

The Silent Revolution: How Bány Garang Malwal Jok's Administration Transformed Twic East Leadership in Queensland, Australia.

Abstract: *This study was commissioned by Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior, former Secretary General of TECAQ under the government of Bány Garang Malwal Jok Piok, to document the transformative administration of Bány Garang Malwal Jok in Queensland from January 2023 to January 2025. As national leadership contests ramp up in Australia and election campaigns unfold in the USA and Juba, this chronicle serves not only as a tribute to Bány Garang Malwal Jok's exceptional leadership, but also as a blueprint for Twic East community (TECA) and youth associations (TEYA) across the USA, Canada, Kenya, Uganda, Juba, Mading-Bor and Panyagor.*

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Introduction

Thursday, 05/06/2025 (PW) -- One of the pressing modern challenges confronting the Dinka community in general and the Twic Dinka community in particular is how to reconcile the profound tension between the deep-rooted authority of customary governance with the demands of modern democratic values. Historically, the Twic Dinka community, like the rest of the Dinka community, operated under a stable system of hereditary chieftaincy, where leadership passed from the eldest son of the first wife within the same family, generation after generation, until the advent of British colonial administration in the 19th century. This system provided clear succession protocols and minimized leadership disputes. The dawn of the liberation era introduced democratic principles emphasizing majority rule rather than hereditary succession, a radical transition that embraced human rights approaches where individual votes and voices carry weight in determining leadership claim and influence.

Consequently, this shift toward democratic governance has fundamentally disrupted the once-stable customary leadership system and supplanted it with a contemporary leadership structure that has, ironically, brought persistent disputes and factional divisions. As a result, the Twic Dinka community has been plunged into relentless turmoil, marked by political infighting and factionalism, evident both within the diaspora communities across Australia, USA, and Canada, and back home in East Africa, Juba, Mading-Bor and Panyagor. This climate of political disarray and factional discord stands in sharp contrast to the transformative leadership revolution ushered in by Chairperson (Bány) Garang Malwal Jok Piok within the Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ), whose efforts have fostered unity and progress.

Therefore, this study explores the transformative administration of Chairperson (Bány) Garang Malwal Jok, popularly known as Mony Abuk, within the Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ), Australia. In a remarkable departure from tradition, the TECAQ association witnessed an unprecedented phenomenon in January 2025 when no candidate stepped forward to contest the chairperson position following Bány Garang Malwal Jok's completion of his single two-year term. This was an extraordinary anomaly in the politically charged Twic East community, a group renowned for her vibrant, and often contentious, internal politics. For Twic East community legendary for its political fervour, the scarcity of candidate stepping forward to contest the chairperson position speak volumes about the transformative impact of Bány Garang Malwal Jok's revolutionary leadership in the Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ).

Part 1: Twic Dinka – A Political Community

The Twic Dinka community is widely recognized as a political community in South Sudan, distinguished by their active engagement in political discourse and maneuvering, both within their internal communal dynamics and in the broader national context. Historically, internal debates within Twic leadership, such as those among the chieftaincy have resulted in intense divisions and tragedy. Under Paramount Chief Ajang Duot Bior-Kweigak, the community split into two bitterly opposing camps, between those advocating for the youth to join the Anyanya One liberation struggle immediately, and those supporting strategic education for the youth, to better prepare for a prolonged liberation war. This ideological clash tragically culminated in the assassination of several chiefs, including Paramount Chief Ajang Duot Bior, the father of the late Gen. Bior-Aswad Ajang Duot, former TECA-Juba chairperson who passed away on 14 August 2024. The post-Addis Ababa Accord years were no less turbulent. In the autonomous government era of Abel Alier Kwai Kut and Joseph Lagu Yang'a, Twic politics played out among political titans like Mark Atem Awuol Nyok, Elijah Malok Aleng Mayen, Manyok Agwer Deng, Akuot Atem Mayen, and Mading Garang Tong.

The SPLM/SPLA era witnessed further political rivalries, notably between Akuot Atem Mayen and Dr. John Garang Mabior Atem Aruai on one hand, and between Arok Thon Arok Bul and Dr. John Garang Mabior Atem Aruai on the other. From the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, a fierce political duel emerged and unfolded over the name “Kongor District,” with some community leaders arguing that the name was not inclusive of the broader Twic East community. The dispute pitted Elijah Malok Aleng Mayen against the combined influence of Gabriel Achuoth Deng-Karkawaan Achuoth, Bul Deng-Achuek Bul Bior, Philip Chol Biowei Deng and Deng Agwang Atem-Banyelok. This power struggle culminated in the renaming of the district from Kongor to the present-day Twic East County during the Global Twic Conference held in Panyagor in 2001, which was attended by Dr. John Garang Mabior Atem. After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, the political battleground shifted to new fronts, with Hon. Deng Dau Deng Malek and Hon. Chol Biowei Deng emerging as key rivals. More recently, following the independence of South Sudan in 2011, intense political rivalries have flared between Hon. Deng Dau Deng Malek and Governor Philip Agwer Panyang Jot on one hand, and Gen. Bior-Aswad Ajang Duot and Hon. Deng Dau Deng Malek on the other hand, over Twic-Bor identity politics and the future of the Twic Dinka community in Jonglei State.

The mantle of Twic politics has now been taken up by the Twic East Youth Association (TEYA-Juba), whose fierce political rivalry and high-flying election campaigns virtually overshadow national politics in Juba. This dynamic political landscape has pitted Garang Atem Ayiik against Deng Kwir Bul (Deng Junior) on one front, and Arok Dut Arok against Deng Kwir Bul on another, while also setting Ajang-Ateer Diing Awuol against Anyuon Atem Dau, alongside rising stars such as Khot Dut-Kelei Goch, Chol Yaak Akoi-Lonhdit, and Dut-Abiany Atem Malek. Bul-Gidaam Majok Manyuon, a Twic political activist, explained the evolution of political party dynamics within the Twic East Youth Association in Juba (TEYA-Juba): “The first TEYA-Juba chairperson was Mabioor Deng-Wutung Mabioor Atem, a nephew of Dr. John Garang. He was succeeded by Ajang-Ateer Diing Awuol as the second chairperson. In 2021, Garang Atem Ayiik (Gatem) became the third chairperson, followed by Arok-Matir Dut Arok, who assumed office as the fourth chairman in 2023. Elections are currently underway for the fifth chairperson. A significant shift occurred after the term of Ajang-Ateer, when political parties began to emerge within TEYA-Juba. This development coincided with

the arrival of Deng Junior from Dar es Salaam, who contested for the TEYA-Juba chairmanship. Currently, the ruling party is the Twic East Youth Solidarity Alliance (TEYSA), led by Arok Dut Arok, the incumbent TEYA-Juba chairperson. TEYSA's founding chairman, Chol Yaak Akoi-Lonhdit, who lost the 2021 election to Garang Atem Ayiik of the Twic East Alliance for Prosperity (TEAP), endorsed Arok Dut Arok in 2023. In turn, Arok Dut Arok has now endorsed Khot Jok Ajak as TEYSA's candidate for the upcoming election. In addition to TEYSA, several other parties have emerged, each fielding its own candidate: Twic East Forward (TEF) under Deng-Junior Kwir Bul as chairperson and its candidate; the Twic East Alliance for Development (TEAD) under Dut-Abiany Atem Malek as chairperson and its candidate; Twic East Aangär (TEA) under Khot Dut-kelei Goch as chairperson and its candidate; Twic East Vision for Development (TEVD) under Bul Ajak Thieu as chairperson and its candidate, and Twic East Network Alliance (TENA) under Adier Deng Abit as chairperson and its candidate."

The Twic East Youth Association (TEYA-Juba) works in alignment with the broader Twic East Community Association (TECA-Juba) in championing Twic Dinka cultural and political identity, Eastern resettlement (Dhuku Baai) and the future of the Twic Dinka community in Jonglei State. These political divisions intensified following the devastating 2020 floods in Twic East County, Jonglei State, a catastrophe that displaced over 90% of the population from their ancestral homeland, with Twic Dinka community members scattered to Minkaman in Lakes State, Mangala in Central Equatoria State, Shirkat in Juba, and refugee camps across Kenya and Uganda, further complicating community cohesion. "The floods created an existential crisis for our community," explains Makwei Mabioor Deng, a concerned citizen of Twic East's diaspora community. "Political leaders were suddenly debating not just policy differences but fundamental questions about our future as a people with a defined homeland."

The October 2022 BMC Declaration at the National Twic Conference in Juba, and the March 2024 Panyagor Resolution at the Global Twic Conference in Panyagor, significantly deepened the political divide within the Twic East community. Two distinct factions emerged from this division: The community association faction under TECA and TEYA, and the political faction composed of Twic East elected and nominated leaders. The first faction is a coalition comprising of the late Gen. Bior-Aswad Bior Ajang, Gen. Biar Mading Biar, Dr. Majak Agoot Atem, Governor Agwer Panyang Jot, Vice President Mama Nyandeng Chol Atem, Garang Atem Ayiik, and Arok Dut Arok. This faction organized around community associations, specifically the Twic East Community Association (TECA-Juba) under the leadership of the late Gen. Bior-Aswad Bior Ajang and Gen. Biar Mading Biar, alongside the Twic East Youth Association (TEYA-Juba) during the ground-breaking administrations of Bäný Garang Atem Ayiik and Bäný Arok Dut Arok. The community association faction champions the cultural and political identity of Twic Dinka as outlined in the BMC Declaration, positioning themselves against Greater Bor politics and supports the Eastern Resettlement Initiative (ERI) proposed in the Panyagor Resolution, which aims to address recurring floods in Twicland. The community association faction positions itself as the custodian of Twic Dinka's cultural and political identity and accuses the political faction of sacrificing the interests of the Twic Dinka community at the altar of the Greater Bor politics.

Conversely, the opposing political faction rallied around Twic East National MP Hon. Deng Dau Deng Malek, comprising an assortment of Twic East MPs from Opposition Parties, and some Twic East County commissioners such as the late Hon. Deng Mabäný Kuot and Hon. Juach Arok Juach who are affiliated with Hon. Deng Dau Deng Malek. The political faction criticizes the community and youth associations for interfering in Twic East political matters,

accusing them of overstepping their mandates and usurping the authority of elected officials and traditional leaders to advance their own political agenda. This political faction recognizes only elected officials and customary chiefs as the authentic representatives of the community, viewing the associations as illegitimate challengers to established authority. The political faction maintain that only elected representatives and customary chiefs hold legitimate leadership roles in the community and view the associations' activism as a politically motivated attempt to displace recognized leadership structures.

