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# VARSITY FOCUS

A General Information Newsletter From The Office Of The Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi

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## VARSITY-BASED PROJECT JUDGED 'BEST RUN'

A research project, based at the Department of Crop Science, University of Nairobi, has been judged the best run out of 11 such projects funded by the National Academy of Sciences, U.S.A. throughout the World. In a ten page report, prepared by Dr. C.S. Kauffman, Assistant Director of Rodale Research Centre in the U.S., the Grain Amaranth Research Project in Kenya has been described as "by far the best run of all amaranths projects . . . visited."

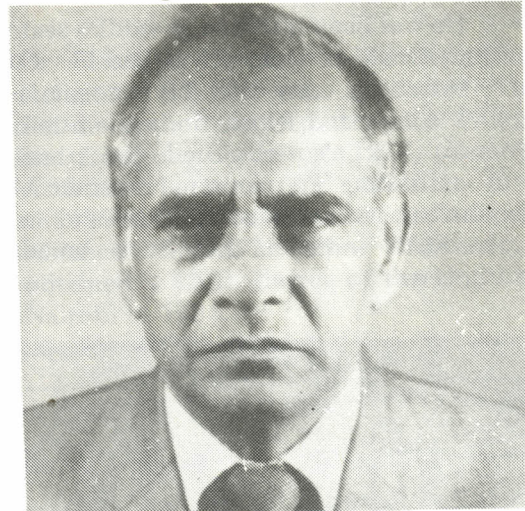
Managed under the leadership of Prof. V.K. Gupta, a plant breeder specialist at the Department of Crop Science, the Grain Amaranth (terere) Research Project seeks to measure the performance of the plant, to improve its productivity and to develop improved varieties of amaranth for differing climatic zones. Prof. Gupta was experimenting with varieties from Rodale Research Centre, local indigenous varieties and another variety, JUMLA, originally imported from Nepal. Experimental stations are based at Kabete, Mtwapa, Kiboko and Thika while another one will be opened at Eldoret.

The report which singles this University-based research project as the best run, was prepared by Dr. Kauffman after visiting all the eleven amaranth research projects some of which are in Peru, Mexico and India.

Interest in the grain amaranth (terere) as a major crop has grown in recent years due to its excellent nutritional quality. The seed is relatively small but high in protein and is comprised of well balanced array of essential amino acids. According to Prof. Gupta, Amaranth is a 'Super Grain' because it contains the highest quality of protein in any grain on earth. It is especially important as a breakfast food and as baby food. It contains a high concentration of lysine, an essential amino acid lacking in most other cereals and has more 'complete' proteins than milk and soybean. It is also high in vitamins and mineral elements.

Amaranth represents a fascinating crop with world wide potential as a high quality crop. It is widely grown in India, U.S.A. Central America, Mexico, South America and Africa for grain and vegetables. According to Prof. Gupta it has a wide range of environmental adaptation and grows well under stress and can be an ideal short duration crop for arid and semi arid areas. Several recent studies in Kenya and elsewhere have drawn attention to amaranth not only as a cheap source of protein but also as a high yielding grain (1.5-2.5 tonnes per hectare) in marginal environments. Early maturing varieties take 45-60 days while the late maturing ones take about 90-100 days. It fits well in the

cropping systems common in Kenya and can go a long way in solving malnutrition and food shortage.



Prof. Gupta, the Project leader of the Amaranth Grain Research Project at Kabete.

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### UNIVERSITY NEWS THROUGH VARSITY FOCUS

If you have any items concerning any public lecturers, seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, research projects, presentations, and any other miscellaneous events and activities, please send your information to Mr. G.G. Wainaina of the Vice-Chancellor's office for inclusion in the next issue of the Varsity Focus.

