In recent years, robotics has emerged as a powerful tool in early childhood education, offering unique opportunities to develop essential cognitive and technical skills. Preschool children, typically aged 5–6, are at a crucial stage of intellectual and creative development, making it an ideal period to introduce concepts of engineering, problem-solving, and logical thinking. Educational robotics combines play-based learning with foundational STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) principles, allowing children to engage in hands-on activities that foster curiosity and innovation.

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prepares children for future academic challenges.

Educational robotics is increasingly recognized as a significant tool in preschool education, providing children with early exposure to concepts related to engineering, technology, and creative problem-solving. At the preschool age, children are naturally curious and eager to explore the world around them. Introducing robotics at this stage allows them to engage in hands-on activities that develop both cognitive and motor skills. By manipulating robotic kits, preschoolers learn how different components work together, which fosters a basic understanding of mechanics and electronics. The use of robotics in early education also promotes spatial reasoning, as children must consider dimensions, movement, and the placement of parts when constructing their robots. These activities not only strengthen logical thinking but also encourage experimentation, allowing children to hypothesize, test, and adjust their designs based on observed outcomes.

Robotics activities can take various forms, ranging from simple assembly tasks to basic programming exercises.

For children aged five to six, introductory kits such as LEGO Education WeDo provide structured projects that guide learners step by step while allowing room for creativity. Children can build models such as vehicles, cranes, or animals, which introduces them to the principles of gears, levers, and pulleys. These early experiences lay the foundation for understanding more complex engineering concepts in later years. As children assemble and operate robots, they develop fine motor skills through the careful handling of small components. At the same time, collaborative tasks enhance social and communication skills, as preschoolers learn to share ideas, negotiate, and work together to achieve a common goal.

In addition to mechanical skills, educational robotics fosters problem-solving abilities. When a robot does not function as expected, children are encouraged to analyze the situation, identify potential errors, and implement corrections. This iterative process builds resilience and adaptive thinking, teaching children that mistakes are part of learning and that solutions can be discovered through

persistence and creativity. Teachers play a key role in facilitating this process by providing guidance, asking probing questions, and encouraging reflection without giving direct solutions. This approach nurtures independent thinking while maintaining a supportive learning environment.

Robotics also introduces preschoolers to basic programming concepts in a visual and intuitive manner. Platforms like ScratchJr or the programming components of LEGO WeDo allow children to sequence commands, create simple loops, and observe cause-and-effect relationships between instructions and robot behavior. Through programming exercises, children develop computational thinking skills, learning to break down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps. This early exposure to coding strengthens logical reasoning and lays the groundwork for more advanced programming in later education. Moreover, these activities demonstrate the connection between abstract concepts and tangible outcomes, helping children understand that their actions in programming directly influence the behavior

of a physical robot.

Another important aspect of robotics in early childhood education is the stimulation of creativity. While kits provide a structured framework, children are encouraged to experiment with designs, combine different components in novel ways, and invent their own robotic models. This freedom promotes divergent thinking and allows children to explore multiple solutions to a single problem. Creative engagement also supports emotional development, as children gain confidence in their abilities and learn to express themselves through tangible creations. The combination of technical and creative tasks ensures a holistic learning experience, integrating cognitive, motor, and social-emotional development.

Integrating robotics into preschool curricula also supports interdisciplinary learning. For example, constructing a robot may involve basic mathematical skills such as counting pieces, comparing sizes, or understanding symmetry. Science concepts are intro-

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Asian News

Developing Engineering Thinking And Creative Problem-Solving In Preschool Children Through Robotics

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- In addition to mechanical skills, educational robotics fosters problem-solving abilities.



duced as children explore motion, energy, and simple circuits. Engineering thinking develops as they plan, design, and modify their robots. Language and communication skills are strengthened through explanation, storytelling, and presentation of their projects. This interdisciplinary approach aligns with modern educational frameworks that emphasize the importance of STEM learning from an early age. In addition to cognitive and technical benefits, robotics activities encourage collaborative learning. Working in small groups, children develop teamwork skills, learn to negotiate roles, share responsibilities, and celebrate collective achievements. These experiences foster social competence, empathy, and the ability to work toward shared goals, which are essential skills for success in both school and life. Educators can design tasks that promote cooperation, such as group challenges where teams must program a robot to complete a task or solve a problem collectively. Such collaborative exercises not only reinforce technical knowledge but also cultivate interpersonal skills, patience, and adaptability. Practical implementation of robotics in preschool ed-

