



# Museum News

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Above: First lady Margaret Kenyatta cuts the ribbon to officially open the exhibition

### First Lady opens the 'Kenya Through the Diplomats Lens' Exhibition

The First Lady opened a photo exhibition by Kenyan Diplomats dubbed, 'Kenya Through the Diplomats Lens' on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

*"This Exhibition celebrates our country's diversity and also provides appreciation of culture, heritage and harmony through photographs. As a result of its empowerment and mentorship projects, it will also have great social impact that will inspire and nurture the talents our youth in photo-art,"* the First Lady said.

The photo exhibition showcases a unique collection of photographs taken by members of the diplomatic community in Kenya illustrating the nation's beauty and diversity.

It also features photographs taken by students from Kibera sponsored by the Nikon Photo School, who through pictures, communicated their thoughts, imagination and passion.

Proceeds from the sale of the photographs will go towards supporting Destiny Children's Centre which caters for orphaned children in Kibera and Karika Care Giving Centre for the elderly in Kawangware, Nairobi.

Sports, Culture and Heritage Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed said the exhibition was a step in the right direction as it promoted the preservation of the country's Cultural and National Heritage.

The CS pointed out that the event created a new watermark in the recognition of photography as form of art with immense economic potential. Other speakers included Director General NMK Dr. Mzalendo Kibunja and Iraqi Amb.to Kenya Burhan Al-Jaf who is also the Chairman of the 'Kenya Through the Diplomat's Lens' photo exhibition.



## Dr. Manthi Receives the African Oxford Initiative (AFOX) Award

Dr. Fredrick Manthi, Head of Earth Sciences Department traveled to the University of Oxford from the 6th - 17th April 2019 through an award offered by African Oxford Initiative (AFOX) in 2018. This travel grant enabled Dr. Manthi to visit Oxford University for engagements with faculty and students as well as researchers and museum staff from several institutions in the UK.

The AfOx Initiative is a cross-university platform for all issues on Africa in Oxford. The primary vision of AfOx is to make Africa a strategic priority for the University of Oxford, while also building equitable research collaborations between researchers and academics from African institutions and the University of Oxford. Throughout the year AfOx hosts several events and workshops about Africa-focused research with speakers from diverse and varied academic. Following the AfOx award, Dr. Manthi also gave a talk titled: *“Decolonizing African museums: the African perspective”*.

In this talk, Dr. Manthi discussed how European Nations ‘looted’ African cultural and natural history collections when they colonized Africa, and the ongoing debate on the repatriation of these collections to Africa. Part of this discussion was recorded and can be viewed at this link: <https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/decolonising-african-museums-africa-perspective%20>



Above: Bats resting at Uhuru gardens, Mombasa

## Bat surveillance research launched in Mombasa

A countrywide surveillance research project on bats and associated Aviruses was launched on 6<sup>th</sup> May by the NMK Director General Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia assisted by Directors from KWS, Dr. Patrick Omondi, JKUAT, Dr. Patrick Mbindyo and KEMRI, Dr. Lubano Kizito at Uhuru Gardens Mombasa.

Spill over risk assessment and surveillance of infectious bat bone viruses in Kenya (SORASIB) is a unique joint research project funded by the government of Kenya through the National Research Fund and will be implemented by NMK, KWS, JKUAT, and KEMRI.

Speaking during the launch Dr. Mzalendo debunked the misconception about most misunderstood mammals and yet they serve as indicators of a healthy ecosystem that includes dispersing seeds, pollinating flowers and assisting in the natural control of population of insect pests.

The project investigators include Mr. Bernard R. Agwanda (lead researcher), Dr. Vincent Obanda (Kenya wildlife service), Dr. Sheila Ommeh (Institute of Biotechnology Research, JKUAT) and Victor Ofula (KEMRI)

Also present at the launch was Mr. Athman Hussein, keeper Coast region, Ms. Fatma Twahir, Principal Curator Fort Jesus World Heritage Site and Mr. Ali Bakari Ali, Site Manager mama Ngina Drive and Uhuru Gardens, Mombasa.



## Enhancing Capabilities in disaster risk preparedness in World Heritage properties workshop

In support of the implementation of the UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the National Museums of Kenya and the Kenya Wildlife Service, with support from UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa, organized the three-day workshop on 12th – 14th June 2019 at Lions gate hotel, Nanyuki. The workshop aimed at enhancing the technical and institutional capacities and expertise of relevant national heritage stakeholders regarding principles, methodology and process for managing disaster risks in cultural and natural World Heritage properties.

