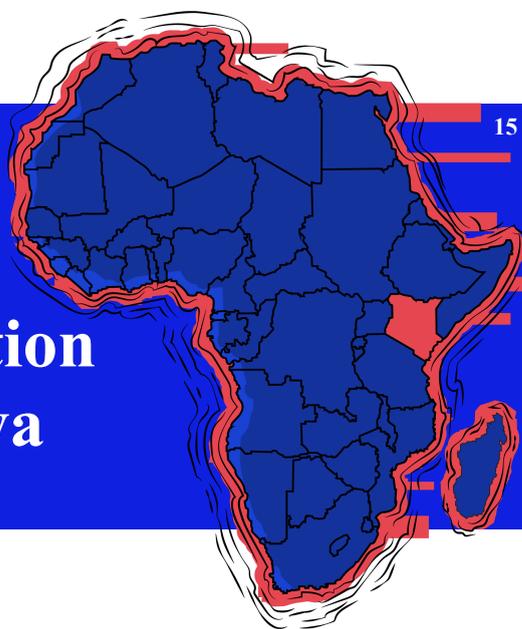


*Pulse Report***Biweekly overview of information manipulation & interference in Kenya**

*This **PULSE Report** is a biweekly analysis of coordinated online hate speech, cyberbullying and trolling, information manipulation, and other online harms, as well as the abuse of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to target vulnerable communities or subvert public discourse in Kenya. It also identifies weaponised narratives and the key actors undermining information integrity. It analyses the tactics or techniques used to subvert or polarise local audiences.*

1. Executive summary

On 24 July 2025, a coordinated campaign on X under the hashtag [#TerrorismByHeadlines](#) targeted The Standard newspaper, accusing it of using sensational journalism to incite [fear](#) and spread [misinformation](#), particularly against president William Ruto. The campaign, [initiated](#) by [@KenyaWeWant_](#), generated significant engagement, with 85 posts mentioning ‘misinformation’ and top influencers like [@africaelite_](#) amplifying the narrative.

Simultaneously, the [#DorcasBoyfriend](#) hashtag emerged from 23 to 27 July 2025. This hashtag was part of a campaign alleging pastor Dorcas Gachagua was having an affair. She is the wife of the former deputy president Rigathi Gachagua. Meanwhile, a pro-government [#RejectAnarchists](#) campaign on 24 July 2025 painted youth protests as anarchic.

County issues included rising sexual assaults in Busia, renewed cult fears in Kilifi, and a militant attack in Lamu, sparked online debates and criticism of security agencies.

Notable narratives and incidents

A narrative is a technique for presenting or understanding a situation or series of events, promoting a particular viewpoint. Information manipulators develop ‘persistent’ narratives that play on emotions, fears, or pre-existing beliefs to inject an ideological spin on the facts, manipulate public perceptions, and exploit cognitive biases that shape public opinion.

- a. **The Standard spreads fear and stirs unrest through misinformation:** On 24 July 2025, a coordinated X campaign using [#TerrorismByHeadlines](#) accused The Standard of spreading fear, division, and misinformation through sensational reporting critical of Ruto. Numerous posts alleged that the outlet deliberately distorted facts for political and [commercial gain](#).
- b. **Pastor Dorcas Gachagua is having an affair with a bishop:** From 23 to 27 July 2025, the [#DorcasBoyfriend](#) campaign claimed Dorcas Gachagua was involved with Bishop David Muriithi, using [religious](#) and [moral](#) angles to question her integrity and cast the alleged affair as a blow to her husband Rigathi Gachagua’s reputation.

- c. **Youth-led protests are designed to destabilise Kenya:** On 24 July 2025, the pro-government hashtag #RejectAnarchists framed youth-led anti-Finance Bill protests as destructive, [elite-driven](#) attempts to destabilise Kenya.

County radar: The notable emerging incidents or campaigns at the county level

This section provides a concise overview of notable incidents, campaigns, and insights into emerging trends and issues in the information landscape within the focus counties (Busia, Homa Bay, Lamu, Mombasa, Nairobi, and Nakuru). It aims to inform readers about the emerging conversations shaping public discourse in these countries.

- a. **Rise of sexual assault offences in Busia:** Between 01 July and 06 August 2025, five sexual assault cases in Busia led to multiple prison sentences, with most users online praising the judiciary as a deterrent while others downplayed the crimes, questioned victims' ages, or implied the acts were consensual.
- b. **Renewed Kilifi cult fears trigger backlash against security agencies:** Between 20 and 31 July 2025, the [discovery](#) of a body and four emaciated individuals in Kilifi sparked online discussion, with many [criticising](#) the National Intelligence Service (NIS) for failing to prevent renewed cult activity, while others used the incident to stereotype and [insult](#) the Mijikenda and Kilifi residents as gullible or incapable of learning from past tragedies.
- c. **Militant threats in Lamu fuel border policy backlash and security agency criticism:** The 25 July 2025 Lamu Al-Shabaab [ambush](#) sparked online reactions split between xenophobic and anti-refugee [sentiments](#), blaming Somali communities for insecurity. The posts also criticised security agencies for focusing on protesters and political opponents instead of countering militant threats.

Key actors

An actor is a person, group, company, or nation-state that acts with deliberate purpose. Information manipulators are considered bad actors who purposely and repeatedly engage in manipulative or disruptive behaviour, which is usually to radicalise, polarise, or subvert the public.

- a. **Individual actors:** A Facebook group admin, [Yunus Is'hakia Ahmed](#) of the [Lamu County Politics group](#), posts content that subtly [incites](#) lethal action against protesting youth and [fuels ethnic tensions](#).

Noteworthy tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs):

TTPs describe the behaviour and strategies threat actors use, focusing on the structured frameworks or infrastructure they use for executing cyberattacks. Using TTPs to diagnose information manipulation allows investigators to develop early warning systems. It also allows watchdogs to identify vulnerabilities in influence operations that can be used to disrupt the attack.

- a. **Develop AI-generated videos (deep fakes):** The Disinformation Analysis and Risk Management (DISARM) framework defines this tactic as using AI-generated media to fabricate events. On 18 July 2025, an AI video falsely claimed the 25 June 2025 protest was staged, implicating several leaders. The narrator's unnatural movements confirmed it was AI-generated. The technique was also seen in campaigns like #RejectAnarchists and #DorcasBoyfriend, where manipulated videos were used to discredit protests and smear public figure.