ucation requires thoughtful planning and resources. Educators should select age-appropriate kits that balance structure and creativity. Sessions should be of suitable length to maintain attention and engagement, typically ranging from 30 to 45 minutes. It is also important to provide opportunities for children to reflect on their work, discuss what they learned, and consider how they could improve or modify their designs. Parental involvement can further enhance the learning experience, as children often enjoy sharing their projects at home, explaining the principles behind their robots, and involving family members in small-scale activities. Safety and accessibility are critical considerations when introducing robotics to preschoolers. Components should be non-toxic, durable, and easy to handle. Teachers must ensure that children understand basic safety rules, such as careful use of tools, proper handling of batteries, and supervised use of small parts. Clear instructions and a structured environment help prevent accidents and create a positive learning atmosphere. By maintaining safety standards and providing adequate support, educators can foster an environment

where children feel confident to explore, experiment, and innovate. Research supports the effectiveness of robotics in early childhood education. Studies indicate that children who participate in structured robotics activities show improvements in cognitive skills, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. For instance, interventions that combine hands-on robotics with guided instruction have demonstrated gains in spatial reasoning, logical thinking, and collaborative skills. Additionally, children often exhibit increased motivation and enthusiasm for STEM subjects, suggesting that early exposure to robotics can positively influence attitudes toward science and technology. These findings underscore the potential of robotics not only as a technical skill-building tool but also as a means of promoting holistic child development. The use of robotics in preschool settings also bridges the gap between play and formal learning. Young children naturally learn through play, exploration, and experimentation, and robotics activities leverage these tendencies to introduce complex STEM concepts in an accessible and engaging way. By embedding learning ob-

jectives within playful contexts, children develop skills organically while enjoying the process. This approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical strategies that emphasize experiential, inquiry-based, and constructivist learning methodologies. Overall, educational robotics provides a rich platform for developing engineering thinking, creative problem-solving, and foundational STEM skills in preschool children. By integrating robotics into early childhood education, educators can create a dynamic and stimulating learning environment that nurtures curiosity, supports cognitive and social development, and equips children with essential skills for the challenges of the future. The combination of hands-on construction, collaborative problem-solving, and introductory programming ensures a comprehensive approach that addresses multiple dimensions of early development. Through robotics, preschoolers gain meaningful experiences that connect abstract concepts with real-world applications, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and innovation. Educational robotics provides preschool children

with unique opportunities to develop engineering thinking, creative problem-solving skills, and foundational STEM knowledge. By engaging in hands-on activities with robotic kits, children learn about mechanical systems, basic programming, and collaborative problem-solving in a playful and interactive environment. These experiences enhance cognitive abilities, spatial reasoning, fine motor skills, and social competence. Robotics also fosters creativity, as children are encouraged to experiment with designs and invent their own models, transforming abstract concepts into tangible, understandable outcomes. Early exposure to robotics helps prepare children for future academic challenges and nurtures curiosity, logical thinking, and resilience. Integrating robotics into preschool curricula not only supports technical learning but also promotes holistic child development, bridging the gap between play and formal education. Encouraging collaborative work, guided experimentation, and reflective learning ensures that children acquire essential skills that will benefit them throughout their educational journey and future professional life.

America

White House blasts Nobel Committee for not awarding Peace Prize to Trump

By: BBC
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The White House has accused the Nobel Committee of placing “politics over peace” for awarding its most coveted prize to a Venezuelan pro-democracy activist over President Donald Trump.

On Friday, the Committee announced María Coria Machado would receive the Peace Prize for her “tireless work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela”.

Trump has been outspoken about his desire for the award, taking credit for ending several global conflicts. He regularly brought it up, including during his address to the UN General Assembly in September.

“The Nobel Committee proved they place politics over peace,” White House communications director Steven Cheung said after the announcement.

President Trump will continue making peace deals, ending wars, and saving lives,” Cheung wrote on X. “He has the heart of a humanitarian, and there will never be anyone like him who can move mountains with the sheer force of his will.”

Trump has played a significant role in forcing a multi-stage deal for a ceasefire in Gaza, which was announced two days before the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded.

The president has also asserted that he ended numerous global conflicts during his nine months in office, and in his previous term.

Following the announcement of the ceasefire deal in Gaza, Trump declared: “BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS.” The White House called him “the peace president”.

Trump’s ambitions for a Nobel Peace Prize are well known, and mentioning his name for the award has become common among leaders seeking to advance diplomatic interests with the US.

Many foreign leaders, including Israel’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, have publicly argued that Trump deserves the prestigious honour.

Asked by reporters to react to the Nobel Prize, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Trump was doing a lot to resolve complex crises.

“Thank you to President Putin!” Trump wrote on Truth Social on Friday alongside a video of Putin saying “this award has lost credibility”.



President Donald Trump

Machado herself praised Trump on X following her win, writing that “I dedicate this prize to the suffering people of Venezuela and to President Trump for his decisive support of our cause!”

