



## **The Former Impeached Deputy President’s Dangerous Historical Salesmanship: Reviving Old Hatred and Ethic Divisions**

**By Osman Ali Hassan  
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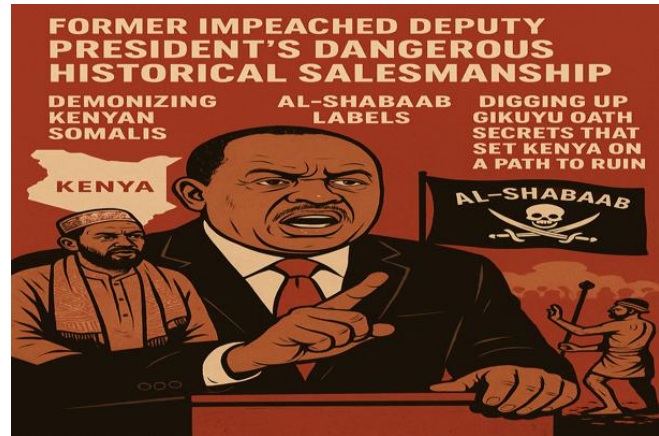
*“If any tribe tries to set itself up against the Kikuyu, we must fight them in the same way that we died fighting the British settlers. No uncircumcised leaders [for example, the Luo] will be allowed to compete with the Kikuyu. You shall not vote for any party not led by the Kikuyu. If you reveal this oath, may this oath kill you Gikuyu oath*

The Kenya’s political landscape has never been immune to inflammatory rhetoric, ethno-political manipulation, and historical revisionism. Yet, the recent resurgence of divisive narratives by a former impeached Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has escalated tensions to a dangerous new level. By branding Kenyan Somalis as “non-Kenyans” and linking them to Al-Shabaab, while simultaneously reviving the painful history of Gikuyu political oaths tied to Kenya’s first president, Jomo Kenyatta. This figure as former Deputy president of Kenya has revived old wounds and fueled new suspicions among Kenyan fabric. His blind political zeal misses’ critical realities of Kenyan Somalis, far from being outsiders, are part of Kenya’s social fabric at home and abroad, including in the diaspora communities in the United States and as registered voters in Kenya’s electoral system. This intertwined layers of historical grievances, political opportunism, and the weaponization of identity in Kenya’s politics that carries this kind of dangerous of reckless political speech, the enduring scars of the Kenyatta oath era, and the profound political miscalculation of alienating a community whose transnational presence holds significant electoral weight here in the US is an alarming case.

The political life of the former impeached Deputy President Gachagua is a story rooted in the long shadow of Kenya’s authoritarian past. His journey began during the presidency of Daniel Arap Moi, when he served as a District Officer (DO), a position that, during the one-party era, wielded immense local power. In those years, the DO was not merely an administrator; he was the face of the state, the enforcer of the regime’s will, and the gatekeeper of resources in rural Kenya. As Mr. Gachagua, a mare DO under Moi’s patronage network, he mastered the art of political survival through loyalty to the regime and manipulation of local authority. This period also became the foundation of his personal fortune.

By leveraging his position, he built deep connections with local contractors, businessmen, and political brokers, using state resources as bargaining chips through contracts, tenders, and land allocations passed through his hands, and those who sought his favor paid in kind, whether through cash, livestock, or political allegiance.

What led the impeachment of Kenya's former Deputy President was the culmination of years of political tension, personal arrogance, and deep-seated mistrust that had been building from the very moment he assumed office. His political story began long before the deputy presidency, during the authoritarian era of President Daniel Arap Moi, when he served as a District Officer's role that in the one-party KANU state was both feared and envied. As a District Officer, he wielded the power of the central government at the grassroots level, controlling administrative decisions, the allocation of resources, and the implementation of Moi's political directives. It was in this position that he mastered the art of patronage politics, building a loyal network of local influencers, contractors, and businessmen who benefited from his influence over government tenders, land allocation, and security decisions. By the time Moi's regime ended, he had accumulated vast, uncountable wealth whose origins were never clearly documented, much of it suspected to have come from inflated procurement deals, kickbacks, and manipulation of state contracts. This wealth became the financial muscle that sustained his political ambitions in later years, giving him the ability to fund campaigns, command loyalty, and portray himself as a man of means and influence.



