



Meet Ugas Mohamed,
an aspiring Member
of Parliament for the
newly-created Tarbaj
Constituency. **Pg 6**



“The most effective way
to do it is to do it so let us
do with URP” says Fatu-
ma Osman. Read why she
thinks URP is the party to
beat in Wajir County. **Pg 11**

WAJIR LIVE

May -July 2012 /ISSUE 8 / KSHS 50

BREAKING THE SILENCE

Banning Khat



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS

www.neponline.net

@
50/=



Meet Ugas Mohamed, an aspiring Member of Parliament for the newly-created Tarbaj Constituency. Pg 6



"The most effective way to do it is to do it so let us do with URP" says Fatuma Osman. Read why she thinks URP is the party to beat in Wajir County. Pg 11

WAJIR LIVE

May - July 2012 / ISSUE 8 / KSHS 50

BREAKING THE SILENCE

Banning Khat



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS

www.neponline.net

@
50/=

EDITOR

Adow Moahmed

CONTENT EDITOR

Abass Adan

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Mohamed Ali

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Wajir Lvie

P.O.Box 311-70200

Wajir-Kenya.

editor@neponline.net

www.neponline.net

ADVERTISING:

office: +254721680588

advertising@neponline.net

PUBLISHER:

Wajir Live Initiative Group

P.O.Box 311-70200 Wajir-Kenya.

WAJIR LIVE

The editorial content and individual opinion expressed herein are solely those of the authors and don't necessarily represent those of Wajir Live. The publisher does not accept responsibility for the content. All rights reserved. Reproduction of published material is prohibited but those wishing to do so must obtain written permission.

THIS IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

Wajir Live Newsletter issue No. 008

Inside

THIS ISSUE

Why you must think before you mark your ballot come the General Election

Page 3

Banning Miraa: Why controlling Miraa will reduce poverty in North Eastern Kenya

Page 4



Reasons Not to Burn Plastic

Page 5



Meet Ugas Mohamed, the aspiring MP for the newly created Tarbaj constituency. He says he has what it takes to alleviate the suffering of his would-be poverty-stricken constituents

page 6

Dilemma And Disarray As Dating Delays Somali Marriages

Page 12



"The most effective way to do it is to do it so let us do with URP" says Fatuma Osman. Read why she thinks URP is the party to beat in Wajir County.

Page 11



Wajir Museum: Geographical location and historical background

Page 14

WAJIR LIVE KITCHEN

Somali Ground Beef Sauce with Potatoes



GLACIER
Pure natural spring water
WAJIR COUNTY'S FAVOURITE BRAND
FRESH, DELICIOUS, SAFE

It shows on the experience of its members, hydrological engineering, water quality engineering and public health. The company has been awarded the ISO 9001:2008 certification.

THE SOURCE
The water source is obtained from underground springs in the high green hills of Wajir, Kenya. The water is naturally pure and free from chemical contaminants. It is passed through natural mineralization of active minerals to enhance its natural purity before bottling.

QUALITY ASSURED
The most advanced processes of water treatment are used to ensure the highest quality of water. The water is then bottled in 1.5L and 5L bottles.

SAFETY AND HEALTH
The water is naturally pure and free from chemical contaminants. It is passed through natural mineralization of active minerals to enhance its natural purity before bottling.

FOR TRADE ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT US: HYDROLAB LTD. TEL: 0222 794 519, EMAIL: info@hydrolab.co.ke

Why you must think before you mark your ballot come the General Election

By Adow Mohamed

So you had a Member of Parliament whom you thought will be your savior? One who will agitate for your rights in the august house? In 2007 you thronged polling stations, braved the scorching sun, lined up to cast your ballot and 'sent one of our own' to represent us in the national assembly? Women ululated; men played the *Saar lugheed* to signify a future oozing with success. Poor, elderly men and women were ferried in Lorries like potatoes to vote for their 'preferred candidate'. You did that in good faith thinking that your Honourable Member of Parliament will articulate issues in the floor of the house (as it were) and alleviate your life which was dominated by hopelessness and misery, didn't you? How wrong you were.

Since Kenya attained independence about half a century ago, the terrible neglect and sheer contempt of the people of the region still persist with no solution in sight. We are purposely considered as second class citizens. Ask me how. How long will it take for you to get that all important document called ID (Identification Card) and don't forget this is a right enshrined in the constitution you religiously passed. For you to get one must parade father, grandfather, great grandfather (some of which they have been six feet underground for decades) and a

semi-illiterate chief. When you are going to Kenya (that is what we say because that is what we feel), don't even think of leaving your doorstep lest you be intercepted at the Garissa Check point (or the bridge as it commonly called) and locked up in a cell because you of 'suspicious character' without identification documents.

The poor

When other regions are thinking of by-passes and superhighways, yours remains something like cattle tracks. How else can you explain this: You are given a whole ministry and "one of your own" as the minister. And you know what I am talking about, hah? The government called this affirmative action. What do you have to show for it? NOTHING!!

It was in this newsletter in 4th Edition highlighted the sorry state of the Wajir County's biggest referral hospital. The Garissa Provincial General Hospital has nothing good to write about either. The other district and locational health facilities face the same predicament. Private clinics and pharmacies are awash with medicines meant for the dying poor, despite the clear mark "NOT FOR SALE". Cartels have literally taken over the sector.

In 2011 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE), the results of more than 1600 students were cancelled. All reasons indicated there was foul play on the side of Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). Kneec CEO Paul Wasanga foolishly said they did not supervise the exam in northern Kenya! Why? Because of insecurity! Because of Al-Shabaab!! If this is not impunity and 'Warya ni Warya tu' feelings, then tell me what it is. If I quote him this is what he said "We did not monitor North Eastern. We were not there and the reason is simple. Security was the

Continue on page 9



road network is a nightmare. Those who traveled from Nairobi to Mandera know it all. If you did not dislocate your vertebra during the excruciating journey, then count yourself lucky. It does not mean Kenya lacks the funds to carpet (the word is carpet not tar-mack) the roads, but comrades, we elected self-seeking, short-sighted leaders who don't command anything beyond their bedrooms.