This deeply ingrained culture of vibrant politicking travelled with Twic East community members as they resettled in the USA, Canada, and Australia, where large populations of Twic Dinka have resettled. In Australia where the same political dynamics have taken root, Twic East politics are played out both at the federal level (TECAA-Australia) and state levels such as Queensland (TECAQ). At the federal level, factions such as TECAA-DCR led by Bány Deng Chol Riak-Magany and TECAA-KDA led by Bány Kwer Dau Apai dominate. At the state level in Queensland, the local landscape has been defined by a political rivalry between TECAQ-Group of 23 formerly under Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng and TECAQ-Twic Care formerly under Bány Dau Mabil Aweer. Community observers maintain that TECAQ-Group 23 is nothing more than a reincarnation of TECAA-DCR at state level while TECAQ-Twic Care was nothing more than TECAA-KDA reincarnation in Queensland. It was into this fractured and politicized environment that Bány Garang Malwal Jok Piok stepped in January 2023 when he assumed TECAQ community leadership from Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng. Unlike his predecessors, his approach emphasized unity, community development, and a break from the cycles of factionalism. By the time his single, non-renewable two-year term ended in January 2025, his impact was so profound that neither of the warring factions fielded a candidate to succeed him, a rare political spectacle in a historically vibrant community of Twic Dinka.

This begs critical questions: What exactly did Bány Garang Malwal Jok's administration accomplish to change the political calculus of TECAQ? What strategies did they employ to overcome entrenched divisions and factional discord? And perhaps most importantly, what lessons can other Twic East community (TECA) and youth associations (TEYA) globally, whether in the USA, Canada, Kenya, Uganda, Juba, or Panyagor, draw from Bány Garang Malwal Jok's transformative leadership revolution? This study therefore sets out to investigate the political evolution and transformation of TECAQ leadership under the administration of Bány Garang Malwal Jok, placing his transformative leadership in historical and cultural context, and assessing its implications for the broader Twic East community (TECA) and youth associations (TEYA) across the world.

Part 2: Pioneers of Exile – The Twic Dinka Diaspora Story: How the Twic Dinka Rebuilt Community Across Oceans.

While the mass migration of Dinka people to the West is widely regarded to have commenced in late 2000 with the "lost boys" flight to the USA, they were not necessarily the first members of the Dinka community to settle in Australia and New Zealand, USA, and Canada. As early as the mid-1990s, several Dinka families and individuals had arrived and settled in Australia. The Twic Dinka community's migration to Australia unfolded in distinct waves, each shaped by broader geopolitical shifts, resettlement policies, and the agency of early trailblazers who paved the way for others. Among the earliest Twic Dinka pioneers were individuals such as Machar Piok Kheer, who arrived around 1995 from Egypt and settled in Townsville, Queensland; Comrade Aguil Chut, who came around 1996 from Kenya, also settling in Toowoomba,

Queensland; Ayuel Bul Kooch, who arrived in 1996 and made Melbourne home; and both Ajang-Makot Deng Biar and Yaak Deng-Malwal Akol, who came from Kenya around the same time and settled in Sydney. These early arrivals formed what can be termed the first wave of migration, comprising individuals and families who left Egypt and Kenya during the mid-to-late 1990s. This group included not only the family of Machar Piok Kheer but also the Family of Ajang Barach Mabior (Ajang Abun) and Awaak Bior-Toohr Ajang, who arrived around 1999–2000 and settled in Toowoomba, Queensland.

The second wave consisted largely of educated individuals and intellectuals from Kenya, who had better access to information and resources on navigating western embassy processes in Nairobi. This was the era of the educated migrant, the Nairobi-savvy, embassy-fluent Twic Dinka who knew how to navigate Western bureaucracies, leveraging their education and networks to secure resettlement in the USA, UK and Australia. Key figures in this wave include Ustaz Ajang Alaak, Yaak Deng-Malwal Akol, Comrade Aguil Chut, Ajang Deng Biar, Akuch Gayo Galuak Reech, Ayuel Bul Kooch, Chol Aleu Angok, Dau Atem-Agiei Yong, Deng Amol Dau, Ajang-Dwek Pageer Alaak, Mangar Ayuel Malwal, and Akoi John, all of whom arrived between 1996 and 1998. By the early 2000s, changes in Australian refugee policy, specifically the introduction of pathways for resettlement from camps such as Kakuma, triggered the third wave. This included Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)-sponsored students who arrived around 2002, representing a shift from individual to institutionalized resettlement.

The fourth wave, spanning from 2002 to 2008, was predominantly shaped by family visa program. Arriving between 1995 and 1998, those who had arrived in the first and second waves opened doors for others, not just metaphorically but literally, by sponsoring relatives and community members through the family visa program. This was the age of family reunification, powered by family visa sponsorships. As a result, the bulk of the Twic Dinka population in Australia today can trace their migration story to the following pioneering trailblazers: Machar Piok Kheer; Yaak Deng-Malwal Akol; Comrade Aguil Chut; Meshack Ajang Alaak and Ajang-Dwek Pageer Alaak; Akuch Gayo Galuak Reech; Akoi John; Chol Aleu Angok; Dau Atem-Agiei Yong; Ajang Deng Biar; Ayuel Bul Kooch; Ajang Kezekia Barach Mabior and Awaak Bior-Toohr Ajang Duot and Deng Amol Dau. The pioneering figures were not just migrants but architects of a transplanted social order that continues to shape community life in the diaspora today.

During this pioneering period, no Twic East community associations (TECA) existed at either federal or state levels, and Twic politics was instead dominated by youth associations across Australia. The first discernible Twic leadership structure in Queensland emerged through these youth associations, such as the Kongor Students Association (KSA), formally established in 1998 in Kakuma refugee camp and re-established in Australia in 2003 as the Kongor Students Association in Australia (KSAA) under the leadership of Dr. Atem Dau Atem-Agiei.

Beyond youth associations, the first broader community association to emerge in Australia was the Greater Bor Association (GBA), comprising the three counties of Twic East, Duk, and Bor, which coincided with the signing and inauguration of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. Notably, among the early Dinka settlers in Queensland were also Padang Dinka from Khorfulus and Ataar of Pigi county. However, an initial proposal by Akech Kiir for an inclusive Greater Jonglei community association, encompassing all Dinka communities in Jonglei state, was rejected in favor of the region-specific Greater Bor Association (GBA), which elected Chaw Juuk Chaw as its first chairperson with Chol Aleu Angok as deputy. Initially, all members of the Twic Dinka, Hol Dinka, Bor Dinka, and Nyarweng Dinka

communities in Queensland were fully represented in the membership and leadership of the GBA association, while clans in Twic East, Duk, and Bor were primarily represented through their youth associations. The subsequent conflict over GBA politics between Twic Dinka and Bor Dinka communities triggered the swift exodus of Twic Dinka from the Greater Bor Association (GBA) and the subsequent formation of Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ) with Ajakthii Deng Biar as founding chairperson and Abuoi Garang Kheer as the second chairperson.

"The first association was the Greater Bor Dinka Association (GBA), initiated in 2009 by Akech Kiir, Chol Aleu Angok, and John Adoor Deng. Chau Juuk Chau became the inaugural chairperson with Chol Aleu as deputy. The GBA association included three counties: Twic East, Duk, and Bor. There was also a GBA youth association under Mach Majok Anyuat and Akol Maluk Chol, and payam associations like Kongor Student Association (KSA). TECAQ was established with Ajakthii Deng Biar as inaugural chairperson in 2010, and Abuoi Garang Kheer as second chairperson in 2014," explained Anyieth Duom Angoh Panyang, the third chairperson of TECAQ. "The first association was GBA, formed in 2005 with Chau Juuk as chairperson, Chol Aleu as deputy, and Gakheer Dut as Secretary General. In 2008, the Twic community pulled out of GBA because of the fight over GBA politics, and TECAQ was formed under Ajakthii Deng Biar and Twic youth under Kuol Atem. We left the GBA association because we had the numbers to establish our own association. So, deputy chair Chol Aleu Angok and I, as Secretary General, withdrew from the GBA association under Chairperson Chau Juuk. However, Kongor and Ayual remained with the GBA association, and so we were replaced with Dhiak Akol Mabior as deputy chair, Dau Mabil Aweer as Secretary General, and Akol Maluk Chol as youth deputy chair," explained Gakheer Dut-Magheer Ajak, former SG under the administration of Chairperson Anyieth Duom Angoh, who later run against Bány Garang Malwal Jok.

Thus, the first major political disagreement among members of the Twic East community in Queensland emerged over GBA politics. Long before Twic-Bor identity politics surfaced in Juba, tensions had simmered and ignited in Australia and USA over leadership of and membership in the Greater Bor Association. The dispute revolved around whether the Twic Dinka community should continue or withdraw its membership in the GBA association. The Twic community split between Kongor and Ayual, the two biggest clans, who were advocating for continued GBA membership and Pakeer, Ajuong, Awulian, Dachuek, Adhiok, and Abek clans who pushed for withdrawal from the Greater Bor Association. Community observers suggested that Kongor had Akol Maluk Chol while Ayual had Dau Mabil Awer in the leadership of the GBA associations, which explained why these two clans favored Twic Dinka remaining an integral part of the GBA association, whereas the other clans, perceiving they had less stake in GBA leadership, were those championing 'Twic-Exit' from the GBA association.

"It was not the case that Kongor love the GBA association more than Twic association. On the contrary, Kongor made the decision to protest the attempt by a minority group to impose themselves on the majority. A community of 3-5 members deploying a payam delegate system to make decisions and select leadership to dominate the majority was undemocratic and repressive and therefore unacceptable. The payam system was not representative of the numbers of people from different Twic communities in Queensland," explained Kwir Garangthii Bul Bior, former deputy chairperson under the administration of Chairperson Diing Arok Deu. "It was around the time of the Wanglei crisis, and Ayual boycotted Twic leadership because of perceived Dachuek influence in Twic leadership. Kongor boycotted Twic leadership because Twic preferred a payam system, as smaller communities feared domination by Kongor,

while Kongor opposed the payam delegate system in favor of popular vote as it feared domination by smaller communities," explained Gen. Dau Wach Deng, the fourth chairperson of TECAQ.

The successful withdrawal of Twic Dinka from the Greater Bor Association culminated in the establishment of Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ). However, shortly after TECAQ's formation, disputes erupted over the methodology for electing leadership. The community divided into two camps: one supporting selection through payam delegates (delegate voting) and another advocating for universal suffrage (individual voting) where every community member could participate directly in the election process. Community observers explained that this disagreement pitted communities with numerous members from Africa in Australia such as Kongor who favored popular voting against those with fewer members who advocated for payam-based delegate voting. Ultimately, advocates of individual voting (popular voting) prevailed, and Bány Ajak-thii Deng Biar was popularly elected as the first chairperson of TECAQ in 2009, defeating Awuol Akol Achuoth. Bány Ajak Deng Biar formed his administration with Abuoi Garang Kheer as deputy, Kwer Joh Duot as Secretary General, and Deng Chol Riak-Magany as Treasurer. His leadership lasted approximately five years (2009-2014).