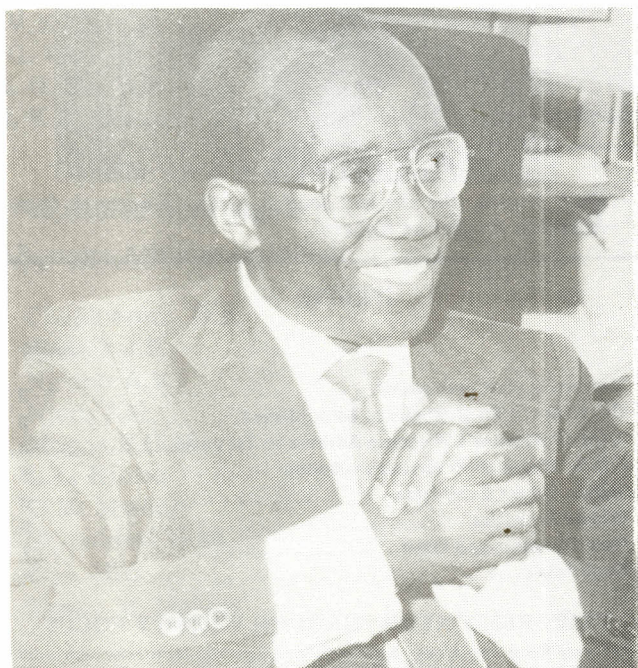
# UNIVERSITY STAFF GET AWARDS

## 3.1 Prof. Gombe receives Award

Prof. S. Gombe of the Department of Animal Physiology has been conferred with the award of "Fellow of 3rd World Academy of Science." He was awarded the fellowship in recognition of his researches in reproductive physiology which he has been carrying out since 1972.

Prof. Gombe has investigated infertility caused as a result of inadequate food and minerals intake indicating that irreversible brain damage can be caused by malnutrition. He has also explored the occurrence of chorionic gonadotropins (CG) in various domestic and wild animals. As a result of these investigations, it is now known that C.G., which are produced by the placenta during pregnancy, are essential in protecting the foetus from expulsion by the mother.

He has been involved in studies searching for male contraceptives and has studied infertility caused by Trypanosomiasis in the male and female domestic ruminants. He has also explored the possibility of finding Trypanosome resistant breeds of goats in East Africa and results to date indicate that such breeds do occur.



*Prof. Gombe, a Fellow of the Third World Academy of Science.*

The Award, conferred to him in July this year, is given by the Third World Academy which was established in 1983, with Prof. Abdus Salaam, Nobel Prize Laureate in Physics and Director of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, as its first president.

Prof. T.R. Odhiambo (Kenya), C. Chagas (Brazil), and M.G.K. Manon (India) were elected Vice-Presidents. The Academy now comprises of 28 founding fellows, 12 fellows and 18 Associate Fellows. Of the 40 fellows, 5 come from Africa of which 2 are Kenyans.



*Dr. Mwangi, Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Economics elected Vice-President of the International Association of Agricultural Economists.*

## 3.2 DR. MWANGI ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS.

Dr. W.M. Mwangi, Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Economics, has been elected Vice-President (Administration) of the International Association of Agricultural Economists. He was given this honour during the XIX International Conference of Agricultural Economics held in Malaya, Spain between 26th August and 4th September, 1985.

The conference was also attended by Dr. A.C. Okello-Ogutu and Dr. Willis Oluoch-Kosura of the same Department. Dr. Mwangi presented a paper on 'Forces Facing the Future of Kenya Agriculture' while Dr. Okello-Ogutu read a paper on "The Need for a New Approach to Fertilizer Use and Food

Production in the Developing Countries.” Dr. Oluoch-Kosura’s paper was on ‘Determining a Strategy for Mechanising Land Preparation for Maize Production in Kenya.’ These papers along with others presented during the conference, will be published in a book form in 1986.

In the sixty years of the International Association of Agricultural Economists, Dr. Mwangi becomes the second African to be elected to the executive council and the fifth person from the developing world.

We take this opportunity to congratulate both Prof. Gombe and Dr. Mwangi for these honors, which are in a way, an honour to the University of Nairobi.

#### 4. DR. KINOTI’S PH.D THESIS TO BE PUBLISHED.

The doctorate thesis of Dr. Hannah Wangechi Kinoti entitled, ‘Aspects of Gikuyu Moral Values’ is to be published as a book by Transafrica Press.

