

Police officer detained over gun drama

MOMBASA

By TOBIAS CHANJI

A police officer is being held at Likoni Police Station for allegedly trying to snatch a gun from a colleague.

Trouble began when the officer picked an argument with a colleague over a suspect he had arrested in a nearby bar.

During the argument, the officer who recently joined the force, tried to snatch a gun from another officer but was restrained and wrestled the ground by colleagues.

By yesterday afternoon, the officer was still being held at the station and it was not clear whether the suspect he brought in had been freed.

A junior police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity added that the officer, who has worked less than a year, appeared drunk when he entered the station with a suspect.

"He was drinking at Masai Club with some people and arrested one of them but when he wanted to check him in at the station, he was restrained by colleagues because the law does not allow a drunk officer to make arrests," the officer said.

The report spread fast on social media, with many equating it to last week's Kapenguria killings. Police Commanding Officer Benjamin Rotich said the two situations were not similar.

"I refute what is circulating in the media about a police officer. The truth is that there was a small problem of an officer who was drunk but was restrained and put in the cell," he said.

He argued that there was nothing related to terrorism or any attempt to harm fellow officers.

Tourism players demand security as hotels re-open

MOMBASA

By LINAH BENYAWA

Investors in the tourism industry have called for increased security at the Kenyan coast.

The investors are in the process of re-opening hotels after a three-month closure during the low season.

Jacaranda Beach Hotels chairman Pasquale Tirito said the national government should take terrorism seriously, adding that tourist facilities were becoming a soft spot for terrorists. He claimed records show that more than 812 people around the world have died following terror attacks in the last one year.

Mr Tirito wants the security authorities in the country to put up permanent police bases in the hotels as a way of beefing up security.

"Our major concern is the issue of security. We want to see (police) officers in the area. Another way is to have beach traders' operations streamlined so they can be used to help us identify suspicious characters roaming the beaches," he said.

"We are isolated because of the distance from Watamu and Malindi where there are police stations. If the Government could set up a police base here, it would boost security and guarantee the safety of tourists who come on holiday," he said.

He also said the hotels would benefit from at least five security lights in Watamu to keep the area well lit at night. Tirito said his hotel, which has a capacity for over 300 guests, had started receiving bookings.

FROM THE HOTEL PLAYERS

- Hotels closed in the low season have started opening
- They want the Government to increase security
- They said the county and national governments were slow to respond to security concerns
- They want at least five security lights in Watamu to help keep the area well lit at night

ed receiving bookings.

Separately, youth groups in Likoni sub-county have protested against increased insecurity in the area.

The youths said gun attacks had increased in the recent past and accused local politicians of not addressing the matter.

The more than 100 youths meeting under the umbrella of the Sauti Ya Vijina Likoni Forum also complained about the falling standards of polytechnics in the area.

The youths also called for the restoration of the Mtongwe Ferry Services, which was suspended by the Government 10 years ago owing to a shortage of vessels to ply the channel. They said residents were relocating because of the transport crisis.

They also said no attention was being given to growing poverty, drug abuse or poor academic performance, even as local girls resorted to prostitution at the Likoni ferry channel.