- b. Create a dedicated hashtag:** This DISARM-defined tactic uses hashtags to shape narratives and gain visibility. It appeared in #TerrorismByHeadlines, which criticised The Standard for sensational reporting, and #RejectAnarchists, promoting pro-government views that portrayed protests as disruptive and harmful to stability and institutions. Similarly, the #DorcasBoyfriend campaign alleged an affair and attempted to damage Gachagua’s credibility.
- c. Create Cyborg accounts:** This tactic, defined by the DISARM framework, uses cyborg accounts, partly automated accounts with periodic human control, allowing them to post at high volume while engaging selectively with users. On 24 July 2025, the top five accounts using #TerrorismByHeadlines exhibited these traits. Their volume and occasional interactive posts suggest human oversight alongside automation.
- d. Develop inauthentic news articles:** The DISARM framework defines this tactic as fabricating news content, seen in #DorcasBoyfriend where fake front pages and TV bulletins mimicking major Kenyan outlets spread false claims of a bishop’s affair with Gachagua.

2. Weaponised words: the narratives and incidents shaping public discourse

This section highlights amplified ‘meta’ narratives, citing specific examples and listing a selection of the most noteworthy incidents or narratives.

a. The Standard spreads fear and stirs unrest through misinformation

On 24 July 2025, a coordinated X campaign using [#TerrorismByHeadlines](#) targeted [The Standard](#), with posts minutes apart accusing the paper of [sensationalism](#), spreading [misinformation](#), and using fear-driven reporting to [divide](#) audiences. The hashtag had 4,181 mentions on X, and generated a total engagement of 5,784 and 109,917 views. The patient zero [post](#) was published by the account [@KenyaWeWant](#), accusing The Standard of publishing targeted, sensational headlines that undermined journalistic standards and, allegedly, aimed to ‘bring the country down.’ It contained three images of headlines published by The Standard, all criticising president Ruto, his administration or close associates. The post received a total engagement of 53 and 8,828 views. A web search of the three headlines ([1,2,3](#)) confirmed that they were published by The Standard.

The account posted a total of 24 ([1,2,3](#)) posts using the hashtag on 24 and 25 July 2025. The posts from this account received a total engagement of 93 and 11,000 views, which is approximately 9.02% of the total views the hashtag received.



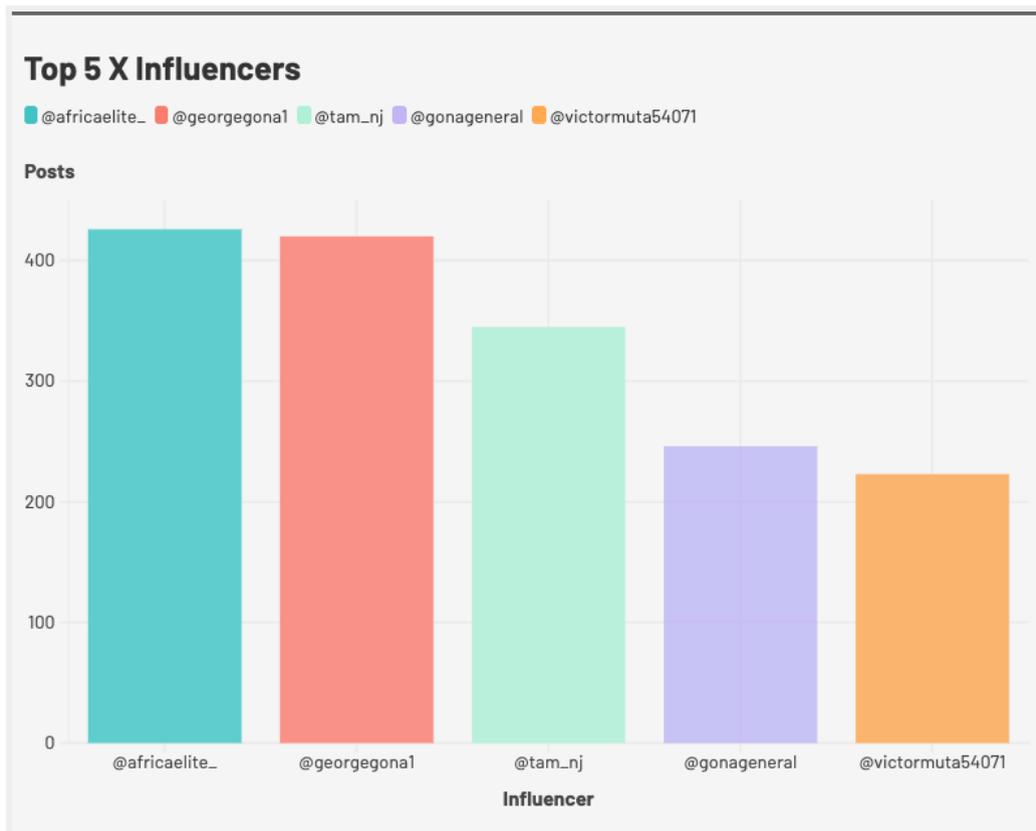
Screenshot of patient zero X post (left) and a post sharing a visual depicting fear (right) using the hashtag #TerrorismByHeadlines (Source: CfA using X)

At least 85 posts mentioned the phrase ‘misinformation’, accusing The Standard of publishing misleading headlines (and the perceived chaos they create) while also implying the newsroom was spreading misinformation.

One of the posts claimed that Ruto had performed well as president but The Standard was ‘working overtime to bury progress under a flood of misinformation’. The post also says: ‘#TerrorismByHeadlines has become the tool of choice; spreading fear, twisting facts, and fuelling public anxiety. This is not journalism. It is a deliberate disruption. Kenyans must reject emotional manipulation and demand a media culture grounded in truth and responsibility.’

