

# Foreign tourists now prefer private lodges to beach hotels

KWALE

BY TOBIAS CHANJI

The latest trend indicates that tourists prefer private lodging as opposed to beach hotels.

The long tradition of tourists wanting to be near the ocean is on the decline as most of them opt for private apartments, villas and cottages.

Trevors Field is a tourist from Australia who has been visiting Kenya frequently. He prefers luxury villas.

"I have been staying here for the last two years now and it is a good thing so far. It's friendly, private, nice, quiet, and the staff are friendly. I will definitely come back because I always come two to three times a year," said Mr Field, who stays at Diani Pearl Luxury Apartment.

Kwale Governor Salim Mvuruya said the county was attracting internation-

al recognition following Diani's recognition as the best beach destination three years in a row.

"Because of getting the recognition for three years consistently, and the peaceful stay that we have witnessed, most investors have come our way," he told *The Standard* yesterday.

Susan Andeka, a manager at Diani Pearl Luxury Apartment, said Diani had for a long time lacked apartments that were well-serviced and professionally managed.

## SENIOR OFFICIALS

"Many senior officials, whose names I will not reveal for the sake of their privacy, have been flocking here to sample our products," she said.

With a ready chef at your beck and call, the luxurious apartments also provide other services that include housekeeping and laundry.

The concept borrows heavily from Lamu-Swahili architecture, with mod-



“Because of getting the recognition for three years consistently, and the peaceful stay that we have witnessed, most investors have come our way - Salim Mvuruya, Kwale governor”

ern amenities.

Spanish porcelain tiles and Italian granite blend tastefully with locally mined Galana stone. Lamu arches, chiselled Swahili pillars, hand-carved Mvuli doors and vintage staircases, all complemented by naturally earthy colours.

"We have many locals talented in art and masonry who we employ to help us blend our product," said Ms Andeka.

She further noted that the apartment received both local and international clients, adding that most guests preferred to have their own chefs.

"Some guests find hotels crowded and prefer apartments for the sake of privacy," she said.

However, facilities like these face big challenges in the low season when they still have to pay for staff and maintenance.