

All set for Ggaba killings trial as

The police say at least 500 people, including relatives and Judiciary staff, had already been accredited to attend the proceedings. The remaining 500 slots will be allocated this morning on a first-come, first-served basis.

BY BENSON TUMUSIIME

All is set for the highly anticipated public trial of Mr Christopher Okello Onyum, the prime suspect in the killing of four toddlers at a Ggaba daycare centre, as the first-ever community-based mobile High Court session opens today at Ggaba Community Church grounds.

By yesterday afternoon, different stakeholders, including the Judiciary, Police, Uganda Prisons Service, church leaders, and local council officials, were finalising arrangements at the venue, which is located about 100 metres from the daycare centre where the fatal stabbing occurred on April 2.

Mr Okello, 38, is facing four counts of murder contrary to Sections 171 and 172 of the Penal Code Act, 1950.

He was last week committed to the High Court for trial after appearing before Makindye Chief Magistrates Court, which formally communicated the charges and remanded him to Luzira prison.

Security officials said the suspect is expected to be brought to the venue at 8am under tight security and held in a temporary cell created near the church grounds before being produced in court at 9am.

"We have created a temporary cell here near the grounds where this suspect will be detained in the meantime as the court proceeds," a security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said.

The proceedings will be conducted inside a large tent erected at the church



A community-based mobile High Court session that opens today at Ggaba Community Church grounds in Kampala City, will try Mr Christopher Okello Onyum, who allegedly killed four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme on April 2. PHOTO/IBRAHIM KAVUMA

grounds as part of the Judiciary's newly introduced mobile court framework.

Court officials said they are expecting up to 1,000 people to attend the hearing, making it one of the most publicly attended criminal proceedings in recent years.

ABOUT THE PROCEEDINGS

Today's hearing marks the first recent civilian criminal case to be heard through a community-based mobile court. The mobile court framework was formally introduced about three weeks ago by Chief Justice Flavio Zeyia through Legal Notice No.1 of 2026. Under the framework, courts may sit in public buildings, vehicles, and other temporary locations to bring justice services closer to communities.

According to the officials, the session is planned to run for one week, depending on the accused's plea.

"If the suspect pleads guilty today, then, tomorrow (Tuesday), the sentence will be given, and proceedings shall end. But if he does not plead guilty, the

The move follows President Museveni's directive on Easter Monday, ordering the Judiciary to fast-track the trial and have it conducted within the community where the alleged crime occurred so residents can witness justice being dispensed.

The case relates to the fatal stabbing of four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme on the eve of Good Friday, allegedly by Mr Christopher Okello, a tragedy that sent shockwaves across the country.

court shall take Tuesday as an off day to enable processing of the case, then proceedings shall resume on Wednesday, and sentence [if the accused is found guilty] will be delivered on Friday," a court official said.

The Kampala Metropolitan Police Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police Ezekiel Emtu, said at least 500 people had already been accredited to attend the proceedings.

These include family members of the deceased children, church leaders, Judiciary staff, and senior government officials.

He added that the remaining 500 slots would be allocated this morning on a first-come, first-served basis through coupon distribution.

ACP Emtu said security agencies would mount temporary roadblocks and conduct spot checks on all access routes leading to the venue.

"From 4am, there will be stiff deployment on four junctions that connect to

mobile court opens

The victims



One-year-old.
Ryan Odeke



Two-year-old.
Ignatius Sseruyange



Two-year-old.
Gideon Eteku



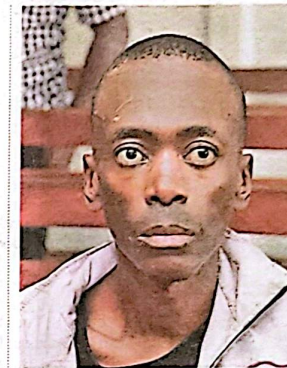
Two-year-old.
Keisha Agenrwot



The timeline.

If the suspect pleads guilty today, then, Tuesday (tomorrow), the sentence will be given, and proceedings shall end. But if he does not plead guilty, the court shall take Tuesday as an off day to enable processing of the case, then proceedings shall resume on Wednesday.

- A court official.



Christopher Okello Onyum, the prime suspect. PHOTO/FILE

the scene. Only accredited guests will be allowed access to the venue," he said.

ACP Emtu added: "At the venue, there will be one entry point and one exit point. The entrance from the school to the grounds where the court shall take place is reserved only for High Court members and specially invited guests."

He assured the public that joint security teams comprising police and the army were fully prepared to secure the event, given the high stakes.

"We shall be here, nowhere else with in Kampala Metropolitan Area. I want to assure you, we are ready to work with you, but also implement some of the standard operating procedures since you have the church and other learning institutions," Emtu said.

A public address system had been installed at the venue, with the Judiciary indicating that the proceedings would be broadcast live on major television stations and social media platforms to allow wider public access.

At the venue, two white tents have been erected, a big one that will accommodate the general public, and a smaller one for the court officials, and also where the accused will stand.

This publication also understands that four State-sponsored lawyers have been hired to also represent Mr Okello as demanded by the Constitution in capital offenses.

Attendees will not be allowed to carry bags and other unnecessary items for security reasons.

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The case relates to the fatal stabbing of four toddlers aged between one and two years at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme on the eve of Good Friday, allegedly by Mr Okello, a tragedy that sent shockwaves across the country.

1,000
EXPECTED IN
COURT