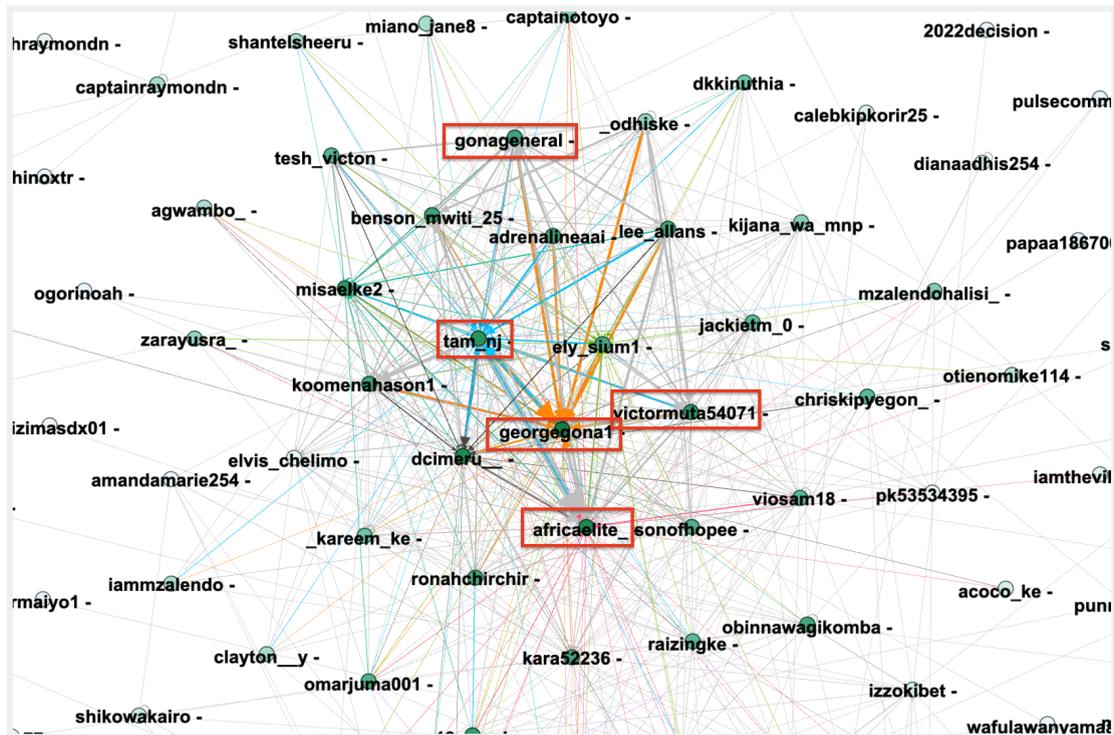
Another X post claimed misinformation to be the deadliest weapon in the digital age and that The Standard knows it yet keeps using it daily. One user claimed that The Standard was spreading misinformation by reporting using ‘sources close to...’ without providing actual facts while another claimed that the newsroom was using misinformation to market and sell fear.

The top five influencers posted over 200 posts using the hashtag. The five accounts made over 1,600 posts.



A graph showing the top 5 influencers in the #TerrorismByHeadlines campaign. (Source: CFA using Flourish)

- i. The most active account was [@africaelite_](#), which posted 426 times using the hashtag. This account has 21,000 followers and primarily posts pro-government political content.
- ii. The second most active account was [@georgegona1](#), which made 420 posts using the hashtag. The account has 1,719 followers and mainly focuses on political content.
- iii. The third account [@tam_nj](#) made 345 posts. The account has 43 followers and posts political posts mainly using hashtags. The account also says they are aspiring to vie for a political seat in the 2027 general election.
- iv. The fourth account [@gonageneral](#) made 246 posts. The account has 286 followers and mainly posts political content using hashtags.
- v. The fifth account [@victormuta54071](#) made 223 posts. The account has 770 followers and mostly posts political content.



Network analysis graph of the amplifier accounts that participated in #TerrorismByHeadlines (Source: CfA using Gephi)

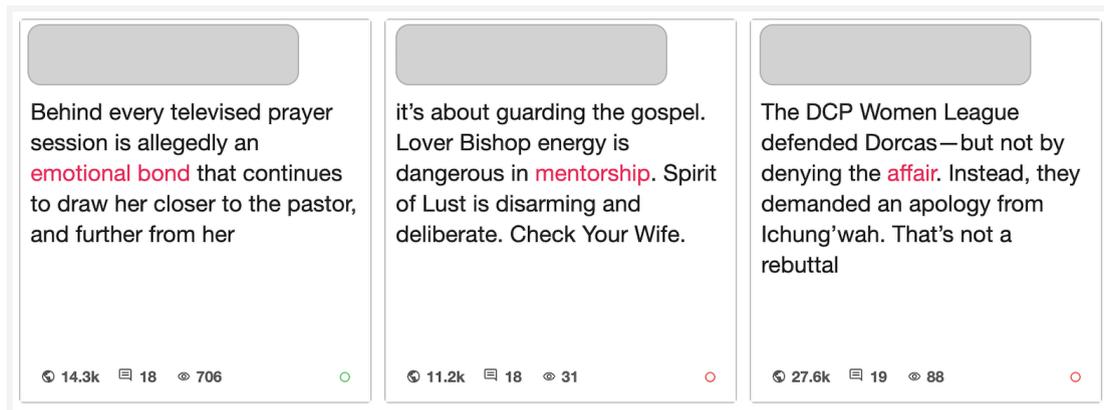
Previous Code for Africa (CfA) reports noted coordinated X campaigns using [#SewageJournalism](#) and [#VodkaNaHeadlines](#). The former accused Standard Group of biased reporting against Ruto, while the latter alleged the outlet was linked to Russian influence via Lukoil and supported Gideon Moi’s 2027 presidential bid. At least 27 accounts engaged in both #TerrorismByHeadlines and #VodkaNaHeadlines, 24 in #TerrorismByHeadlines and #SewageJournalism, and 10 in all three, showing that there is a high level of coordination from these networks.

b. Pastor Dorcas Gachagua is having an affair with a bishop

Between 23 and 27 July 2025, the hashtag [#DorcasBoyfriend](#) surfaced on X, targeting [Dorcas Gachagua](#), wife of former deputy president [Rigathi Gachagua](#), with unverified allegations of an affair with [House of Grace](#) Bishop [David Muriithi](#). The campaign originated from [a post by @kanairofinest](#) and quickly gained traction, generating 5,743 mentions, 163,287 views, and total engagement of 5,130.