Trump reshared Machado’s message on his Truth Social platform.

But despite the lobbying, Trump faced hurdles this year.

Nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize close on 31 January of each year, according to the awards website, just days after Trump took office.

The Nobel Committee meets between February and September to whittle down the

list of nominees.

It is not clear what achievement Trump would have secured for this year.

Russia’s war with Ukraine continues to rage, despite Trump’s demands that both Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Putin broker an end to the bloodshed.

The ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas is a significant development, but it is still in its initial stage.

In his second term, Trump has pursued an “America-first” policy, dramatically reshaping its place in the global economy and diplomatic stage.

Weeks into taking office, his then-advisor Elon Musk oversaw the dismantling of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which provided humanitarian assistance throughout the world.

The Nobel Committee awards the Peace Prize to leaders who champion “arms control and disarmament, peace negotiation, democracy and human rights, and work aimed at creating a better organized and more peaceful world,” according to its website.

Trump’s mass deportation policies have sparked protests across the US and

drawn criticism from immigrant rights and humanitarian groups.

Trump’s attempt to use National Guard troops to patrol US cities for the stated intent of controlling violence and crime has raised alarm from Democrats and rebukes from federal judges over his use of the military on domestic soil.

Four US presidents have received the Nobel Peace Prize: Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, and Barack Obama.

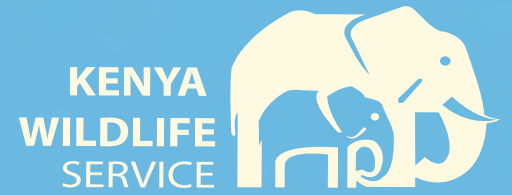
Only Obama won the prize while in office.



Former President Donald Trump’s campaign spokesman Steven Cheung speaks to reporters across the street from Trump’s criminal trial in New York, Tuesday, May 28, 2024. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

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Diaspora

China's WTO shift is a bold bid for trade leadership

When Premier Li Qiang announced on 23 September 2025 that China would no longer seek Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) in future World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, it signalled more than a diplomatic headline.

By: Stephen Ndegwa
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Worth Noting:

- By voluntarily stepping back from future SDT claims, Beijing has removed one of Washington's most potent talking points. Domestically, the cost is modest: many SDT entitlements under existing agreements have already lapsed. Internationally, the diplomatic payoff is larger. The move has been widely welcomed as a pivotal gesture towards a fairer, more balanced trading system at a time when multilateralism is under strain.
- The timing is strategic. The WTO has been stuck for more than a decade, hamstrung by disagreements over how to treat large emerging economies. The 2026 ministerial conference in Cameroon is shaping up as a make-or-break moment. By dropping new SDT claims, China helps clear a path to substantive talks on subsidy rules, state-owned enterprises and the rebuilding of a credible dispute-settlement system. The legal impact may be limited; the political signal is not.



When Premier Li Qiang announced on 23 September 2025 that China would no longer seek Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) in future World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, it signalled more than a diplomatic headline. It was a calculated repositioning by the world's second-largest economy—an acknowledgement that Beijing has outgrown the comfort of its “developing country” cloak and is prepared to compete alongside major trading powers.

For years, China's dual identity has been contentious. It is the world's largest goods exporter and a global manufacturing hub, yet it has retained developing-country status at the WTO, a designation that confers flexibilities such as longer timelines to implement rules, greater latitude to use tariffs and subsidies, and preferential treatment in negotiations. Critics—chiefly the United States—argue that this stance is incompatible with China's economic heft and has impeded meaningful WTO reform.

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Great-power trade politics may also shift. In Washington, China's SDT posture has long served as a catch-all justification for unilateral tariffs and technology restrictions: you cannot, the argument goes, claim superpower privileges while sheltering under developing-country flexibilities. Beijing's move will not make Section 301 tariffs vanish overnight, but it blunts an easy rhetorical cudgel and nudges both sides towards a more pragmatic conversation. Europe is likely to read the shift similarly. Brussels has struggled to balance defensive instincts with the need to keep trade flowing. China's willingness to shoulder more obligations reassures sceptical capitals that have accused it of gaming the rules, even as they continue to scrutinise state support and market access.

For the Global South, the message is nuanced. China is not abandoning developing-country identity or solidarity. It will continue to identify as a developing country while refraining from seeking new SDT privileges. That dual posture allows Beijing to present itself both as a responsible major power and as a leader among emerging economies. For many in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the question is not symbolism but outcomes: finance for diversification, value addition and better terms across supply chains.

