

LOCAL DOCTORS TO TRAIN FOR SURGERIES IN ISRAEL

PHOTO/CHARLES KIMANI

BY JOHN MUCHANGI

A team of Kenyan doctors will benefit from Sh1.5 million-training each to carry out heart operations locally.

The cost will be covered by Save a Child's Heart (Sach), an Israeli organisation that funds heart operations for children from developing countries.

Announcing the move in Nairobi at the weekend, Sach global executive director Simon Fisher said three Kenyan pediatricians had already been trained in Israel to help in the surgeries.

Currently, the organisation funds treatment of children with heart problems in Israel at a cost of Sh750,000 each.

"By the end of 2008, three Kenyan children will have undergone successful heart operations in Israel," Fisher said.

The services are provided at the Wolfson Medical Centre in Tel Aviv.

Fisher however said once enough local personnel were trained, affordable operations would begin at a yet-to-be identified Nai-

robi hospital.

Yesterday's occasion was graced by deputy prime minister Musalia Mudavadi.

He said: "This is not an issue of taking people to Israel, but it's about developing capacity here."

Mudavadi thanked Israeli ambassador Jacob Keidar for helping establish Save a Child's Heart in Kenya after his posting this year.

The organisation's local chapter was launched in May. The latest beneficiary is 8-year-old Simon Kithome from Kitui. The cost covers a three-month stay in Israel for the child and parent to allow recovery.

Among doctors involved in the current project include former President Moi's doctor Dr David Silverstein and Dr Joshua Luturi of Mater Hospital.

Luturi said though some heart operations were being performed in Kenya, progress was hampered by lack of funds, doctors and facilities.

Sach Kenyan representative Rinat Langlive said



PLAN: DPM Musalia Mudavadi and Israel ambassador to Kenya Jacob Keidar.

they would spend a further Sh3 million to bring a team of cardiologists and pediatricians to Nairobi.

She did not reveal how many local doctors would

be trained.

During the weekend occasion, Sh1.5 million was raised from the sale of paintings to cover part of next year's programme.

The occasion was attended by Safaricom CEO Michael Joseph, Japanese ambassador Shigeo Iwatani and Jimi Kibaki among others.

NAIROBI IN BRIEF

Nine held over illegal logging

KERICHO: Nine men were yesterday arrested with 36 logs on the Londiani-Molo road. According to police boss Perterson Maelo, the suspects were believed to have encroached one of the forests in Londiani and Kipkelion and harvested the timber without licences. Maelo said the suspects would be taken to court as soon as investigations were complete. He said more police officers would patrol forests since the government had recently banned logging in the district.

PNU won't put off elections

MOMBASA: PNU has said its grassroots elections will go on as planned starting this morning. Secretary general George Nyamweya yesterday said plans for the exercise were complete. He said party membership cards and national ID cards would be used to vet voters. Nyamweya assured party members that the polls would be free and fair, supervised by the PNU Election Board. "There is a lot of excitement within the party as members prepare for the election kick off on Monday," Nyamweya said.

Marende wrong, says bishop

MOMBASA: Anglican Church of Kenya Bishop Julius Kalu wants Speaker Kenneth Marende to stop misguiding MPs on taxation. Kalu said it was disappointing to hear Marende dismiss the move by few MPs to have their allowances taxed and to make statements opposing taxes. He termed MPs as hypocritical and indifferent to the plight of poor Kenyans. He also praised MPs who had offered to pay tax on the allowances.

Sacco donates Sh1m to IDPs

KERICHO: At least 2,500 IDPs yesterday received donations valued at Sh1 million from Ndege Chai Cooperative Savings and Credit Society. The beneficiaries are workers of the James Finlay Tea Company in Kericho and Buret districts. They received blankets and cash from Sacco's top management some of whom are also employees of the tea company. The IDPs were victims of the post-election violence.

Solve Mt Elgon row, Kapondi challenges state

BY STAR CORRESPONDENT

MP Fred Kapondi has urged the government to urgently address the thorny land issue in Mt Elgon.

Kapondi praised the state for restoring peace in the district but said the issue that sparked activities by the Sabaot Land Defence Force had to be resolved.

Speaking at the weekend when he presided over a funds drive for Chomiet Women Group and Mt Elgon constituents based in Mombasa at the Mbaraki Sports Club, the MP assured them that peace had been restored in the region.

"I want to assure the government that there is absolute peace in Mt Elgon and residents are going on with their daily activities without fear," he said.

Kapondi denied recent



CALL: Kapondi

media reports that SLDF militia were regrouping.

He said: "We do not want a repeat of what Mt Elgon residents experienced from the military operations and that is why we had to go back to the drawing table to find the best and peaceful way to address our problems."

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