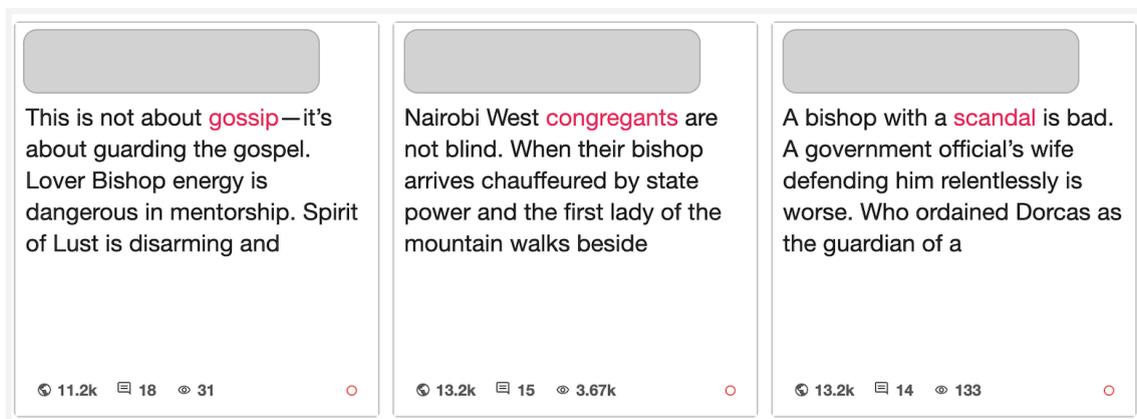
The campaign against Gachagua began after Kikuyu MP Kimani Ichungwa [publicly](#) alleged she was having an affair with a bishop.

Within the campaign some posts [alleged](#) that her sermons and tone now echoed Muriithi’s, [her prayers](#) were no longer [her own](#) and the spiritual connection represented a [betrayal](#). Some phrases used included ‘[Lover Bishop](#),’ ‘Check Your Wife,’ and ‘Spirit of Lust’, generating 490 mentions, 3,251 views, and 385 engagements on X.



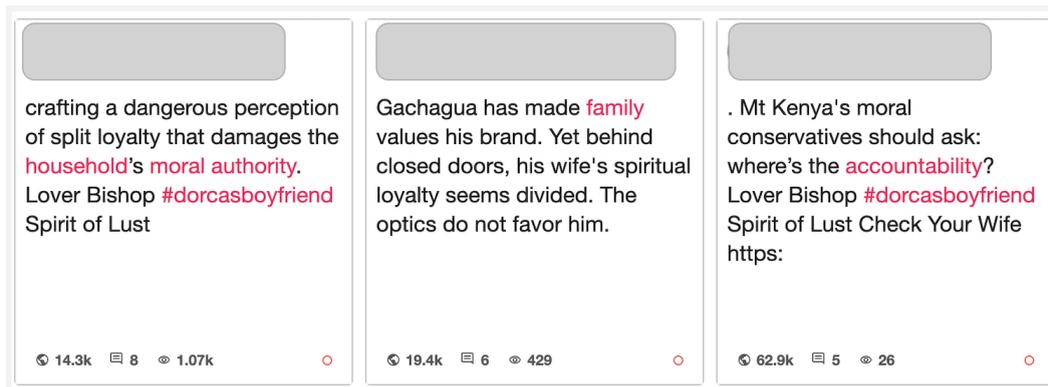
Screenshots of posts ([left](#), [centre](#), [right](#)) commenting on Dorcas Gachagua's ministry and alleged affair (Source: CfA using X)

Other posts claimed that the pair's private meetings and [dinners](#) had [unsettled](#) senior House of Grace elders. These posts logged 439 mentions, 9,801 views, and 480 engagements.



Screenshots of posts ([left](#), [centre](#), [right](#)) highlighting public gossip and concern over Dorcas Gachagua's ties to Muriithi, mixing scandal, religion, and state influence (Source: CfA using Meltwater)

Additional posts cast Dorcas Gachagua's [closeness](#) to Muriithi as a risk to her husband's public image, [political authority](#) and his [legacy](#), while others questioned her [loyalty](#) and pointing to perceived [contradictions](#) between Rigathi Gachagua's family-values messaging and alleged discord at home. The post generated 649 mentions, 6,571 views, and 629 engagements.



Screenshots of posts ([left](#), [centre](#), [right](#)) framing Dorcas Gachagua's spiritual alignment as a threat to household loyalty, family values, and political credibility (Source: CFA using X)

This was the first time Dorcas Gachagua had been directly targeted in a coordinated smear campaign. While her husband has faced regular online attacks following his political fallout with the ruling administration, this campaign marked a shift toward targeting his wife instead.

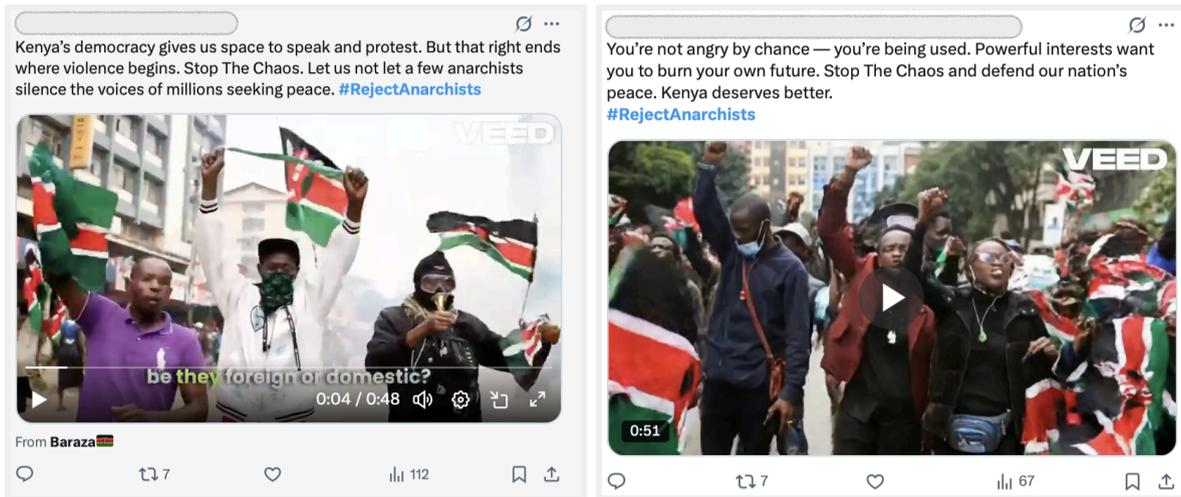
c. Youth-led protests are designed to destabilise Kenya

On 24 July 2025, there was a noticeable spike in a coordinated campaign promoting pro-government narratives. The campaign, [#RejectAnarchists](#), emerged in reaction to the June 2025 protests and unrest, largely led by Gen Z activists opposing the Finance Bill 2024 and voicing ongoing frustrations over poor governance, sentiments that echoed similar demonstrations in June 2024.