When Gachagua rose to the position of Deputy President, his relationship with President William Ruto was initially portrayed as a partnership of equals political marriage forged by necessity rather than genuine trust. They came together to defeat common rivals, riding on promises of unity, economic revival, and a clean break from Kenya's old politics of corruption and ethnic exclusion. But beneath the public smiles, there was already a quiet calculation by both men. President Ruto believed in him as a powerful vote mobilizer and political enforcer. This is where the Deputy President Gachagua saw the opportunity of the presidency itself as his inevitable next step. From the first year of service in office as Deputy President, the cracks began to show. His assertive style, often bordering on arrogance, made him a polarizing figure within the cabinet. Senior ministers and civil servants complained of his tendency to bypass established procedures, issue unilateral directives, and interfere in ministerial mandates that did not fall under his office. The anti-corruption agency reports began to surface of public resources being diverted to projects in regions that were politically loyal to Gachagua-the impeached deputy president, as part of building a personal political base for his expected presidential run.

President Ruto could not stand with his corruption allegations dogged in him persistently, and while some of them could be dismissed as political smear campaigns, others were supported by credible anti-corruption agency investigative reports, parliamentary committees, the Auditor-General's reports, and leaked procurement documents pointed to questionable deals in infrastructure projects, inflated costs in public works contracts, and the mysterious acquisition of prime properties by companies linked to his associates. And make the matters worse, the president realized very late that his Deputy was running a parallel shadow government, one that used public resources for personal political gain while undermining the authority of the President. These accusations became more difficult to ignore as the Deputy President began to openly challenge the President's policies, criticize cabinet decisions, and court opposition figures to build his own political coalition in preparation for the next election.

The breaking point came when Gachagua- the Impeached Deputy President's political maneuvering started to resemble outright defiance, in where several high-profile cases, he publicly contradicted the President on matters of national policy, from security operations to economic strategies. This made the cabinet meetings turned tense, with reports of verbal confrontations between the two leaders. while at the same time, behind closed doors, the Deputy President and his loyalists began leaking confidential government information to political rivals and foreign actors, both to embarrass the administration and to gain political capital. Similarly, Gachagua's office was implicated in using state intelligence and security resources for personal political surveillance, targeting opponents and even members of the President's inner circle. Hence, the public image of the Deputy President suffered as his personal wealth became a subject of national debate. For example, the Kenyan activists, journalists, and opposition leaders openly questioned how a man whose entire career had been in public service could accumulate such vast real estate holdings, luxury vehicles, and business investments without any transparent trail of legitimate income. In addition to this, Gachagua's allegations of land grabbing, illegal tender awards, and money laundering as usual practiced like that of Moi government began to gain traction, especially as investigative journalists uncovered links between his known associates and companies awarded lucrative government contracts without competitive bidding. These scandals were amplified by his own combative nature; rather than offering credible explanations, he often dismissed his critics as enemies of progress, political losers, or foreign-funded agents.

Thanks to the new constitution, a formal impeachment process began after a series of scandals converged with a deepening political rift within the ruling coalition. This procurement scandal illuminated Gachagua's involvement of multi-billion-shilling infrastructure project, in which companies tied to the Deputy President's network were accused of delivering substandard work at inflated prices that provided the legal foundation for charges of gross misconduct and abuse of office. This prompted the parliamentary allies of the President moved quickly, framing the impeachment not as a political purge but as a necessary step to protect the integrity of the Deputy presidency office by pinpointing the impeachable charges that included corruption, violation of the constitution, interference with government agencies, and undermining national security through unauthorized engagements with foreign representatives.

