

On Monday, the High Court reconvened with the further hearing of the prosecution's evidence against Christopher Okello Onyum, a man accused of killing four pre-school children at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme. The business of the day started with Assistant Inspector of Police Emmanuel Odongo, who revealed a trail of movements made by Okello using CCTV cameras to reconstruct his routes on the eve of the attack and also on the fateful day. Below is a slightly edited court proceeding.

BY ANTHONY WESAKA & JULIET KIGONGO

Police CCTV analyst details



Assistant Inspector of Police Emmanuel Odongo, attached to the Department of CCTV at the National Command and Control Centre, shows court footage detailing Mr Christopher Okello Onyum's movements on April 1 and April 2. PHOTOS/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

Court clerk calls up Okello's case file. Prison warden brings Okello into the court make shift structure to start the day's business.

Judge: Good morning, Mr Okello.

Okello: Good morning, my lord.

Judge: Prosecution, I'm waiting for you.

Muwaganya: If it pleases my lord, for the record, Jonathan Muwaganya, and Mrs Anna Kiiza, for the watching brief are Stanley Ketchio, Pius Katumba, and Roger Mugabi.

For defence, we have Mr Richard Rumbaga and Sarah Awelo. My lord, the accused is in court, and the assessors are also in court.

I have five witnesses. My lord, the matter is for further hearing, and we came ready. We start with PW13 (prosecution witness number 13).

Judge: Defence, are you ready to proceed?

Awelo: My lord, we are ready to proceed.

Judge: Good morning, sir (judge exchanges pleasantries with the prosecution witness), may I have your name? Speak louder than that.

Witness: My lord, I'm Assistant Inspector of Police, Odongo Emmanuel.

Judge: How old are you, sir?

Odongo: My lord, I'm 31 years old.

Judge: What is your religion?

Odongo: My lord, I'm a Christian.

Judge: My lord, will you take the oath.

Odongo: I do, my lord.

Muwaganya: You said you are an Assistant Inspector of Police, Odongo Emmanuel?

Odongo: Yes, my lord.

Muwaganya: Your age again for the record?

Odongo: I'm 31 years old.

Muwaganya: What do you do for a living?

Odongo: My lord, I'm a police officer.

Muwaganya: Where are you from?

Odongo: I'm attached to the Directorate of ICT, Uganda Police Force, under the Department of CCTV at the National Command and Control Centre.

Muwaganya: Where is that located?

Odongo: My lord, it's located in Naguru.

Muwaganya: What are your duties?

Odongo: I do retrieve CCTV footage to be used as relevant evidence, write CCTV analysis reports, and also tender CCTV evidence before courts of law.

Muwaganya: What is your designation at the ICT Command Centre?

Odongo: My lord, I'm a CCTV analyst.

Muwaganya: What are your qualifications?

Odongo: My lord, I hold a Diploma in Computer Science from Kampala International University in 2019.

Muwaganya: Anything else?

Odongo: My lord, I also hold a certificate in cybersecurity and digital evidence handling from Kibuli Training School in 2022.

I also hold a certificate in Software Development from the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology in 2018.

Muwaganya: For how long have you worked as a CCTV analyst?

Odongo: Since 2022.

Muwaganya: What role did you play in this matter?

Judge: Mr Muwaganya, before we go there, can he explain to the court how the CCTV system works?

Odongo: My lord, CCTV is a closed-circuit television system, which has a set of cameras in different categories. We have ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras, which are cameras that specifically detect number plates of vehicles and motorcycles.

Muwaganya: Where are these found?

Odongo: Highways.

Muwaganya: Who do they belong to?

Odongo: All are under the Uganda Police Force. We also have digital cameras. These are fixed cameras that are specific to video surveillance.

Muwaganya: Any other?

Odongo: We have facial recognition cameras. They have helped in detecting faces. They are specially located at border points.

Muwaganya: We shall concentrate on those relevant to your work in this case.

Odongo: Okay, my lord.

Muwaganya: Any other cameras outside the Uganda Police?

Odongo: We have private CCTV surveillance cameras under the ownership of individuals.

Muwaganya: How do police cameras work in terms of recording and storage?

Odongo: My lord, the digital surveillance cameras, which are also called the dome cameras, because they record real-time incidents and all incidents recorded, are sent to the server, where they are stored for a period of 30 days.

Muwaganya: Where is the server located?

Odongo: It's located at the National Command and Control Centre.

Muwaganya: How do you access the server?

Odongo: My lord, I access the service of permission and instruction from my supervisor.

Muwaganya: How about the private cameras belonging to private citizens?

Odongo: My lord, I access them through the consent of the owners.

Muwaganya: How do they work?

Odongo: My lord, these cameras also record in real time. They have an external storage, which is the DVR where all their recordings are stored for a specific period of time based on the storage capacity.

CCTV feed.

I observed that at 10:45:09, and 10:47:40, the police camera named mental fabrication, and Lugogo Rugby, captured the same vehicle being driven by the suspect towards Kampala City Centre, my lord. That is seen in images 2 and 3 of my report. I also observed that at 10:45:09 and 10:47:40, the police camera named Jinja Road-New Vision Junction recorded the same vehicle proceeding towards Kampala City Centre, my lord.