Banning Miraa: Why controlling Miraa will reduce poverty in North Eastern Kenya

By Salah Abdi Sheikh

Miraa is the curse of North Eastern Kenya. Miraa is not only highly addictive but also expensive. Miraa in Kenya is grown in Meru and transported by Land Cruiser that drive across the plains of Northern Kenya at a breakneck speed. It is supposed to reach its destination within hours of its cultivation otherwise it becomes stale and loses value.

The narcotic is sold in bunches called kilos and bark of the small twigs provide hallucinating feeling that miraa users are usually crave. The effect gives the miraa chewer a removal from reality in to a world of make believe. Miraa has to be chewed constantly to reinforce the hallucinations; the effect wears off once the chewer runs out of twigs and leaves. The addict has to be able to replenish his miraa or will suddenly fall off the cliff of the make believe world into the harsh river of reality. They want to be out there in their own world not to be bothered by the harsh reality of this world.

A kilo of miraa is equal to the price of lunch. This means the addict has to either have unlimited supply of money or make a choice between chewing miraa and eating lunch. The typical family may subsist on 4 dollars a day.

The father being the bread winner of the family has therefore two bills to pay every morning; 4 dollars for family food and 4 dollars for miraa. The income of the man is not sufficient. He has to make a choice; family or miraa; these are crude choices the miraa addicts have to make; school fees for children or miraa, hospital bill or miraa, and endless choices that eventually affect the family of Miraa chewer.

Miraa has destroyed families, increased divorce rate and school dropouts. This means it is a source of poverty at very basic level. Fathers faced with a choice abandoning the family or continued supply of the daily entertainment, always choose miraa.

This is a scenario repeated across North Eastern where families are heeded and taken care of by women. Some of these women also maintain their husbands' expensive habits. Miraa has led to household poverty by depleting families' resources.

The addicts spend a large part of their waking hours sitting and chewing miraa. They extend their entertainment to a whole night sojourn and they

spend their days sleeping. Most of the addicts are teachers, civil servants and labourers. They cannot balance between their leisure habits and their work. The quality of services in government office is so poor, it can be termed nonexistent, the quality of education is worse, North Eastern has the poorest schools in the whole nation. Healthy men of working age spend their days trying to obtain handouts to finance their miraa habits. No labour is undertaken. The most affected in-

stitution is the school. Teachers are the most miraa addicted group in North Eastern. Less than 1 in 10 teachers are free from miraa addiction.

Miraa is a health hazard. It has caused many problems to its addicts. First of all chewing miraa with the same set of teeth for many years will lead to black teeth, tooth decay and eventually loss of teeth in total. That is the least of the problems. Chewing miraa causes impotence in some men and increases the potency of others.

Miraa causes psychological problems especially those addicts who consume it without having

continue on page 5



Are you
a hotelier?



You can now
reach more
customers in
this space

Advertise now!

Call

0721680588

0711628544

0723638303

email:

wajirlive@group.com



The twigs



A bunch of such miraa coast ksh. 500 Photo/file

continue from page 4

decent meals. Chewing miraa on an empty stomach is inviting madness. The numbers of crazy people in Northern Eastern Kenya whose insanity can be attributed to miraa form a good percentage of the population

Miraa also makes the towns very untidy. It is dirty in nature and comes with large amount of banana leaves. The addicts litter the towns with black paper bags they use to carry their kilos of miraa.

Banning miraa will probably be a very challenging undertaking. Total ban will be catastrophic and may lead to accusation of Puritanism. It may even cause

“Banning miraa will probably be a very challenging undertaking”

riots in towns and even lead to temporary loss of business in the county. The ban can be enforced gradually. Selling miraa to persons under the age of 18 years should be a criminal offence attracting the same penalty as selling alcohol to underage persons. Other measures should be putted in place.

Wide ranging measures including outreach and awareness to control, manage and finally ban the consumption of miraa should be undertaken. Such measures will raise revenue for the county, make miraa too expensive to many poor people in the society and eventually reduce the stranglehold of this narcotic on the population. It will surely reduce poverty and increase the standards of living of families and raise the standards of education in the region.

Salah. Abdi the author of "Blood on the Runway: The Wagalla Massacre of 1984" is a freelance writer specializing in history, culture and politics of the Somali people

ECO-WATCH: Reasons Not to Burn Plastic

Mohamed Ali

Reason not to burn plastic bags is out of concern for our environment. The largest contributor to the increase in greenhouse gases (i.e water vapor, carbon dioxide and methane) is the burning of fossil fuels, which emit

carbon dioxide.

This increase in greenhouse gases results in the temperature

increase in the Earth's atmosphere and oceans, known as global warming. Global warming is the observed and projected increases in the Earth's average temperature. According to Time for Change, the carbon footprint of one kilogram of plastic bags is approximately six kilograms of carbon dioxide, which contributes to global warming.

When plastic bags are burned, the high-density polyethylene from which they are made together with the heat of burning produces an extremely toxic chemical called dioxin. As there is nowhere for the dioxin-filled smoke to go other than into the air, it eventually settles on the surrounding ground, where

it is likely to be eaten by animals and become concentrated in their body fat. This ends up in meat and dairy products from these animals and is then consumed by humans. Anybody who is near a burn pile that is burning plastic bags is at risk



Clouds of black smoke from burning plastics

of inhaling the poisonous dioxin-filled fumes released into the air. According to The World Health Organization, as soon as dioxins have entered the body they become a permanent fixture, as they do not dissolve in human fats. This poison has been linked to cancer and is also known to affect the immune system, reproduction, and the hormone-producing endocrine gland system.