As the impeachment motion gained momentum, the former impeached Deputy President attempted to rally his political base, painting himself as a victim of political betrayal. He embarked on a whirlwind of public rallies, claiming that his impeachment was part of a conspiracy to block his path to the presidency. But his campaign only hardened the resolve of his opponents, who portrayed him as a dangerous, self-serving politician willing to destabilize the government to save his career. Additionally, the civil society organizations, religious leaders, and even some members of his own ethnic community began to distance themselves, worried that his escalating defiance could plunge the country into political instability.

Undoubtedly, the impeachment motion finally came to a vote, it passed with a decisive majority both lower and the upper house, his opponents laid out a damning case that the impeached Deputy President had abused his office for personal enrichment, undermined the President, violated constitutional principles, and failed to separate personal ambition from national duty. His defenders, though vocal, could not convincingly refute the documentary evidence of procurement irregularities, the testimonies of whistleblowers, and the patterns of behavior that pointed to a man who believed he was above the law. In the end, the impeachment of the Deputy President was not the result of a single scandal, but the cumulative effect of years of political arrogance, corruption allegations, , and a complete breakdown of trust between him and the President. His fall from grace was swift but predictable, the inevitable collapse of a political career built on patronage, unaccountable wealth, and the dangerous assumption that personal ambition could override the responsibilities of high office. What began as a partnership of political convenience ended as a bitter public divorce, with the Deputy President leaving office not as a national hero, but as a cautionary tale of how unchecked power, corruption, and defiance can destroy even the most ambitious political dreams.

The hostility of Gachagua, the former impeached Deputy President of Kenya, toward Kenyan Somalis is neither an accident of personality nor a passing political disagreement; it is the product of a long arc of political opportunism, historical prejudice, and a calculated strategy to maintain relevance in a rapidly shifting political environment. His animosity is rooted in the intersection of three dangerous impulses:

- a) the exploitation of ethnic stereotypes for personal political gain,
- b) the weaponization of insecurity narratives linked to terrorism, and
- c) the lingering historical grievances between the Gikuyu political elite he grew up under and the Somali communities of northern Kenya.

From his earliest days in politics, Gachagua learned the effectiveness of using fear and suspicion as tools to consolidate political support. Under the Moi regime, where he cut his teeth as a District Officer, state control in the North Eastern Province was built not on trust but on militarized administration. The region was treated as a frontier zone, and its Somali population was viewed through the lens of the Shifta War legacy — always suspect, never fully trusted. In that environment, an administrator like Gachagua absorbed and later reproduced the belief that Somali identity was somehow incompatible with true Kenyan citizenship.

By the time he rose to national office, this prejudice had hardened into political doctrine. His hostility was sharpened by the electoral math that defined his career. Gachagua's political base was rooted in the Mount Kenya region, where suspicion of Somali politicians and businessmen is often quietly nurtured through security narratives and competition over business space in cities like Nairobi. In these urban settings, Somali success stories from dominating the Eastleigh commercial hub to building influential networks in real estate and transport are sometimes resented as evidence of an "outsider" community prospering at the expense of "locals." Gachagua, attuned to this undercurrent, chose to amplify it rather than challenge it. He branded Kenyan Somalis as "non-Kenyans," knowing that this rhetoric would resonate with sections of his core support who had little direct contact with Somali communities but had been fed decades of mistrust through media and political discourse.

Likewise, the Al-Shabaab narrative became his most potent weapon in justifying this animosity for Somali by subtly or explicitly linking Kenyan Somalis to terrorism in tapping into fears of ordinary Kenyans Somalis, particularly after high-profile attacks such as Westgate, Garissa University, and Dusit D2. In Gachagua's framing, Kenyan Somalis were not just political opponents or economic competitors that they were potential security threats. This framing allowed him to sidestep the uncomfortable reality that Somali communities are often the first victims of Al-Shabaab's brutality and have been at the forefront of counter-radicalization efforts. Instead of acknowledging their contributions to national security, he exploited the public's lack of nuanced understanding, presenting a monolithic image of Somali disloyalty. This was political convenience in its purest form in turning a complex security problem into a simple, emotionally charged enemy for his supporters to rally against.

