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ALANNA LESLIE: Hi, I'm Alanna Leslie and welcome to Newsreel World...

In this episode we're going to look at elections and the different ways democracies are structured around the English-speaking world.

Like Sweden, Kenya has a general election this year.

The voting age in Kenya is eighteen but the country has a very young population, with over forty two percent of Kenyans being under sixteen years old.

To tell us more about the key issues for young Kenyans leading up to this election, Michael Kaloki has this report.

Michael Kaloki: In August 2022, Kenyans will be heading to the polls to elect their new president as current president Uhuru Kenyatta's two term limit draws to an end.

Here in the capital Nairobi, it is not uncommon to come across small groups of people discussing the upcoming elections.

Two of the names that are likely to feature in these discussions are those of William Ruto and Raila Odinga, seen as the two main presidential contenders. But who are William Ruto and Raila Odinga?

William Ruto: Today, the United Democratic Alliance Party is the largest party in the Republic of Kenya....

Michael Kaloki: William Ruto is the country's current deputy president, who at the moment does not see eye to eye with his boss, President Uhuru Kenyatta. Some have termed their relationship as estranged.

William Ruto has moved to another political party known as the United Democratic Alliance. He has styled himself as a champion of the poor and says that if he is elected as President, he will ensure that more assistance is given to Kenyans struggling to make a daily living.



Raila Odinga: And I would say that we want to ensure that our youth are empowered...

Michael Kaloki: Then there is Raila Odinga, son of the country's first Vice President the late Jaramogi Oginga Odinga.

Raila Odinga heads the Orange Democratic Party. He says that one of his main policies will be to boost the country's economy and improve the livelihood of Kenyans.

But what are the issues that young Kenyans are concerned about that they would like to see the next President address?

Leonard: The problem that is facing Kenya is tribalism, because now we find out that people are electing people based on a tribal basis.

Michael Kaloki: These are both quite old candidates; do you feel like you can relate to them at all?

Leonard: I think old is gold. Even old candidates can have a good vision for the Kenyans.

Mary: I don't see the need of having an old president. Times have changed and our preferences are also different. I would prefer a leader who is young enough, someone who can relate to my issues, someone I can speak to freely who understands me at another level.

Michael Kaloki: What are the two most important issues for you in this election?

Mary: I would love, first of all, to have a peaceful election and stability in the economy.

Jacob: Right now, the economy of Kenya it's not that good, eh?

To elect leaders who would at least change the economy and so that they can lower the price of commodities.

Michael Kaloki: Reporting for Newsreel World, this is Michael Kaloki in Nairobi, Kenya.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Michael.



ALANNA LESLIE: Imagine if the current King of Sweden, Carl Gustaf, was also the monarch of dozens of other countries all over the world?

That's the situation with Britain's monarch Queen Elizabeth II.

She's also the head of state for countries as varied as Canada, Australia and Jamaica.

There's an ongoing debate in many of these countries about whether this should continue to be the case.

To tell us more, Giovanni Dennis has this report...

Andrew Holness: Jamaica is a country that is very proud of our history, very proud of what we have achieved, and we are moving on.

Giovanni Dennis: Frank and forthright.

Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness telling the Duke of Cambridge, Prince William, that Jamaica intends to complete its circle of independence from Britain by removing the Queen as head of state.

Prince William and his wife, the Duchess of Cambridge, Catherine, were in Jamaica as part of their tour of commonwealth countries marking the platinum jubilee of his Grandmother's reign, Queen Elizabeth II.

The Duke and Duchess were treated to cultural delights like drumming and a football game in Trench Town, the home community of reggae icon, Bob Marley.

Those highlights aside, the visit was tainted by protests as scores gathered outside the British High commission, in the capital city, Kingston, on the day the Royals arrived.

Protest clip: "for deporting our ancestors..."