Anybody who is near a burn pile that is burning plastic bags is at risk of inhaling the poisonous dioxin-filled fumes released into the air.

Ugas Mohamed: Why he thinks he is the best bet for Tarbaj Constituency.

They say “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” and one young man says he has what it takes to be one. Ugas Shiekh Mohamed,⁴¹ an aspiring Member of Parliament for the newly-created Tarbaj Constituency, lays bare why he thinks he is best suited to alleviate the suffering of his poverty-stricken constituents. In the nineties, Ugas left for the United States where he lived and worked since then. Wajir Live Editor, ADOW MOHAMED, caught up with him for an interactive interview. Excerpts:

WLN: Thanks Mr. Ugas for your time. Now tell us more about yourself?

Ugas: I was born in El-Noor in Wajir County 41 years ago, married with 3 children. In 1978 I was enrolled in Wajir Township for first grade and later transferred to boarding school at Wajir “Full” Primary School. Years later, a boarding school was opened in Tarbaj and due to the migratory circumstances of the family, I was transferred there. I graduated with 8th grade in 1986 and Joined Wajir High School. I sat for my KCSE in 1990 and thereafter joined Kenyatta University (KU) to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics. I left for the United States in the 1995. I have since acquired a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems and an MBA in Project Management and Non-profit Management.

WLN: When did the idea of going to the US struck you and how did the so-called ‘American Dream’ came true?

Ugas: During my time at KU, I became active within the university community and outside, increasing my exposure to the outside world. My special gratitude goes

to those who helped me through these formative years of my life. In subsequent years, I temporarily joined the leadership of North Eastern Province University Students Association (NEPUSA). It was during my 3rd year of study that I came to know of this diversity visa. I applied and was surprised to have been picked a year later. I left for the US without much fanfare and in somber mood not knowing what it had in store for me. I have worked for social justice since I stepped in the US. I have served on the boards of community-based organizations, global charity organizations, national civil rights organizations and so on. This was the ‘American Dream’ for me.

WLN: Now you want to contest for the newly-created Tarbaj constituency, what motivated you to seek such an elective post?

Ugas: I am motivated by

my passion to help alleviate suffering of our society. Social justice and equity is a cornerstone of our faith as well as a basic human right. A fragile environment, a nomadic way of life that is in danger of extinction with very limited alternatives available to the victims, extreme unemployment, almost non-existent infrastructure, extreme poverty; among many



others problems face the people in these areas. Many have questioned my sanity and asked why put myself through such a difficult situation when I could lead a comfortable life elsewhere. If at all there are men who should take up challenges, I should be at the forefront.

WLN: According to you what ails the politics of Wajir and by extension, North Eastern Province (NEP)?

Ugas: For a long time, Kenya politics has been dominated by cash and clan. We’ve elected peo-

ple who made us wonder whether they really cared about this country and the future of the people they led. The political situation reminds me of the famous story of the 3 bulls (Red, White and Black) and the lion. The Lion tried to attack them but because they were strong together he decided to bid his time. He befriended the bulls and told them he was protecting them.

One day, he called the Red Bull and the Black Bull and said “My friends I am really concerned for you.” “Why?” they asked. The Lion responded “The White Bull represents a threat to you; he stands out with his complexion and he is going to make you a target for other predators and hunters; the lives of both of you at risk, let me eliminate him.” The Red Bull and Black Bull agreed, after all the Lion was their sincere friend and King of the Jungle. The lion attacked the white bull and, because none came to his help, he was defeated. The lion ate him.

A few weeks went by and the Lion called the Black Bull over and gives him the same speech “The Red

Continue on page 7

Continue from page 6

Bull represents a threat to you by attracting attention, let me eliminate him and you will be safe.” The Black Bull agreed; he was a friend of the King of the Jungle so who cares about anyone else....So he allowed the Lion to kill and ate the Red Bull.

A few days later the Lion confronted the Black Bull and said “Now it is your turn”...The Black Bull finally realized his mistake and said, “I was killed the moment the white bull was killed.”

The moral of the story is that we cannot afford to be divided as we have common problems that need to be solved with the strength that comes from unity.

WLN: What should Tarbaj Constituents expect from you if elected their Member of Parliament?

Ugas: A leader, who cares about their issues, goes beyond the call of duty and does everything humanly possible, and promotes their collective interests. A leader, who will not delegate the affairs and resources to lieutenants and disappears, thus lets those lieutenants to plunder the people's affairs. They should expect a social worker who will be present in the hours of most need to direct the affairs of the community towards aiding the neediest, the sick, and elderly among them.

WLN: The people here are mainly livestock keepers. But analysts say this trend is no longer viable as the diverse climate changes often annihilate large numbers of livestock thereby leaving them destitute and dependent on relief food? In your opinion, is/are there an alternative livelihood (s) the people of this region can pursue other than livestock keeping and how?

Ugas: We have witnessed firsthand the effects of dramatic changes in climate conditions in the vicious cycles of droughts and floods. Many analysts attribute this to the phenomenon of global warming. We must begin discussions on what is next for our communities. We can only solve

“I have unique experiences that provide me with abundant qualifications in the communities that I intend to serve.”

problems if we collectively identify them and work together towards long term solutions.

One of the areas that need urgent attention is the enhancement of food production. It is unfortunate that in Wajir County there is no large scale cultivation of corn, sorghum, millet and so on. We cannot rely on hand ploughed subsistence farming to feed these many people.