- Emmanuel Odongo, Assistant Inspector of Police.

Muwaganya: I want you to look at the document and tell the court whether you recognise it.

Odongo: Yes, my lord, I recognise it.

Muwaganya: You recognise it as?

Odongo: It's a CCTV analysis report on the alleged case of murder vide Ggaba Police Station, CRB026/2026, my lord. My lord, this report was authored by me.

Muwaganya: Is it dated?

Odongo: Yes, my lord, it's dated April 7, 2026, and it's addressed to the commander of CID KMP.

Muwaganya: You said you signed it. Where did you sign it?

Odongo: My lord, this report bears a signature on each and every page.

Muwaganya: How about the signatures of your line supervision you talked about?

Odongo: The signatures of all my line supervisors are on each page, and specifically on page 11, it bears their signatures and names.

Muwaganya: In summary, what does it comprise?

Judge: Mr Muwaganya, before we put content on record, we need to admit it. Another inquiry: Did you make that report directly from the server, or did you extract it and put it on a device?

Muwaganya: My lord, that was the intention of why I asked.

Odongo: The report comprises still images, which are extracted from the CCTV footage. There is also a request letter by ACP Taremsa Moses, who is the commander of CID KMP.

The report also has consent letters attached. We have consent from Renewal Sacco, Wentz Medical Centre, and Shell Jinja Road.

Muwaganya: What else?

Odongo: I also have a flash disc, a storage device having a CCTV footage. And it's labelled CCTV footage Vide Ggaba CRB 026/2026.

It's tendered in court.

Muwaganya: Yes, when was this?

Odongo: That was on the day prior to the incident day, and I was

Okello's movements



Judge: Who is responding?

Awelo Sarah, defence lawyer: My lord, we have no objection.

Judge: The CCTV analysis report, which is dated April 7 by the witness Odongo, is admitted as FE 9A, and the flash disc is marked 9B.

Muwaganya: Mr Odongo, I have requested you to use the soft copy to take us through the report. What does page one contain?

Odongo: On page one, I have a background of what was indicated in the request letter.

Muwaganya: We shall be more interested in page 2, as you requested, as per the request letter. What did you do?

Odongo: My lord, as the action officer, the action I took upon the receipt of the request letter was visiting the scene in the company of the investigating officers from Kibuli Police Station to identify the presence of any private CCTV around the scene of the incident. I also conducted a mapping exercise to determine the availability of CCTV cameras along the suspected routes used by the suspect to access the scene.

Muwaganya: So, after your scene surveillance and mapping exercise, what followed?

Odongo: I accessed the police intelligence surveillance system to assess the availability and coverage of the police CCTV cameras within and around the scene, and also to track the suspect's movements.

Muwaganya: What did you discover regarding private cameras and police surveillance cameras at the scene?

Odongo: With private cameras at Renewal Sacco, located right behind the scene, when I gained consent to the scene at the Renewal Sacco, I retrieved CCTV footage, which I later analysed, and upon analysis, I found out that the suspect drove a motor vehicle RAV4, which has the number plate indicated in the report.

Muwaganya: Yes, when was this?

Odongo: That was on the day prior to the incident day, and I was

able to identify the features on that motor vehicle. I now went ahead and conducted an analysis of the police CCTV cameras.

Muwaganya: For what purpose?

Odongo: To enable me to get the number plate of the vehicle and have its movements tracked.

Muwaganya: Couldn't you have established this through the Renewal Sacco camera?

Odongo: The registration number plates could not be established using the Renewal Sacco footage, so I went ahead and used that of the police along Ggaba Road; that is, Ggaba Trading Centre cameras along Bunge.

Judge: Why?

Odongo: It was because of clarity issues, not clear to show the number plate.

Muwaganya: What features did you manage to recognise with the Renewal Sacco camera?

Odongo: I was able to see the spare tyre, which is behind, and the colour of the vehicle.

Muwaganya: Tell the court what you discovered with the aid of police cameras.

Judge: Wait a minute, there are places I missed.

Odongo: Ggaba, Kabalagala, Bunge, Lugogo and Nakawa.

Muwaganya: With the use of the police cameras, what did you establish?

Odongo: I was able to establish the number plate of that vehicle, which aided me in tracking the movement of that vehicle, and that was the day prior to the incident.

Judge: Officer, if you feel like sitting down, let us know. Do you want to stand?

Odongo: Okay, my lord, I can stand.

Muwaganya: Now, take the court through what you observed.

Odongo: My lord, upon tracking the motor vehicle movements, the police ANPR camera captured it on April 1 at 10:17 am, being driven from Kyamba towards Kibuli.

Muwaganya: What paragraph?

Odongo: Found on page 4.

Muwaganya: Did you observe anything else?

Odongo: There were other motor vehicles, and he looked for a location where he could park right behind other cars.

Judge: Where is that in your report?

Odongo: Under paragraph 4.11, it summarises all the activities at Renewal Sacco. He later returned and drove away.

Muwaganya: Let's summarise 4.1.