The decision also fits a broader pattern. In December 2024, China extended zero-tariff treatment to imports from least-developed countries with diplomatic ties—covering a large swathe of African economies. Such measures are not charity; they are instruments of soft power that build commercial interdependence, cultivate allies and reinforce Beijing's claim to leadership in the global trading system. What matters now is what follows before Cameroon 2026. If China's gesture is matched by credible disciplines—at home and at the WTO—on subsidies and state enterprises, it could unlock negotiations others have resisted. Restoring a fully functioning appellate body remains central. Equally important is reciprocity: will the US and EU respond with step-downs of their own, or simply pocket China's concession? And will renewed momentum translate into tools that help smaller economies move up value chains rather than remain raw-material suppliers?

China's decision to forgo SDT in future WTO talks is a meaningful, forward-looking step that strengthens confidence in multilateral trade. It reframes diplomatic narratives, deprives critics of an easy line of attack and creates space for the reforms the WTO urgently needs. Whether it sparks real change depends on what follows—particularly from other major players. But the signal is unambiguous: Beijing is prepared to carry a larger share of responsibility for the rules that govern world trade.

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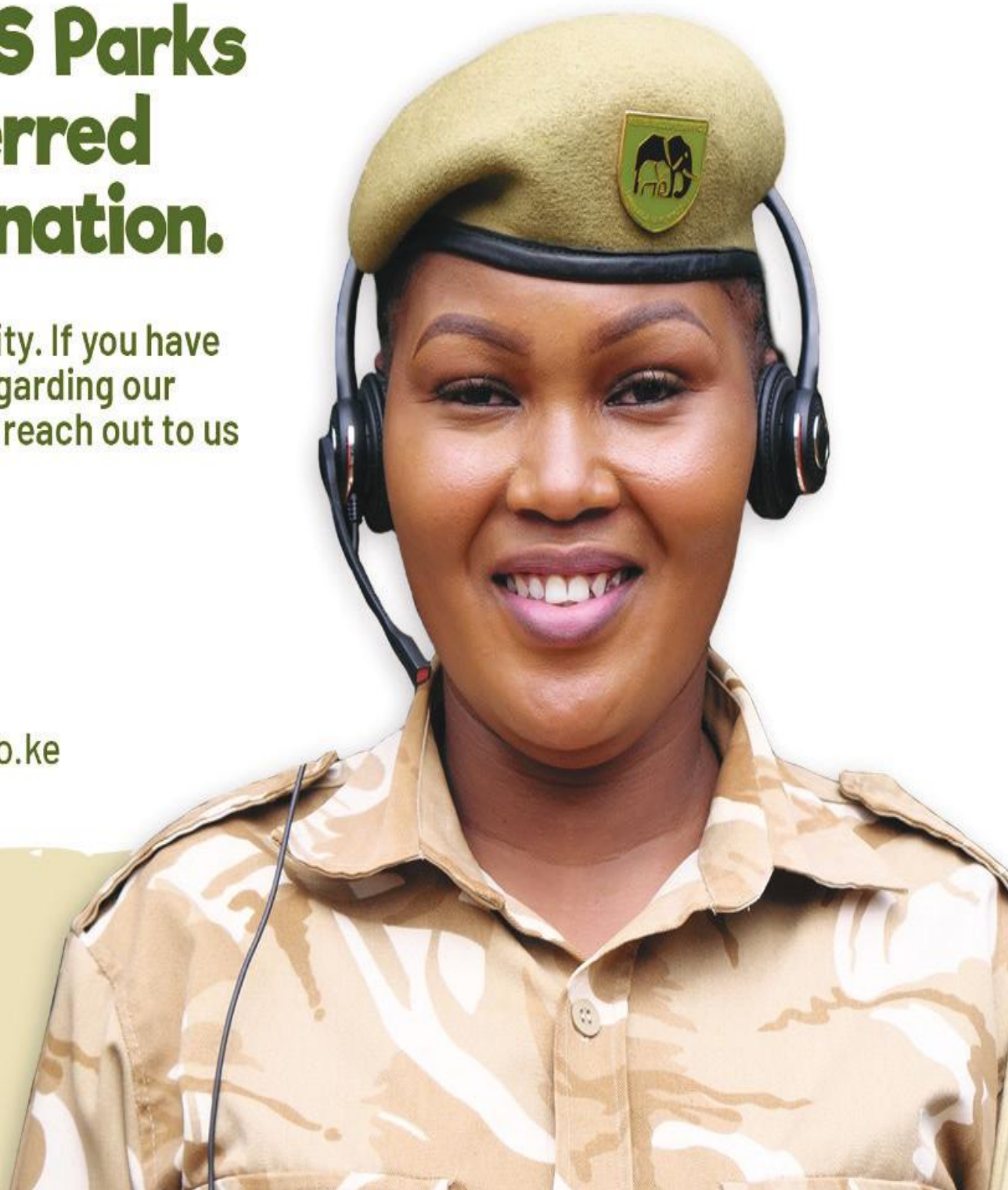
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Education Ministry Launches Bold Plan: 2,000 Fruit Trees Per School to Nourish Students and Restore Ecosystems

In a bold and transformative move aimed at enhancing both environmental sustainability and student well-being, the Ministry of Education has launched a nationwide initiative directing every public and private primary school to plant a minimum of 2,000 fruit trees.