Announcing this, the Director of Transafrica Book Publishers Mr. John Nottingham, told the Varsity Focus, that it will perhaps be the first Ph.D. thesis by a Kenyan woman to be published locally as a book. He said that except for minor adaptations, the major thrust and text of the thesis remain the same. The title of the book will however be ‘Gikuyu Traditional Morality.’ The publication date is expected to be 20th November 1985.

In a pre-publication leaflet, Transafrica Press describes the title as follows:— “All over Africa today there is a deep yearning to revive and promote traditional African Culture and moral values. This search for a meaningful ethic arises from a growing disillusionment and dissatisfaction with Western morality. In this provocative and important book Dr. Kinoti, after lengthy and path-breaking original research, presents the essential elements of Gikuyu traditional morality and shows how these elements have been eroded and corrupted since the imposition of Christian canons of behaviour. She maintains that the younger generation have a considerable knowledge of the traditional morality and approve of it. Because of changed social, economic and political circumstances she allows that a wholesale return to traditional moral standards is unrealistic. But she believes that in the adaptation of traditional morality to modern family life lies the only possible



*Dr. Kinoti, Lecturer at the Department of Religious Studies, . . . . her Ph.D. thesis to be published.*

way to create viable morality and an acceptable social fabric in the future.”

Dr. Kinoti, a Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies was appointed Tutorial Fellow at the then Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies in 1974, promoted to Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer in 1982 and 1984 respectively. She was educated at Alliance Girls, Makerere University and obtained a Ph.D. degree of the University of Nairobi in 1984.

#### 5. OBITUARY

Mr. James Muiruri

It is with deep sadness that we report the death of Mr. James Muiruri, a Technician in the Department of Medical Physiology, on 2nd September 1985 following a road accident.

The late Mr. Muiruri was first employed by the University of Nairobi as a Trainee Technician in the Department of Animal Physiology in 1971. In 1975, he was promoted to Technician in the Department of Medical Physiology. In all he had served the University of Nairobi for about 15 years.

May God rest his soul in Eternal Peace.

The following is the full text of the address given by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P.M. Mbiti to first year students on 4th October 1985:

"1st. year students of the University of Nairobi, staff, wardens, Chairmen of Department, Dean, Principals, Ladies and Gentlemen;

"It is my great pleasure this afternoon to welcome you, our first year students, to the University of Nairobi. The entire University Community and the Nation are happy that you succeeded in obtaining a place at the University and will be watching your undergraduate career with tremendous interest.

This year the University of Nairobi enrolled about 2,000 undergraduates (about 20% of the applicants for University places) and 500 post-graduate students. You are now joining an academic community made up of 1090 academic staff, some 3,000 support staff (excluding USAB) and will form part of the student population numbering about 7,000 students.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF:

I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to introduce those who are going to be responsible for your growth in the University. I call upon the following to introduce themselves:

- Wardens i/c Halls of Residence
- Chairmen of Academic Department;
- Heads of Service Departments, including College Registrars.

Academic departments in the University are organised into science or professional groups under a faculty headed by a Dean who is responsible for co-ordinating academic activities and overseeing student academic welfare.

The faculties have been grouped further into a combination of science and professional groups under six campus colleges headed by Principals. The Principals are responsible for both academic and administrative development of each College, and are responsible for maintaining academic and administrative standards of the Colleges on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

The head of the University of Nairobi is the Chancellor, H.E. President Daniel Arap Moi. The Vice-Chancellor, under the Chancellor and directly responsible to Council, is the overall academic and administrative head of the University. The Vice-Chancellor is assisted by two Deputy Vice-Chancellors; one in charge of Administration and Finance and the other in charge of Academic Affairs - Prof. F.A. Mutere. His office deals with admissions, examinations, student welfare, curriculum development and staff-student interaction. We are processing the appointment of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Finance).

# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S

# TO 1ST YEAR

## OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE ROLE OF THE STUDENTS:

The central objective of the University, according to the University of Nairobi Act 1985 is, among others, "to participate in the discovery, transmission and preservation of knowledge and to stimulate the intellectual life and cultural development of Kenya". The focus of University education is to discover knowledge, develop analytical skills, to integrate knowledge, and to prepare students to serve society by developing appropriate attitudes that will enable its graduates to use their knowledge and skills for betterment of our society.