The second TECAQ leadership contest in 2014 saw the election of Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer, who prevailed against Diing Nyuon Akoi and Mabior Achuoth Mabior. Reportedly, due to internal political dynamics, the Kongor community had initially put forward three candidates – Diing Nyuon Akoi, Deng-Akak Biowei Awuol and Kwer Joh Duot – but only Diing Nyuon Akoi ultimately contested the chairperson position, as regulations limited the field to three candidates. Diing Nyuon Akoi instead ran for and won the deputy chairperson position against Kwer Joh Duot. Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer formed his administration with Diing Nyuon Akoi as deputy, Deng Chol Riak-Magany as Secretary General, and Dhieu Arok Ajang as Treasurer. His leadership lasted approximately three years (2014-2017). The first two TECAQ leadership contests, won by Bány Ajak Deng Biar and Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer respectively, were conducted largely as one-day events without formal campaign periods, with voting done by show of hands rather than secret ballot. Only the chairperson position (and occasionally the deputy chairperson) was contested, with the remaining positions appointed by the elected chairperson.

"The Kongor community had to conduct their primary election to select one candidate to send to the Twic general assembly. Kwer Joh emerged the winner, defeating both Diing Nyuon and Deng-Akak Biowei, who secured zero vote. It was alleged that lobbying was done by Kwer Joh's detractors who ganged up to block him from nomination at the community hall. I nominated Abuoi Garang Kheer, Garang Kooch nominated Diing Nyuon, and another person nominated Mabior Achuoth. As only three nominees were required, Kwer Joh was blocked from contesting the Twic leadership, and Abuoi Garang won against Diing Nyuon and Mabior Achuoth. It was alleged that my decision to nominate Abuoi Garang was influenced by Deng-Akak as revenge to get back at Kwer Joh for Deng-Akak getting zero votes during the Kongor primary election," explained Gen. Dau Wach Deng. "When three candidates (Kwer Joh Duot, Diing Akoi Nyuon, and Deng-Akak Biowei Awuol) from Kongor expressed interest in contesting the community association leadership position, Yuotdit Pageer, as Kongor community leader, convened a meeting at my house to deliberate on which person among the three interested candidates Kongor should send to contest the community election. There was an expectation that each community should front only one candidate, and it was understood that three candidates from Kongor was a guaranteed loss of the contest as they would dilute

their voting base. A primary election was conducted, and Kwer won to proceed to contest the election. However, at the community hall, a secret deal was cooked to block Kwer Joh, Kongor's choice, and instead the general assembly ended up nominating Abuoi Garang, Diing Nyuon, and Mabior Achuo, explained Manyok Monychol Lueth, former campaign manager for Dau Mabil Aweeer.

"The first two leadership administrations were chosen by nomination, as Twic customary system discourages naked pursuit of power," explained Abuoi Garang Kheer, the second chairperson of TECAQ. "Our main challenge was that the first two administrations were inexperienced in terms of control over community affairs, and it was often the case that the community would conduct their parallel activities, which often interrupted and undermined TECAQ activities. We are the first or second generation in Twic Dinka history to establish and run a community association (Akutnhom); therefore, we do not have historical reference or precedent to educate and guide ourselves in running the association. Later, it was resolved to encourage open contest by self-declaration, and the first candidates to self-declare were Anyieth Duom, Dau Mabil, and Diing Nyuon." One of the significant challenges during these first two TECAQ administrations was managing the transition from dominant youth associations to emerging community associations. The debate centered on whether Twic community should maintain distinct youth and community associations as separate entities or convert existing youth associations into community associations. Proponents of conversion argued that since community associations were being established by former youth association members, transforming existing youth organizations would be more practical than maintaining separate entities.

Ultimately, advocates for maintaining two distinct associations prevailed, resulting in the Twic East community establishing both youth and community associations as separate entities. A similar debate occurred in the Bor community, where the 'One Bor' faction under Khor Abuol Dot advocated for reforming youth associations into community associations, while the 'Bor Values' faction under Herjok Apech Herjok supported separate associations for youth and community, as was implemented in the Twic East community. Those supporting the transformation of youth associations into community organizations feared that an exodus of youth from existing associations into new community associations would diminish the relevance of youth associations in community affairs. This concern proved valid, as demonstrated by the lack of interest in the chairperson position for the Twic East youth association in Queensland (TEYAQ), which Bány Thoor Akoi Kiir have held for years without election. Indeed, the formation of TECA significantly diminished interest in youth association leadership across Australia, which stands in sharp contrast to Twic politics in Juba, where both the Twic East Community (TECA-Juba) and its Youth Association (TEYA-Juba) are thriving and expanding. Elections for the positions of community and youth association chairperson in Juba spark intense political campaigns that rival national elections, attracting widespread attention and dedicated coverage from the South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC), the national television broadcaster.

Part 3: Big Boyz Clubs – The Enduring Politics of TECAA-DCR and TECAA-KDA Factions in the Twic East Community Leadership in Australia.

The year 2016 marked the dramatic emergence of two dominant political factions that have since defined Twic East community politics in Australia: TECAA-DCR under Bány Deng Chol Riak-Magany and TECAA-KDA under Bány Kwer Dau Apai. In April 2016, before the conclusion of Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer's administration in 2017, federal elections for the

chairperson position of Twic East Community Association in Australia (TECAA) commenced to replace the first TECAA administration under Yaak Deng-Malwal Akoy as chairperson, Mangar Ayuel Malwal as deputy, Ustaz Wach Duot Wach as Secretary General and Mabior Kon as Treasurer. "TECAA was mostly dormant until Chol Mawai Majok, who was youth leader in Adelaide, convened a federal youth conference in Queensland to establish federal youth leadership, leading to an election contest between Chol Mawai and Kut Manyang. Chol Mawai defeated Kut to become the first federal youth leader. That youth leadership jolted TECAA from their deep slumber. By that time, Yaak Deng-Malwal had returned to South Sudan and Mang'ar Ayuel, the acting chair, was impressed by the youth leadership contest and thus convened a Twic conference to select new leadership for TECAA," explained Kwir Garangthii Bul Bior.

In 2016, Bány Deng Chol Riak resigned from his position as Secretary General in Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer's state administration to contest the federal chairmanship against Bány Kwer Dau Apai of Sydney, NSW. Following his resignation, Dau Mabil Aweer was appointed Secretary General in 2016, stepping in to fill the vacancy left by Deng Chol's entry into the federal race. In a hotly contested election, Bány Kwer Dau Apai squarely defeated Bány Deng Chol Riak in April 2016 and formed the second TECA-Australia administration with Biar Manyuon Biar (Biar Biar) as deputy, Biar Ajang Garang as Secretary General, and Mamer Atem Duom as Treasurer. While Bány Kwer Dau Apai decisively defeated Bány Deng Chol Riak, the significant contest between these two giants birthed the two dominant factions, TECAA-KDA under Bány Kwer Dau Apai and TECAA-DCR under Bány Deng Chol Riak, which have dominated Twic politics in Australia since 2016.

In January 2017, Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer's administration concluded, and Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh was elected on 8 January 2017 as TECAQ chairperson, defeating rivals Dau Mabil Aweer and Diing Nyuon Akoi. Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh formed the third TECAQ administration with Gen. Dau Wach Deng as deputy, Gakheer Dut-Mageer Ajak as Secretary General, and Atem Ajang-Magwer Nuer as Treasurer. His leadership lasted approximately two years from 2017 to 2019. By this time, the competing TECAA-DCR and TECAA-KDA factions had become the dominant political forces in Twic politics, with every election at both federal and state levels viewed as an existential contest between these factions. The election of Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh was largely interpreted as a triumph of the TECAA-DCR faction over the TECAA-KDA faction, with momentous implications for the 2018 federal election following Bány Kwer Dau Apai's term and the 2019 Queensland state election following Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh's term.

Bány Deng Chol Riak, who had been defeated two years prior, announced his candidacy for the 2018 TECAA chairperson position, receiving enthusiastic support from TECAA-DCR and fervent opposition from TECAA-KDA, which backed the rival candidacy of Manyok Ajak Mabil from Adelaide, South Australia. Anyieth Duom Angoh explained: "In 2018, when the term of Kwer Dau concluded, Deng Chol Riak called to notify me that he was interested in running for the TECAA chairperson position for the second time. Thereafter, Kuol Atem Kuol also called me to advise that he was also interested in running for the federal chairperson position. It was a requirement that any candidate interested in running for federal office must notify their respective chairperson, who would then notify the federal office. The reason was that it was a requirement for any two or more candidates from one state to participate in a primary election to pick one person who would then proceed to the federal level."

The fierce contest and intense political maneuvering between the factions manifested in three primary arenas during the 2018 federal election cycle: The determination of candidates, the nomination of Electoral Committee (EC) members and the selection of the EC chairperson and the conduct of the election. The first arena was the determination of candidates. For the first time in Twic politics in Australia, the two factions fielded rival candidates at the state level in both Queensland and Adelaide. The TECAA-KDA faction fronted Kuol Atem Kuol against Bány Deng Chol Riak in Queensland primaries, while the TECAA-DCR faction backed Juach Lueth Juach against Manyok Ajak Mabil in Adelaide primaries. Community observers noted that each faction strategically fielded candidates to block their opponents' candidates in primary elections. Unfortunately for the TECAA-KDA faction, Manyok Ajak Mabil was eliminated in the Adelaide primary, while Kuol Atem Kuol failed to block Bány Deng Chol Riak in the June 2018 Queensland primary. Consequently, much to TECAA-KDA's disappointment, the federal election became a contest between Bány Deng Chol Riak, the supreme leader of TECAA-DCR, and Juach Lueth Juach, originally fielded by TECAA-DCR to neutralize Manyok Ajak Mabil.

The second arena of factional rivalry emerged in the nomination of electoral committee members for the 2018 federal election. Ordinarily, each state or territory nominated one electoral committee (EC) member, typically selected by the state chairperson in a general assembly meeting with sufficient quorum. For the 2016 federal election, TECAQ chairperson Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer had nominated Mawut Mabior Chol as the Queensland electoral committee representative. However, the 2018 nomination process was marred by bitter controversy reflecting TECAA-DCR and TECAA-KDA factional politics. Since EC members conducted the federal election and effectively announced the winner in the factions' political calculus, the nomination was highly contentious. Acrimonious disagreement within Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh's administration led to the Chairperson (perceived as leaning TECAA-DCR) nominating Adoor Deng Ngon, while the Secretary General Gakheer Dut-Mageer Ajak (seen as leaning TECAA-KDA) nominated Yai Atem Dut. When community elders' mediation failed, both Adoor Deng Ngon and Yai Atem Dut were dispatched to represent Queensland at the federal level, creating a dilemma for Bány Kwer Dau Apai, the outgoing TECAA chairperson and supreme leader of TECAA-KDA.

"Chairperson Anyieth Duom was reluctant to convene a general assembly meeting to deliberate on the nomination of the EC member due to fear of being overruled in the choice of his preferred candidate to represent Queensland at the federal level. Majority of the members of Anyieth's administration under Secretary General Gakheer Dut had rebelled against him, and he had lost their support except for his deputy Dau Wach," explained Manyok Monychol Lueth. However, Chairperson Anyieth Duom countered: "It was a requirement that each state send one EC member to the federal EC, and the selection was done by the chairperson. It did not require the involvement of the general assembly. Therefore, I commissioned John Adoor Deng to represent our state at the federal election and sent his name to Kwer Dau. My secretary, who was away when I commissioned John Adoor, came back later and contested the nomination of John Adoor. He convened his own meeting, selected Yai Atem Dut, and sent his name to Kwer Dau as well."