Moreover, Gachagua's Historical wounds also is fueling his beliefs on Kenya Somali hostility. He has repeatedly invoked the so-called "secrets of Kenyatta oaths", *"If any tribe tries to set itself up against the Kikuyu, we must fight them in the same way that we died fighting the British settlers. No uncircumcised leaders [for example, the Luo] will be allowed to compete with the Kikuyu. You shall not vote for any party not led by the Kikuyu. If you reveal this oath, may this oath kill you"*, and the idea of historical Gikuyu victimhood under competing ethnic claims to power. The Kenyatta oaths, according to political legend, symbolized a Gikuyu-centric vision of Kenya's future, one in which certain communities would hold disproportionate political and economic power. Somali resistance to post-independence integration, particularly during the Shifta War that is often recast in this narrative as proof that they were never fully loyal to the Kenyan project. In Gachagua's worldview, reviving this history serves two purposes. This, in his view and thoughts that it reinforces the legitimacy of Mount Kenya's dominance in national politics and frames Somali citizenship as perpetually conditional, something that must be re-earned rather than taken for granted.

His personal downfall after impeachment only deepened his animosity and the stripped of the institutional power of the Deputy Presidency, Gachagua needed a new platform to remain politically relevant. And Ethnic scapegoating offered a ready-made stage, casting Kenyan Somalis as the dangerous "other," he could position himself as the defender of "true" Kenyan identity against both internal subversion and external influence.

This posture not only sought to galvanize his political base but also distract from his own record of corruption, abuse of office, and accumulation of unaccountable wealth. In this way, the Somali community became a political punching bag in a way to rally support without having to offer substantive policy solutions to Kenya's economic or governance crises.

What makes Gachagua's hostility particularly pernicious is his blindness to the political and economic reality of Kenyan Somalis, both within Kenya and in the diaspora. He appears unaware, or willfully ignores, that Kenyan Somalis are a vital electoral constituency, not only in the northeastern counties but also in major cities and abroad. Thousands are registered voters in Kenya despite residing in the United States, the Gulf states, and other parts of the world. Their remittances sustain families, their investments fuel the economy, and their political influence extends across borders. By alienating them, Gachagua undermines any possibility of building a broad, inclusive coalition for future political ambitions. Yet his rhetoric shows no sign of softening, suggesting that, for him, the short-term gains of ethnic polarization outweigh the long-term costs to national unity and his own electability.

The Gachagua's hatred of Kenyan Somalis is not simply the product of individual prejudice but it is the expression of a broader political culture in Kenya where ethnicity is a currency and fear is a tool. He embodies the cynical calculation that demonizing one community can secure loyalty from another, even at the cost of tearing at the fragile threads of the nation's cohesion. His animosity is a reminder that Kenya's greatest political danger does not come from any one community, but from leaders willing to exploit old wounds for personal survival. And in that calculation, Gachagua has chosen about the Somali community as his sacrificial scapegoat, is a choice that reveals both the poverty of his political vision and the depth of his reliance on division as a political weapon.

For Somali citizens already on edge, the combination was chilling: the former Deputy President Gachagua publicly browbeats a Somali security chief while an ally airs nativist anxieties about Somali economic visibility. Even if Gachagua would disclaim the tones and words of others, politics is collective theater, and the cast around him made the ethnic subtext hard to miss. For instant, in early August 2024, pastoralist leaders from across northern Kenya condemned what they described as Gachagua's "reckless" claims connecting the President's easing of vetting protocols, in a policy shifts long criticized for singling out Somalis to terrorism risks, explicitly warning that such talk was false and dangerously divisive. For Somalis, these pushbacks were more than elite sparring that they were rare and necessary acts of public defense against a long habit of treating Somali identity as a national security. Notably, a respected civic figures have to remind the second-highest office in the land that casual "terror talk" that revived the stigmas and license abuses that confirms what Somali Kenyans have long known between bureaucratic "concerns" and ethnic profiling.