A total of 33 participants attended the training session and were drawn from the National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and the Mount Kenya Trust. There were also four Ethiopian participants in the workshop representing the Simien and the Bale Mountains National Parks. National Museums of Kenya had nine participants and among them were all the site managers of the Cultural World Heritage Sites namely;

1. Lamu Old Town: Mr. Mwenje Mohammed
2. Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests: Mr. Anthony Githitho
3. Fort Jesus: Ms. Fatma Twahir
4. Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site: Mr. Kelvin Somoire

The National Museums of Kenya was also represented by its affiliated heritage training institutions, namely; the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA) represented by Mr. Dennis Okwaro and the Kenya Heritage Training Institute (KHETI) represented by Mr. Khalid Kitito. The trainers were Mr. Koen Meyers, a UNESCO Expert, Mr. Joseph Edebe of KWS and Mr. Hoseah Wanderi of the National Museums of Kenya. The NMK Director General Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia graced the occasion and closed the session.



Above: D.G plants a tree in the reclaimed forest land and below addressing press at Kitale Museum

## NMK recovers 60 acres of land at the Kitale Museum

On 6<sup>th</sup> May, Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia Director General NMK led staff, the public, officials from Ministry of Sports and Heritage, Trans Nzoia County Government and various government agencies in launching the planting of 20,000 seedlings at the Kitale museum.

The trees were planted in the recently reclaimed 60 acres of land that had been encroached by grabbers. 4,000 trees have already been planted. This will go a long way to restore the forest cover that had been depleted for a long time by squatters. The trees will be planted gradually in order to maintain and sustain them all to avoid unnecessary loss of any of them.

Governor Patrick Khaemba hosted the Director General Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia and discussed measures aimed at giving the facility a facelift. Khaemba challenged NMK to fast track devolution of the facility so that it can be managed by the county administration. He said his administration will work hand in hand to secure all the land as the fencing is being done. They are also to provide security support.



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## German Embassy in Kenya signs contract with NMK

The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Kenya H.E Mrs. Annett Gunther signed a contract for 60,000 Euros with the National Museums of Kenya Director General Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia on 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2019. This will facilitate PHASE II of rehabilitation of Krapf Cottage in Rabai, Kilifi County.

In April 2018, Dr. Krapf Memorial Museum was rehabilitated under phase 1 through the funding from the Federal Republic of Germany in collaboration with the Anglican Church of Kenya. The Government of Germany provided Kshs.5.7m.

The funds provided by Germany were used for rehabilitation of the Rebman Cottage and the first church which is currently the museum. The rehabilitation included buildings' restoration, signage, as well as for the procurement of museum exhibition showcases complete with rise; display panels and captions, casting of agreed exhibition items (e.g. Dr. Krapf statue & elephant tusks), a display screen and purchase of some stationery for mounting the exhibition. National Museums of Kenya also availed Kshs.2 million for research work and collections for the museum exhibition. These funds covered expenses for literature reviews, and extensive interviews with locals and church communities living in Frere Town (Mombasa), Rabai, Jilore, Gulbanti, Mariakani and Sagalla. Finally, NMK funds also facilitated recovery of materials and collections to be used as well as the treatment and conservation of these display items.

Phase 2 of the funding will now cover the rehabilitation of Dr. Krapf Cottage to a community resource center where locals, visitors and other users may access information particularly on the history of the German missionary work within the area. This resource center can also benefit the local community and the neighboring school that would use it for study, access the internet and other opportunities.

The Krapf's House/Cottage, was built from mud and coral hence vulnerable to termite activity. The architectural ensemble /design signify the introduction of western architectural forms alongside traditional ones that have coexisted to date. It was said to have multiple usage housing a school and health facility. Initially, it had a flat roof but later a second floor with palm frond roofing was added. In the 20th century the makuti roof was replaced with iron sheets. Owing to poor maintenance the upper floor collapsed. Currently, the ground floor functions as the vicarage and offices of the Rabai Archdeaconry and St. Paul Church youths. It's currently in a very poor state of conservation with serious structural cracks and termites infected wooden members.

During the signing of the contract Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia said that it was noted after Phase I of rehabilitation the number of visitors increased and interest from tourists was heightened.



