Twitter Thread by Daniel Njaga

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There was no stigma around 1982 coup; Kenya was already sliding to the abyss. My fourth thread on Railaphobia in Kikuyuland. LONG THREAD, FREE TO DISCARD

As alluded to in a previous thread, Moi was very popular when he inherited the power from Jomo. He played an important historical role in dismantling Kikuyu hegemony that peaked at Kenyatta's death. The whole nation supported him thinking it was all driven by national interest

Just that time he was very popular, he made a lot of decisions that laid the ground for his future dictatorship which he was cunningly planning for. Like civil servants' union and university staff union were proscribed. This time, President's word was law and Moi took advantage

To compensate lack of charisma, Moi resorted to populist roadside decrees that would make people happy. In the process, he was making so many policy decisions at the spur of the moment. Some were so expensive to the country economically and politically

Among such decisions was to ban traditional liquor. The implications were enormous to this day – the gvt spends so much time and resources following up people and pouring liquors. It was a prime opportunity for gvt agencies to meddle in peoples social and economic lives

Another one barred business like bakeries from selling products outside their districts. This led to collapse of some industries that had a wider market outside their district. Main culprit in Nakuru was Elliots bakery that collapsed early at Mois leadership. No economic sense

Another one was to ban institutions with local names in fight tribalism – the main target was a huge self-help group called GEMA. But it affected others like Abaluhya Football Club (AFC). This was Moi's understanding of tribalism and how to fight it. No "tribal" name

He also set the stage for government profligacy. Many populist appointments that didn't make sense. One ministry would have 3 assistant ministers. Then he toured the whole world with a large entourage costing the country so much economically. And at the expense of national image

It was obvious in the first 3 years of Moi that he could not manage a modern economy and a modern nation. His inferiority complex made him dislike and avoid charismatic people. His association with professional rejects was legendary and subject of so much ridicule and riddles

He could not stand wealthy institutions and people. Already there were deliberate attempts to sabotage all institutions that were not under the direct control of the government. Nakuru residents are still nostalgic of the Kenya Farmers Association that was the town's insignia.

Although Moi was still largely popular, most Kenyans had begun silently withdrawing their support and excitement. Some foresighted people could see the country was headed in the wrong direction but it was not clear how to approach this.

One foresighted and brave person was Jaramogi Odinga. They teamed up with late George Anyona to launch another party – Kenya African Socialist Alliance. By then the government had started dictatorship in earnest. Jaramogi and Anyona were arrested and could not launch their party

Immediately thereafter, the government mobilised its senior figures to make Kenya a one-party state by law. Section 2A was enacted. The motion was moved by Charles Njonjo and seconded by Mwai Kibaki. They were both to become victims of the law, Njonjo immediately and Kibaki later

Government waste, collapsing institutions and creeping dictatorship. It was in the midst of this national tension that nation woke up to the news of coup against Moi. "Serikali iko mknono mwa jesho, Polisi waamuriwa kukaa kama raiya…." The radio announced

The coup was widely celebrated. UON students poured on the streets and demonstrated in the city the whole morning chanting "power" – signifying power back to the people. But the relief was short-lived. In the afternoon the nation was told the coup was quelled by loyal officers.

In the immediate aftermath, many things happened, including Raila's first detention. I will discuss in the next thread how the coup was used by Moi to show Kenya his true colours and finally become a fully-fledged dictator.

But to cut a long story short, blaming Raila for 82 coup is just foolish. Kenyans were happy. That was the best time for Moi to leave power. From that time on, Kenya was on a backward trajectory such that by the time Moi was exiting the nation was battered into negative growth.

In fact, Raila's credentials as a national hero were cast by this coup. Anybody farsighted and courageous enough and even attempted to nip Moi's nascent dictatorship in the bud was a true patriot. Blaming Raila for this coup is therefore a perfect case of CHANGING GOAL POSTS.

Kikuyus were especially happy with the coup as they were the primary targets of Moi malice and economic sabotage. They only started blaming Raila for it recently when looking for an excuse to hate him. Attaching strong emotions to the event to depict Raila as heartless, brutal

In 2013 campaigns, Kikuyu musician Muigai Njoroge released a song cautioning his people that:
“this kimundu (his word) is very dangerous...
“He was involved in the murder of hundreds of people during 82 coup....
"Because he is very power-hungry.”
It was such a good excuse

Next thread - Moi's true colours after the coup and the struggle and sacrifices to remove him. It was not easy; we should thank Kenyans who made it happen. Raila and his father, among others, played an important role

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