For example, Gachagua's depiction of the intelligence [chief Noordin Haji's](#) as the shifta or a bandit trouser who is not qualified to hold position of the Director of Kenya National Security Intelligent. The danger here, is that when institutions are accused of abuses, the critique shift from systems to surnames and the most visible face becomes the repository of blame, since Noordin face belongs to a Somali leader that flare Gachagua's old prejudices.

Additionally, Gachagua forgets that, in Kenya, Somali citizens have lived through waves of state suspicion, from colonial-era collective punishments to post-independence crackdowns and the securitized politics of the War on Terror. In connection to this, Gachagua's acknowledgement that advocates for his old bureaucratic procedures and vetting regimes, roadblocks, special "operations" proves that Somalis are in a threat in the year 2025. When a deputy president stands up in that atmosphere, points at the Somali head of intelligence, and insists "he failed us," he is speaking into a haunted room where Kenya Somali audiences will still hear the echo of profiling because recent history has trained them to.

Moreover, criticism of Haji came paired with a broader pattern of accusations that Somali-heavy regions and communities are conduits of insecurity. This is not a mere semantic debate but in practice, a whiff of "terror talk" that means businesses face new raids, travelers from Garissa or Wajir are stopped more often, young men disappeared and the line between lawful policing and communal intimidation thins. This as well, Gachagua signaled that Kenya's cohesion architecture sees the risk clearly when he publically flirts the idea that Somalis are evasive in an urban invasion or a security hazard, the social fabric frays. When a former impeached Kenya's deputy president trains the floodlights on a Somali director-general and calls him the reason the state stumbled, he should expect the country to ask whether he is diagnosing failure or directing resentment. For many Somali Kenyans, listening in the North America, Eastleigh stalls, Garissa cafés, and Manderu chamas, that his answer shaped by history and sharpened by allied rhetoric, sounded too much like the latter.

Similarly, Gachagua's decision to brand Kenyan Somalis with the Al-Shabaab label is not merely an internal political maneuver but it is a carefully calculated narrative designed to resonate with U.S. citizens and policymakers, where the language of counterterrorism carries both moral weight and strategic currency. Additionally, in the United States, the mention of Al-Shabaab immediately triggers associations with terrorism, violent extremism, and threats to Western security. Since the 9/11 attacks, American political culture has been deeply conditioned to view Islamist militant groups through a lens of zero tolerance, and this extends to East Africa, where Al-Shabaab's attacks in Kenya and Somalia have been covered extensively by U.S. media. Mr. Gachagua understands that by framing Kenyan Somalis as either sympathetic to or infiltrated by Al-Shabaab, taps directly into American fears, thereby positioning himself as a frontline soldier in the global "war on terror." This framing gives him the ability to present himself not simply as a Kenyan politician, and a former Deputy President who has the immunity and the tips of all Kenya's national Security information and as an indispensable partner to the U.S. in a shared fight against the Kenyan Somalis terrorism.

Here in the US, Gachagua's smear campaign serves multiple purposes directed toward his point of view of his American and Western audience. First, it allows him to craft a narrative of moral alignment with U.S. foreign policy priorities, knowing that United States invests heavily in counterterrorism operations in East Africa, including funding Kenya's military efforts in Somalia through the African Union. By presenting Kenyan Somalis as a community susceptible to radicalization or infiltration, he implicitly justifies the continuation and even expansion of U.S. security assistance to Kenya assistance that his political faction could influence or control. Secondly, it provides him with a convenient scapegoat for Kenya's internal security lapses, shifting blame away from systemic corruption and governance failures that have historically weakened Kenya's ability to contain Kenya Somalis terrorism. And if Kenyan Somalis are framed as the problem, then the failures of police intelligence, military strategy, and political leadership become secondary in the eyes of external observers such as the US and Western Europe.