The third arena of factional rivalry manifested in selecting the chairperson for the electoral committee and conducting the 2018 federal election. With Queensland sending two rival electoral committee members while other states contributed only one member each, Bány Kwer Dau Apai confronted a significant challenge. Compounding this issue, the nominated electoral committee members convened independently and formed a federal electoral committee that included both Queensland members and elected Adoor Deng Ngon as committee chairperson.

This created a dilemma for Bány Kwer Dau Apai, who sought to maintain the principle of one electoral committee member per state. Seeking to uphold the one-member-per-state principle, Bány Kwer Dau Apai decided to dismiss both disputed Queensland representatives from the federal electoral committee. However, the TECAA-DCR faction accused him of targeting the elected EC Chairperson, whom they perceived as sympathetic to their faction, rather than simply enforcing rules. While Bány Kwer Dau Apai maintained his action was principled, TECAA-DCR alleged his true motive was opposition to Adoor Deng Ngon's election as EC chair.

“I was one of the Electoral Committee (EC) members during the federal election between Deng Chol Riak and Juach Lueth. After being nominated to represent Queensland, I was elected by my peers as EC Chair to oversee the process. However, then-TECAA Chair Kwer Dau Apai objected to my appointment, alleging that I was too close to Deng Chol Riak. His opposition sparked a significant controversy that nearly derailed the entire election,” explained Adoor Deng Ngon. “It appears Chairperson Kwer Dau was suspicious of John Adoor Deng, suspecting him of eyeing his seat as Chairperson. John Adoor was chosen as EC chairperson and had called for Kwer Dau to step down as chair so that the EC could run the election. Moreover, around this time, the administration of Kwer Dau was in turmoil, and Kwer had lost the confidence and support of his team members except his deputy Biar Biar. Thus, Kwer Dau was suspicious that EC chairperson John Adoor Deng was after his leadership position,” explained Gakheer Dut-Magheer Ajak. “There was speculation that John Adoor Deng was purposely tapped by Deng Chol Riak to become head of the federal EC,” states Gen. Dau Wach Deng.

The controversy over disputed Queensland's representation and the election of Adoor Deng Ngon as federal electoral committee chairperson nearly derailed the federal election process. Around this time, Bishop Gabriel Thuch Agoth Deng of Kongor Diocese, Bishop Gabriel Kuol Garang of Wernyol Diocese, and Bishop Elijah Abuoi Arok arrived in Australia from Africa and were invited to attend the Twic federal election as observers. Therefore, it took the intervention of Bishop Gabriel Thuch Agoth Deng, Bishop Gabriel Kuol Garang, and Bishop Elijah Abuoi Arok, who successfully mediated a compromise to the rancorous dispute. The factions reluctantly agreed to include both Queensland representatives in the federal electoral committee, with Adoor Deng Ngon remaining as chairperson. This compromise resulted in Queensland having two committee members while other states had only one each, a problematic outcome for the TECAA-KDA faction, which had lost in primaries in both Queensland and Adelaide and now faced an election presided over by EC chair they perceived as a TECAA-DCR sympathizer, with neither of their preferred candidates on the ballot. Nonetheless, in a strategic pivot, the TECAA-KDA faction embraced Juach Lueth Juach and threw their mighty support behind his candidacy against TECAA-DCR's supreme leader, Bány Deng Chol Riak. The TECAA-KDA faction's previously dim prospects seemed revitalized, convinced they could now defeat Bány Deng Chol Riak for a second time, tossing him into the dustbin of history. This bewildering development created a political nightmare for Bány Deng Chol Riak, who had thought victory was secured after the primaries. Juach Lueth Juach, initially fielded by TECAA-DCR to block Manyok Ajak Mabil, now posed an existential threat to Bány Deng Chol Riak's political ambitions, attracting support from all his partisan opponents and detractors. However, in what observers hailed as a strategic masterstroke straight out of *The Art of War*, Bány Deng Chol Riak reportedly held a secret meeting with Juach Lueth Juach and persuaded him to withdraw from the race at the last minute, effectively leaving himself as the sole candidate.

"We in the EC heard rumors that Juach Lueth was planning to quit the race, and I told Juach to compete and, if successful, to later resign if he were not interested in the TECAA chairperson position and hand over the leadership to his deputy. It appeared at first as if he had listened to the advice, but he dropped out at the last minute, leaving Deng Chol Riak as the unopposed candidate. Consequently, the EC made the decision that there would be no need for voting, and Deng Chol Riak was declared the elected chairperson of TECAA," explained Adoor Deng Ngon, former head of federal EC. "It was widely suspected that Juach Lueth would drop out of the race a few weeks after defeating Manyok Ajak Mabil in the primary election in Sydney, but he was reportedly pressured by the Ajuong community to proceed with the race and contest against Deng Chol Riak. However, at the community hall during election day, Juach Lueth publicly declared that he was giving a chance to Deng Chol Riak and would wait for another chance to serve the Twic community in Australia," explained Manyok Monychol Lueth, former campaign manager for Dau Mabil Aweer.

As the unopposed candidate, Bány Deng Chol Riak was declared the winner by electoral committee chairperson Adoor Deng Ngon, much to the chagrin of the TECAA-KDA faction. The TECAA-KDA faction felt deceived by these tactics and protested that Juach Lueth Juach had blocked Manyok Ajak Mabil during Adelaide primaries only to withdraw at the last moment, leaving Bány Deng Chol Riak unopposed. They argued that Juach Lueth Juach, having blocked their preferred candidate in the primary, should have withdrawn earlier if uninterested, rather than dropping out at the last minute, rendering Bány Deng Chol Riak unopposed. Some demanded a pause in the election to allow Manyok Ajak Mabil to re-enter the race. However, EC Chairperson Adoor Deng Ngon ruled that the TECAA-Australia constitution did not specify a deadline for candidate withdrawal, asserting that Juach Lueth Juach had the right and freedom to withdraw at any time. Following further intervention by Bishop Gabriel Thuch Agoth Deng, Bishop Gabriel Kuol Garang, and Bishop Elijah Abuoi Arok to ease tensions, Bány Deng Chol Riak-Magany was confirmed by the general assembly as the duly elected TECAA-Australia chairperson on 01 December 2018.

Bány Deng Chol Riak formed the third TECA-Australia administration with Garang Juach Thiew as deputy, Ayiik Chol Anyang as Secretary General, and Mamer Yaak Dutdit as Treasurer. His leadership lasted approximately two years, from December 2018 to April 2021. Beyond the controversial candidate withdrawal, another significant controversy during Bány Deng Chol Riak's tenure was a constitutional amendment, fiercely contested by the TECAA-KDA faction. His administration established a constitutional amendment committee headed by Garang Deng Ghak-Awuot and Akoi Bol Nyuon which enacted key amendments included: Extending the chairperson's term limit from two years to a three-year single term; changing the election policy from all positions being contestable to only the chairperson being elected and empowering the elected chairperson to appoint their administration from like-minded individuals to strengthen unity of purpose and reduce office conflicts, and abolishing the requirement that administration members be selected with input from state chairpersons to ensure state representation at the federal level. The TECAA-KDA faction opposed these amendments, accusing Bány Deng Chol Riak's administration of unilaterally selecting the amendment committee without broader community input, and dismissing the entire process as a 'Zoom amendment' approved by only twelve people online, claiming it lacked legitimacy and did not represent the will of Twic East community in Australia.

"Garang Deng Ghak's electoral committee introduced two amendments: extending the two-year single term to a three-year single term for the chairperson position, and introducing three electable positions, chairperson, deputy chair, and secretary general, in a joint ticket. Thus,

when Mamer Yaak Dudit won against Bul Gew, they won as a joint ticket of three people alongside his deputy Mabior Mabil Atem and Secretary General Makwach Mabior Deng. The rest of the positions were nominated by Chairperson Mamer after the election," explained Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior, former SG under Chairperson Garang Malwal Jok.

The controversy surrounding the so-called 'Zoom Amendment' was ultimately overtaken by political events when Bány Deng Chol Riak was succeeded by his former Treasurer, Mamer Yaak Dudit, who became the current chairperson of TECAA. Elected on 11 April 2021, Bány Mamer Yaak Dudit defeated Manyok Ajak Mabil in the Adelaide primary election and subsequently won against Bul Gew Ayuel and Deng Garang Bul in the federal election. Bány Mamer Yaak Dudit received backing from the TECAA-DCR faction, while Manyok Ajak Mabil and Bul Gew Ayuel were supported by TECAA-KDA. Deng Garang Bul ran as an independent candidate. Bány Mamer Yaak Dudit formed the fourth TECA-Australia administration with Mabior Mabil Atem-Agiei as deputy, Makwach Maboor Deng as Secretary General, Jonglei Kwereng Dau as Treasurer and Awai Piok Kheer as Media Director.

Part 4: Transforming Tradition: How Bány Garang Malwal Jok's Administration Revolutionized Twic East Leadership in Queensland, Australia.

The longstanding political rivalry between the TECAA-KDA and TECAA-DCR factions intensified and reached new heights following the controversial federal election victory of Bány Deng Chol Riak, as bitter factional discord spilled over from federal to state elections across Australia. Each contest became a high-stake political battle between the two factions, exemplified in Queensland's state election held just four months after the contentious federal election. This political dynamic was evident in the April 2019 Queensland election to succeed the third TECAQ chairperson, Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh, whose term had concluded. Two candidates vied for the chairperson position: Gen. Dau Wach Deng, the outgoing deputy chairperson, and Dau Mabil Aweer, previous contender defeated by the outgoing chairperson. Simultaneously, Khot Dau Ghak and Mathiang Garang Piok competed for the Secretary General position. The election reflected the broader factional divide, with Gen. Dau Wach Deng and Mathiang Garang Piok backed by TECAA-DCR, while Dau Mabil Aweer and Khot Dau Ghak supported by TECAA-KDA, still reeling from its loss at the federal level and was therefore eager for political redemption at the state level. Nevertheless, with Bány Deng Chol Riak leading federally, TECAA-DCR was confident of securing another victory, aiming to solidify its dominance across Australia and sent TECAA-KDA to the dustbin of political history.

