

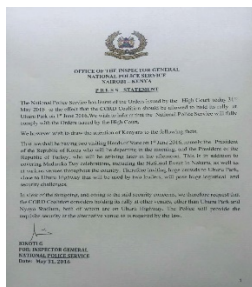
SMA Africa – Kenya – June 2016 Report 1

Demos, Continued

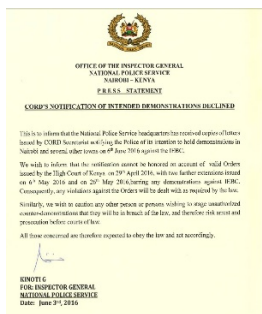
June 1 is Madaraka [Independence] Day in Kenya. Usually on these holidays, there are ‘barazas’ i.e. gatherings in administrative centres around the country that culminate in the reading of the President’s speech. The biggest one of these is usually held at one of the stadiums in Nairobi, where the President reads his speech in person. This year, the President was appearing at Afraha Stadium in Nakuru and rival political group, CORD, wanted to hold a meeting of their own in Nairobi. Perhaps, it was the residue of good feeling generated by the nice dinner that the politicians from both camps had enjoyed at the previous night’s state dinner for the President of South Korea, but CS Nkaiserry was rather amiable about the whole thing. In the preceding days it had looked as though the government was going to

@InteriorKE CS @GenNkaiserry says Police will provide security to Cord if they choose to hold their parallel rally at Uhuru Park tomorrow (PSCU_digital, 2016)

The police did request a change of venue owing to the fact that there were visiting dignitaries in town but CORD ignored them and held their event at Uhuru Park; helicoptering in after attending the event at Afraha Stadium first..



Later that week relations soured. On June 3rd, the police politely declined to receive notice from CORD of their intent to hold another anti-IEBC demonstrations, citing orders from the High Court.



https://twitter.com/NPSOfficial_KE/status/738773185240268801

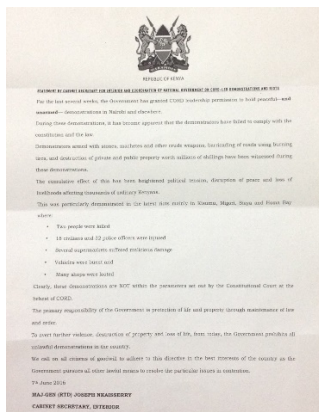
Unfortunately for the police, on June 6th the High Court finally ruled on the motion presented by government representatives to have the court bar the weekly CORD demonstrations on the grounds that they were supposed to follow a constitutionally mandated process. The court ruled that it could not revoke the right of free assembly. Thus, the injunctions that were in place while the case was being decided were voided. The police were ordered to ‘protect the rule of law’ and ensure that the demonstrators could go about their business unimpeded.

HIGH COURT JUDGE in Kenya invoke the OBVIOUS provisions on rights to assemble provided for in the LAWS of KENYA & allows CORD to assemble (Jmwasela, 2016)

HIGH Court declines to stop CORD protests and directs Boinnet to ensure law, order is maintained during demonstrations #CORDDemos (SokoAnalyst, 2016)

So @JBoinnet the High Court sitting in Nairobi Kenya has OK'd the protests by CORD. @PoliceKE to provide security. What sayeth you? (Wekesah, 2016)

The Ministry of Interior decided that since their ministerial mandate was to ensure rule of law, it was within their fiat to determine which gatherings were likely to cause disorder and ban them. Coming on the heels of the High Court decision, this apparent disregard for the law caused an angry furore on social media.



Source: https://twitter.com/NPSOfficial_KE/status/740205304714043392

@NPSOfficial_KE @InteriorKE There is no law or declaration by anyone that is above the constitutional right to demonstrate & picket! (Okolowaka, 2016)

In the interim, an anti-demonstration demonstration was held by individuals who identified themselves as matatu owners and other business people who had experienced property damage during the anti-IEBC protests. They were led by Starehe (and Jubilee) MP, Maina Kamanda and they carried the husk of burnt-out matatu to Raila Odinga's office. Some on social media tagged the discussion of this milieu with #mungikidemos, which many interpreted as having derogatory intent. Incidentally, it also illustrates the poor political

memory of many Kenyans since the Mungiki are not unequivocally anti-CORD. In fact, once upon a time, during the Kibaki era, Mungiki and Raila Odinga were strange bedfellows.