Odongo: He returned in a period of about 12 minutes, where he checked again the motor vehicle specifically the front tyre at the co-driver's side, and after that he opened the car, entered, and drove away.

Muwaganya: When he drove away, where did he go, and using what route?

Odongo: He used a minor road where he connected to Ggaba Road in his exit and drove towards Bunge Market.

When he reached Bunge, my lord, he was a stopper in a dark place which was out of camera range for a period of one hour and 40 minutes.

Muwaganya: I want you to brief the court on when you last saw him, like which camera last saw him.

Odongo: A camera named Ggaba Shell last saw him at 12:13 pm, and the next camera that sees is Hash at 14:19 pm.

Muwaganya: What is the location of Shell Ggaba and Hash Petrol Station Bunge, which are within a distance of about 500 meters?

Muwaganya: You said he entered a dark spot. What informed that?

Odongo: There was a substantial distance, a distance of 500 meters could not be driven in a period of one hour and 40 minutes.

Muwaganya: When you next see him at the Hash Petrol Station, where did he go again?

Odongo: The vehicle proceeds towards Kasanga, Kabalagala to Arena mall traffic lights, then it turns towards Electoral Commission along Jinja Road, and from there it continues up to Shell Jinja Road.

Muwaganya: What happened at Shell Jinja Road?

Odongo: Arrived there at 14:45 hours, the driver parked, and after parking he interacted with the staff.

Muwaganya: What did you use to observe these activities at Shell Jinja Road?

Odongo: I used private cameras, that is, a camera named Shell Jinja Road.

Muwaganya: What did you observe?

Odongo: The suspect disembarked, interacted with staff, and was assisted by the staff to push the vehicle into the parking area. I also observed the suspect making phone calls.

Muwaganya: Anything else?

Odongo: That is all for day one.

Muwaganya: That was April 1. Did you observe anything on April 2?

Odongo: At 10:16 am, the police camera named Ggaba Kawuku Junction filmed camera 1 and 2, captured the suspect carrying a backpack being transported on a motorcycle as it headed towards the scene, with an identified registration number plate.

Muwaganya: Two things, what date is in your report?

Odongo: There was a typing error, but I would like to bring to your attention. Instead of 2025, they typed 2023.

Muwaganya: Is that the only error?

Odongo: Yes, my lord.

Muwaganya: How did you identify the suspect on this particular motorcycle as the suspect?

Odongo: After the arrest of the suspect at the scene, he was taken to Kabalagala Police Station, where I saw his dress code, and I identified him as the same suspect who was arrested at the scene.

Upon identifying that, I went to the Kawuku Ggaba junction cameras and checked.

Muwaganya: Based on what?

Odongo: Using the dress code, the backpack, and the eyeglasses.

Muwaganya: You saw the motorcycle carrying the suspect to the scene. Anything else?

Odongo: Upon seeing the suspect heading to the scene on that motorcycle, I went ahead and analysed the footage of Wentz Medical Centre.

Muwaganya: Why Wentz Medical Centre?

Odongo: This is where the victims were rushed to after the attack, my lord.

Muwaganya: What did you observe?

Odongo: I observed that at 11:20 hours, the private cameras at Wentz Medical Centre recorded an identified individual bringing victims for medical attention.

My lord, from the time I saw the suspect at Ggaba-Kawuku Junction cameras, at 10:16 am, when he was on a boda boda, then I saw the victims being brought to Wentz at 11:20 am, which gives a time frame of 1 hour and 4 minutes.

At 11:22 am, the second victim was brought in. The third victim was brought in at 11:24 am.

The court watches a video of Okello's movements on the eve and actual day of the alleged incident.

Muwaganya: My lord, that is it.

Judge: How long will the cross-examination take, or do we have a health break?

Sarah Awelo: Good afternoon, my lord. Upon your findings on page 8, 5, 6 private cameras at Renewal Sacco were not operational in the morning hours but later resumed in the afternoon. Did you find out why they were not working in the morning?

Odongo: I interacted with the system myself, and I found out that there was a power outage.

Awelo: Are you aware that was the time when the alleged incident occurred?

Odongo: Yes, my lord.

Awelo: From the camera recordings, were you able to identify any faces on April 1?

Odongo: Yes, at Renewal Sacco and Shell Jinja Road.

Awelo: As I was watching the video, it was too dark for any of us to identify the faces.

Odongo: Maybe that was the lighting effect, but it's clearly on my laptop.

Judge: Mr Muwaganya, do your colleagues have a copy of the flash?

Awelo: No, my lord.

Judge: You will need to give them a copy; it may not be now.

Awelo: From your analysis, when he was driving in the camera, could you identify whether any of the drivers could have a mental illness?

Judge: That is a very strange question. Maybe what I can say is that the driver was very conscious and observed traffic regulations. He could stop at the traffic lights to show that the lights are red not allowing him to proceed, and once they were green, he could proceed and could not knock anyone on the way (Attracting clapping from the public attending the trial).

Awelo: That is all, my lord.

Judge: Mr Muwaganya, are re-exam?

Muwaganya: No, my lord.

Judge: Thank you, my lord. Let's take a health break of 15 minutes.

Court adjourned