

Two Kenyan Athletes Accept Provisional Suspension At World Championships

The International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) has said in a statement that Kenyan athletes, Koki Manunga and Joyce Zakary, have accepted provisional suspensions after they tested positive for banned performance enhancing drugs in samples provided in Beijing on the 20th and 21st of August respectively. IAAF conducted these targeted tests at the hotels of athletes during the pre-competition phase.

Joyce Zakary had clocked a national record of 50.71 seconds in the first round of the women's 400m at the Bird's Nest in Monday but she did not start the semi-final on Tuesday for which she had qualified. On the other hand, Manunga failed to make it out of her first round of the 400m hurdles after timing 58.96sec to finish 35th out of 37 athletes.

The IAAF statement reads rules of the International Association of Athletics Federation dictate that the IAAF is only able to make a public disclosure once this provisional suspension is in place.

Recently, German state broadcaster ARD has reported that some athletes from Kenya were warned ahead of unannounced doping tests. The broadcaster also revealed that a banned runner accused officials of Athletics Kenya of demanding money to hide positive tests. In the latest report on Kenyan athletes, a former runner who works with athletes revealed that some testers called up athletes ahead of their scheduled visits. [Frimin Kiplagat Kipchoge](#), the former runner, also said these testers told athletes they were willing to reschedule them if they were not available. Under anti-doping rules, unannounced tests can happen at any point of time with the athlete having to register his or her daily whereabouts with a central system to stay available for drug-testing, both in and out of competition. ARD was told by banned athlete Ronald Kipchumba that some officials in the country demanded money from them to hide positive tests. Kipchumba tested positive for blood-boosting EPO in 2012.

A recent report by ARD and the Sunday Times claimed that there were 18 Kenyans, among more than 800 athletes, who had "suspicious blood test results" between 2001 and 2012.

In another development, a two-year doping ban has been imposed on Julia Mumbi Muraga from Athletics Kenya on Thursday after testing positive for the performance-enhancing drug [Erythropoietin](#) (EPO). Muraga represented Kenya in the 2009 World Championships Marathon and the 2008 World Half Marathon Championships. She was tested after winning the 2014 Cologne Marathon in 2:28:00 on September 19.

This year, Kenyan athletics was rocked by the doping ban imposed on marathon star [Rita Jeptoo](#) after she was caught doping with EPO, the banned blood-boosting hormone. Jeptoo remains the biggest name till date in Kenyan sports to have been caught and her ban was a major trauma for Kenya that has always idolized its record-breaking and medal-winning runners. Since the 1960s, athletes from the African country had more Olympic medalists and record holders in long distance running than any other country.

The IAAF, with support from the World Marathon Majors, is planning to open a new testing facility in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi in two to three months.