WLN: There are devolved funds such as Constituency Development Fund

(CDF), The Local Transfer Fund (LAFT), the Bursary Fund, etc. These monies have often been misappropriated. How different are you going to manage these funds?

Ugas: Insha'Allah, if elected, I intend to strictly supervise the use of these resources to ensure they are been distributed fairly, implemented wisely and effectively. We cannot afford to have white elephant projects that are cash cows for a few individuals while the rest of the population misses out on the use of the intended projects. A combination of education and oversight is required to raise the conscience of the community to safeguard what they collectively own together.

W L N : There are many students who drop out of school due to lack of school fees. How are you going to handle this issue?

Ugas: I understand the issue of school fees is a big problem and I intend to initiate discussions for an action plan by the stakeholders to chart a way forward. I intend to work with donors, NGOs and well-wishers, both local and overseas to help implement that action plan. There are ongoing regional efforts to address the issues of underperformance in education

and I hope to lend a hand to these efforts as well. My sincere hope is that no child from my constituency and by extension the whole region will drop out of school due to lack of school fees.

WLN: How different will you be from previous members of parliament of the area?

Ugas: I have unique experiences that provide me with abundant qualifications in the communities that I intend to serve. I have the will and God willing, the ability to do something about some of these issues. I have exposure to higher possibilities through my travel and life in the developed world for many years. In nominating the best people for the job, I am reminded of the story of prophet Yusuf (A.S), and the daughter of Prophet Shuaib (A.S), in the Qur'an. Prophet Yusuf said to the ruler of Egypt at the time to send him over the storehouses of the land for he was a Hafidh and Aalim (skilled/trustworthy and knowledgeable). The daughter of Prophet Shuaib said to her father with regards to Musa (A.S), “O my father, hire him, for the best (man) that you can hire is the strong/able and trustworthy”. These are lessons for our society to remember when choosing their leadership.

Continue on page 9

The Ethnicity Tag In Our Life

BY MOHAMED ABDULLAHI

The word 'ethnicity and ethnic groups' have almost become synonymous with the Kenyan populace and politics to the extent that no day passes without talk of my community, my people, my region. In the last decade alone, there has been numerous clamor for this country to deal with the negative impacts this monster has had on the country.

After even more than a decade since the introduction of multi party democracy in Kenya, ethnicity has always its ugly head at times leading to disastrous consequences, the 1997 clashes and the 2007/2008 post election violence attest to this. The inception of the national cohesion and integration commission (NCIC) led by Mzalendo Kibunjia was meant to enhance integration and coexistence among different Kenyan ethnic groups.

"Ethnicity is a fundamental factor in human life: it is a phenomenon inherent in human experience." Ethnicity has always existed in society even in prehistoric communities and evident in all facets of life where even wars were fought along ethnic lines and kinship reigned everywhere.

History has it that Kenya has always experienced horrific level of violence and internal strife and all fingers were pointed at ethnicity. As we get closer to the elections, the hurricane of negative ethnicity is daily gathering pace and there is need to understand why it keeps rearing its head and how its enshrined in our lives. Allowing that negative ethnicity was the mother of post-election violence and no one wants it to resurface again as we head towards the general elec-

tion. How is ethnicity evident in our life?

First, ethnicity is evident in our local and national politics. This is where political positions are determined and decided along ethnic groupings. The nature of politics in the expansive north eastern Kenya has been pegged along community interest and the resultant effect is the ascension to power by people who were rewarded through clan loyalty and not by their ability to deliver the much needed reprieve to the electorate.

Secondly, our economics and commerce has hallmarks of ethnicity. Business activities and even positions in work related environment is dished out on who appears to be next of kin to the 'top man'. This is plainly evident where people charged on corruption and unethical issues immediately mobilize their kin and tribesmen. For instance, the Central Bank governor was recently quizzed for the fall of the shilling and had nearly all MPs from central Kenya by his side.

Thirdly, we have ethnicized our Constitution. Every republic considers the constitution as a unifying and nation building tool. In our sense, the constitution is considered not as an instrument for nationalizing our mind-sets and institutions, but as one meant to replace merit, turning counties into ethnic homelands and balkanizing Kenya. The recently concluded report on the boundaries review and the creation of the new constituencies in line with the provisions of equal representation by the constitution was hijacked and turned into an exercise to settle old political scores. Major ethnic groups wanted to show their muscles while fixing their would be competitors before

the much awaited general election. Fourth, Elections in our backyard are considered as a predetermined power-game in which some communities must win while others are marginalized. Inevitably, our culture has been to look forward to elections, not as a democratic exercise by citizens to give themselves the best possible leaders, but as a do-or-die contest between communities who have long standing bitter rivalry and historical tension. We expect elections to be an issue of 'out-muscling' each other and not an election based on policy issues and service delivery.

Fifth, our institutions of higher learning which have been considered to be centers of excellence in preparing the young Kenyans to nation building and leadership have not been spared either by this monster christened 'ethnicity'. The public universities for instance are fast becoming institutions churning out thousands of Kenyans with ethnic mind even as they are prepared to join in nation building. A report by the National cohesion and integration commission (NCIC) indicated that jobs in public universities are dominated by few ethnic groups particularly those from the area

Continue on page 10

History has it that Kenya has always experienced horrific level of violence and internal strife and all fingers were pointed at ethnicity.

Continued from page 3

issue and so we could not go there. So when people think that they can have a field day because the council does not appear there, then they are mistaken.” That is the guy you entrusted with your results speaking.