When election results were announced, Gen. Dau Wach Deng defeated Dau Mabil Aweer for chairperson, while Khot Dau Ghak prevailed over Mathiang Garang Piok for Secretary General. However, Dau Mabil Aweer disputed the results, alleging the election was rigged by a group of influential individuals he dubbed "a group of 23" (G-23) who had reportedly met and strategized to ensure his defeat. "From the onset, the system was manipulated, and we felt like pulling out of the state election. But because of our love for Twic Panda, we decided not to pull out but instead to reject the results of the election so as not to embarrass Twic community," explained Dau Mabil Aweer who received support from TECAA-KDA adherents throughout Queensland who echoed his claims of electoral manipulation by the "Group of 23." Unlike the federal election where compromise eventually prevailed, Queensland's post-election impasse remained unresolved, with factions establishing parallel administrations under Gen. Dau Wach Deng and Dau Mabil Aweer respectively. Though Khot Dau Ghak initially won the Secretary General role, he declined to serve under Gen. Dau Wach Deng and resigned in

solidarity with Dau Mabil Aweer. Following his declared victory on 06 April 2019, Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng formed the fourth TECAQ administration with Kwir-Masinde Chol Atem as deputy, Mathiang Garang Piok as Secretary General and Dut Deng Dut as Treasurer. This administration lasted approximately four years, from April 2019 to January 2023. Meanwhile, Dau Mabil Aweer's supporters established a separate administration popularly known as Twic Care, aligned with TECAA-KDA at the federal level.

"The Group of 23 (G-23) began with a lobbying campaign and secret meetings at Richland Hotel in Brisbane for the TECAQ chairperson position. The lobbying was modeled on the lobbying campaign at the federal level that resulted in the dropping out of Juach Lueth in favor of Deng Chol Riak. It was said to be the turn of Kongor payam, and intense lobbying and frequent meetings were conducted at Richland Hotel, Brisbane, with Deng Biowei leading the pack of those vying to succeed Anyieth Duom. I declared my candidature and an impromptu primary election was conducted, which ended in a draw, with both of us garnering the same number of votes. Akoi Bol Nyuon was Secretary General for the meeting and was therefore taking notes. He was asked to cast his vote to break the tie and cast his vote in favor of Deng Biowei who was declared the winner. However, few days later, Deng-Akak Biowei dropped out due to personal circumstances, and I became the default candidate for the G-23 camp. I then ran and defeated Dau Mabil Aweer to succeed Anyieth Duom," explained Gen. Dau Wach Deng.

"I was the campaign manager for Dau Mabil Aweer's contest against Dau Wach Deng. Dau Mabil reportedly garnered about 246 votes against 256 votes for Dau Wach, who was declared the winner for a vote difference of only 10 people. To Twic Care, the election results were manipulated, and we rejected the declaration of Dau Wach as the winner. There are several issues as to why we disputed the election results as fraudulent and thus invalid. First, ballot papers were printed unilaterally by the chairperson, and they were never counted nor verified. Second, hall attendance was not counted, and some people voted more than once. Most importantly, there was a major discrepancy between the registered members and the final vote count of those who voted to elect Dau Wach, which showed that the election was rigged," explained Manyok Monychol Lueth, former campaign manager for Dau Mabil Aweer.

Queensland's leadership thus fractured into rival camps: TECAQ-Group of 23 associated with Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng and TECAQ-Twic Care associated with Bány Dau Mabil Aweer, whose persistent bickering threatened community progress. Observers noted that "Group of 23" functioned essentially as TECAA-DCR at the state level, while "Twic Care" was basically an incarnation TECAA-KDA in Queensland. Thus, Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng's administration faced a protracted legitimacy battle against the parallel Twic Care leadership, which branded his government illegitimate, alleging it was controlled by the "Group of 23" and brought to power through a rigged election. This bitter political feud persisted throughout Gen. Dau Wach Deng's tenure. In 2021, an intervention by the 'Twic Elders for Peace,' led by Ustaz Wach Duot Wach, Chol Kwereng Agook and Ajak-thii Deng Biar, recommended dismissing both leaders to enable a fresh election. However, federal TECAA Chairperson Bány Deng Chol Riak overruled the elders' decision, citing bias among the elders, and reinstated Bány Gen. Dau Wach Deng to conduct the state election. Bány Deng Chol Riak rejected the recommendation from the elders, declaring, "It was not up to you to conclude the case, but to make a recommendation to me as the TECAA chairperson to make a decision."

It was amid this renewed controversy that Bány Mamer Yaak Dutdit won the federal election, defeating both Bul Gew Ayuel and Deng Garang Bul. Shortly thereafter, Bány Gen. Dau Wach

Deng experienced disagreements with Bány Mamer Yaak Dutdit's administration, defected from the TECAA-DCR faction, and co-founded a new independent third party, "Twic Citizen (TC)," alongside Bul Gew Ayuel, Akech Adoor Deng-Awertok, Biar Manyuon Biar, Ajak-Matiop Deng Biar, and Ayiik Garang-Weet Ajak. This unexpected radical realignment further complicated the political landscape in Queensland and the factional chaos persisted until January 2023, when Bány Deng Atem-Tiordit Deng, supreme leader of Twic Global Desk (comprising TECA-Australia, TECA-USA, TECA-Canada, TECA-Juba and TECA-Panyagor), intervened to resolve the partisan divisions and facilitate elections for a new TECAQ leadership. After consulting community elders and meeting with both parallel leaderships, Bány Deng Atem-Tiordit secured agreement from both Gen. Dau Wach Deng and Dau Mabil Aweer to pursue peace, dissolve their rival administrations and form a new electoral committee for state elections. Major points of contention included the electoral committee composition and whether all positions should be open for contest or only the chairperson position. For the electoral committee, Twic Care nominated Bány Ajak-thii Deng Biar and Kwer Joh Duot, while the general assembly put forward Thiew Atem-Gutbeer Achideer and Ajang-Ajeidi Deng Duot, with Bány Deng Atem-Tiordit supervising the election.

"Deng Atem-Tiordit was a principled and forthright leader, unyielding in his convictions and unafraid to confront difficult issues head-on. His leadership was marked by clarity, decisiveness, and a refusal to bend to factional pressure. Yet, as the election season unfolded, factional maneuvering resurfaced. Some members from the political blocs attempted to contest positions that, according to the electoral terms of reference, were never meant to be up for election. Unbelievably, a few members of the Electoral Committee (EC) appeared to indulge this procedural breach, until Deng Atem-Tiordit intervened with characteristic firmness. Taking to Twic TV, he publicly reaffirmed that only the chairperson's position was to be contested, while all other roles would be appointed by the winning candidate," recalled Thiew Atem. "The point of contention was the question of which positions should be contestable and the formation of the electoral committee (EC). Those from Twic Care brought their two nominees for the EC: Ajak Deng Biar and Kwer Joh. The general assembly argued that since the community had been united by Deng Atem-Tiordit, the EC should be nominated by the general assembly, not the two factions, as that would perpetuate political factionalism and defeat the logic of the just-concluded unity. However, the Twic Care camp rejected that argument, and thus the general assembly nominated Thiew Atem and Ajang-Ajeidi Deng Duot as the other two members of the EC alongside Ajak Deng Biar and Kwer Joh," explained Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior.

Regarding election format, TECAA-KDA advocated opening all positions for contest, while TECAA-DCR favored electing only the chairperson, who would then nominate their administration, to prevent forcing a leader to work with politically disloyal individuals or adversaries, potentially leading to volatile administrations. Examples cited included the suspension of Biar Ajang Garang under Bány Kwer Dau Apai, the dismissal of Akech Adoor Deng-Awertok under Bány Mamer Yaak Dutdit, and the fallout with Gakheer Dut-Mageer Ajak under Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh, all illustrating potential conflicts arising from political differences within a single administration. Moreover, community elders and factional leaders had advised Bány Deng Atem-Tiordit that historical precedent showed variation: the 2014 election of Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer contested both chairperson and deputy positions, while Gen. Dau Wach Deng's 2019 election saw both chairperson and secretary general positions contested. During elections of Bány Ajak-thii Deng Biar (2009) and Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh (2017), only the chairperson position was contested. After considering all perspectives, Bány Deng Atem-Tiordit endorsed electing only the chairperson as a means to reduce political discord and factional politics.

It was into this contentious political landscape that Bány Garang Malwal Jok Piok, popularly known as Mony Abuk, declared his candidacy for the TECAQ chairmanship in January 2023. Campaigning under the slogan "Twic Willpower" and vision of "A leadership that will deliver for all," Bány Garang Malwal Jok pledged to strengthen unity by restoring trust and mutual respect, address youth challenges and needs, recognize and empower women leadership, establish a council of elders, support incarcerated youth through church leaders, link vulnerable community members with service providers, and facilitating professional advice on pertinent issues including mental health and domestic violence. On 14 January 2023, Bány Garang Malwal Jok was elected TECAQ chairperson, defeating Gakheer Dut-Mageer Ajak, to form the fifth TECAQ administration with Yaak Barach-Magaar Dau as deputy, Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior as Secretary General, and Chol Awang Duot as Treasurer. His leadership lasted two years until January 26, 2025, when Yaak Barach-Magaar Dau was elected unopposed after no candidates from either faction contested the position.

Former Secretary General Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior explained that Bány Garang Malwal Jok's administration achieved transformational progress rooted in its campaign manifesto, fundamentally reducing factional politics and revolutionizing Twic East leadership in Queensland. First, the administration amended the TECAQ constitution through a committee comprising Chol Mawaai Majok, Garang Kooch Mabioor, Chol Gakheer Dut, and Ayual Jok Alaak, producing a comprehensive document which was approved and submitted to the Office of Fair Trade for regulatory compliance. Key constitutional changes included: endorsing a system in which only the chairperson is elected, with the authority to appoint like-minded individuals to their administration to reduce internal conflict; establishing a fixed, single three-year term, thereby standardizing a tenure that had previously varied, ranging from five years under Bány Ajak Deng Biar, to four years under Bány Abuoi Garang Kheer and Bány Dau Wach Deng, and two years under Bány Anyieth Duom Angoh and Bány Garang Malwal Jok; introducing a defined campaign period for candidates to present their manifestos, replacing the earlier practice of holding one-day election events; and reinforcing the use of secret ballots in place of the old-fashioned show-of-hands voting method. Second, the administration introduced and enforced popular community norms and regulations, including: mandating event safety and midnight finishing time policy with \$200 fines for violations, which improved time management and reduced sleep-driving risks; reducing food wastage by limiting meal preparation primarily to significant occasions like funerals or welcoming guests, which reduced food wastage and conserved resources when the administration welcomed and provided hospitality to 11 visitors in its first year and 22 in its second; developing and implementing a shared community event calendar to improve planning, prevent conflicting events, reduce tensions, and encourage better attendance and community harmony, and actively promoting collaboration and partnerships with other community organizations, to enhance TECAQ's visibility and recognition in Queensland.

Third, Bány Garang Malwal Jok's administration marked a transformative departure from divisive politics to emphasizing work and unity ("luoi ku mät") by enacting a new constitution and renewing the association's registration certificate to ensure regulatory compliance; conducting a successful community fundraiser that raised over AUD \$80,000 for a community hall, with an exceptional 98% pledge collection rate, which demonstrated strong community support; completing outstanding audits for the seven years from 2016 to 2023 to restore compliance and improve record-keeping; establishing a Feasibility Study Committee under Ms. Bor Majok Tuil, Kwir Garang-thii Bul Bior and Bány Deng Chol Riak-Magany to research the costs and logistics of purchasing a community hall, which laid groundwork for the

successful fundraiser; creating a Grant-Writing Committee headed by Makwei Mabioor Deng and Thiew Atem-Gutbeer Achideer to seek future funding and link vulnerable community members with service providers; organizing major outdoor community events such as Family Fun Day, Father's Day and Mother's Day barbecues; and commissioning the first external auditing report and a comprehensive administration report for the period January 2023 to January 2025 detailing accomplishments, challenges, financial status, constitutional amendments, and policy implementations.