The [#RejectAnarchists](#) campaign generated approximately 3,515 mentions on X, reaching about 22,625 views and 3,100 engagements. Posts using the hashtag [portrayed](#) the protests as attention-seeking acts of destruction rather than genuine calls for reform, [alleging](#) they were driven by 'powerful elites' exploiting tribal and political divisions. The campaign further claimed the [demonstrations](#) sought to destabilise government institutions, serve political brokers and [roll back](#) national progress for personal gain.

One post read: 'Kenya's unrest isn't accidental– it's engineered. Powerful elites use tribal and political divisions like chess pieces, igniting chaos whenever their grip on power feels threatened. The people pay the price, always. [#RejectAnarchists](#) Stop The Chaos.'

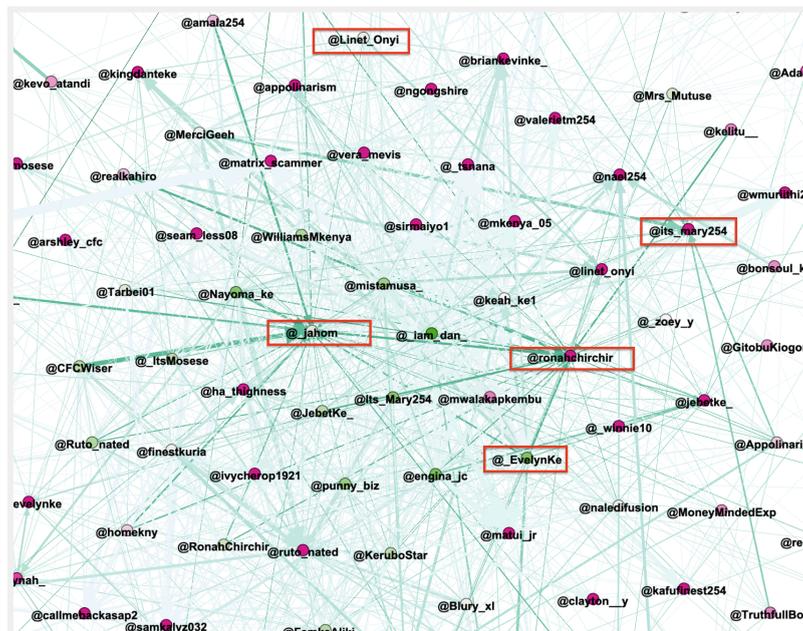
Notably, posts with the hashtag [#RejectAnarchists](#) were accompanied by two main videos sourced from VEED, an online AI-powered video editing platform. The [first](#) criticised the protests as potentially benefiting 'enemies of Kenya', both foreign and domestic and warned that 'anarchy delays justice and deepens poverty.' The [second](#) contrasted narratives of disruption and violence with those of progress and revolutionary zeal, framing actions such as setting buses on fire or looting shops as criminal rather than revolutionary.



Screenshots of the two videos used alongside #RejectAnarchists (left, right) (Source: CfA using X)

These are the top five accounts that made close to 270 posts and reposts:

- i. The most active account was [@_jahom](#) which posted 72 times using the hashtag. This account has 34,067 followers and primarily reposts pro-Ruto narratives.
- ii. The second most active account, [@ronahchirchir](#), made 59 posts. The account has around 36,164 followers and mainly posts and reposts Kenyan pro-government content.
- iii. The third account, [@_evelynke](#), made 46 posts. The account has about 13,240 followers and it focuses on content that supports Ruto's government.
- iv. The fourth account, [@linet_onyi](#), posted 44 times using the hashtag. The account has 13,257 followers and primarily shares content showcasing President Ruto's progressing development projects across Kenya.
- v. The last account, [@its_mary254](#), made 41 posts. The account has 23,060 followers. Its content focuses on Kenya pro-government narratives.



Network analysis graph of the #RejectAnarchists amplifier accounts (Source: CfA using Gephi)

Notably, 32 accounts engaged in both #RejectAnarchists and #TerrorismByHeadlines on 24 July 2025, indicating pro-government alignment. The central accounts have been flagged in earlier pro-government campaigns.

3. County radar: notable emerging incidents or campaigns from the county level

This section provides a concise overview of notable incidents, campaigns, and insights into emerging trends and issues in the information landscape within the focus counties. It aims to inform readers about the emerging conversations shaping public discourse in these counties.

a. Rise of sexual assault offences in Busia

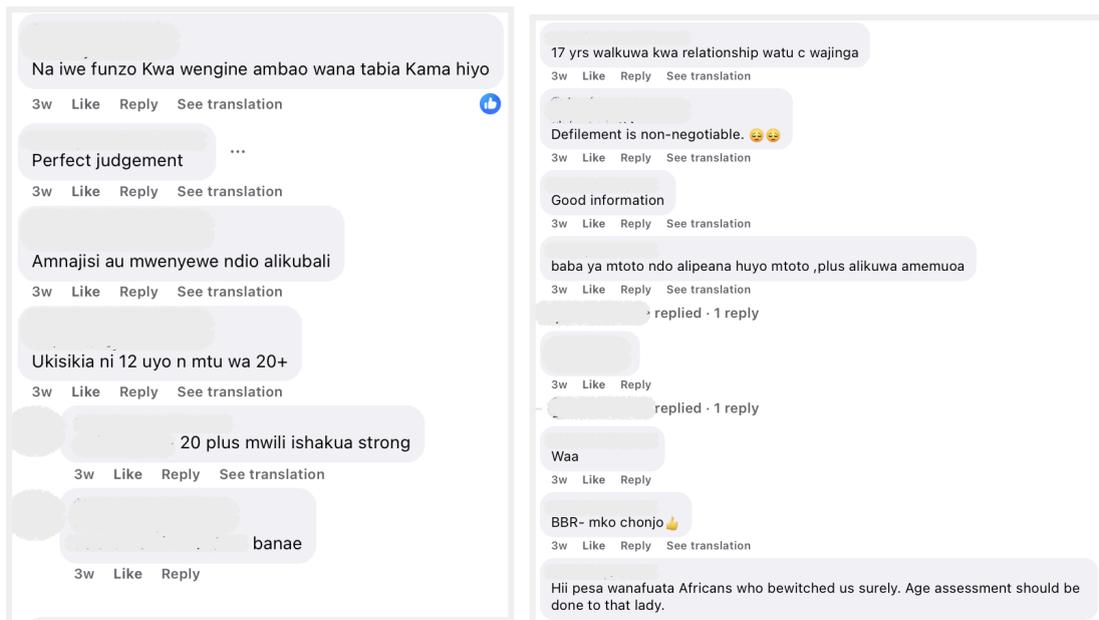
Between 01 July 2025 and 06 August 2025, there were five noted cases of sexual assaults, including child molestation in the county.