A Greek Scholar once argued that: 'an education which aims at money-making or at cultivation of physical strength or at some kind of cleverness without regard to justice or reason is vulgar and illiberal and is not worthy to be called education at all'.

As you prepare to start your undergraduate career in this University, it is crucial that you attempt to emulate the ideal image of a scholar. Among other things, he is thirsty for knowledge and searches tirelessly; he is thorough, methodical and objective; he is aware of his weaknesses; he is humble; and willing to listen to others and debate ideas. Irrespective of his emotional commitments, he is willing to concede to a new point of view or suspend judgement until he confirms his facts.

The danger facing scholars and by extension any academic community such as ours, is intolerance to ideas and opinions of others, dogmatism or emotional attachment to ideologies or issues to the extent that this attachment warps our vision. A community of scholars is like a debating club or a knowledge processing factory. Disagreements are



The Vice-Chancellor with students after the address.

# WELCOME ADDRESS

## STUDENTS



*Prof. Mbithi addressing students and staff at Taifa Hall... rededicate yourselves to a stable and vigorous academic activity within the current social aspirations of our nation.*

facts of life in any academic community and we expect you to enjoy debates, seminars, challenges and new points of view. It is in this respect that I must request you to avoid dogmatism, confrontation and intolerance as this leads to emotionalism and loss of objectivity. Loss of objectivity makes scholars narrow minded and makes academic life barren, unproductive and unstable. Instability, as you all know, has cost this institution two years of study and research and has shaken public confidence in us. You yourselves have waited for two years to come to the University. I am sure you do not want those you left in Form Five or Form Four to wait for three or more years because you, who have already suffered and know how frustrating waiting is, have assisted to destabilize this institution of higher learning once again. This University is painfully aware of the costs of instability and I am appealing to all students and staff to re-dedicate themselves to stable and vigorous academic activity within the current social aspirations of our nation.

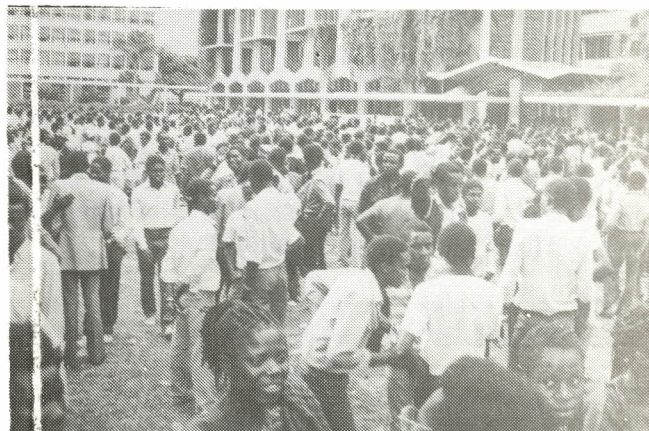
I am, therefore, welcoming you to a community of scholarship. You will be as good a citizen of this nation as you will have been a good student. The academic programmes of this University have been developed over the years in response to the needs of this country. It will be a pity if, on graduation, you fumble and stutter when entrusted with a task in our nation building efforts. This can happen if, during your stay at the University, you have deviated from your academic and social duties; you have not developed the spirit of inquiry; a hunger for knowledge; social ethics and creativity. I would like to urge each student to establish priorities in his goals and interests while

at the University. Such priorities should be consistent with the expectations of your families and society and you should live up to these irrespective of any negative influences.

The academic programmes you face here are well designed and our expectations very exacting. In spite of our unfortunate closures, the University of Nairobi Senate has ensured that we do not lose one single teaching hour or lecture, tutorial, or laboratory class. I am pleased to inform you that the University has maintained a record of excellence in scholarship that is acknowledged by our external examiners and other academic institutions all over the world. This is because of the dedication of our staff and the flexibility and adaptability of our students and the support we have received from our nation. I feel very humble when I note the resiliance of this University and the promise it holds for the future of our nation.