Above: Winners and runners up of the Makavazi ya Kitaifa Darts competition pose for a photo session

## NMK Sponsors National Darts Tournament

National Museums of Kenya for the first time in history sponsored the just concluded National Darts Tournament that was held in Chuka, Tharaka Nithi County on 29 th June, 2019. This Makavazi darts tournament brought together 27 counties.

The two –day tournament had various teams from 27 counties competing for the National Museums of Kenya Trophy. Speaking during the tournament, Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia reiterated the importance of sponsoring the National Darts Tournament to the society and the country as a whole. *“Darts is a sport that is not well known in the country yet it brings together people from different cultural backgrounds i.e young and old; men and women. It is a sport that needs to be nurtured in order to help build a cohesive society”*, he said.

In order to strengthen the darts sport, NMK is working in collaboration with Kenya National Darts Association, which will continue to ensure that all the 47 counties are brought on board from next year. Dr. Mzalendo said that hosting of the National Darts Tournament will henceforth rotate to other counties.

NMK Darts Club participated during the tournament and posted impressive results with the ladies being ranked position three Nationally.





NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF KENYA

WHERE HERITAGE LIVES ON

# JUNIOR BIOLOGIST PROGRAM



## NAIROBI SNAKE PARK

## AUGUST 2019

Contact: 0721433448, 0721512488, 0720044096



*Above: Governor, Busia County Hon. Sospeter Ojaamong MGH visits the stand during the event.*

## Museum Celebrates International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) 2019 at Busia County

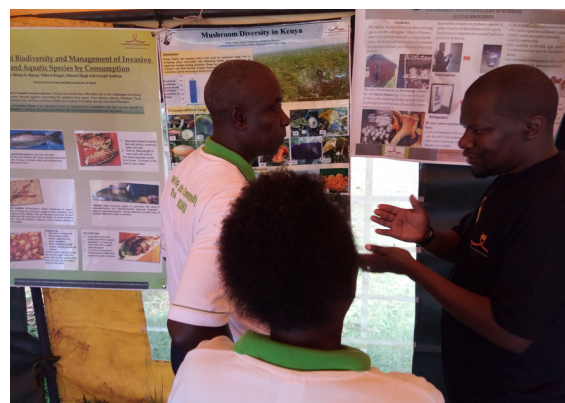
All roads led to Busia County on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2019 where the International Day for Biological Diversity was celebrated. The theme this year was “Our Biodiversity, Our food, Our Health”. The theme was aimed at spreading awareness of the dependency of our food systems, nutrition and health on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.

Key in attendance at Busia county during the IDB celebrations was Hon Mohammed Elmi, Chief Administrative Secretary of Environment and forestry who joined other Kenyans to mark this significant day.

National Museums of Kenya was represented by Mr. William Wambugu head of section -Botanic Gardens, Kashim Oginga, a research scientist at Ichthyology section, Victor Raul a research scientist at Mycology section and Daniel Maina of Public Relations.

The convention on Biological Diversity under the umbrella of the United Nations called on people

to contribute to biodiversity conservation by purchasing and consuming local foods. It is in this regards, the Museum team exhibited on Biodiversity of mushrooms in Kenya and culture of mushroom propagation plus educating the public on food security with focus on aquaculture fishes identification.



*Above: Victor Raul of Mycology section explains to the public about mushroom cultivation during IDB day at Busia County.*



Above: Spanish ladies dancing salsa during the festival.

## The 7<sup>th</sup> Nairobi International Cultural Festival Comes to Life at Nairobi National Museum

Nairobi National Museum celebrated the 7<sup>th</sup> Nairobi International Cultural festival on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2019. Organized by the Research Institute for Swahili studies in Eastern Africa (RISSEA) with support from NMK. Food, music and art dominated the Nairobi Cultural festival. The one day event showcased exhibitions of various foods from different countries, fashion show, diverse crafts, music and art.

The idea behind the Nairobi Cultural Festival is to bring people together from different parts of the world and to offer them a forum to experience and enjoy the rich and diverse cultures of different nationalities. Through each other's diversity we become more aware of our own. Cultural celebrations give people the opportunities to view and maybe understand more about cultures different from their own. By learning about other cultures people can develop respect and open-mindedness for other cultures.

NMK was proud to be embraced by the following embassies in Kenya and organisations during the festival: Embassy of Argentina, Botswana, Chi-

na, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Somalia, Spain, Sudan and Thailand respectively. Other organisations that supported this festival were Goethe Institute, Dickson Sushi Kitchen, National Government Affirmative, Action Fund of Esther Passaris and Light Academy.



