

Kenya Domestic Media Monitor Report
October 25-31, 2011
Eric Jospe, MIGS Media Monitoring Reporter



Content Report:

1. Kenya's War on Al-Shabaab
2. Al-Shabaab in Kenya
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*Unless otherwise stated,
all articles were written in English*

1. Kenya's War on Al-Shabaab

"Army, Al Shabaab in First Battle"

The Star, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 28, 2011

The Nairobi Star reports that Kenyan troops faced Al-Shabaab militants in open combat on Thursday for the first time since the two-week-long invasion began, leaving nine Al-Shabaab members dead and two Kenya Defence Forces injured. The battle occurred when militants attacked a convoy of Kenyan troops who were on their way to the town of Beles Qooqani to reinforce Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) soldiers.

Government spokesman Alfred Mutua said that the Kenyan government's strategy is to "destroy Al Shabaab's network within the shortest time possible", and ruled out negotiations with the group, even as other members of the government spoke about the possibility of such negotiations.

"US pledges Kenya logistical support"
KBC, state-owned national broadcasting company
October 28, 2011

Government-owned Kenya Broadcasting Company reports that the United States government has been providing logistical support to Kenyan troops who are fighting in Somalia. The US denies that it has any more involvement in the operation to fight Al-Shabaab, clarifying that it only provides support from within Kenyan territory. US ambassador Scott Gration told journalists in Nairobi Friday that his government will continue supporting Kenya to curtail any external aggression.

"Why capturing Kismayu could trigger proxy wars for Kenya"
The East African, privately-owned weekly newspaper
Sunday, October 30, 2011

A report by the East African analyzes the question of what to do once the war against Al-Shabaab is over, and how to deal with governing Somalia should Kenya succeed in defeating the Islamist rebels. While Kenya's invasion was timely, coming at just the right moment when Al-Shabaab was weak and vulnerable, large questions remain about what to do once victory is secured.

According to the article, a governance strategy is emerging from Somali leaders and regional players in the conflict. The strategy includes creating buffer zones between the borders of Somalia with Kenya, similar to the ones that exist between Somalia and Ethiopia, as well as handing control back to Somalis. However, the report also warns that Kenya's defeat of Al-Shabaab could ultimately lead to a proxy war between Kenya and Ethiopia, as both countries begin jockeying for power in choosing regional leaders of the lands liberated from Al-Shabaab.

"Somalia PM signs communiqué with PM Odinga"
KBC, state-owned national broadcasting company
Monday, October 31, 2011



The Prime Ministers of Kenya and Somalia announced in a joint communique that the two countries have agreed to continue the military offensive against Al-Shabaab until the militia group is destroyed. This announcement comes after Somali President Sharif Ahmed denounced the invasion. Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga allayed fears that Kenya had intentions of annexing parts of Somalia. "We have no imperialistic intentions of occupying any part of Somalia", he assured.

2. Al Shabaab in Kenya

“Grenade attack man to spend life in jail”
The Star, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 29, 2011

The suspect responsible for two grenade attacks in Nairobi last week has confessed to his crimes, admitted to being a member of Al-Shabaab, was tried by a Kenyan court and convicted to life imprisonment. According the Star, 28-year-old Elgive Bwire, who hails from western Kenya and is not an ethnic Somali, appeared to have no remorse for his crimes and was smiling as he spoke to reporters. Bwire, who converted to Islam in 2005, travelled to Somalia to receive training on arms, ammunitions and how to conduct attacks.



No remorse: Bwire after he was sentenced for life. Photo/Philip Kamakya, The Star

“Inside Al-Shabaab network in Kenya”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 29, 2011



The Daily Nation reports that hundreds of Kenyan youth have been recruited by Al-Shabaab in the last six years, a problem which the government is now urgently seeking to reverse. The newspaper claims to have seen a leaked US cable detailing how Al-Shabaab exploited youth unemployment to recruit hundreds of young men. The cable dated July 6, 2009 titled, “A Portrait of Al Shabaab Recruitment in Kenya,” named Eastleigh, North Eastern Province, Isiolo, Dadaab refugee camp and Mombasa as some of the areas where Kenyans were enrolled to the militia group.

“State offers amnesty to Kenyans in terror group”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 29, 2011

The Daily Nation reports that the Kenyan government on Saturday offered amnesty to all Kenyans who have joined Al-Shabaab, if they came forward. According to Chief of Defence Forces Gen Julius Karangi, national Al-Shabaab recruits should denounce the group and seek the government’s help. Internal Security Permanent Secretary Francis Kimemia said the government was profiling Kenyans who may have been recruited into the militia. Several Kenyans have been used by the group to stage terror attacks in and out of the country.

“Anxiety as Kitui residents suspect enemy within”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 29, 2011

Tensions ran high this week in the Somali community of Kitui, a town east of Nairobi, as allegations spread of Somali businessmen having links to Al-Shabaab. There have been a string of businesses established by Somali traders in Kitui and Mwingi towns recently, and uncertainty about the source of their investment capital is fuelling allegations that Al-Shabaab is behind it. One of the business leaders rejected the allegations, saying “We are Kenyans by birth and have a right to do business anywhere in the republic. Rumours that we have links with terrorists are only aimed at frustrating our operations”.

