

Kenyan police kill three amid anti-Ebola facility demonstrations

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14 June 2026

Police have killed three protesters in Nanyuki, Laikipia County, during demonstrations against a US Ebola quarantine facility.

Nanyuki became a battleground on June 1 and June 9, as police violently suppressed protests at Laikipia Air Base, a Kenya Air Force installation that hosts British military personnel. Thousands of workers, youth and small traders took to the streets to oppose the quarantine facility project. They were met with tear gas, live ammunition and mass arrests.

Three people have been killed, several others wounded and at least 50 arrested. On June 1, two men were killed after police used live ammunition, while at least three others were treated for gunshot injuries. One of the dead has been identified as Charles Mang'aro Mwangi, 27. The identity of the second man killed that day has not been publicly established. A week later, police again attacked demonstrators, killing 17-year-old Sylvester Muigai Ndungu, a secondary school student who, according to his family, had been sent home over school fees and was on his way to collect a uniform when he was caught in the police violence.

The Ebola quarantine will be for US citizens only, including aid workers, military personnel and health officials with or potentially exposed to Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. Protestors are angry that they should be made to bear the risks of a deadly viral disease that has already led to the deaths of at least 138 out of 695 confirmed cases in Congo, for the benefit of Washington. The facility is not being built to serve Kenyans, even as hospitals across the country are starved of funds, staff, medicine and basic equipment by Ruto's IMF austerity and siphoning off money.

On Saturday it emerged that the US has already deployed AFRICOM personnel to Kenya to support the construction and operationalisation of the facility. The troops reportedly include medical, engineering,

communications, security and contract-planning specialists, although Washington has refused to disclose their number.

This deployment has gone ahead even after Kenya's High Court issued conservatory orders temporarily barring the establishment and operationalisation of the facility, following a petition by the Katiba Institute, a constitutional rights body, challenging the secrecy of the Kenya-US agreement and the absence of public participation. The case is due back before the High Court on June 16.

The deployment of US troops refutes Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale's claims that construction has been paused in compliance with the court order. Ruto is making clear that the facility will proceed whatever the High Court rules.

Ruto's pact with Donald Trump lays bare the real class character of the Kenyan state. Since taking office, he has dispatched Kenyan police to Haiti in a US-orchestrated intervention aimed at propping up a neocolonial order in the Caribbean. He has backed Israel as it wages genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza and the US-Israeli imperialist war against Iran. Most recently, has courted French imperialism, seeking to insert Kenya into Paris's efforts to reassert influence across Africa after being driven out of its former colonies in the Sahel.

For Washington, Kenya is to serve as a forward operating base in East and Central Africa, a staging ground for military, intelligence and counterinsurgency operations, and now a dumping ground for health risks the American ruling class is determined to keep off US soil.

The capitalist opposition parties have sought to exploit the anger while keeping it within the bounds of parliamentary protest, court challenges and tribalism. Like Ruto, they are all lackeys of imperialism.

Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka denounced the plan, declaring that the lives of Kenyans "are not bargaining

chips”. But for years he was a senior figure in Daniel arap Moi’s US-backed dictatorship, serving as the party’s National Organising Secretary during the one-party era and its aftermath, before holding top cabinet posts under Moi. KANU was the ruling party under which left-wing opponents, students, trade unionists and intellectuals opposing dictatorship and IMF austerity were detained, tortured and killed.

Kalonzo is politically orientated to Washington. In February, he travelled to the US and met Senator and anti-China hawk, Chris Coons, where discussions reportedly centred on “regional stability” and the Kenya-US partnership. He reportedly attempted to meet senior Trump officials.

Martha Karua, leader of the People’s Liberation Party, appealed to both Nairobi and Washington to abandon the project after the police killings in Nanyuki. Addressing the US State Department and Ruto directly, she tweeted, “Isn’t this reason enough for you to retreat? Haven’t you shed enough blood in Haiti and Palestine?” Karua has longstanding links to US political establishment, having occupied various ministerial roles under President Mwai Kibaki governments in the 2000s.

Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, Secretary General of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), whose position is now the subject of a bitter factional dispute inside the party, linked the Ebola facility to Ruto’s deployment of Kenyan police to Haiti, declaring that “for the right amount, this one can sell us to the devil himself.”

But Sifuna speaks from within a party that has been integrated into Ruto’s “broad-based government” following the pact signed by the late Raila Odinga with Ruto’s United Democratic Alliance following the mass Gen-Z protests against IMF austerity in 2024. Sifuna later said that Odinga, who has for decades channelled mass anger back into the political establishment, had appointed him to oversee implementation of the ODM-UDA agreement, exposing the fraudulent character of his anti-Ruto posturing.

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, who served as Ruto’s deputy from 2022 to 2024 before being impeached and driven out of government, is inciting tribalism. Gachagua claimed the facility “is a strategic plan by William Ruto to wipe out the Mt Kenya community and, more so, the people of Meru and Laikipia,” demanding that the Americans take the centre “to America or another country.” The Mt Kenya population come largely from the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru tribes of central Kenya whose support Gachagua is

seeking to consolidate after his break with Ruto.

The opposition of all these forces is conditioned by fear that the anger in Nanyuki might intersect with a far broader social crisis. Across Kenya, the working masses are being crushed by soaring food, transport and fuel costs, intensified by the US-Israeli war against Iran and the resulting shock to global oil supplies.

In May, this anger erupted in a nationwide public transport shutdown after a sharp hike in fuel prices. The Ruto government again responded with repression. Police fired on demonstrators, leaving four people dead and more than 30 injured, while hundreds were arrested.

Ruto is now preparing a new assault through the Finance Bill 2026. Among its measures are 16 percent VAT on digital payment-processing services, expanded withholding taxes on card and digital transactions, an increase in excise duty on mobile phones from 10 to 25 percent, and a rise in monthly rental income tax from 7.5 to 10 percent.

The memory of the 2024 Gen Z uprising, when millions of youth opposed Ruto’s tax hikes and protesters stormed parliament, still terrifies the political establishment. The lessons of that struggle is that courage and spontaneity, however immense, are not enough. The movement was strangled above all by the absence of a revolutionary leadership and a socialist programme, as Odinga and ODM entered the government to rescue Ruto, the trade union bureaucracy isolated workers from the youth, and the Stalinists and pseudo-lefts promoted illusions in leaderless protest, constitutional reform and pressure politics.

Two years later, the same fundamental issues remain. Workers and youth must reject all attempts to subordinate their struggles to the opposition parties and build independent rank-and-file committees in workplaces, schools, universities and neighbourhoods, as part of the fight for a socialist and internationalist programme, the building of a Kenyan section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, and the struggle for world socialism.



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