‘Mungiki’ is a Kikuyu word that can roughly be translated as ‘the multitude’ with the attendant romantic connotation of stoic people rising up against some form oppression. These days, the name is used by a criminal gang that references traditional Kikuyu beliefs and couches its criminality within the cause of economic and political empowerment. Their heyday, aka reign of terror, was brought to an end by Michuki, the Minister of Internal Security under Kibaki (who makes Nkaissey look milquetoast in comparison). Michuki cracked down on the gang with all the powers at his disposal—judicial and extra-judicial—without any evidence of remorse. Michuki’s tactics cowed the organisation and during that period of siege, the CORD leadership spoke in their defence and their leaders were often seen lauding each other’s best qualities. Basically, attributing the behaviour of the main protagonists to an interest in personal wealth and power, is the best way to make sense of Kenyan politics.

Many on social media bristled at the ‘Mungiki’ moniker; the ‘insult’ had hit home:

#Kenya: Quite interesting demos held in Nairobi on 8th June tweeted online as #MungikiDemos... National Polarization (NominalAnalyst, 2016)

Everything now must be turned to tribal wars? Those guys with the bus want compensation but it has turned they are Kiuks and #MungikiDemos. (Petrstarbwoy, 2016)

Those weren't #MungikiDemos, mungikis acts they don't demonstrate (Superjaymoh, 2016)

#MungikiDemos is a hashtag that shouldnt exist! it provokes incitements of the highest order (SSimonmwaura4, 2016)

Of all the #tags today #MungikiDemos just feels wrong 30% of these tweets are facts.. don't be part of the 70% spilling hatred allover (wiseyelite, 2016)

CORD bloggers should stop inciting Mungiki to rise again. Its not a force anyone wants to see in action from previous acts #MungikiDemos (NgugyEvans, 2016)

#MungikiDemos if u r mad for being called mungiki rem that's how we feel when u say Kibera pple r idlers n goons (A5aa1d439eb34aa, 2016)

Other tweets noted differences between the two protests—the lack of teargas, no running battles with police—and depending on the affiliation of the ‘tweep’, attributed the disparity to either the good manners Jubilee protestors or the protections that Jubilee protestors enjoyed.

Whether u like it or not #MungikiDemos proved that in Kenya kuna watu wazima [there are grown ups] ,who are peaceful (Juliuspeters254, 2016)

----I thought all demos were banned, whether peaceful or chaotic. We thank them for being not so peaceful on Jogoo rd. @juliuspeters254 (Itskingbruno, 2016)

@itskingbruno cordiots always say ,demonstrating is enshrined in the constitution wachana na nkaissery [ignore Nkaissery] (Juliuspeters254, 2016)

----@juliuspeters254 and they showed how trully the law is selective in lenya (sic) #MungikiDemos (Chesoliprotus, 2016)

@chesoliprotus those guyz ain't mungiki and also hawakuguza [did not touch] private property nor attack any1 (Juliuspeters254, 2016)

----@juliuspeters254 what of the gvt ban (Chesoliprotus, 2016)

----@juliuspeters254 dont think so myself. saw useless people who are no different from the other groups (sucr68, 2016)

#MungikiDemos is what we want to see peaceful and well organized not hooliganism (Alexc_slim, 2016)

#MungikiDemos where was Koome, Boinet & Nkaissery with their teargass, water canons & live bullets? (Salimnyaoga, 2016)

#mungikidemos we have been blinded by tribalism, my CORD family does it mean you wanted the police to shoot someone to avoid double standard (Ericfoxe, 2016)

President Kenyatta declared that contrary should by to Nkaissery's position, the demos should be allowed to continue, he further acquiesced to having dialogue with CORD over the IEBC issue. This contradiction of Nkaissery is telling, suggesting that either the government had had a change of heart or that the cabinet offices do not generally run their decisions by State House.

PRESIDENT KENYATTA says Cord can hold demos, warns against property destruction and attack on police officers. (Nationbreakingnews, 2016)

He proposed that an IEBC committee be formed with representatives from his Jubilee Party and from CORD. Unfortunately, CORD did not find that he was taking the matter seriously enough when Kenyatta listed the Jubilee members that he was fielding. They subsequently informed the police that they would be protesting on June 13th and 16th. The police responded in accord with the High Court and the President.



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/nationalpoliceke/photos/pcb.1798211397082560/1798211297082570/?type=3&theater>

Hate Speech Arrests and Riots

As the rhetoric around the IEBC issue, has degenerated, representatives from either side of the political divide have said things that caught the interest of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission. The NCIC whose mandate is not always clear, finally used their powers to suggest that some people be arrested and prosecuted.