By: Perpetual Nyambura
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Tree planting

Worth Noting:

- **Basic Education Principal Secretary Julius Bitok emphasized the dual purpose of the initiative, stating that it is designed to “support both environmental care and school-based nutrition.” The theme for this year’s Mazingira Day, “Citizen-Centric Tree Growing and Environmental Stewardship,” reflects the government’s commitment to involving communities in climate action and ecological restoration. Schools, as centers of learning and community engagement, are seen as ideal platforms for cultivating long-term environmental consciousness and practical skills in agroforestry.**
- **The inter-ministerial collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environment has been pivotal in rolling out the program. Environment Cabinet Secretary Soipan Tuyu noted that schools are being positioned as central players in the national tree-growing agenda. She highlighted that the initiative is not only about planting trees but also about nurturing them to maturity, ensuring that they contribute meaningfully to the ecosystem and to the nutritional needs of students.**

In a bold and transformative move aimed at enhancing both environmental sustainability and student well-being, the Ministry of Education has launched a nationwide initiative directing every public and private primary school to plant a minimum of 2,000 fruit trees. This ambitious program, unveiled in conjunction with Mazingira Day celebrations, is part of Kenya’s broader National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy, which seeks to grow 15 billion trees by 2032. With over 35,000 schools participating, the initiative is expected to result in the planting of more than 71 million fruit trees across the country. The tree-planting campaign is not merely a symbolic gesture. It represents a strategic effort to address multiple challenges facing the nation, including food insecurity, malnutrition among school-children, and the degradation of natural ecosystems. By focusing on fruit trees, the Ministry aims to create self-sustaining orchards within school compounds that will provide nutritious

food for students, reduce reliance on external food programs, and instill a culture of environmental stewardship among the youth. Basic Education Principal Secretary Julius Bitok emphasized the dual purpose of the initiative, stating that it is designed to “support both environmental care and school-based nutrition.” The theme for this year’s Mazingira Day, “Citizen-Centric Tree Growing and Environmental Stewardship,” reflects the government’s commitment to involving communities in climate action and ecological restoration. Schools, as centers of learning and community engagement, are seen as ideal platforms for cultivating long-term environmental consciousness and practical skills in agroforestry. The inter-ministerial collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environment has been pivotal in rolling out the program. Environment Cabinet Secretary Soipan Tuyu noted that schools are being positioned as central players in the national tree-growing agen-

da. She highlighted that the initiative is not only about planting trees but also about nurturing them to maturity, ensuring that they contribute meaningfully to the ecosystem and to the nutritional needs of students. To facilitate the success of the program, the government has mobilized resources including seedlings, technical support, and training for teachers and students on tree care and orchard management. Partnerships with local nurseries, community-based organizations, and environmental NGOs have been established to ensure the availability of diverse fruit tree species suited to different climatic zones. Schools are encouraged to select varieties that thrive locally, such as mangoes, avocados, guavas, and pawpaws, which can provide year-round fruiting and dietary diversity. The long-term vision of the initiative extends beyond the immediate benefits of fruit production. It aims to transform school environments into green, shaded, and biodiverse spaces that enhance learning and men-

tal well-being. Studies have shown that green schoolyards can improve concentration, reduce stress, and foster a sense of responsibility among students. By engaging children in the care of trees, the program also nurtures values of patience, resilience, and respect for nature. Community involvement is another cornerstone of the initiative. Parents, local leaders, and volunteers are being invited to participate in planting ceremonies and ongoing maintenance efforts. This inclusive approach not only strengthens the bond between schools and their communities but also ensures that the trees are protected and valued as shared assets. In many rural areas, the fruit trees are expected to supplement household nutrition and even generate income through surplus sales, thereby contributing to local economies. While the scale of the initiative is unprecedented, it is not without challenges. Ensuring the survival of millions of saplings requires consistent watering, protection from pests, and mon-

itoring. The Ministry has acknowledged these hurdles and is working to integrate tree care into school routines, including the establishment of environmental clubs and the incorporation of agroecology into the curriculum. Teachers are being trained to guide students in practical horticulture, turning classrooms into hubs of ecological learning. The 2,000 fruit trees per school initiative marks a significant step in Kenya’s journey toward climate resilience and food security. It reflects a visionary approach that links education, nutrition, and environmental conservation in a single, cohesive strategy. As the trees take root and begin to bear fruit, they will stand as living symbols of hope, growth, and the power of collective action. In the years to come, generations of students will not only enjoy the shade and sustenance these trees provide but also carry forward the lessons of stewardship and sustainability into their communities and beyond.