What distinguished Bány Garang Malwal Jok's approach was his revolutionary shift in priorities, elevating community development and unity above factional politics. Former TECAQ chair aspirant Deng-Akak Biowei Awuol recalled: "Before Garang Malwal Jok's leadership, our community meetings often devolved into arguments between factions. The Group of 23 and Twic Care would transform even simple decisions into political standoffs. Little was accomplished because the focus was on political maneuvering rather than community welfare." Former TECAQ Secretary General winner, Khot-Attack Dau Ghak Bior, explained the shift: "Both factions were deeply frustrated and had lost interest in the leadership contest. Even the faction that brought him to power felt sidelined by Garang, while the opposing camp eventually came to respect and acknowledge his leadership. The two camps were exhausted, wary of each other, and ultimately chose, of their own accord, not to field a candidate. They recognized that Garang's politics had transcended their rivalry." Former Secretary General Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior attributed the success to several factors: "Bány Garang Malwal's administration succeeded because its leadership prioritized tangible outcomes, focusing on community activities and projects that delivered visible benefits rather than chasing symbolic political victories. It practiced transparent governance through open financial reporting and inclusive decision-making, which helped build trust across factional lines. Most importantly, it celebrated shared heritage by organizing cultural events that highlighted common identity over political divisions."

Ms Amer Mayen Dhieu, a professional child protection practitioner, observed that Bány Garang Malwal Jok "understood that our community needed healing more than it needed another political contest. He made everyone feel heard without taking sides in old disputes. More importantly, he redirected our energy toward helping those affected by issues within Australia such as youth crime and access to social services." Bány Garang Malwal Jok's leadership proved so effective that upon completing his two-year term in January 2025, the previously unthinkable occurred: no candidates from either faction contested the position. Community observers suggest this reflected widespread satisfaction with Bány Garang Malwal Jok's unifying approach and a reluctance to revert to past factional divisions. "For the first time, I saw members from both G-23 and Twic Care working together on community initiatives without tension," Ms Amer Mayen Dhieu. "That's Bány Garang Malwal Jok's most significant achievement, making unity practical rather than just aspirational."

Part 5: Belling the Cat: Why no candidate from either political faction came forward to contest the election after Bány Garang Malwal's term concluded.

Bány Garang Malwal Jok's leadership proved so transformative that upon completing his two-year term in January 2025, an unprecedented event occurred: no candidates from either political faction contested the chairperson position for the Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ). Community observers suggest this reflected widespread satisfaction with Bány Garang Malwal Jok's unifying approach and a collective reluctance to revert to the factional divisions that had previously characterized Twic East leadership in Queensland.

Below are records of conversations with TECAQ leaders explaining why no candidates from either political faction came forward to contest the chairperson position for the Twic East Community Association in Queensland (TECAQ) after Bāny Garang Malwal Jok's term concluded.

1. Conversation with Garang Malwal Jok (Friday, 09/05/2025):

"I am profoundly grateful for my team, without them, this administration would not have succeeded. We entered leadership with one heart and one mind, united in purpose. When we began, the community was fractured by factional rivalries. Leadership had devolved into political posturing and empty rhetoric rather than vision and service. I witnessed firsthand the destructive impact of partisan politics during the leadership tenures of Dau Wach and Dau Mabil. Initially, I attempted to resolve the conflict by bringing in neutral figures from both camps, but I failed. That failure prompted me to become the change I wanted to see in our community. I asked myself what I could contribute to the community, rather than what it could provide for me. Community members began calling upon me to run for office. Some even approached my wife to encourage my candidacy. Politics can be messy, particularly given the toxic environment on social media where people face unwarranted abuse. It represented a risk not only for me but for my innocent family. However, after discussions with my wife, I declared my candidacy. I assembled a team of independent-minded individuals who genuinely loved Twic. We became one body, one soul, one mind, one heart. We refused to let external gossip influence our internal deliberations, only our resolutions and agenda left the room, not rumors entering it. Initially, some doubted our intentions and assumed we were part of the established partisan chaos. Over time, however, even our detractors recognized us for what we truly were: leaders of the community, not partisan warriors. In the early days, people would ask, 'Garang, with whom are you aligned?' I would simply smile and respond, 'I am aligned with the Twic community.' Our team worked entirely for the community, jointly as a collective and independently as individuals, each contributing according to their capacity. We avoided micromanagement, creating a genuine sense of ownership within our leadership and the broader community. This approach enabled our spectacular success in dismantling the factional politics we inherited. We introduced a new political culture focused on action and development rather than chest-thumping and empty rhetoric. We delivered unity (mät) and development (luoi) while discarding the zero-sum politics of 'be raan guut nyin.' Once we replaced divisive politics with community progress, the factions lost both their reason and desire to contest. They had nothing meaningful to campaign on. Moreover, times are changing. In Australia, our people are increasingly committed to their families and their children's futures. There is diminishing appetite for controversy-driven community politics. While people enjoy drama, few truly cherish the politics of unity and development. This shift in priorities also contributed to the lack of factional candidates in the election. We undermined factionalism by transforming Twic politics from chaos and division to peace, unity, and progress. We promoted inclusion and participation, actively involving respected community members and former leaders in important roles. For example, Ajak Deng Biar and Abuoi Garang led the recent electoral committee; Deng Chol Riak headed the feasibility study committee; and Chol Mawai, Garang Kooch, and Chol Gaker worked on the constitutional amendment committee. This approach gave everyone a stake in the process and ownership of the outcomes. Consequently, few people have attempted to attack us on social media, they simply have little to criticize. I sought leadership to model a new kind of politics in our community. People lobbied me to run, even calling my wife to persuade me. Our administration broke the cycle of division and introduced a politics of peace, unity, and development. I drew inspiration from Twic aphorisms such as 'Kon-Koch,' 'loi e math,' and 'lier e poi e Twicda', reminders that

even in politics, the community must chart a better path for its future, especially for our children. I often observe that the Twic community in Queensland mirrors our forefathers who founded Kongor, Adhiok, Ayual, Ajuong, Pakeer, Dachuek, Awulian, and Abek. These clans were established by individuals who migrated and settled based on relationships and shared purpose. Today in Queensland, we are the new pioneers. Our children's future lies here in Australia. Few of us will return permanently to our ancestral homeland in Jonglei state. Therefore, our community politics must not only reflect our present generation but also safeguard our children's future. Societies that fight among themselves never progress. We are 'one Wut' in Queensland. This is why when we encounter fellow Queenslanders in Juba, we greet each other warmly and sit together, even away from our own relatives, because we are now one people with intertwined futures. Our politics must reflect and build that future, especially for our children."

2. Conversation with Agwer Ajang-Warken Bior (Saturday, 05/04/2025 & Thursday, 24/04/2025):

"The phenomenal success of Garang Malwal's administration stemmed primarily from the professionalism and teamwork exhibited by the leadership. This extraordinary achievement also explains why no candidates from either faction came forward to contest the chairperson position for the Twic East Community Association in Queensland. In Twic politics generally, and within both factions specifically, the motivation for pursuing politics centers on three key elements: serving the community (Luoi), demonstrating public rhetoric (Ngiëi-Jam), and seeking leadership positions (Bääny). Twic Care has historically identified itself as decent people affiliated with the elders, positioning themselves as public servants and community leaders. In contrast, TECAA-DCR and the Group of 23 present themselves as progressive leaders working for the welfare and interests of the Twic community, while dismissing the opposing group as merely skilled in empty public discourse (koc ke jam abac). The primary reason no candidate from either political faction came forward to contest the chairperson position was the unprecedented level of job satisfaction and approval regarding the remarkable work accomplished by Garang Malwal's administration. Both factions were pleased with our transformative work and consequently felt apprehensive about coming forward to contest the election, recognizing that the exceptional record established by Garang Malwal's administration would be difficult to surpass. Therefore, the main reason for the absence of candidates was the historic level of job satisfaction, exceptional leadership, and the administration's commitment to 'walking the talk rather than talking the talk', governing under the principle of 'promises made, promises kept' by Garang Malwal and his dedicated team."

3. Conversation with Ajakthii Deng Biar (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"Garang Malwal was initially perceived to be from a certain political group, but he eventually came out as an independent person not under the influence of any political faction. I think no candidate came forward to contest the leadership position after Garang Malwal because the two factions fear each other. People are also no longer interested in community leadership because of the realization that it is expensive in terms of time and resources, and also because of the risks associated with community leadership, which is now being boycotted. Our community politics is also fundamentally flawed in that good leaders (Malong) are very reluctant to run for community office and quarrelsome leaders (Matong) are eager to seek community office. Under the customary system, Bääny had to prepare for a long time and was to be nominated, not self-nomination, but nowadays aspiring leaders just wake up one day and declare interest in community leadership. Once they are in leadership, they pursue their

personal interests, not the interest of the community. They don't see issues during their leadership term but create dramas when others are in power. There are even strange cases where some people are at war with others without ever quarreling with each other. This is the major issue why no one came forward to contest community leadership."

4. Conversation with Abuoi Garang Kheer (Sunday, 11/05/2025):

"No candidate came forward to contest the election because of fear of the other opposition political camp, namely Twic Care vs G-23. If one political camp were to come forward, they were not sure of securing support from the other camp and thus felt very unsettled. For example, Twic Care feared that G-23 would not support them and would also isolate themselves during Twic Care administration just like the way Twic Care isolated themselves without participation in community events during the reign of Garang Malwal's administration. On the other hand, G-23 camp did not want to create the impression that the community leadership had become theirs and everyone else was abandoning them to remain with the community leadership. Thus, it has become evidently clear to everyone that community leadership was slowly but surely becoming a burden to top leadership while the rest of the team were laid back without support from wider team or community. Increasingly, personal responsibility has intersected with the demands of grown-up kids and job commitments leaving hardly any time to fully commit to community associations. No one came forward to contest leadership position because there is no support from team members and no support from community in terms of ideas and action and no good attendance of community events and no full participation. If Bäny convenes a meeting and few people turn up and no contribution of ideas and action, then it is not a mystery why no one stepped forward to contest the election after Garang Malwal. The community appears unwilling to share the burden of leadership. There is hardly any patience and interest to listen to other people's ideas and solutions. There is no serious consideration and determination to solve community problems and we love to let the problem persist without resolving the problem. We lack honesty in leadership and yet leadership is honesty in saying the right thing and doing the right action irrespective of the consequences, and history will judge you correctly. Thus, no one came forward because people are afraid of each other, people are scared of Bäny and of the burden of community leadership. This is why no one came forward to contest the election after Garang Malwal's terms ended."