In addition to this, Gachagua also exploits the fact that most U.S. citizens have limited, fragmented knowledge about Kenya's ethnic and political dynamics. The average American's Citizen awareness of East Africa's security issues comes through a narrow media lens focused on terrorism incidents, humanitarian crises, and piracy. Within this limited framework, the distinction between Somali nationals, Somali refugees, and Kenyan Somalis is often blurred. However, the Gachagua's smear capitalizes on this lack of nuance, collapsing these identities into one amorphous "Somali" threat category. This simplification allows him to market a binary narrative, that he and his allies represent the "safe" Kenya, while Somali communities represent a potential breeding ground for extremism through Al-Shabab narrative. Such a narrative is far easier to sell to a U.S. audience than a complex truth involving historical marginalization, economic exclusion, and the disproportionate victimhood of Somalis in Al-Shabaab attacks.

Moreover, the smear is designed to appeal directly to the U.S. security establishment's appetite for strongmen partners. In Washington's counterterrorism calculus, reliability and aggressiveness against terrorist groups often matter more than internal democratic credentials. By publicly portraying himself as tough on Somali-linked extremism, Gichagua casts himself as the kind of decisive, no-nonsense leader that U.S. security agencies can work with, even if his domestic record on human rights and governance is questionable. This is a familiar strategy in global politics authoritarian-leaning leaders presenting themselves as bulwarks against terrorism to secure foreign legitimacy and aid. Similarly, Gichagua see the financial dimension of this narrative is equally important as counterterrorism funding is one of the most politically resilient forms of U.S. foreign assistance, even in times of budget cuts, programs targeting extremist threats are protected, and in some cases, expanded.

Gichagwa thinking that if can persuade U.S. officials that Kenyan Somalis pose an increasing security risk, he can justify directing more of this funding toward security apparatuses under his influence. These resources, while ostensibly for combating terrorism, he can be leveraged for political purposes as aw rewarding loyal security chiefs, funding patronage networks, and intimidating political opponents under the guise of counter-extremism operations.

At its core political lavae, Gichagua's Kenyan Somalis Al-Shabaab smear is not about improving Kenya's security or fostering U.S.-Kenya relations based on mutual respect. it is about manipulating the counterterrorism narrative to serve his personal political survival. He sells fear because fear is a commodity that travels well across borders, especially when marketed to a superpower with a global security mandate. For example, the U.S. citizen hearing his words on television, the story is simple and emotionally charged that a Kenyan leader bravely confronting Islamist militants on behalf of both nations. For U.S. officials, the subtext is equally appealing, and here is a man ready to align himself with America's security interests in a volatile region. However, behind this narrative lies the dangerous reality that an entire community's identity is being weaponized for political gain, its loyalty questioned, and its citizenship undermined all to secure the attention, funding, and endorsement of a foreign power that may not see the human cost of believing his version of the truth.

The political history of Kenya is scarred by moments when leadership choices, driven by fear, ethnic dominance, and exclusionary ideology, paved the way for generational grievances that have never healed. Among these moments, the infamous Kenyatta oaths of the late 1960s and 1970s stand out as a dark chapter, a ritualized political pledge rooted in the insecurities of a new post-colonial elite, one that deliberately sidelined certain communities from the national table of power. These oaths, sworn largely among sections of the Gikuyu elite, carried an unspoken yet widely understood message. The Kenya's leadership and political destiny belonged to them, and anyone outside the core circle, particularly Kenya's Somalis was to be politically marginalized, economically excluded, and treated with suspicion. The legacy of that mindset lingers decades later, manifesting in policies, attitudes, and even rhetoric by modern politicians like Rigathi Gachagua, whose own brand of politics echoes the dangerous exclusionary undertones of those earlier years.

The Kenyatta oaths, taken in secrecy but enforced with public policy, were born out of a political paranoia by Kenya's founding president, Jomo Kenyatta, having survived the turbulence of the Mau Mau era and the uncertainties of early independence, feared the erosion of Gikuyu dominance. The oaths, administered to political loyalists and community leaders, were framed as a commitment to defend the presidency from being taken by "outsiders" and to protect land acquisitions by the politically connected. For Kenya Somalis, many of whom were already considered suspect due to their calls for self-determination, this set the tone for decades of exclusion. In national politics, their voices were silenced. In security policy, they were painted as perpetual threats. Similarly, in development planning, their regions were neglected, and structural marginalization did not happen by accident but it was cultivated through deliberate political engineering from the get go before and after 1963 to date.