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Biden Battles Back: Former President Begins Radiation Therapy in Fight Against Cancer

In a poignant chapter of his post-presidency life, former United States President Joe Biden has begun radiation therapy as part of an aggressive treatment plan for metastatic prostate cancer.

By: John Kimsy
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Worth Noting:

- This is not Biden’s first encounter with cancer. In September, he underwent Mohs surgery to remove cancerous skin cells from his forehead, a procedure that left a visible bandage during public appearances. The former president has long been an advocate for cancer research, a cause deeply personal to him following the death of his son Beau Biden from brain cancer in 2015. During his presidency, Biden launched the Cancer Moonshot initiative, aiming to accelerate research and improve outcomes for patients nationwide.
- The announcement of Biden’s treatment has sparked an outpouring of support from across the political spectrum. Lawmakers, former colleagues, and citizens have taken to social media to express solidarity, praising his courage and wishing him a full recovery. President Donald Trump, who succeeded Biden in office, issued a brief statement acknowledging the news and extending well wishes, a rare moment of bipartisan empathy in a deeply polarized political climate.



Former U.S. President Joe Biden. Photo | Courtesy

In a poignant chapter of his post-presidency life, former United States President Joe Biden has begun radiation therapy as part of an aggressive treatment plan for metastatic prostate cancer. The 82-year-old Democrat, who left office in January 2025, revealed his diagnosis in May, marking a sobering moment for a public figure whose career has been defined by resilience and personal trials. According to his spokesperson Kelly Scully, Biden is undergoing a combination of radiation and hormone therapy to combat the disease, which has spread to his bones. The treatment regimen is expected to span five weeks and represents a new phase in his ongoing battle with cancer. Despite the seriousness of the diagnosis, Biden’s team has emphasized that the cancer is hormone-sensitive, meaning it is likely to respond to treatment. “President Biden is doing well,” Scully noted, adding that the former president remains in good spirits and is surrounded by family. This is not Biden’s first encounter with cancer. In September, he underwent Mohs surgery to remove cancerous skin cells from his forehead, a procedure that left a visible bandage during public appearances. The former president has long been an advocate for cancer research, a cause deeply personal to him following the death of his son Beau Biden from brain cancer in 2015. During his presidency, Biden launched the Cancer Moonshot initiative, aiming to accelerate research and improve outcomes for patients nationwide. The announcement of Biden’s treatment has sparked an outpouring of support from across the political spectrum. Lawmakers, former colleagues, and citizens have taken to social media to express solidarity, praising his courage and wishing him a full recovery. President Donald Trump, who succeeded Biden in office, issued a brief statement acknowledging the news and extending well wishes, a rare moment of bipartisan empathy in a deeply polarized political climate. Medical experts note that radiation therapy for metastatic prostate cancer is a common and often effective approach, especially when paired with hormone treatments that suppress the growth of cancer cells. While the journey ahead may be challenging, Biden’s medical team remains optimistic about the potential for managing the illness and maintaining his quality of life. Biden’s health has been a topic of public interest for years, particularly during his presidency and the 2024 election cycle. His decision to withdraw from the race following a difficult debate performance was attributed in part to concerns about age and stamina. Yet, even in retirement, Biden has remained active, delivering speeches, mentoring young leaders, and continuing his advocacy for healthcare reform and climate action. As he undergoes treatment, Biden has reportedly scaled back public engagements but continues to communicate with supporters and staff. His office has pledged transparency throughout the process, promising regular updates while respecting his privacy. “Cancer touches us all,” Biden said in a recent message. “But with hope, science, and the support of loved ones, we can face it head-on.” The former president’s battle with cancer is a reminder of the fragility of life and the strength of the human spirit. For many Americans, Biden’s journey resonates not just as a political story, but as a deeply human one—of perseverance, vulnerability, and the enduring fight for health and dignity. As radiation therapy begins, the nation watches with empathy, rooting for a man who has weathered storms and now faces another with characteristic grace.