On 16 July 2025, in Teso North subcounty, Busia, Malaba court [sentenced](#) Peter Ekaranit to 30 years in prison for ‘defiling’ a 12-year-old girl in Achuot village. The offence occurred on 12 December 2024, when the minor, on her way to fetch water, was lured by Ekaranit. At the time he was employed as a security officer at Kajei Primary School. The court found him guilty of sexually assaulting the minor and infecting her with a sexually transmitted disease. The sentence is [effective](#) from 16 December 2024 when Ekaranit was remanded.

On 17 July 2025, Turkish national Uguz Reced [appeared](#) before the Busia Law Courts on charges of sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl. The alleged offence occurred between 27 June and 09 July 2025. Reced was remanded at Korinda Prison pending his hearing scheduled for 18 July 2025. There have been no substantial updates on the case since.

On 24 July 2025, the Busia Law Courts [sentenced](#) three men for separate sexual assault cases. Sylvanus Opondo Okumu received a life sentence for sexually assaulting a nine-year-old child on 28 December 2022. Stephen Owino was also handed a life sentence for sexually assaulting his 12-year-old step-sister on 28 August 2023. In a third case, Sylvester Bushuru Nyongesa was sentenced to 15 years in prison for sexually assaulting his neighbour’s 16-year-old daughter between May and June 2023.

Between 01 July 2025 and 06 August 2025, conversations related to sexual assaults in Busia on Facebook garnered about 57,000 views and 770 reactions. Sentiment in the comments was divided as 65% applauded the judiciary, viewing the rulings as a deterrent to future offences, while 35% expressed negative views. Among the negative comments, some questioned the reported ages of the victims, suggesting they could be older than stated and therefore not minors. Others doubted whether the incidents constituted rape, implying the acts might have been consensual. In Reced’s case, some users alleged that the victim’s father accepted money in exchange for his daughter, dismissing rape. These narratives not only downplay the severity of the sexual assault incidents but also perpetuate harmful stereotypes that contribute to the normalisation of gender-based violence.



Sample comments on the recent sexual assault incidents in Busia ([left](#), [right](#)) (source: CfA using Facebook)

Notably, on 27 July 2025, Busia High Court judge William Musyoka [reaffirmed](#) the judiciary’s commitment to imposing tough sentences in cases of child molestation and rape, citing a rise in such offences within the county. He also urged the public to familiarise themselves with court procedures to help ensure timely access to justice.

CfA and Siasa Place will continue to monitor these developments.

b. Renewed Kilifi cult fears trigger backlash against security agencies

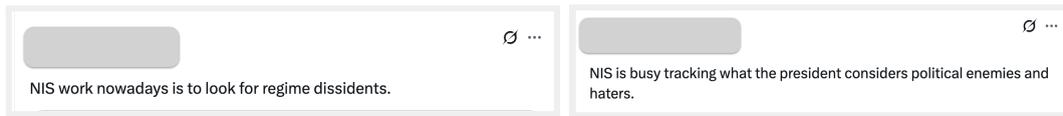
On 20 July 2025, authorities in Kilifi County [recovered](#) the body of an unidentified adult and rescued four severely emaciated individuals, triggering fresh fears of cult activity nearly two years after the [Shakahola massacre](#). The discovery, made just a few kilometres from the original Shakahola site, has raised alarm that extremist religious ideologies may be resurfacing in the region.

The 2023 Shakahola tragedy, which saw hundreds of followers of pastor [Paul Mackenzie](#) starve to death in a secluded forest under the guise of spiritual salvation, prompted widespread crackdowns and legal proceedings.

Between 20 and 31 July 2025, there were 2,023 mentions on [X](#) about the Kilifi cult incident, garnering 376,189 views and 9,100 interactions. While on [Facebook](#), 535 posts were identified, over the same period, highlighting the incident, collectively garnering over 12.8 million views and 34,318 total interactions.

The renewed fears have triggered online discussions expressing frustration at the perceived failings of the National Intelligence Service (NIS) and questioning its effectiveness in preventing such incidents. One [post](#) recounted how a survivor of the Shakahola massacre – described as a staunch follower of Mackenzie – allegedly returned to the area from Siaya County to continue the deadly fasting mission. The user questioned how NIS could have failed to detect such activity. Another [urged](#) security personnel to intensify efforts to ensure no similar cult operates again. Others accused NIS of

neglecting its core mandate, claiming it now focuses on [tracking the president's political opponents](#), and [regime dissidents](#) instead of addressing genuine security threats.



Screenshots of X posts ([L.2](#)) criticising the National Intelligence Service (NIS) for neglecting genuine security threats. (Source:CfA using X)

One [post](#) on Facebook said the Mijikenda community are ‘very easy to deceive’. This is despite the fact that the cult involved individuals from various regions across Kenya. Other posts went further, directly insulting Kilifi residents with remarks such as ‘Kilifi is stupid’ and ‘The society there never learns.’ On X, one user asked: ‘Why is it only Kilifi that’s being affected by cultism?’ while another [replied](#) with ‘Headquarters of fools’.



Screenshots of some [comments](#) on Facebook with derogatory language against the Kilifi community. (Source:CfA using MCL)

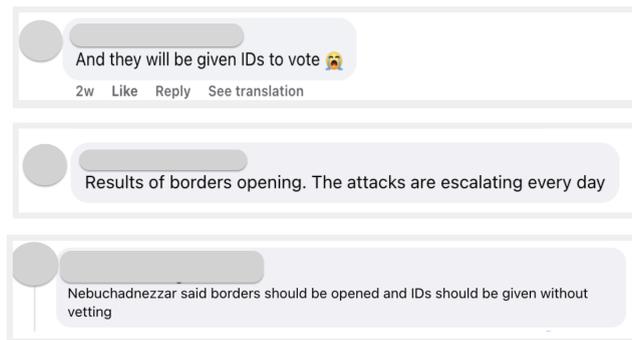
c. Militant threats in Lamu fuel border policy backlash and security agency criticism

On 25 July 2025, a new security incident was [reported](#) in Lamu County as 60 suspected Al-Shabaab militants launched a coordinated attack on an army police General Service Unit (GSU) camp near a village in the Boni Forest region. According to reports, the assault involved indiscriminate firing at residences and rocket-propelled grenades targeting both the camp and a nearby village. Intense gunfire followed, but GSU officers successfully thwarted the attack. No injuries or deaths have been reported so far.