Our honourable members of parliament made their usual blah blah in parliament for the camera (Parliament is beamed live these days). But let's give praise where it is due. Pertinent questions were raised by one Aden Duale MP for Dujis constituency where a student who passed away two months before the exams started had his 'result' cancelled. May be he cheated in the grave. Another student who never sat for the exam was awarded grade D+ by Wasanga's Kneec. Dear comrade, this does not reek of foul play? No MP has sanctioned Paul Wasanga or the Sam Ongeru for this. Independent sources suggest there was "surprise performance" by students in the region and as always Wasanga and his ilk could not take it lying low. They blamed it on cheating. Does it make sense for the entire province, right from Garissa to Mandera, to have cheated the same way? They cancelled the result, putting the lives of thousands of poor students in jeopardy. They were tear-gassed when they took to the streets in fury. Their behinds kicked.

The 2009 national population census result in Northern Kenya was another issue that cemented the hatred the government has for the people of the region. The population has drastically increased since 1999 when the last census was conducted from 900,000 people to 2.7 million in those 10

In 2011 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE), the results of more than 1600 students were cancelled.

years. The Office of the President was mad at this. The results were cancelled. There was futile attempt to conduct a repeat census just to hoodwink the people. When repeat census was not possible, the government went ahead and 'revised' the figures. This means your share in the so-called national cake (if at all you had some in the first place) will even be smaller.

Then the Kenya's incursion in Somalia came. There are convincing reports of persecutions, torture and intimidation against the people in North Eastern by the security agents in disguise of hunting down Al-Shabaab.

According to the lobby group, the Washington-based Human Rights Watch there are harrowing tales of people beaten up and tortured causing them physical harm. Pictures availed to this writer by a local human right organization in Garissa show people having their hands fractured and their bellies whipped. One octogenarian mother had her hand plastered after she was attacked and allegedly raped by soldiers during a raid in Dadaab refugee Camp. In Wajir, Garissa and Mandera Counties many were brutalized when cowards detonated Improvised Explosive Device (IED) that left deaths and score of injuries. But the instead of looking for the real culprits behind the attacks, they descended on innocent people going around with their business. Talk of security machinery lacking intelligence.

In a nutshell, don't you feel lesser Kenyan? I hope you do.

Continued from page 7

WLN: If in 2012 you are elected the legislator for Tarbaj constituency, what will be your top priority?

Ugas: My top priority will be in provision of water to stop droughts from turning into famine in the distant future. I would also drive the adoption of agriculture as a source of food for the families. With these basic needs covered, I think school enrolments will increase and the quality of life will improve. I will also pay special attention to quality of health care, vocational training, and employment for the youth.

WLN: Legislators from North Eastern province often pull in different directions when comes to matters affecting the province. Your advice...

Ugas: I would advice our leadership work together on the issues affecting the region for the long haul. It is normal to disagree, but when it comes to existential issues, we have to remember who we are and where we come from. The most important projects for North Eastern Province at the moment are tarmacked roads and complete cell coverage in the region. I am aware that collective efforts have been done in the past to highlight these issues and some progress has been made. It would be unfair to forget the Wajir Sewerage project and those behind it.

WLN: Your parting shot.....

Ugas: Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself to your readers and Muslim community in general. I pray that Allah Subhanahu wata'ala will use me for His cause in enjoining the right, forbidding the evil, and working for justice everywhere, and especially within our local communities. Thank you and God bless you all.

10 CONTINUATION.....

continue from page 8

where the institution is located. The report titled 'NCIC REPORT ON ETHNICITY IN PUBLIC VARIETY'S JOBS' reveals that jobs in public institutions are dominated by specific ethnic groups related to the top management and in essence ruling out other Kenyans. In another report by NCIC on ethnicity in the civil service, The Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba and Luo account for 70% of all service jobs. Of all government workers 22.3% are Kikuyu, 16.7% are Kalenjin, 11.3% are Luhya, 9.7% are Kamba, 9.0% are Luo and 5.8% are Kisii, 20 tribes have less than 1% representation in the civil service." The report further breaks down the ethnic composition across government ministries and departments.

Sixth, sports in this country have had its ups and downs since this country gained independence and has albeit improved in the recent past thanks to aggressive campaign by the government through the creation of the ministry of youth and sports. However, even with this glad tidings and optimism, there is the dark side in this sector. Some Sporting activities are identified along certain groups and regions as a result receiving hefty allocation of funding. For instance, Athletics is considered a preserve of the kalenjin and the rift valley province while football is dominated by the luhya and the luo especially the national team (Harambee stars). Infact, the perennial poor performance of the national football team is blamed on skewed composition of the team (most of the players are from the established urban centres). This has in essence made young and brilliant sports talents from other parts of Kenya to feel 'ignored and locked out' of the prestigious national sporting tournament and awards. By propagating ethnicity even in sports, funding allocation to sport

facilities and activities is skewed in essence the social scientist phenomenon of "self fulfilling prophecy" is practiced. The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behaviour which makes the original false conception come 'true'(wikipedia). This can be interpreted to mean that because a certain region or group is assumed to be good in a particular sport, then all government allocations and equipments are directed towards that area or group and they continue doing good while other areas are neglected.

Seventh, the chapter on devolution has excited many both in the political and professional circles and has dominated talks in public Baraza and even air waves in local vernacular stations. It is a chapter that has made veterans politicians and other young Kenyans already jostling and huddling for positions in the county assembly. This is the first time that Kenyans are to be treated to the most ever expensive and logistically challenging election where they are expected to elect six officials on the same day. As such, there is already notable political realignment both at the national and village level ostensibly to 'prepare well' for the general election and put in place all that is needed for the big day. At the county level, different ethnic groups are engaged in an ever present debate on how the 'county cake' is to be shared with talks of communities ceding ground for others to also 'return favor' once the cake is on their hands. There has been numerous community meeting in different places to identify flag bearers and community elders and draw the road map on how to clinch power in the fourth coming general election. Some of the utterances and maiden speeches by aspirants are heart wrenching indicating how the ethnic tag has

cemented itself into our life.