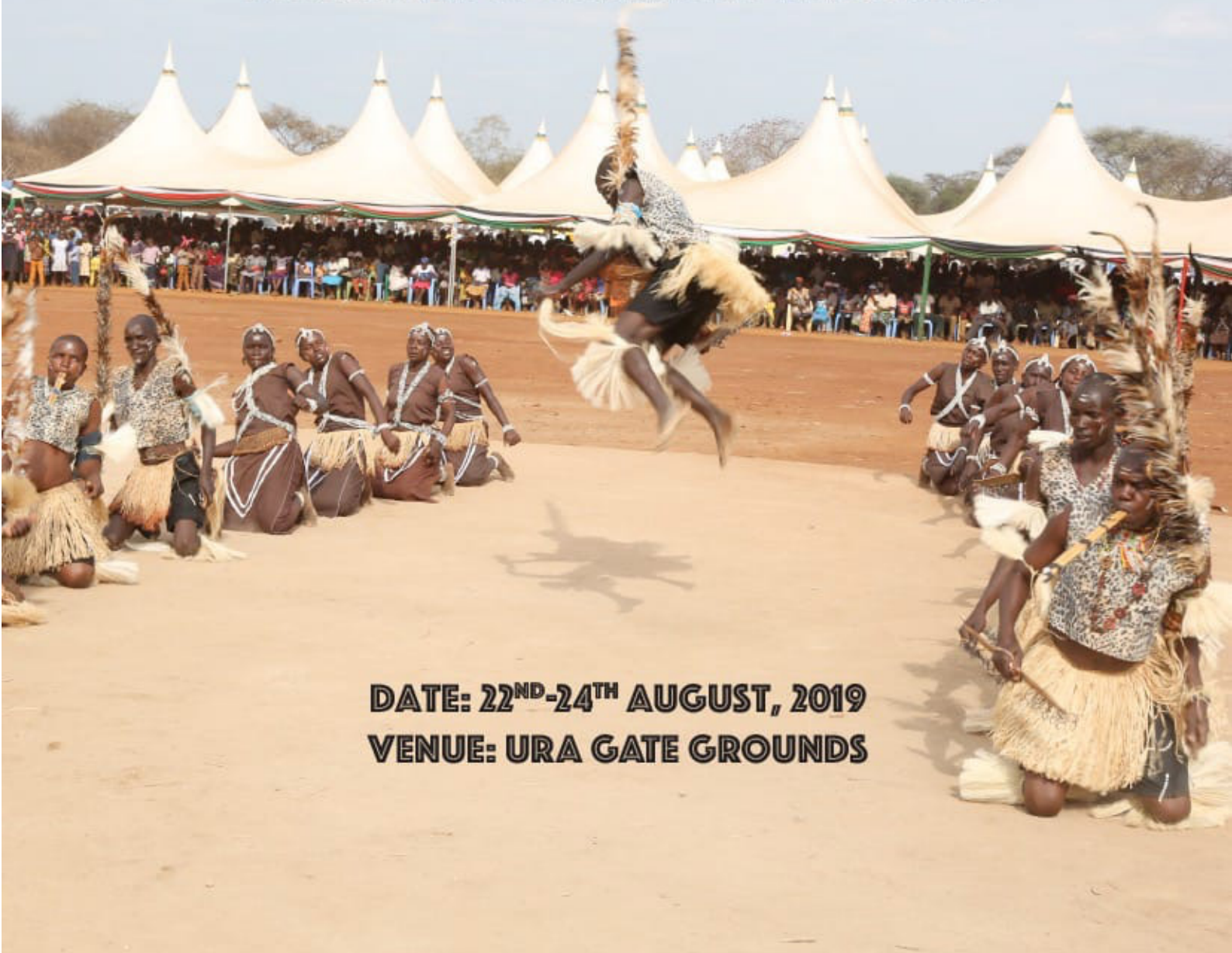
Above: Young students shake a leg during the Nairobi International Cultural Festival



**Cultural Festival**

# **URA GATE THARAKA CULTURAL FESTIVAL 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION**

**THEME: CULTURE AS A CATALYST TO CONSERVATION AND  
RESTORATION OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.**



**DATE: 22<sup>ND</sup>-24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2019  
VENUE: URA GATE GROUNDS**



Above: NMK Board Chairman Hon. David Musila holds a framed image of the archaeological site during the inauguration of Thimlich Ohinga site.  
 (Inset pic: Thimlich Ohinga Archeological Site)

## Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological site officially inaugurated as a World Heritage Site

Thimlich Ohinga was officially inaugurated on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 as the 7th World Heritage Site after its inscription in June 2018 on World Heritage List by UNESCO. The inauguration will coincide with the International Day for Monuments and Sites where the theme was Celebrating Rural Landscapes.