Between 25 July and 06 August 2025, the attack generated 1,450 mentions on [X](#) with 614,200 views and 15,000 total interactions. Approximately 107 posts referenced the attack on [Facebook](#) during the same period, attracting collectively more than 3.9 million views and 22,970 interactions.

Following the Lamu attack, online conversations linked the incident to Kenya’s visa-free and open-border policies. On Facebook, users repeatedly [claimed](#) that granting IDs without strict vetting, particularly to Somali refugees or Kenyan Somalis, had weakened national security. [Comments](#) such as ‘Results of borders opening, the attacks are escalating every day’ and ‘They should go back to their roots’ were posted. Several posts directly associated Somalis with terrorism, portraying the attacks as a predictable consequence of government leniency on vetting.

Alongside this, X users criticised Kenyan security agencies for misdirecting resources toward arresting and [charging](#) Gen Z protesters and government critics with terrorism instead of countering actual militant threats. Posts [mocked](#) the government’s labelling of protesters as terrorists, with one user quipping that those in Lamu ‘could have been peaceful protestors’ since all the ‘terrorists had been arrested’ elsewhere. Others [accused](#) the NIS, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), and the army of focusing on domestic dissent, leaving groups like Al-Shabaab free to attack. This criticism was amplified by frustration that, despite repeated militant attacks in Lamu, authorities were still prioritising the suppression of political opposition over tangible counter-terror operations.



Screenshots of sample [comments](#) claiming Al-Shabaab attack is linked to ID vetting and visa policies. (Source: CFA using Facebook)

4. Actor spotlight: the people and organisations amplifying toxic content

This section highlights the key accounts, entities, or actors involved in amplifying toxic online content in Kenya and provides an in-depth assessment of their identities and motivations.

a. Individual actors

i. @Yunus Is'hakia Ahmed

On 16 July 2025, a [post](#) was published in the [@Lamu County Politics](#) Facebook group, a highly influential forum in Lamu with approximately 43,800 members. The post, made by the group's administrator, @Yunus Is'hakia Ahmed, carried undertones of incitement against youth participating in protests, suggesting they should be killed. The Swahili post directly translates to 'I wonder, were all these people doing business? Oh, now a mask seller, oh, I don't know, a conductor? Useless media narratives, crush the neck, take them to the mortuary.'

The [@Yunus Is'hakia Ahmed](#) account has around 4,982 followers and appears to be pro-government, with most posts highlighting Ruto's [achievements](#) and countering criticism, particularly from the youth. It also [targets](#) Ruto's political opponents, like Rigathi Gachagua. In one post, the admin uses the phrase 'TUTAMS' (two terms); a pro-Ruto slogan countering 'WANTAM' (one term), which is used by opponents advocating for Ruto to serve only a single term. The account has also been [observed](#) posting content that incites tribal divisions, particularly pitting the Kikuyu community against other ethnic groups in Kenya.

Despite the pro-Ruto messaging, reactions to the posts are largely negative, with over 75% opposing the narratives. Some users dismiss the account's support for Ruto as [performative](#), while others share their [grievances](#) about hardships under his administration, [reaffirming](#) their stance on limiting him to one term. Many also [condemn](#) the ethnic profiling content, saying it is an incitement to tribalism. The remaining 25% of responses express [support](#) for Ruto's government.

5. Tactics and techniques: unveiling the actors' modus operandi

This section outlines the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) used by actors in the identified narratives. It focuses on strategically disseminating content and coordinating its online presence.

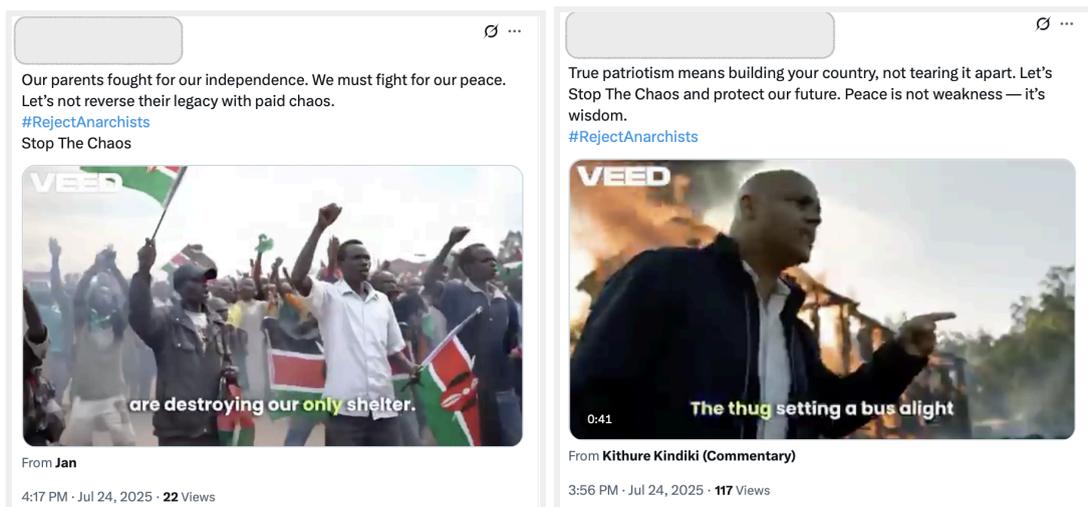
a. Develop AI-Generated Videos (Deepfakes)

The DISARM framework defines this [tactic](#) as the use of AI-generated fake media, such as audio, photos, or videos, in influence operations to create false scenarios by altering an individual's appearance, voice, and movements.

On 18 July 2025, the Facebook page [Denis Itumbi Commentary](#) published an AI-generated [video](#) claiming that the 25 June 2025 protest was 'a coordinated political operation, funded, staged and weaponised to overthrow a legitimately elected government to plunge Kenya into chaos'. The video alleged that the people at the centre of the operation included: former deputy president Gachagua as the leader; Safina Party leader Jimmy Wanjigi; activist Boniface Mwangi; activist and co-founder of Mathare Social Justice Centre Wanjira Wanjiru; Busia senator Okiya Omtata; activist Boniface Akach; activist and lawyer Hussein Khalid; and lawyer Willis Otieno, among others. The video also claims that the group was referring to itself as 'Social Justice Warriors'. The video received eight comments, 12 likes and 1,400 views. The video was also shared on X by Kileleshwa Member of the County Assembly (MCA) and blogger Robert Alai on 20 July 2025. The post received a total engagement of 541 and 24,900 views.