As we prepare in earnest for the general election at the end of this year, there is need to tame the ethnicity tag that has virtually become part of our life and a sitting room affair if this country is to integrate the different ethnic groups and foster a national outlook in nation building. In the event we watch from far as the 'status quo' is maintained, the ordeal undergone by Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia might be in the offing for us and will only retell the tale after the Nation has been brought to its knees!

The writer is a monitoring & evaluation officer at MercyCorps Kenya, Wajir program.

ibnuabdullahi2005@gmail.com

ADVERTISE
in the magazine
that is read by people of all spheres of
lives and that cuts
a cross diverse demographics groups

CALL

0721680588

0711628544

0723638303



The future looks perky with United Republican Party (URP)



Fatuma Hassan Osman URP coordinator in Wajir County.

It's the first time since independence a political party in Kenya stressed on the need of family values. For a country to reach fundamental prosperity it has to inject a sense of bond in the family fabric, it must inculcate discipline and respect in its citizenry. In this respect, United Republican Party (URP) is the only party that considers family values as a robust tenet in its campaign manifestos.

Kenyans are weary of unfulfilled promises made by parties in their campaigns in every electioneering period. For URP to chat a different path from other parties which have for decades been masquerading as development oriented, it has espoused and came up with family values as a tool to further the developments Kenyans yearned for epochs.

More outstandingly, the youth comprise a constituency that cannot be ignored anymore. Kenya sits on a time bomb if the intensity of redundancy among the youth is not treaded and addressed carefully. It is therefore prudent, for any government to mind the welfare of the young folks. Job creation for the youth has been a bane for subsequent governments since independence and with URP at the

helm, it is envisaged that this will be trashed in the dustbin of history. Youth must be given ways to forge their destiny. They must be given a door to access quality education, technical expertise must be given a priority in line with the saying "All too often we are giving young people how to cut flowers when we should be teaching them how to grow their own plants."

As a region which has borne the brunt of sustained marginalization by subsequent regimes, Wajir County has a lot to benefit from URP. The less-privileged in our midst will be given due attention. The handicapped will be considered as economically-vibrant lot in their own ways and circles. They will be given life-sustaining ventures in order for them to remain independent.

Women in Wajir County must undertake income generating ventures that can keep the perennial hunger at bay. Droughts decimate large herds of livestock, rendering many communities destitute and dependent on relief food and hand-outs. This has created a culture of vulnerability among the society, worst effected being women and children.

As Oprah Winfrey said referring to women "It doesn't matter who you are, or where you came from. The ability to triumph begins with you." What the Wajir women needs are long term sustenance strategies that will enable her regain her potential and strength in the society. The URP has put in place stringent

"The family is both the fundamental unit of society as well as the root of culture. It ... is a perpetual source of encouragement, advocacy, assurance, and emotional refueling that empowers a child to venture with confidence into the greater world and to become all that he can be" goes the saying.

mechanisms that are specifically devised for poverty-stricken widows of the marginalized areas. The creation of self-help groups for enterprising women who wish to remain afloat in these economically turbulent times will also be a main concern for the URP fraternity.

The girl child has remained a thorn in the flesh for the pastoral community in the Wajir County. Subsequently, the party has put much emphasis on the girl child education in line with development goals set by the party. The party further wishes to inspire the women in politics in Wajir County and whatever capacity they hold. So they say "The most effective way to do it, is to do it" so let us do with URP.

Women in Wajir County must undertake income generating ventures that can keep the perennial hunger at bay

"URP- KUTENDA NA KUSEMA"

The writer is the URP coordinator in Wajir County.

Dilemma and disarray as dating delays Somali marriages

By **Yahya .M. Dahiye**

Somalis have always lived strictly within the tenets of their unique and pristine culture, but as ravages of modernizations takes centre stage among traditional African societies, the conservative community is undergoing a transformation in almost all spheres of life.

Dating for instance has been an unacceptable practice among the nominally Muslim community as socialization between opposite sexes took a back seat during early years.

Traditional Somali youths observed only acceptable cultural avenues as an opportunity for courtship that led well into strong families. They would meet in traditional dance nights, weddings and other cultural activities that the nomadic community embraced. Although the customary courtship arrangements may not all fit into the context of Islam, it was by far better than the current generation.

The story is different, today, young boys and girls enter into one-on-one intimate relationships; spend time together with what they call as their potential wife or husband. Some even call it the wife/husband hunting business. Endless relationship Many of the younger generations of Somalis are turning to dating with the anticipation of finding the

right partner in the hopes of eventually settling down, but for most the dating spree seems never-ending with marriage often getting elusive.

While some struggle to find a convincing partner for a hand in marriage through dating, others are totally confused on which way to jump as it gets difficult to find a clean person during this age and time.

Most of the invigorated young people use the ill-presumed excuse of

up marrying the wrong person altogether.

A spot-check by Wajir Live revealed high level of dilemma and confusion that dashed the hopes of both boys and girls who are putting their best foot forward with the aim of making new families.

Saida (not her real name) is a Somali lady living in Nairobi. She told WL that she entered into more than 10 pre-marital relationships for a period of between 6 months to 5 years.

She is now approaching the age of 30 and the hope of tying the knot is fading away every passing day.

“When I first accepted a boy who approached me while still in primary school as my boyfriend, I believed I will one day settle down with him and enjoy a good life by the time of marriage” she narrates her ordeal.

Much to her dismay, however, Saida’s first relationship which she describes as her “first love” only lasted until she completed high school.

“I felt like I was divorced. I already had an intimate relationship with him. Although, we never shared any bed we hugged and kissed each other. I even introduced him to my sisters and the entire village back at home” Saida said.