The Chief Guest will be Amb. Dr. Amina Mohamed, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Sports, Arts and Heritage. Others will be the UNESCO Kenya Country- Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Governor, Migori County Hon. Okoth Obado, NMK Director General, Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia.

Kenya is a signatory to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage World Heritage

Convention, 1972. Thimlich Ohinga site is situated in Migori County is listed by UNESCO as being of outstanding universal value. Thimlich Ohinga became the 7th Site in Kenya to be inscribed as a World Heritage site after Lamu, Fort Jesus Mount Kenya, Kaya Forests, Lake Turkana and Great Rift Valley Lakes of Bogoria, Elementaita and Nakuru.



## Pictorial



Above: U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, H.E. Kyle McCarter made a courtesy call to Dr. Mzalendo Kibunja NMK Director General at Nairobi National Museum on 25<sup>th</sup> April.



Centre: Hon. Okoth Obado, Governor, Migori County during a press briefing on 4th April in regards to the official inauguration of Thimlich Ohinga as the 7th World heritage Site. On his left, Dr. Kiura, Director Antiquities, sites and monuments. This comes after its inscription in June 2018 on the World heritage list by UNESCO. Others standing L-R: Josephine Gitu, Hosea Wanderi, Daniel Mitei, Dr. Christine Ogola and Dennis Milewa.

## Pictorial



Above: Dr. Manu Chandaria, and Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia DG (reflector jackets) poses with staff members on 11<sup>th</sup> April during the ground breaking ceremony of the Ayushi and Nirali Chandaria play park and new washrooms at Nairobi National Museum. Dr. Chandaria has fully sponsored the developments.



State Department of Heritage PS Josephita Mukobe (centre) poses with NMK Director General Dr. Mzalendo Kibunja (left) and Busia Deputy Governor Moses Mulomi (right) during the signing of an MOU aimed at conserving and restoring cultural and natural heritage in the County on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.

## Pictorial



Above: Kenya Museum Society behind the scenes visitors admire a map of Kenya made up of invertebrates on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at the Entomology department



A member of staff extinguishes a fire during a mock fire drill training held at the Louis Leakey Auditorium on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019

## Pictorial



Above: International Museum Day celebrations at Uhuru Gardens Museum on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2019. The theme this year was "Museum as a Cultural Hub: Future of Traditions"



Left -Right: CS Ministry of Sports Culture and Heritage Ambassador (Dr.) Amina Mohamed at the Earth Sciences department during her recent courtesy call to the NMK, Director General on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019. Research Scientist Francis Muchemi displays some of the collections and looking on is the lab technician Tom Mukuyu