Over time, oath politics hardened into a system of inherited prejudice. Kenya's Somalis were stereotyped as secessionists, smugglers, or militants, regardless of their individual conduct. In the 1980s and 1990s, these attitudes justified brutal security operations in Northern Kenya, such as the Wagalla massacre, that further entrenched mistrust between the state and Somali citizens. Every new administration paid lip service to inclusion but carried forward the same exclusionary framework in practice.

Even when Somali politicians emerged at the national stage, they were tolerated rather than embraced, often needing to over-prove their loyalty in ways never demanded of politicians from the dominant communities. This was the poisoned political soil from which today's tensions have grown.

At a glance, the Rigathi Gachagua's political conduct illustrates a kind of amnesia, or perhaps selective blindness about this history, as a former provincial administrator under the Moi regime and later a politician allied to shifting political camps, Gachagua has crafted a narrative that sidesteps the state's role in creating Somali marginalization. Instead, he has leaned into the old convenient trope of linking Somalis to terrorism, as a means of rallying domestic political support and appealing to foreign powers, especially the United States. This is not merely an accident of rhetoric; it is a calculated political move. By invoking security threats and tying them to a particular community, Gachagua taps into deep-seated fears among the Kenyan public and presents himself as a strong defender of national security and never minds that such narratives deepen divisions and fuel discrimination. This is where the dangerous consequences of exclusionary politics become undeniable.

Gachagua's rhetoric recycles the same logic that underpinned the Kenyatta oaths that certain communities are inherently untrustworthy and should remain peripheral to political and economic life. In practical terms, this politics normalizes profiling, arbitrary arrests, business harassment, and the political disenfranchisement of Kenyan Somalis from Kenyatta to Uhuru's presidency. It sends a message to young Somalis that no matter how loyal or law-abiding they are, they will always be judged through the lens of suspicion as Al-Shabab boys and sisters. It erodes the little fragile marginalized gains made through devolution, where counties in Northern Kenya have begun asserting more control over their development in reference county budgets unlike the National cake.. And at a broader level, it feeds into the extremist narrative that the Kenyan state is fundamentally anti-Somalis, a perception that groups like Al-Shabaab exploit to recruit and radicalized at the watch of President Ruto's government.

Above all, Gachagua's brand of dirty politics is particularly dangerous to Kenya Somalis because it operates on multiple fronts. Domestically, it plays to the frustrations of communities who feel economically excluded or insecure, offering them a scapegoat in the form of a marginalized ethnic group. At the same time, Internationally, it seeks validation and possible funding from Western allies by posturing as a hardline enforcer against terrorism. This two-pronged strategy mirrors the Cold War-era manipulations of African politics, where leaders portrayed internal dissent as communist infiltration to gain Western support. And in Gachagua's case, the "communist threat" has been replaced by the "terrorist threat," and Kenya's Somalis are the convenient collateral victims of that geopolitical game.

What makes this trajectory especially tragic is that Kenya has repeatedly had opportunities to break away from the legacy of the Kenyatta oaths. The 2010 constitution, with its promise of inclusivity, devolution, and human rights protections, was a chance to undo decades of exclusion of Northern Kenya, Coast and border communities. The devolution of power to counties offered Kenya Somalis a stronger voice in local governance.

Yet politicians like Gachagua, operating within the same zero-sum framework of ethnic competition, have found ways to undermine these reforms through budgetary sabotage, political interference in county leadership, and inflammatory public statements that reignite old wounds.

On the other hand, the Kenyan diaspora who are scattered across the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and other corners of the world, has grown into a politically aware and economically influential community. From sending remittances that sustain entire counties to influencing policy debates back home through activism, media, and lobbying, the diaspora's political engagement is no longer marginal. In this context, the former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's politics of selective historical truth, dressed in half-baked narratives and opportunistic distortions, becomes a key test case for Diaspora in his July and August recent US trip.