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/nationalpoliceke/photos/a.1716387848598249.1073741829.1676421275928240/1798659577037742/?type=3&theater>

If you spread #HateSpeechKe, don't blame us when we come for you ~ @Mo_Hassan90
@Ole_kaparo (NCIC, 2016)

We are hard on this & we are going to deal with all hate mongers regardless of their political affiliations ~Muhoro (NCIC, 2016)

For instance, Jubilee MP Moses Kuria insinuated that assassinating Raila Odinga would lead to greater peace in the land. His statements led to protests by Raila supporters. Moses Kuria was one of Jubilee's nominees to the IEBC committee, so they were well within their rights to be perturbed.

Ngong rd blocked near Adams in anti- @HonMoses_Kuria demos over remarks on @RailaOdinga assassination. #HateSpeechKe (Macotani, 2016)

15:46 Ngong road closed at Adams Arcade. Kibera youth engage police in fight. via @carlocuslimited (Ma3Route, 2016)

To the glee of many Kenyans, the indicted MPs were required by the court to remain in custody until their hearing date, four days later. The CORD faction were unhappy, they said some more inappropriate things and threatened to take to the streets if the ‘political prisoners’ were not released in 24 hours.



Source: <https://twitter.com/Kipezer/status/743442009587851264>

The Tweet above has since vanished perhaps because it did not go down well amongst the people revelling in the arrests.

JUST IN - All 8 politicians arrested earlier today, have been REMANDED in custody until Friday #HateSpeechKe @K24Tv (Eriknjoka, 2016)

All the 8 suspects from CORD & jubilee to be detained for 4 days without option of bail/bond. Case to be heard on 17th June. #HateSpeechKe (Mate_tongola, 2016)

I'm really Perturbed!!! So you call a presser to complain and you continue uttering Hate? Ati Kuria arudi "Congo kule walitoka???" [go back to "Congo where they are from"] SMH (Eriknjoka, 2016)

----@eriknjoka are they talking about all Bantus? That's kinda hilarious (KennethNjeru10, 2016)

#RailaIntimidatesJudiciary the same judge who they praised on allowing demos denied them bail. Now he is a devil. This is stupidity (Jamesmacharia2, 2016)

RIOTS IN parts of Kisumu, Kibera and Migori as six MPs appear in court charged with making inflammatory statements. <http://m.nation.co.ke> (Linuskaikai, 2016)

The political leaders needs to reign in their troops who spew hate at every turn heightening levels of intolerance (Marthakarua, 2016)

Whoever knows or sees Raila Odinga. Tell him that this country is not his. Everything cant be done his way #RailaIntimidatesJudiciary

Raila has no respect for the law. You cannot give ultimatums to law enforcers. Shame upon him #RailaIntimidatesJudiciary (OMAKOluoch, 2016)

Role of ‘bloggers’

The pre-election fever has captured some of the leading social media accounts. Even Patrick Safari seems to have abandoned security matters in favour of discussing politics in his home county of Machakos, and in support of CORD. Given the rumours about certain ‘bloggers’ being paid to push certain content, it makes me wonder if he too has found a backer. Certain hashtags are allegedly created and ‘pushed’ by social media personalities e.g.

#Mungikidemos was attributed to @RobertAlai and #RailaIntimidatesJudiciary and #RailatheAnarchist to @ItsMutai. One user notes that you can usually correlate the content of the tweet with the name on the account, indicating that identity politics continue to hold sway among the populace, in spite of every indication that the leadership are only motivated by self-interest. It reminds me a little of how much Kenyans enjoy and support the English Premier League. The league has done nothing in particular to encourage this fandom, but it attracts strong allegiances. If people can summon such loyalty for sports teams, I suppose it should come as no surprise that they would develop strong feelings for a ‘team’ with which they share stronger ties and from whom they expect future material rewards.

In Kenya you can predict how someone will contribute to a hashtag by their second names. Case in point is.. #RailaIntimidatesJudiciary (Nyalendaphil, 2016)

----@nyalendaphil Same applies to YOU mate, ours is purely a TRIBAL society. Period!
(Kenkariukim, 2016)

Death of Garissa Mastermind

Meanwhile, the mastermind of the Garissa University attack, Mohamed Kuno, was killed by Somali Special Forces, with some form of assistance from US forces. This news did not make waves on social media, much more discussion was generated by Raila Odinga’s visit to Garissa. Apparently, the mainstream news may also have been preoccupied with matters of the moment. Those who did express an opinion felt that justice had been served:

The way magazeti zenu hunichosha aki [your newspapers tire me seriously]. This is the week the Garissa attack mastermind was killed. No one spared the first page for that. (Kuria_nimo, 2016)

@MohajichoPevu did you hear the Garissa master mind was killed. #147NotJustANumber @bonifacemwangi kindly retweet. (Testempla, 2016)

Am damn happy the dude who caused us pain during Garissa University attack is dead #148NotJustANumber (redeviller, 2016)

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