Amir Khan Muttaqi to visit India for talks with Jaishankar, trade outreach

By: AGENCIES
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Acting Afghanistan foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi begins his first visit to India on Friday, a nearly week-long trip expected to blend political, economic and cultural engagements. Muttaqi is scheduled to hold delegation-level talks with external affairs minister S. Jaishankar in New Delhi and meet Afghanistan-origin traders based in India. Over the weekend, he may travel to Deoband in Uttar Pradesh, where a small number of Afghan students are enrolled, according to people familiar with the plan. While no major announcements are anticipated beyond the prospect of additional Indian development assistance for Kabul, the visit is significant as the Taliban administration seeks broader international acceptance and warmer ties with New Delhi. Afghan experts note that “Taliban 2.0” has largely avoided anti-India rhetoric and actions since taking power. The itinerary under consideration includes stops in Agra, Mumbai and Hyderabad, alongside a session with an Indian business chamber to

explore trade and investment opportunities. The city visits are yet to be finalised. Afghanistan maintains consulates in Mumbai and Hyderabad. Chabahar port is expected to feature prominently in talks. The facility remains Afghanistan’s most viable sea gateway for commerce with India. New Delhi has secured a US sanctions waiver for Chabahar through 28 October, after an earlier deadline of 29 September had been set for revocation, officials said. Muttaqi’s trip follows this week’s “Moscow Format” consultations on Afghanistan, where India aligned with aspects of Kabul’s position, including security and regional connectivity priorities. Afghan representatives raised concerns about extremist threats and cross-border stability during the meeting. India has been a leading regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction support to Afghanistan, including foodgrain, medical supplies and development assistance after the September 2025 earthquake. Kabul has formally conveyed priority needs in energy and infrastructure, to which India has responded positively, officials from both sides say. By contrast, relations between the Taliban administration and Paki-



Afghanistan’s Foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi.

stan remain strained amid recurring tensions along the Durand Line. Kabul also cites concerns over security incidents and inter-ethnic frictions across the border. Afghan officials allege that Pakistan has historically sought “strategic depth” against India, a claim Islamabad denies; Kabul

has linked these worries to threats posed by groups such as ISKP, al-Qaeda and LeT, issues it says were flagged in Moscow. Diplomats in New Delhi view Muttaqi’s visit as a cautious step toward stabilising engagement: practical cooperation on trade routes and

humanitarian support, without conferring formal recognition on the Taliban government. Further details of the programme and outcomes are expected after the Jaishankar-Muttaqi talks.

GAZA

Modi hails first phase of US-backed Gaza peace plan; speaks to Trump, Netanyahu amid trade talks

By: AGENCIES
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India on Thursday welcomed agreement on the first phase of a US-backed peace plan for Gaza, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi calling US President Donald Trump to congratulate him on efforts to end hostilities and to review progress in India-US trade negotiations. It was Modi’s second call with Trump since 16 September and came amid strains over the US administration’s steep tariffs on Indian exports, including a 25% punitive levy linked to purchases of Russian oil. Both sides have been in touch in recent days on resuming trade talks. “Spoke to my friend, President Trump and congratulated him on the success of the historic Gaza peace plan. Also reviewed the good progress achieved in trade negotiations. Agreed to stay in close touch over the coming weeks,” Modi posted on social media. Earlier, Modi praised the efforts of Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to end fighting in Gaza and facilitate the release of

hostages. Later in the day he spoke to Netanyahu: “We welcome the agreement on the release of hostages and enhanced humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. Reaffirmed that terrorism in any form or manifestation is unacceptable anywhere in the world,” he wrote. Trump announced on Wednesday that Israel and Hamas had agreed the first phase of the plan, including a ceasefire and the release of Israeli captives and Palestinian prisoners. The understanding, part of a US-backed 20-point roadmap to end the war, followed talks in Cairo involving US, Israeli, Egyptian and Qatari officials. In his initial reaction, Modi said: “We welcome the agreement on the first phase of President Trump’s peace plan,” calling it a reflection of Netanyahu’s leadership. He added: “We hope the release of hostages and enhanced humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza will bring respite and pave the way for lasting peace.” The developments in West Asia also figured in Modi’s discussions with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer in Mumbai. Both leaders endorsed efforts to halt the fighting in Gaza, where officials say more than 67,000



Red Cross Field Hospital in Gaza/ICRC

Palestinians, including around 20,000 children, have been killed over the past two years. Modi said India supports all efforts to restore peace through dialogue and diplomacy, including on Ukraine. Starmer said he “strongly” welcomed the deal on the first stage of the Gaza plan, urging full and swift implementation alongside the im-

mediate lifting of all restrictions on life-saving humanitarian aid. He said he also discussed a “just and lasting peace in Ukraine” with Modi, acknowledging India’s role as a global actor. A joint India-UK statement called for restraint, protection of civilians and adherence to international law in West Asia, and urged parties to

avoid actions that could escalate tensions. The two leaders backed the US peace plan for Gaza and said they would work with regional partners to secure an immediate ceasefire, the release of hostages and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

“Madagascar’s Military Pivot: General Zafisambo Named Prime Minister Amid Gen Z-Led Uprising”

In a dramatic turn of events that underscores the growing political volatility in Madagascar, President Andry Rajoelina has appointed army General Ruphin Fortunat Zafisambo as the country’s new Prime Minister.