Although many in Kenya Diaspora questioned and criticized his tribal politics, the question is, did the Kenyans abroad give him their ears, or reject Gachagua's hypocrisy? The Kenya's Diaspora must understand that Gachagua's brand of divisive politics rests heavily on selective memory. He cherry picks and chooses historical facts that suit his political ends, glorifying some events while erasing or twisting others. For example, he has publicly positioned himself as a defender of Kenya's marginalized communities when convenient, yet he has been deafeningly silent, or worse complicit on issues where the victims are communities such as Kenyan Somalis, Nubians, Ogieks or other historically sidelined groups. In some cases, his rhetoric mirrors old state propaganda from the Kenyatta, Moi, Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta's regimes injustices against these communities were not only rampant but officially sanctioned. This selective truth-telling is not about reconciliation or healing the wounds of the nation. It is about carving out a political constituency through calculated narratives, even if that means deepening divisions.

The Kenya diaspora community, however, is not an audience without memory. Many in the Kenyan diaspora, particularly those who left due to political persecution, ethnic targeting, or economic marginalization, are deeply aware of the historical injustices that Gachagua's politics tries to whitewash. The Kenyan Somalis in Minnesota, Boran (Oromo) refugees in Europe, Mau Mau descendants in the UK, and human rights activists in Canada share one common trait that carry with them unbroken memories of the injustices and betrayals that shaped their migration stories. They are not easily swayed by narratives that selectively glorify certain political histories while dismissing or trivializing others. Moreover, the diaspora often has access to multiple sources of information, unfiltered by Kenya's politically captured media houses. They read reports from international human rights organizations, listen to unedited testimonies from victims of historical state violence, and engage in transnational dialogues that connect Kenya's local politics to global struggles for justice and equality. In this environment, Gachagua's speeches can be dissected, fact-checked, and exposed within hours, stripping them of the potency they might have had in an information-controlled domestic setting.

Additionally, Gachagua’s selective truth politics is not without a target audience. He plays on nostalgia for the “strong leadership” of Kenya’s founding and early post-independence years, appealing to older diaspora members who retain loyalty to the Kenyatta or Moi regimes. His narratives are often laced with appeals to ethnic pride, especially among sections of the Kikuyu diaspora who may feel alienated by the current political shifts. By framing certain historical truths as “national heritage” and dismissing others as “divisive,” he positions himself as a defender of the state’s official version of history. This strategy, while hollow in factual depth, can resonate with those who conflate patriotism with blind loyalty.

However, the larger part of the diaspora is increasingly drawn toward politics of inclusivity, accountability, and truth-telling. The younger generation and the second-generation Kenyan-Americans, British Kenyans, and others and that have been raised in political cultures that value transparency and condemn state oppression. They are often active in human rights networks and see selective historical truth as a dangerous gateway to authoritarianism. For them, Gachagua’s political style feels like a recycled relic from an era of censorship, political detentions, and ethnic scapegoating. Ultimately, whether the Kenyan diaspora gives Gachagua their ears depends on how effectively counter-narratives are organized. If the diaspora’s civil society networks, student groups, and cultural organizations actively expose the hypocrisy in selective historical truth politics, Gachagua’s reach will remain limited. If, however, the diaspora remains fragmented along ethnic or partisan lines, he may find pockets of support willing to overlook his distortions in exchange for perceived representation of their community interests.

Finally, exclusionary politics, whether through the formalized rituals of the Kenyatta era or the inflammatory speeches of modern leaders like Gachagua, set Kenya on a path to ruin. They weaken national unity, alienate whole regions, and hand propaganda victories to extremist elements. They foster a political culture where loyalty is determined not by one’s commitment to the constitution, but by one’s ethnic alignment and usefulness to those in power. And for Kenya Somalis, they reinforce a cycle of marginalization that began decades ago with an oath they never took but have been punished for ever since. And unless Kenya confronts this barbaric history honestly and acknowledging the injustices of the Kenyatta oaths, rejecting the politics of scapegoating, and building an inclusive state that values all its citizens equally, figures like Gachagua will continue to thrive on division, and the dream of a united Kenya will remain forever deferred.

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