Finally, a word about your social life. At the University you are an adult, and no longer a schoolboy. You have a great deal of personal freedom and are expected to rule yourself through your own self discipline. An enormous range of interests, activities and temptations will open themselves to you. Perhaps the biggest test of your personal ability will not come from the lecture theatre or examination room (you are already good at this), but from the varied exposure and temptations to let loose and let go. It might surprise most of you to know that most of us feel like letting go most of the time but we spend significant energy re training ourselves in the interests of harmony and the collective good. We will, therefore, be watching you with interest to see how you react when you meet those who place highest value on money, personal power, negative idealism and dramatized egocentrism. You have signed and sown a statement that you will abide by University regulations. We sincerely believe that these rules are mere guidelines to assist you in charting a creative career for yourself while at this University and will do everything to assist you in your future at this University.

Therefore, on behalf of us all at the University, I once again congratulate you for being selected to join us at the University of Nairobi and wish you every success."



*First year students outside Taifa Hall immediately after the Vice-Chancellor's speech.*

## 6. FORTHCOMING

### 6.1 I.D.S. RESEARCH PRIORITIES WORKSHOP OCTOBER 24 - 26, 1985

I.D.S. is planning a workshop on Research Priorities in the current Development Plan period. The purpose of the workshop is to formulate research priorities which will guide research programmes of the staff, those to be associated with I.D.S. and any other interested parties. The participants in the workshop will include; the University Community, government ministries, non-government organisations and donor-agencies. The workshop will be funded by International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

A draft document on research priorities which will form the background material for the workshop is being finalised by the institute. A first draft was discussed at a recent I.D.S. Board meeting and suggestions made will be incorporated in the final document. The workshop will be opened on the morning of October, 24, 1985 at a hotel in Naivasha.

Meanwhile, on behalf of the Ministry of Planning and National Development, I.D.S. organised and hosted a seminar on "Introducing Nutritional Considerations into Agricultural and Rural Development Projects. The seminar took place between September, 1 to 6 at Sirikwa Hotel in Eldoret and was sponsored by the Ministry of Planning and National Development and funded by F.A.O. The Planning of the seminar was in the hands of a steering Committee of the Ministry of Planning and National Development, Agriculture and Health. The participants were drawn from Eastern and Southern Africa.

### 6.2 INDIAN BOOKS EXHIBITION - NOVEMBER 4TH - 9TH 1985.

Taifa Hall will be the venue of a book exhibition between 4th and 9th November, 1985. Featuring about 650 books on various subjects, the book exhibition will be officially opened by the Minister for Education, Science and Technology on 4th November. The exhibition is organised jointly between the University of Nairobi and the Indian High Commission in Nairobi.

The books exhibited will be donated to the University for use by students and staff of the University. Members of the University community are urged to visit the exhibition and sample books published in India. India is well known for her production of low

The orientation address was delivered by Mr. Abraham Besrat, an F.A.O. nutritionist, while the first seminar was officially opened with a speech delivered by Hon. P.L. Odupoy, Assistant Minister for Planning and National Development.



*Students in the sports field . . . a varied range of sports disciplines are available to students at the University.*

## 7. GAMES ACTIVITIES

On 6th July, 1985 the University Volleyball team the "FALCONS" after finishing their exams marched to Nyeri for molten Cup Tournament and went on to reach the quarter finals in this 40-teams tournament. It was a commendable achievement for the "FALCONS" considering that they had done very little practice. They still proved that being East African University Games' Champions last December was not by chance.

Due to exam pressure Mean Machine II succumbed to Mwamba II by 10-16 goals during the Mwamba Cup Tournament on 13th July, 1985.

## 8. WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES (UNIVERSIADE' 1985)

The World University Games (Universiade' 85) were held this year in Kobe, Japan, from 24th August, 1985 to 5th September, 1985.

The Kenyan Universities participated in Athletics only.

# NEW DIRECTORS AND DEAN

## 7.1 INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES

Prof. G.S. Were has been appointed the Director of the Institute of African Studies with effect from 9th September, 1985. He takes over from Prof. C.L. Wanjala who has gone back to the Department of Literature as Associate Professor.