The narrator, a black man with a Kenyan flag bandana, was AI-generated. His physical movements and lip movements in relation to the audio confirmed this. Reverse searches of some of the photos alleged to have been from the 25 June protest did not match any published pictures.

On 24 July 2025, this tactic was also evident in the [#RejectAnarchists](#) hashtag campaign, which featured two (1,2) AI-generated videos. The videos sought to discredit the recent anti-government protests in Kenya, warning against anarchy.



Sample campaign posts with the AI-generated videos ([left](#), [right](#)) (Source: CfA using X)

Similarly, the [#DorcasBoyfriend](#) campaign [featured](#) an AI-generated video portraying pastor Dorcas and her alleged lover engaging in public displays of affection.

b. Create dedicated hashtag

The DISARM framework [defines](#) this tactic as launching hashtags or searchable terms to frame a narrative to manufacture legitimacy, allowing campaigns to trend, attract attention, and influence public conversation.

This tactic was used in the [#TerrorismByHeadlines](#) campaign, which criticised The Standard for its reporting practices.

It was also used in the [#RejectAnarchists](#) campaign, which promoted pro-government narratives and condemned demonstrations, painting them as disruptive in democracy.

Similarly, the tactic was used in the [#DorcasBoyfriend](#), a coordinated smear operation.

c. Create Cyborg Accounts

The DISARM framework [defines](#) Cyborg accounts as accounts that are partly manned, partly automated social media accounts. Cyborg accounts primarily act as bots, but a human operator periodically takes control of the account to engage with real social media users by responding to comments and posting original content.

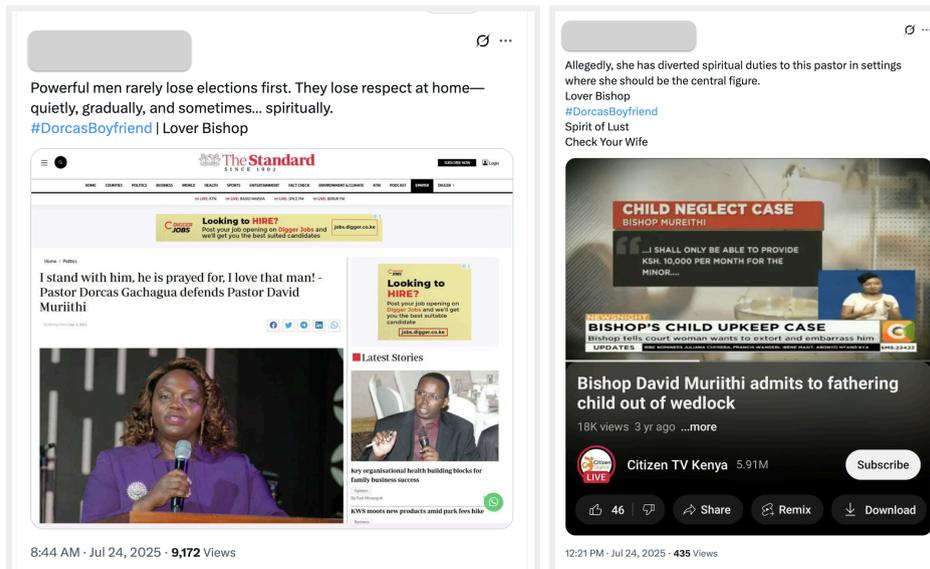
The top five influencer accounts using the hashtag [#TerrorismByHeadlines](#) exhibited cyborg characteristics by posting a huge number of posts using the hashtag between 24 and 25 July 2025. These accounts were seen posting on average eight to nine posts an hour. These accounts posted the following number of posts within the two days:

- [@africaelite](#) with 426 posts
- [@georgegonal](#) with 420 posts
- [@tam_nj](#) with 345 posts
- [@gonageneral](#) with 246 posts
- [@victormuta54071](#) with 223 posts

d. Develop inauthentic news articles

According to the [DISARM](#) framework, this tactic involves creating false or misleading news articles to advance campaign goals or narratives. Such inauthentic content is often crafted to mimic legitimate journalism, giving false claims an appearance of credibility and increasing their potential impact.

During the [#DorcasBoyfriend](#) campaign, fabricated front pages of [The Standard](#) and [The Nairobiian](#) were circulated. Additionally, fabricated bulletin headlines from YouTube imitating [Citizen TV](#) and [TV47 Kenya](#) were also circulated, replicating the design and branding of these media houses to present the false claims as authentic news.



Sample posts sharing fabricated, inauthentic news articles and news bulletin headlines in the #DorcasBoyfriend campaign (left, right) (Source: CfA using X)

6. Conclusion

The recent wave of coordinated campaigns in Kenya shows how influence operations are increasingly turning to AI-generated deepfakes. At the same time, online discourse around sexual violence cases continues to trivialise offences and attack victims, reinforcing harmful stereotypes that normalise gender-based violence. Parallel to this, renewed cult fears in Kilifi show how extremist religious ideologies remain a potent trigger for fear, prejudice, and scapegoating of entire communities. Together, these trends point to a toxic convergence of emerging technologies, entrenched misogyny, and weaponised moral panic, a combination that risks deepening divisions and undermining trust in institutions.

*This report was written by Code for Africa (CfA) iLAB investigative data analysts **Nirali Patel, Dorcas Solonka, Moffin Njoroge, Agape Karashi, and Ivy Masese.** The report was reviewed by iLAB investigations manager **Jacktone Momanyi**, and edited by iLAB chief copy editor **Leizl Eykelhof.** The research was overseen by CfA iLAB editor **Athandiwe Saba** and commissioned by CfA editor-in-chief **Justin Arenstein.***

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Do you know of incidents of suspected information manipulation, coordinated influence operations or other forms of disinformation or weaponised toxic content that you think we should investigate? Share your leads with us, securely, on ilab@codeforafrica.org.



*This report contributes to a growing knowledge base that documents African-focused information manipulation, influence operations, and weaponised disinformation. The knowledge base is curated by the **African Digital Democracy Observatory (ADDO)**. The research in this specific report was produced by analysts attached to ADDO member Code for Africa (CfA), including CfA's **CivicSignal** media monitoring lab, its **iLAB** forensic investigation unit, and its **PesaCheck** fact-checking team.*