

Changing Political Faces on Kenya's Coast, 1992–2007

Abstract:

he voters of Kenya's coastal province largely supported the ruling party of President Moi in the elections of 1992 and 1997, yet in 2002 they turned away from KANU and toward the NaRC coalition led by Mwai Kibaki. The results of the 2007 poll show a marked turn away from the party of government, amid a general decline in the numbers of votes polled. This paper examines the 2007 parliamentary election in four constituencies of Kenya's coastal region. It questions several of the prevailing orthodoxies and generalizations about Kenya's coastal politics, suggesting that the election of a candidate is a matter of local as well as national politics, and that this varies greatly from one constituency to another. The cases of Ganze, Bahari, Likoni and Malindi constituencies will be studied to illustrate these issues, exploring a variety of factors including the personalities of the candidates, their association with the key persons leading the national campaigns, and the relationships of the candidates with past.