5. Conversation with Anyieth Duom Angoh Panyang (Sunday, 11/05/2025):

"There is considerable fear of losing elections repeatedly, especially after suffering multiple defeats. The opposing camp was defeated during my election against Dau Mabil and again during Dau Wach's election against Dau Mabil. Therefore, Garang Malwal's election served as a litmus test of whether claims of rigged elections were true or false. When Garang Malwal won fairly against Gakheer Dut, it proved beyond reasonable doubt that Twic Care lacked the numbers and their claims of electoral manipulation were unfounded. Some people pursue leadership positions to settle personal scores rather than to serve the community. Garang Malwal learned from previous issues and governed people he had studied and understood. Consequently, there were no major dramas or controversies during his term, partly because he had an excellent team and partly because no federal election occurred during his tenure. His administration successfully changed the leadership narrative from group politics to community service and teamwork. No candidate came forward to contest the election because people fear losing, as electoral defeat is perceived as public humiliation in the eyes of the community. They simply do not want to experience that loss again."

6. Conversation with Gen. Dau Wach Deng (Tuesday, 13/05/2025):

"Conflict has been ongoing, mainly relating to election losses which are not taken kindly by our people. Yet, people lose elections due to lack of agenda for seeking the leadership position. The Twic community is divided into various political camps, starting with the contest between Deng Chol Riak and Kwer Dau, with pronounced ramifications in Queensland politics. That problem was compounded during Anyieth Duom's administration in relation to the nomination of John Adoor Deng as Electoral Commissioner, which was contested by Secretary General Gakheer Dut who nominated his own EC member. This blossomed into a full-blown crisis when Twic Care refused to concede defeat during my election until Deng Atem-Tiordit intervened. When we signed a peace and reconciliation agreement with Dau Mabil to allow a new election, it was agreed that the next administration would be mixed, comprising members from both camps: Dau Mabil's Twic Care and G-23. Garang Malwal won and was advised to bring onboard members from the two political camps, but Garang Malwal refused and only picked G-23 members for his administration. I advised Garang Malwal to give positions of deputy and treasurer to Twic Care and maintain the rest, but Garang Malwal told me that he had his own team that campaigned with him, and that is exactly where he appointed his administration from. Most members of Twic Care boycotted community events and meetings during Garang Malwal's tenure, and G-23 was still bullying Twic Care. I think that was the reason why Twic Care did not field any candidate to contest the election after Garang Malwal's term ended. I think there is a need for a new peace and reconciliation process under a neutral leader not elected with support of either G-23 or Twic Care. In that regard, I think the community leadership should be handed over to a neutral person who would bring about peace and reconciliation. No candidate came forward because Twic Care boycotted Twic leadership."

7. Conversation with Dau Mabil Aweer (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"The problem with Twic politics is that we do not play by the rules; we politicize everything to the detriment of rules and regulations of our community and constitution of the association. As Twic Care, our contention is not Bány (pursuit of leadership) per se, but rather with some individuals with interests who have politicized the process. Seeking leadership is not our issue but rather some individuals who inserted their personal issues and vendettas into Bány. Thus, we decided not to field a candidate to isolate personal issues from Bány de Twic in Queensland. After the mediation process by Deng Atem-Tiordit, Twic Care proposed a nomination of transitional leadership entrusted to amend the constitution and conduct elections. Garang Malwal proposed the election of only the chairperson who would then appoint their team. Our idea was for a transitional leadership to chart the path out of the leadership crisis. But we were overruled and Garang Malwal was elected. Again, we advised Garang Malwal to pick his leadership team from both groups, Twic Care and G-23, but we were overruled again and Garang Malwal picked his own people. Thus, we resolved that the best way forward was to separate personalized politics from Twic leadership. This was why we did not field any candidate to contest the election. Yaak Barach-Magaar was elected unopposed, and he stands a great chance of bringing the community together. Therefore, the reason why no candidate from Twic Care came forward to contest the election was not by accident but by design. We needed a transitional leadership not elected by interest groups. Now we have one in Yaak. Leadership is not the issue; the problem is some interest groups with personal grievances that inject their personal vendettas into Twic politics. I was a victim of a manipulated system, politics of personal grievances and revenge. Our system is not compatible with democracy; it is a politics of ateer, of personal grievances and of revenge. We wanted someone not elected by such a corrupt system. This also applies to federal elections after Mamer's administration."

8. Conversation with Gakheer Dut-Magheer Ajak (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"I did not contest after Garang Malwal because I wanted to give a chance to others. During my first contest against Garang Malwal, I declared my candidature because I had been in leadership for about 16 years and wanted to serve the Twic East community. However, I was defeated by Garang Malwal, and I conceded defeat. I promised to the Twic East community that I would not return to contest for the second time, and I kept my promise to the community. I have been in community leadership for a long time and wanted to give others the chance to contest for the leadership position. This is why Yaak Barach-Magaar went unopposed without any candidate running against him. Another reason why no candidate came forward to contest the election was because of the seven-day shift work that has taken the time of most members of our community. People are focused on their jobs and family as the majority do shift work seven days a week. This issue was compounded by COVID-19 which restricted community events and people lost interest in community leadership."

9. Conversation with Thiew Atem (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"First, Garang Malwal assembled a formidable team characterized by exceptional professionalism and teamwork. They were united in purpose with no internal chaos like previous administrations. None of the potential candidates felt confident about assembling such a professional team as Garang Malwal had. Second, Garang Malwal's administration performed extraordinarily well beyond expectations, abandoning group politics to focus on community service and unity rather than empty rhetoric and unnecessary political drama. Some people were simply waiting for Garang Malwal's administration to fail catastrophically, hoping he would commit blunders that would trigger political drama for them to discuss during their campaigns. Without blunders and drama, they were at a loss for talking points and campaign material. It would be extremely difficult for any candidate to come forward and tell Twic that they could perform better than Garang Malwal's administration. This is why no candidate came forward to contest the election, Garang Malwal's administration performed so exceptionally well that they practically deprived both factions of their usual talking points."

10. Conversation with Kwir Garangthii Bul Bior (Monday, 12/05/2025):

"Two factors explain the absence of candidates after Garang Malwal's term ended. The first is political, relating to the series of defeats inflicted upon Twic Care, which may have convinced them to retreat and strategize. When Deng Atem-Tiordit came to mediate peace between Twic Care and G-23, he was ruthless in pursuing peace and reconciliation without favoring either side of the political divide. It helped that Deng Tiordit was a nephew to Dau Wach, the G-13 leader at the time. Twic Care under Dau Mabil had hoped to reap the benefits of peace and reconciliation, expecting to assume leadership of Twic politics after unity was achieved. However, their defeat came as a rude shock against the backdrop of other political losses: Kuol Atem's defeat by Deng Chol Riak, Dau Mabil's defeat by Anyieth Duom, Dau Mabil's defeat by Dau Wach, and Gakheer Dut's defeat by Garang Malwal. Their only consolation was Kwer Dau's federal election victory over Deng Chol Riak around 2016. It appears Twic Care became exhausted from repeated defeats and decided to rest and strategize before participating in future leadership contests. Regarding G-23, if Twic Care had fielded a candidate, G-23 would have responded aggressively with their own candidate, resulting in fierce political competition like other bitterly contested Queensland elections. The lack of a Twic Care candidate was the primary reason G-23 did not field any candidate. The second factor relates to changing circumstances regarding family and work commitments, especially during

weekends when most community activities occur. Unlike when we first arrived in Australia, most people now have growing families, and some with grown children require significant time and resources. Many are caring for children while others are occupied with Uber driving, factory work, disability support work, or taking their families to Africa. All these responsibilities demand time and resources that have become increasingly scarce, and this will likely affect even the federal Mamer office, as it is extremely expensive in terms of time and money to travel between states serving the Twic community at the federal level. It places a huge toll on family time and resources. Therefore, most time is now devoted to family and work, with less time available for community affairs and politics, a trend that will likely increase going forward."

11. Conversation with John Adoor Deng Ngon (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"Garang Malwal is a great leader who engages people in his leadership; he has no political grouping and has no ulterior motive or interest, although he has his political base like all other politicians. Garang Malwal came to power amidst political division between G-23 and Twic Care, and he would not have succeeded if not for his great leadership. I was deeply worried about our community and even reached out to Yuot Pageer to take over community leadership to break the cycle of factional politics that almost paralyzed Twic politics in Queensland. As to why no candidate came forward to contest elections from the two political camps, I think life is getting hard in Australia and most people are preoccupied with work and family commitments. Some people have up to three jobs and many work over weekends where there are hours with good pay, and it is the same weekends that community events are conducted. In the past, those earlier years when we arrived in Australia, people used to gather at community events and community centers playing games up to midnight; but not anymore as life has become harder. With kids grown up, priorities have changed with weekend jobs and house mortgages dramatically altering people's approach to how they spend their time. Nowadays, churches are empty on Sunday, and community event attendance is dwindling as they are affected by weekend jobs and family commitments. I see this issue as a major challenge in the future as it will become difficult to find leaders to run community affairs on a voluntary basis."

12. Conversation with Deng-Akak Biwei Awuol (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"Before Garang Malwal Jok's leadership, our community meetings often devolved into arguments between factions. The Group of 23 and Twic Care would transform even simple decisions into political standoffs. Little was accomplished because the focus was on political maneuvering rather than community welfare. Previously, I was approached by G-23 to contest for the TECAQ chairperson position, but I later dropped out in favor of Dau Wach who later defeated Dau Mabil Aweer. After the peace mediation done by Deng Atem-Tiordit, Twic Care crafted their election campaign around my potential candidacy. They were shocked when G-23 fronted a secret weapon in the person of Garang Malwal instead of me, and Twic Care were thus defeated squarely. After Garang Malwal's term ended, Twic Care was traumatized and scared of another secret candidate from G-23, and they did not wish a third defeat in a row. This is the reason why Twic Care did not field any candidate in the contest to succeed Garang Malwal. Twic Care thought there was another secret candidate in hiding from G-23 waiting for their candidate."

13. Conversation with Khot-Attack Dau Ghak Bior (Saturday, 25/04/2025):

"Both factions were deeply frustrated and had lost interest in the leadership contest. Even the faction that brought him to power felt sidelined by Garang, while the opposing camp eventually came to respect and acknowledge his leadership. The two camps were exhausted, wary of each other, and ultimately chose, of their own accord, not to field a candidate. They recognized that Garang's politics had transcended their rivalry."