Giovanni Dennis: And so, it came as no surprise that people we spoke with welcomed the announcement by Prime Minister Holness:

Giovanni Dennis: Christina sees leaving the monarchy behind as a natural progression:

Christina: I believe becoming a Republic state is inevitably the next right move to further solidify our independence. Continuing to have The Crown as our head of state is absurd.



Giovanni Dennis: Sasha K thinks there's no benefit to keeping the British monarchy as Jamaica's head of state.

She specifically thinks about the Windrush generation, Jamaicans and other African-Caribbeans who came to the UK from 1948 onwards.

The subsequent Windrush scandal which began in 2018 revealed that the UK government had wrongly deported or detained many people who had the legal right to stay in the UK.

Sasha K: There is no difference that it makes us being a part of the monarchy because we still have to get a visa to enter their country and also from a perspective of the persons who went there during the Windrush period. I'm not seeing the benefits that they received or their children, our grandchildren, or the benefits that the country received from even being a part of the monarchy.

Giovanni Dennis: But some people are doubtful, like Avery:

Avery: I don't think it is a good idea because currently we don't have enough resources to stand on our own. It would be better to have a first world country to really rely on.

Giovanni Dennis: Others are sceptical, such as Anthony:

Anthony: This has been said by politicians across the political divide. Hardly any step, any concrete step, has been taken to anchor this kind of commitment. And so what the government recently announced is going to be viewed with a lot of cynicism and pessimism that this will never get done. And this is what politicians do to stoke nationalist sentiments and especially at a symbolic time like this, you know, sixty years: Jamaica's Diamond Jubilee.

Giovanni Dennis: The momentum for Jamaica becoming a republic picked up steam after Caribbean neighbours Barbados did so in February this year.

The visit of the British Royal Family has added to this momentum.

Whether that discussion dies down after the next few months, and how the Jamaican people are consulted about the island's future relationship with the British monarchy, are two of the many questions surrounding this issue.



Giovanni Dennis: This is Giovanni Dennis reporting for Newsreel World from Kingston in Jamaica.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Giovanni.

ALANNA LESLIE: It's been announced that Carrie Lam, the head of Hong Kong's government known as Chief Executive, will not stand for another term in office.

Lam has been heavily criticized for overseeing the erosion of Hong Kong's democratic freedoms during her time in charge.

Back in 2019 the pro-democracy protests were becoming increasingly violent.

The protests had been happening since 2014 as a response to the increasing restriction of Hong Kong's democratic freedoms by China.

Many people in Hong Kong say China has gone back on the agreement that was made when the island was returned to Chinese control from the UK in 1997.

Prince Charles: Five hours from now, the Union flag will be lowered, and the flag of China will fly over Hong Kong...

ALANNA LESLIE: This agreement is known as "One Country, Two Systems" and was meant to ensure Hong Kong remained democratic within China's single party state.

However over recent years China has undermined the independence of Hong Kong's opposition parties, banning them from standing in elections and arranging pro-Beijing candidates to succeed.

ALANNA LESLIE: The passing of the National Security Law in July 2020 was a symbolic moment in the undermining of electoral freedom.



Democracy Activist: Right now, all of my friends are either being arrested, being charged or going to face a court trial, in prison already, or in exile.

ALANNA LESLIE: The situation has become so grave in Hong Kong that many young, pro-democracy activists have had to flee the territory for fear of being arrested. In April 2021 we spoke to one of these pro-democracy activists. They described what the situation was like in Hong Kong and why they had to leave:

Democracy Activist: When the law came into force. I was very panicked, and I was also very confused because I don't know whether I should make a decision to continue to stay in Hong Kong and simply give up my activism or whether I should be leaving Hong Kong and then to continue my activism overseas, but then to leave my friends and families in Hong Kong.

ALANNA LESLIE: The person who replaces Carrie Lam is also expected to be someone who does the bidding of the Chinese government in Beijing, with democratic freedoms unlikely to return to the territory anytime soon.

ALANNA LESLIE: That's all from m