By: Our Correspondent
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Worth Noting:

- President Rajoelina, who came to power in 2009 through a military-backed transition and was re-elected in 2018, has faced mounting criticism over deteriorating infrastructure, frequent power outages, water shortages, and a stagnant economy. The Gen Z-led protests—dubbed “Gen Z Mada”—have become a lightning rod for national frustration, with demonstrators calling for transparency, accountability, and a complete overhaul of the political system.
- In his official statement, Rajoelina said the appointment of General Zafisambo was necessary to “restore order and rebuild public trust.” He praised Zafisambo’s leadership and discipline, suggesting that a military figure at the helm would bring stability and decisiveness to a government struggling to contain civil unrest. The president also dissolved the previous government led by Christian Ntsay, who had served as Prime Minister since 2018.



General Ruphin Fortunat Zafisambo

In a dramatic turn of events that underscores the growing political volatility in Madagascar, President Andry Rajoelina has appointed army General Ruphin Fortunat Zafisambo as the country’s new Prime Minister. The announcement, made late Friday evening, follows weeks of escalating protests led by Gen Z activists demanding sweeping reforms, improved public services, and an end to what they describe as systemic corruption and elite impunity. The appointment of Zafisambo, who previously served as director of the military cabinet in the Prime Minister’s office, marks a decisive shift toward a more security-oriented administration. It also signals the president’s intent to restore control amid fears of a coup attempt and growing unrest in major cities including Antananarivo, Toliara, and Diego Suarez. The protests, largely organized through social media platforms, have drawn thousands of young people into the streets, echo-

ing similar youth-led movements in Kenya, Nepal, and Nigeria. President Rajoelina, who came to power in 2009 through a military-backed transition and was re-elected in 2018, has faced mounting criticism over deteriorating infrastructure, frequent power outages, water shortages, and a stagnant economy. The Gen Z-led protests—dubbed “Gen Z Mada”—have become a lightning rod for national frustration, with demonstrators calling for transparency, accountability, and a complete overhaul of the political system. In his official statement, Rajoelina said the appointment of General Zafisambo was necessary to “restore order and rebuild public trust.” He praised Zafisambo’s leadership and discipline, suggesting that a military figure at the helm would bring stability and decisiveness to a government struggling to contain civil unrest. The president also dissolved the previous government led by Christian Ntsay, who had

served as Prime Minister since 2018. General Zafisambo’s elevation to the premiership has sparked mixed reactions. Supporters of the government argue that his military background equips him to handle the crisis with authority and efficiency. However, critics warn that the move could further alienate the youth and civil society, who view the militarization of governance as a step backward for democracy. “This is not the leadership we asked for,” said one protest organizer in Antananarivo. “We want change, not control.” The protests have been marked by both peaceful marches and clashes with security forces. Tear gas has been deployed near schools and hospitals, prompting condemnation from human rights groups. Several demonstrators have been injured, and arrests have been reported, though exact figures remain unclear. Despite the crackdown, the movement shows no signs of slowing down. Protesters continue to demand im-

proved access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, especially for the country’s youth, who make up more than 60% of the population. Madagascar’s economic challenges have compounded the unrest. Despite its rich natural resources—including nickel, cobalt, and rare biodiversity—the country remains one of the poorest in the world. According to recent data, income per capita has declined by nearly 45% over the past decade, and youth unemployment is at an all-time high. Many young people feel excluded from decision-making processes and disillusioned by a political elite they perceive as out of touch with everyday realities. International observers are closely monitoring the situation. The African Union and United Nations have called for restraint and dialogue, urging the government to respect the rights of protesters and avoid excessive use of force. Meanwhile, regional powers are watching with concern, wary of the

potential for instability to spill over into neighboring countries. General Zafisambo has yet to outline his policy agenda, but sources close to the presidency suggest that his immediate priorities will include restoring public order, initiating dialogue with protest leaders, and launching a national review of service delivery systems. Whether he can balance the demands of a restless youth with the expectations of a security-focused administration remains to be seen. As Madagascar stands at a crossroads, the appointment of a military prime minister could either usher in a period of stability or deepen the divide between the government and its citizens. For the Gen Z movement, the fight is far from over. Their chants of “Change now!” continue to echo through the streets, a powerful reminder that the future of Madagascar may well be shaped by the very generation that refuses to be silenced.