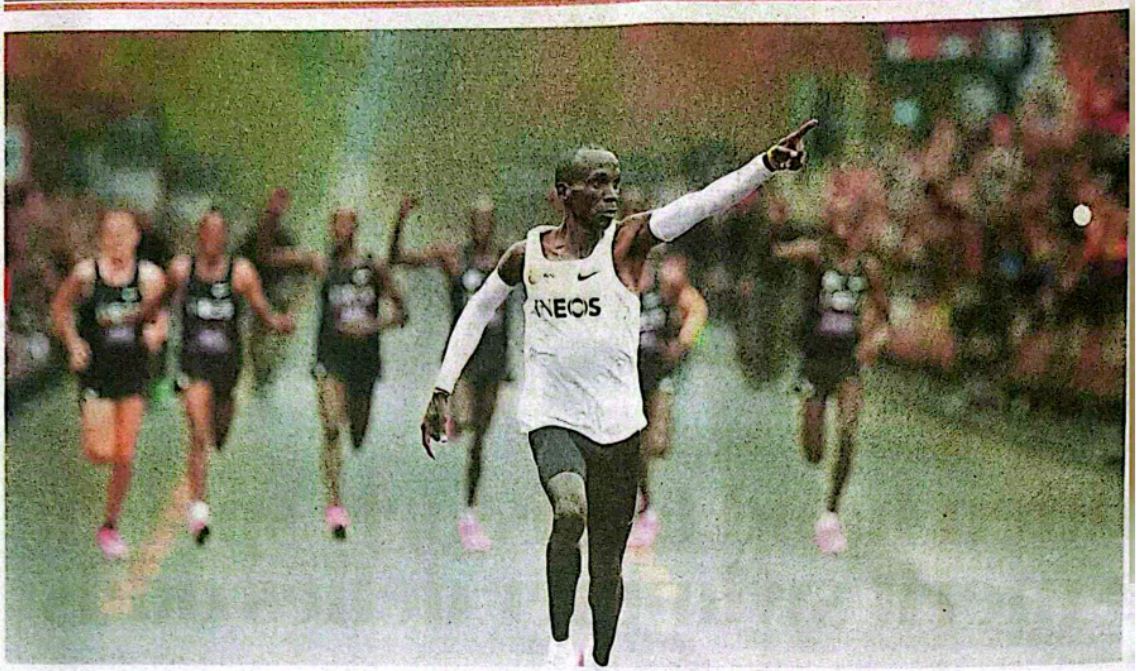


I'm not retiring - Kipchoge

Venture. Kipchoge plans to take his running to the edges of the world with the Eliud Kipchoge World Tour - not to prove his greatness, but to give it away. Over the next two and a half years, the two-time Olympic champion will complete a marathon on all seven continents.

BY AGENCIES

FACTFILE

Born: November 5, 1984 (age 41)
Height: 5ft 7in
Weight: 52 kg

Personal bests

Marathon: 2:01:09 (Berlin 2022)
Marathon: 1:59:40 (Vienna 2019)
10,000 m: 26:49.02 (Hengelo 2007)
5000 m: 12:46.53 (Rome 2004)
Mile: 3:50.40 (London 2004)

For more than two decades, Eliud Kipchoge ran with history on his back and won almost everything there was to win.

He rewrote what the human body was believed capable of and became, by near-universal agreement, the greatest marathon runner ever.

Now the 41-year-old says the chase for medals and validation is over.

"What I am doing is not retiring," he says. "I am evolving. I am running for purpose." Kipchoge plans to take his running to the edges of the world with the Eliud Kipchoge World Tour - not to prove his greatness, but to give it away.

Over the next two and a half years, the two-time Olympic champion will complete a marathon on all seven continents.

"Running is the most universal sport," he says. "It connects us all. With this project, I want to compete not only for records, but for the people.

"I want to inspire, to give back, and to remind everyone that no human is limited."





Easy to pick. Given a choice between Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi, Kipchoge (above) did not find it hard to pick hardwork over poetry. PHOTOS/REUTERS

A legacy without limits

To understand the significance of this moment, it helps to understand the magnitude of Kipchoge's success.

As well as those Olympic titles, Kipchoge's honours have included a world title, 11 World Marathon Major victories and two official world records. In one of sport's most impressive feats, he became the first person to break the two-hour marathon barrier under special conditions in Vienna in 2019, clocking an unofficial time of one hour, 59 minutes and 40 seconds.

"If I look at the last 23 years, the highlight was making history," he says.

"Not winning medals, not even breaking world records, but opening the minds of people around the world to believe that they are not limited in anything they are doing."

That belief has become the anchor of his next chapter.

The tour will operate under Eliud's Running World, a long-term platform designed to promote participation in running while supporting global causes.

Each marathon will raise funds for the Eliud Kipchoge Foundation, which focuses on education, environmental sustainability and health.

Kipchoge hopes to raise $1m (£739,000) at every stop, with projects tailored to local needs.

In Kenya, his vision includes building libraries across all 47 counties. In other cities, he wants the tour to leave behind tangible benefits, not just memories.

"I want to leave a legacy of education," Kipchoge says. "There is knowledge in books. If we want to think with the outside world, we need to get knowledge and understand how other people are thinking."

Running a marathon in the extreme Antarctic cold is not something Kipchoge sees as a stunt, but as a statement.

"It is about pushing your limits," he explains. "I want to show the world that you can still push your limits in anything, even in the toughest conditions."

Asked whether he is pushing himself too hard, his answer is characteristically direct. "Life is about pressing on," he says. "The moment you stop pressing, it is no longer life."

'Nobody protects young athletes'

Kipchoge's shift in mindset has been shaped not just by his success, but by what he has seen around him.

In recent years, he has become increasingly outspoken about the welfare of thousands of athletes who train as hard and dream as big as top stars but are left with little protection when they fall short.

"I am not satisfied with how athletes are being handled or how they are being paid," he says.

"The sports world is making huge profits, but very little goes to the athlete."

He believes the system creates a dangerous