14. Conversation with Garang Deng Ghak-Awuot (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"I was the chair of the first federal constitutional review under Kwer Dau Apai and the second federal constitutional review under Deng Chol Riak. The second federal constitutional review was triggered by the deficiencies in the electoral law laid bare when Juach Lueth dropped out of the race, plunging the Electoral Commission into a legal quagmire about what to do until the church leaders intervened to save the day. Thus, Deng Chol Riak convened a constitutional review to address shortcomings in the association constitution. First, the tenure of the chairperson was extended from two years to three years; while some people alleged that the amendment was meant to extend the term of Deng Chol Riak, it was meant for all leaders as currently reflected by the tenure of all leaders after Deng Chol Riak. Second, we enshrined primary elections at state level when there are more than two aspirants from the same state; while some people alleged that amendment was meant to help Manyok Ajak Mabil in Adelaide, it has become the backbone of our electoral law working for the benefit of all aspirants. Third, to address the electoral shortcomings exposed by the last-minute dropout of the race by Juach Lueth, the constitution enshrined a procedure and timeline for aspiring candidates for TECAA to submit their application to the Electoral Commission and outlined procedures and timeline to drop out of the race. It was enshrined in the electoral laws that any candidate who pulls out of the race at the last minute after the timeline has passed and therefore contrary to electoral procedures would have his or her name retained on the ballot during the voting process, and it will be considered as if he or she had not dropped out of the race. Thus, anyone dropping out after the stipulated timeframe was to have their name remain on the ballot and voting to continue, and that person sanctioned with a penalty not to contest elections for four years. It so happened that the second federal constitutional review was conducted during the COVID-19 lockdown and Zoom was the primary medium of conducting community meetings, conferences, events, marriages, and church services. Thus, the second federal constitutional review was conducted via Zoom due to COVID-19."

15. Conversation with Akol Maluk Chol (Saturday, 10/05/2025):

"The reason why no candidate came forward to contest the election after Garang Malwal's tenure ended was to preclude factional and group politics between G-23 and Twic Care. In most of the elections, Twic Care believed they won the contest between Dau Mabil and Dau Wach, but lost those related to Kuol Atem, Anyieth Duom, and Garang Malwal, and Mamer Yaak Dudtdit at federal level. Therefore, Twic Care should have been very interested to contest the election after Garang Malwal's term ended, but that would have rallied the G-23 camp to mobilize their supporters and field their preferred candidate to block any candidate fielded by Twic Care camp. It was our calculation that any candidate fronted by Twic Care camp would trigger old factional rivalry in G-23 to field their own candidate to block any candidate from Twic Care. Therefore, Twic Care made the decision not to field any candidate to contest the election after Garang Malwal to preclude old factional politics in which G-23 would field their candidate to block Twic Care from taking over Twic East community leadership in Queensland. This was why no candidate came forward to contest the election and Yaak Barach-Magaar Dau was elected unopposed. G-23 should have given the chance to others, but they were intent

on contesting the election, and Twic Care wanted to avoid reigniting old group politics after the peace initiative by Deng Atem-Tiordit."

16. Conversation with Manyok Monychol Lueth (Sunday, 11/05/2025):

"Garang Malwal's leadership was not generally perceived as a unifying leader because he did not bring onboard those from Twic Care camp who expressed interest to be team members of his administration. Instead, he selected his own team from G-23 with few individuals from Twic Care like Marop and Ajakdit. Twic Care conceded defeat of Gakheer Dut and accepted the victory of Garang Malwal, but there was hope of bringing two factions together in his administration to reflect the intention and spirit of the peace and unity brought about by Deng Atem-Tiordit. Therefore, Twic Care did not field a candidate because it saw Bány Twic community as personalized and privatized by some individuals, and Twic Care wanted to stand back and allow the other group to fully own the community leadership and to see where G-23 would take the leadership of Twic community."

Part 6: Divining the Solution: Study Findings and Recommendations:

The absence of candidates in the recent Twic East Community leadership election in Queensland was not merely a procedural anomaly, it was a symptom of a deeper malaise. Through multiple perspectives, a complex tapestry of factional distrust, strategic withdrawal, social fatigue, cultural crisis, and institutional disillusionment emerges, each contributing to the vacuum of leadership. At the heart of the crisis lies the enduring shadow of political factionalism. Figures such as Gen. Dau Wach Deng, Dau Mabil Aweer, and Garang Deng Ghak-Awuot point to the deep scars left by the bitter rivalry between the G-23 and Twic Care factions. For many Twic Care members, abstaining from the electoral contest was not an act of apathy but of self-preservation. Deng-Akak Biowei Awuol, Akol Maluk Chol, and Abuoi Garang Kheer underscore a calculated decision to avoid reigniting hostilities. Beyond the political intrigue lies a quieter, more pervasive deterrent: exhaustion. John Adoor Deng, Gakheer Dut, and Abuoi Garang Kheer highlight a generational shift in priorities. Many community members are stretched thin, working long hours in Uber, factories, and disability care services, all while juggling family obligations. In this context, unpaid leadership roles, once seen as a calling, now feel like burdensome liabilities. COVID-19 only exacerbated this fatigue, fracturing communal cohesion and disrupting traditional modes of engagement. Leadership, once aspirational, has become optional, if not undesirable.

Ajakthii Deng Biar offers a more philosophical indictment: a community culture that valorizes "Matong" (troublemakers) over "Malong" (wise elders). In such a climate, leadership is less about vision and service than about clout and combat. The political arena has become a theatre for personal vendettas, where power is pursued not to uplift but to settle scores. This cultural dysfunction discourages the morally grounded and intellectually capable from stepping forward, lest they be consumed by a system designed to reward division. Amid the disillusionment, there are calls for a path forward, one rooted in neutrality and reconciliation. Leaders like Dau Mabil, Deng-Akak, and Gen. Dau Wach advocate for transitional leadership untainted by factional allegiance. Finally, the problem lies not just with the players but with the game itself. Manyok Monychol and Garang Deng decry a system increasingly seen as manipulated and personalised. Elections are no longer platforms for community empowerment but battlegrounds for private ambition. Without structural reform, even the most charismatic candidate would struggle to inspire confidence in a disillusioned electorate.

Based on the above conversations with TECAQ leadership, the recent leadership vacuum within the Twic East Community in Queensland, marked by the absence of willing candidates for the chairperson position, exposed a critical structural weakness in the association's constitutional framework. When the community found itself leaderless, it fell upon the deputy chairperson to assume the mantle under significant public pressure, despite his personal reluctance. This emergency succession not only tested the limits of communal solidarity but also revealed a glaring absence of constitutional guidance for handling such a crisis. The TECAQ constitution offers no clear contingency plan for leadership succession or mechanisms to proactively identify, prepare, or nominate candidates in the event of an electoral standstill. To safeguard future transitions and ensure leadership continuity, a comprehensive constitutional amendment is imperative, one that embeds a clear, tiered mechanism for candidate identification and succession. The following six-step process is proposed as a remedy to this institutional gap:

Tier 1: Individual Candidate Declaration - Open Declaration: *Priority should be given to any community member who voluntarily expresses interest in contesting the chairperson position. This affirms the democratic principle of open participation.*

Tier 2: Payam-Based Rotation System - Payam Rotation: *In the absence of individual interest, the responsibility should fall to the Payams in rotational order. Each Payam would be tasked with nominating three candidates to undergo an internal selection process.*

Tier 3: Outgoing Leadership Deliberation - Leadership Deliberation: *If the Payams also fail to produce candidates, the outgoing leadership should be empowered to identify and nominate a suitable successor through internal deliberations, ensuring that leadership responsibility is not left in limbo.*

Tier 4: Tenure Extension Mechanism - Tenure Extension: *To avoid administrative paralysis, the General Assembly may formally extend the term of the outgoing chairperson until a qualified successor is identified and endorsed.*

Tier 5: Political Faction Alternation - Political Faction Rotation: *Should the impasse persist, the two major political factions (G-23 and Twic Care) may each nominate candidates on a rotational basis, preserving political balance while resolving the deadlock.*

Tier 6: Women and Girls Leadership Initiative - Women's Forum Activation: *As a final recourse, the women's forum or a joint youth-women's assembly should be entrusted to deliberate and produce potential leadership candidates, reinforcing inclusivity and community renewal.*

This structured, multi-layered approach balances democratic openness with procedural fallback options, ensuring the community is never again caught unprepared in a moment of leadership uncertainty.

Conclusion: A Model for Other TECA Associations across the Globe.

The absence of contenders in the recent TECAQ chairmanship race can be attributed to two interrelated forces: political fatigue and evolving socio-economic realities. First, years of intense factional rivalry, most notably between the G-23 and Twic care groups, have drained both camps. The bruising political battles have left the factions wary of each other's political

manoeuvres, fostering a climate of mutual suspicion and paralysis. This political exhaustion has diminished the appetite for renewed contestation. Second, broader structural changes in the lives of Twic East community members in Australia have reshaped their engagement with community politics. Increasingly, members are absorbed in demanding work schedules, driving Ubers, working in factories, and supporting clients in disability services. Coupled with the responsibilities of growing families, weekends once reserved for community gatherings and political mobilization are now consumed by personal and professional commitments. As a result, time and financial resources for community leadership have significantly diminished.

This shift in priorities has raised the cost, both material and psychological, of contesting leadership positions. In this context, the stellar leadership of Bány Garang Malwal Jok further discouraged competition. His unifying administration not only healed previous factional divisions but also elevated expectations, making it harder for any prospective candidate to justify a challenge. The decision by all factions to forgo competition for the TECAQ chairmanship represents more than political resignation, it signals a collective recalibration of values toward stability, family, and future-oriented governance. Garang Malwal Jok's tenure marked a turning point. He did not merely hold office, he redefined it. The silent consensus around his successor reflects not only respect for his leadership but also an acknowledgment that the community's political culture is evolving. It is a rare and instructive moment in Twic Dinka diaspora politics: a convergence of effective governance and a generational shift in priorities.

Therefore, Bány Garang Malwal Jok's administration (2023-2025) stands as a testament to transformative leadership, marked by significant achievements that have strengthened the very foundation of the Twic East community association. Through constitutional reforms, strategic fundraising initiatives, enhanced community event management, and modernized record-keeping practices, his leadership has navigated substantial challenges while positioning the association for continued growth and success. Therefore, this extraordinary outcome raises compelling questions about whether Bány Garang Malwal Jok's leadership model could be replicated in other Twic East community (TECA) and youth associations (TEYA) worldwide. Similar associations in the USA, Canada, Kenya, Uganda, Juba, and Panyagor confront comparable challenges stemming from identical factional divisions and exacerbated by the displacement and resettlement crisis.

Makwei Maboor Deng, an observer of diaspora communities, suggests Bány Garang Malwal Jok's approach offers valuable lessons: "The key insight from Queensland's experience is that emphasizing concrete community development creates a shared stake in success that can transcend old rivalries. When people see tangible benefits from cooperation, political posturing becomes less appealing. This is especially relevant for communities fractured by both political differences and geographical displacement." As the Twic East community association in Queensland (TECAQ) moves forward, the new leadership now faces the positive challenge of building upon Bány Garang Malwal Jok's towering legacy. Whether his successor can maintain this newfound unity remains to be seen, but one thing is clear: Bány Garang Malwal Jok's administration has demonstrated that even the most entrenched political divisions can be overcome through leadership that prioritizes community welfare over factional politics. For Twic East community with such a rich political heritage, now scattered across continents by both conflict and natural disaster, this transformative leadership may be the most revolutionary development since arrival in Australia.