3. Politics & the 2012 Elections

“Muite warns of Kenya post-poll chaos repeat”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 25, 2011



The Daily Nation reports that Paul Muite, a politician and chairman of the Safina political party, warned that Kenya risks being dragged into a repeat of the post-election violence if the current ethnic mobilisation is not addressed. Speaking at a roundtable conference on relations between the media and political parties, Muite said that we are seeing the same ethnic mobilization that characterized the 2007 election, and called out the media as having failed to hold politicians accountable. Veteran journalist Emman Omari said that community radio stations could be effective tools for civic education.

“G7 to file a censure motion against Raila”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 30, 2011



Saboti MP Eugene Wamalwa addresses a gathering at past event. Photo: Jared Nyataya, Daily Nation

Following the release of a World Bank report alleging that millions of shillings from a youth project went missing, the “G7 alliance” of politicians are reportedly set to file a censure motion in Parliament against Prime Minister Raila Odinga. The World Bank pulled out of the project, meant to reduce the vulnerability of unemployed youth by offering a line of income for participation in infrastructure projects, over Sh33 million that went missing. Since then, politicians on both sides have thrown accusations at one another, with the pro-Raila MPs alleging that the public was being misled, while those against him have called for him to step down.



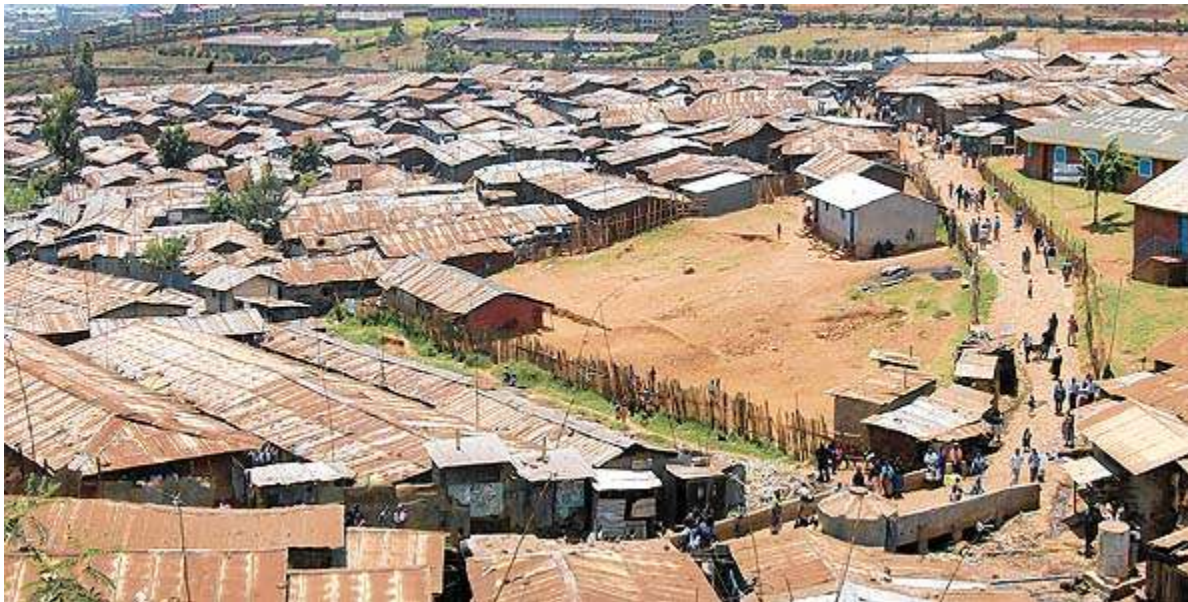
4. Miscellaneous

“Thin line between the legal and the criminal in Nairobi slums”

The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper

October 28, 2011

The Daily Nation reports on urban crime in Kenya’s urban slums, arguing that the void left by the absence of government and police is taken over by criminal gangs and private security companies. According to slum-dwellers, the police are generally slow, inept, corrupt and unlikely to properly investigate crime for successful prosecution. In fact, 92 percent of Kenyans perceive the police as the most corrupt institution of the state.



A slum in Nairobi. Photo/FILE, Daily Nation.

“Coast rebel group scores major diplomatic coup”

The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper

October 29, 2011

The Mombasa Republic Council (MRC), a secessionist rebel group from Kenya’s east coast, has a major breakthrough in securing its legitimacy as the government moved to open talks with the organization. The MRC, which up until now had been considered by the government to be an outlawed organization, was behind the 1998 Likoni attacks that left 89 people dead and 80,000 displaced, and were directed at those perceived to be outside the coastal region. Although small-scale skirmishes have continued, Coast

Provincial Commissioner Ernest Munyi led a high-powered security team to Likoni to meet members of the group on Thursday. The MRC believes that the the coastal people have been marginalized by successive governments and seeks self-determination.

“IDPs plan big protest marches to press for overdue settlement”
The Daily Nation, privately-owned daily newspaper
October 30, 2011

Internally displaced persons living in camps in Kenya will take to the streets next week to protest the government into resettling them, according to civil society organizations. According to the Trusted Society of Human Rights Alliance, an IDP lobby group, IDPs want to know how the Sh4.2 billion, which was allocated during this year’s budget for the resettlement of IDPs, has been used. “We have close to 800,000 IDPs in camps and some politicians are using them as a tourist attraction to earn cash,” the chairman of the organization claimed. He asked all IDPs to come out in large numbers and support the demonstrations.