She later entered multiple relationships, some at the same time with different men but she believes she might not even marry any of the last two of her boyfriends she is now dating.

When WL asked her how she meets those men, Saida replied that they visit her in a house where she lives with her friends.

While some struggle to find a convincing partner for a hand in marriage through dating, others are totally confused on which way to jump as it gets difficult to find a clean person during this age and time.

Samira is a Muslim lady



While some struggle to find a convincing partner for a hand in marriage through dating, others are totally confused on which way to jump as it gets difficult to find a clean person during this age and time.

“knowing better their wife/husband to be” as the reason why they are engaged in the prohibited practice. This situation had forced many to change partners every other time. The result is a seemingly endless relationship.

Like many Muslim youths, young Somali believe that it is not possible to engage in courtship activities just when one is ready to marry because you might end

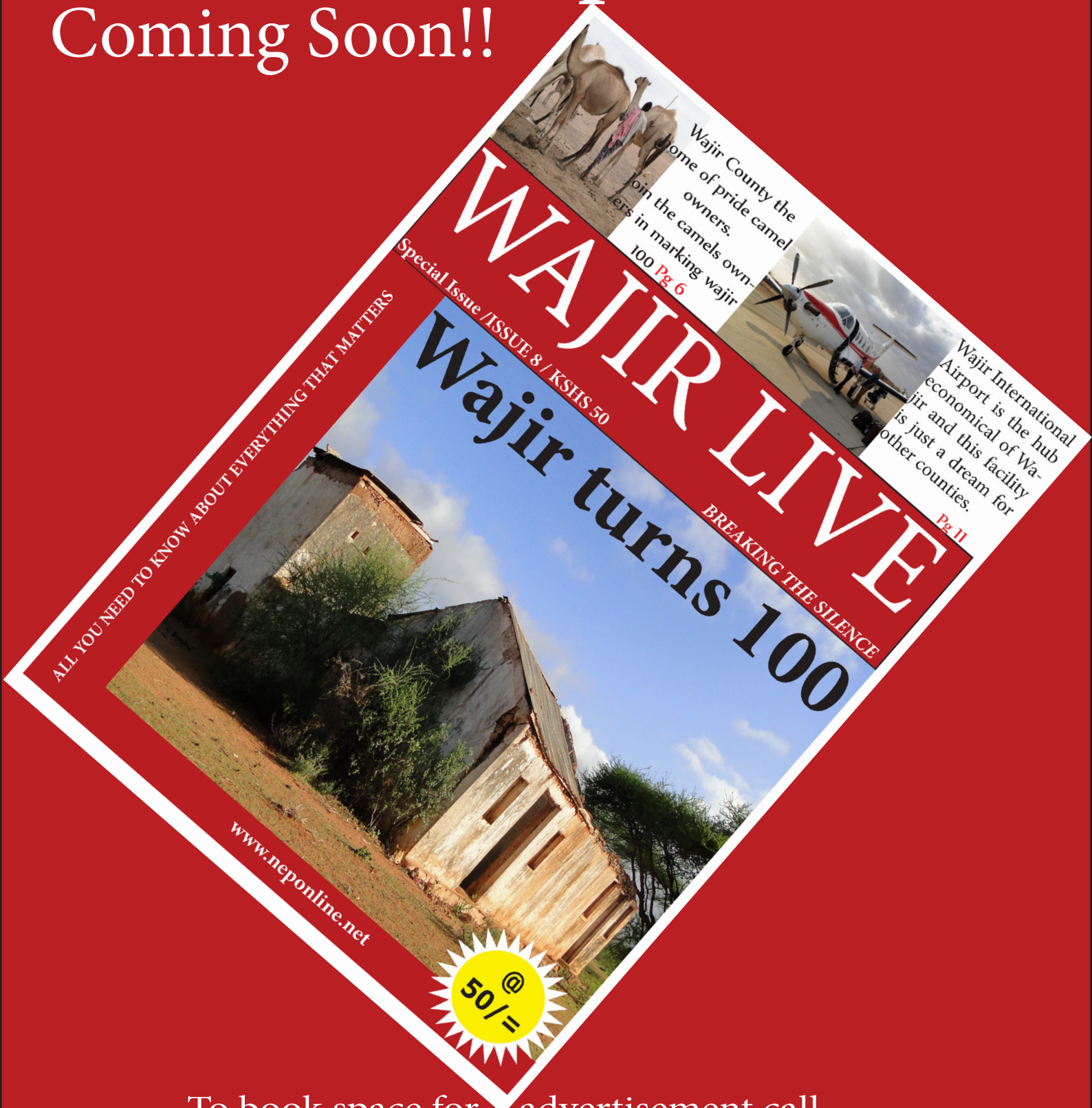
“I felt like I was divorced. I already had an intimate relationship with him. Although, we never shared any bed we hugged and kissed each other

continue on page 15

Wajir Live

Special Issue

Coming Soon!!



To book space for advertisement call
0723638303/0711628544/0721680588

Wajir Museum: Geographical location and historical background

The Wajir Museum was officially open on 19th April, 2011. Its main objective is to give you a glimpse of the rich cultural, historical and natural heritage of Northern Kenya and its interaction with the world.

The Wajir Museum houses an exhibition that reflects traditions and the customs of communities living in this Northern part of Kenya. The theme of the exhibition is "A Window to Northern Kenya".

It is a part of initiatives to open up Northern Kenya to the tourism industry forming a part of the tourist attractions that will offer distinctive products in the region.

History of Wajir

Wajir was occupied in 1912, to prevent the Boranas from being driven away from the Wells which originally belonged to them by other tribes. British Officers arrived at Wajir in 1913. In 1921 the military took over the administration of the district until September 1925, when it reverted to civil administration in 1928, the boundary was shifted North of Modo Gashe to the line of Uaso Nyiro and Lake Dera. Until 1917, Bulsesa was a sub-district of Wajir but in 1918, Wajir became a district of its own.