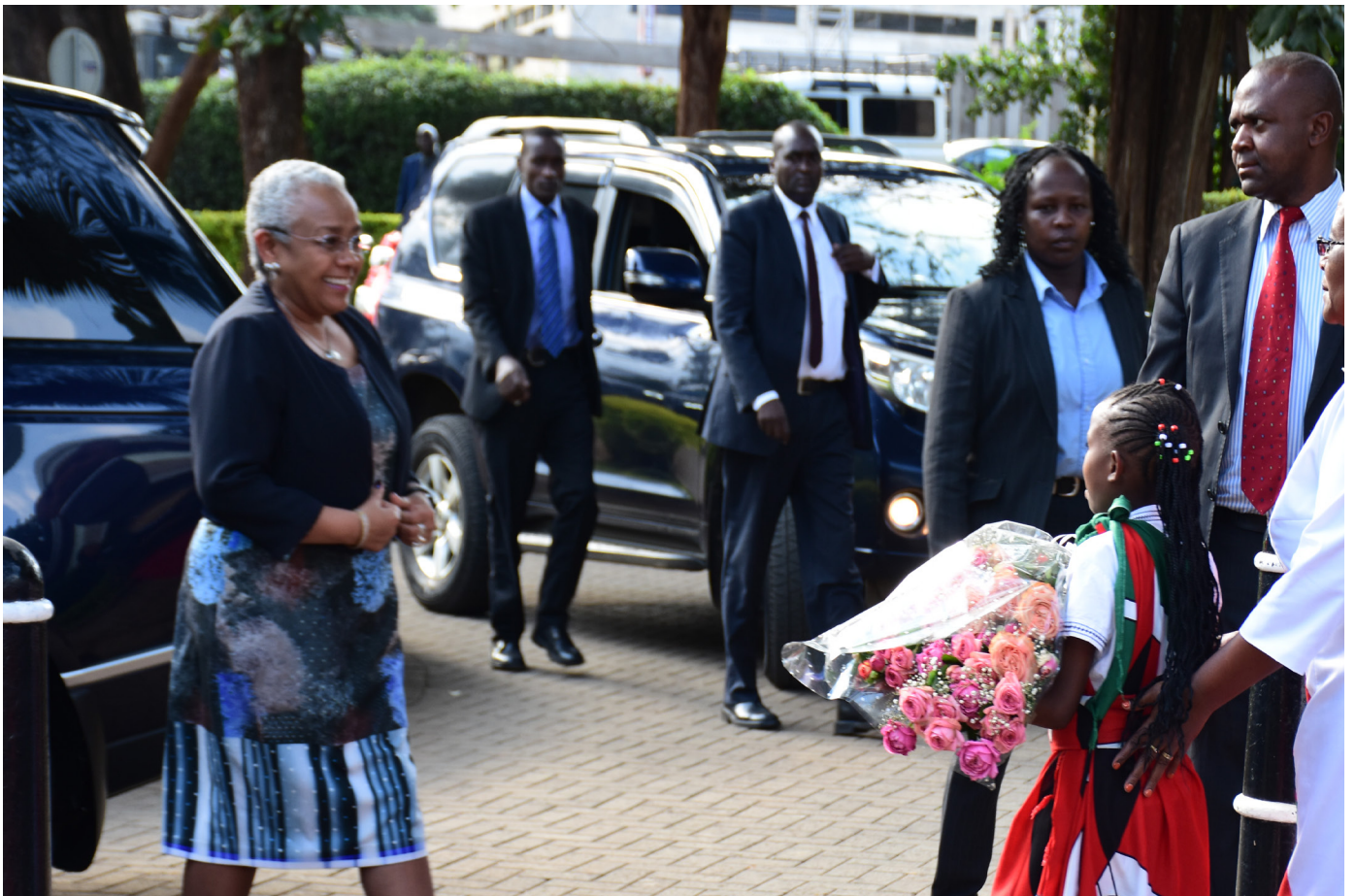
## Pictorial



Above: A group of 50 Harvard professors on a research mission attended a luncheon hosted at Fort Jesus World Heritage Site on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2019. The group learnt about the rich heritage and history of the site. At hand to receive them was Principal Curator Ms Fatma Twahir, Education Officer Mr. Rafael Igombo among other members of staff.



Left to right: Pauline Mbete and Sarah Hassan of Earth Sciences Department at the 44<sup>th</sup> Secondary School Heads Association (KESSHA) conference that took place at the Kenya School of Revenue Administration, Mombasa on 9 - 14 June, 2019. The two NMK officers took this opportunity to highlight the Department's role and exhibit their collection to teachers as teaching aids in key school subjects' i.e. Biology and History.



*Above: H.E First lady Margaret Kenyatta is welcomed to the National Museums of Kenya for the Kenya through the Diplomat's lens photo exhibition*



*Above: Thai Embassy Participants during the 7th Nairobi International Cultural Festival on June playing the ring of fire game*



Right to Left : The Central Bank of Kenya Governor, Dr. Patrick Njoroge and NMK Director, Dr. Mzalendo Kibunjia when the CBK Governor visited NMK to inspect the newly refurbished numismatic (currency) gallery.

## Our images : *The Kigango*



Kigango (plural: vigango) is a carved wooden memorial statue erected by the Mijikenda peoples of the south eastern Kenya coast. The vigango, which can be stylized, abstracted human-form effigies and are placed vertically rising out of the earth, honor a dead member of the secret Gohu society, or the "Society of the Blessed".

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Art in the Park at the Nairobi National Museums Botanical garden. 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

### KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

- August 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 Tsavo West national Park and Taita hills
  - September 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Weekend Get-away in Nanyuki
  - The Affordable Art Show Courtyard behind the Louis Leakey Auditorium, opening on Friday evening, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 6pm
- Contact: 0724255299

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