Former chief Ahmed Liban

Beautiful!



The last standing date palmp in Wajir

The headquarters of Wajir was evacuated in 1940 during the Italian invasion. save for that period, Wajir has remained a full district since 1918.

Attractions

Wajir town is a host to several other sites and monuments among them the Wagalla Massacre Site, Yahut dam, Shalety wells, monumental buildings, the British bunkers and Orpahey wells.

Historical Sites:

- Old homes build by Italian Prisoners
- Old court house
- ritish/ Italian War Bunkers
- Orahey wells

courtesy of National museums of Kenya

WAJIR LIVE KITCHEN

Somali Ground Beef Sauce with Potatoes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 Cups of Ground Beef
- 1/4 Cup of Oil
- 1/4 Cup of Water
- 3 Tomatoes
- 3 Potatoes
- 1 Teaspoon of Cumin Powder
- 1 Teaspoon of Salt
- 2 Tablespoons of Cilantro
- 2 Cloves of Garlic
- 1 1/2 Cupsof Pasta sauce or 1 small can (3 tablespoons) of Tomato paste
- 1/2 Onion

METHODS

1. Add ground beef to a good non-stick pan on medium/high heat with no water or oil.
2. Cook until beef is done.
3. Add oil and onions, cook until meat in brown and onions are soft.
4. Add the tomatoes and cook for about 2-3 minutes.
5. Add potatoes and cook for about 5 minutes or until tomatoes are dissolved.
6. Add the cilantro, garlic, cumin powder, salt, tomato sauce and water. Reduce heat to about a 4 on
7. The stove and cover.
8. Cook about 5 minutes and stir, recover the sauce and cook for 5 more minutes.
9. Check the potatoes; they should be just soft enough to insert a fork without breaking apart.



continue from page 12

who just completed her studies in the university and works in their family business. She is ready to marry as soon as possible but she can't find a "single man" yet.

"All the men I know already have girl friends and I can't even propose to them. Those who don't, as of now, have been into many interactions before and I am not ready to marry such men," Samira said. Delayed marriages

Youths who spoke to WL about pre-marital relationships also complained about lack of trust among those involved in the dating practice.

Others were regretful that mindless dating forced them to delay their marriage on several occasion because their "partner" could not honor the promise at the agreed time.

Suleiman is a 27 year old Somali, the eldest of a family; he complains that his parents and relatives are putting a lot of pressure for him to marry. Although Suleiman would have married long before, his long time partner is not yet ready.

"Although we would have married two years ago, my partner felt it was too early and I have to honor the promise that we should only marry when we are both comfortable," said Suleiman. "These I don't trust because her excuses of postponing the wedding are very many," added Suleiman.

Most of the dating youth

are occupied in multiple relationships. And so widespread mistrust among would-be couples have sometimes led to conflict of interests and hence separation.

Saida explained that she no longer trusts even the one who sincerely admires her. "I am not sure when he is going to tell me lets end it here. So I should be prepared and someone else must be there who will make me not feel heart broken," Saida said. Pre-marital relationships not only inconvenience victims of broken affairs, but it can also result in unprecedented family break-ups later on in marriage life.

The worst of impacts is the moral decadence and the shame that comes with unwanted pregnancies when unmarried youths end up extending their relationship up to bedroom affairs.

One young staunch Somali Muslim boy, describes the current dating craze as the worst social menace of our times, he says the loss of respect and probity the practice has brought for many respectful boys and girls is unimaginable.

"We are in a complete daze; it is like we are swimming in a sea of shame and no body is addressing this issue" he told WL.

Islam prohibits

In Islam it has been made very clear as to what is acceptable and what is not acceptable between males and females who are not married to each other.

Having a girlfriend or a boyfriend for that matter, does not only destroy the family, it destroys society, and those who do this are threatened with the punishment and wrath of Allaah.

"All the men I know already have girl friends and I can't even propose to them."

This story previously appeared on www.onsomalis.net

Community Services.



Do not throw used Plastic bottles, either re-use, recycle or dispose properly.



THIS MESSAGE IS BROUGHT YOU BY HYDROLAP LTD.

GLACIER

Pure natural spring water

WAJIR COUNTY'S FAVOURITE BRAND FRESH, DELICIOUS, SAFE

Hydrolab Ltd was incorporated in 2003 to provide services in high quality water ,water purification equipment and consultancy in water engineering.

It drew on the expertise of its founders in chemical engineering ,water quality engineering and public health.

The company sees itself drawing its strength from:

- Integrity
- Focus on quality and value for money for its customers
- Compliance to stationary regulations and
- Customer satisfaction

THE SOURCE

Glacier spring water is obtained from underground springs in the lush green highlands of Tigon, Limuru in Kiambu county. Limuru area has the unique distinction of having underground water sources that have fresh and moderately mineralized water. The water is naturally pure and free from external chemicals .It is passed through electro magnetic radiation at 230nm wavelength for enhanced safety before bottling.

Glacier spring water is soft, refreshing and absolutely delicious to drink. You are most likely to finish your glass of glacier and not leave it half way.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The important quality parameters of water are:-

MICROBIAL CONTROL: This is done through a series of fine filtration ,disinfection with ultra violet radiation and in situ sanitization of equipment's and containers

TASTE AND SMELL: Addition of chemicals for various reasons may affect the natural taste and smell of water. This is strictly prohibited in the production of Glacier.

We have regular visits froms local public health officers and Kenya Bureau of Standards to audit our systems.



FOR TRADE ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT US **HYDROLAB LTD, TEL. 0722 794 519, EMAIL: bulle@hydrolab.co.ke**