Prof. Were is one of the longest serving members of academic staff having joined University of Nairobi in 1966 as special Lecturer before being promoted to Lecturer (1967), Senior Lecturer (1970), Associate Professor (1973) and Professor (1978). He has at various times served as Faculty of Arts representative to Senate, member of the Library and Bookshop Committee, Chairman Postgraduate Studies Committee and Dean, Faculty of Arts.

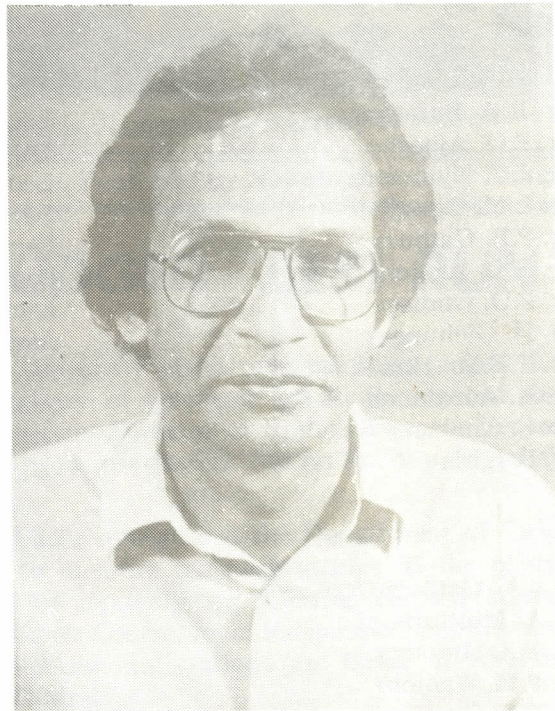
Prof. C.L. Wanjala, the immediate past Director, had served in that capacity since 1983. He was recently promoted from Senior Research Fellow at the Institute to Associate Professor in the Department of Literature where he now moves.



*Prof. Were, New Director of the Institute of African Studies.*

## 7.3 NEW DEAN OF FACULTY OF COMMERCE

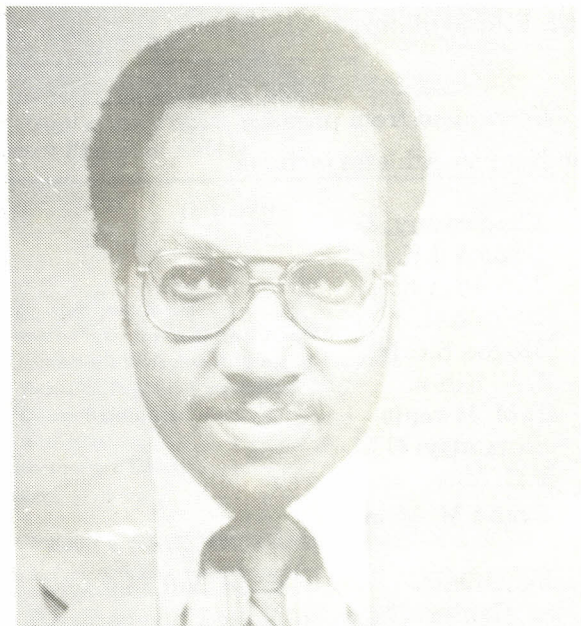
Dr. J.H. Kimura has been elected the Dean of the Faculty of Commerce with effect from 17th September, 1985. Dr. Kimura takes over from Dr. F.N. Kibera who has been the Dean for the last two years.



*Dr. Rodrigues, new Director of the Institute of Computer Science.*

## 7.2 NEW DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

Dr. A.J. Rodrigues has been appointed to assume the functions of Director of the Institute of Computer Science. The appointment will be for an initial period of two years between 20th September, 1985 and 19th September, 1987. Dr. Rodrigues takes over from Prof. R.J.P. Scott who has been the Director of the Institute for the last seven years, and now returns to his academic duties at the Institute as Associate Professor.



*Dr. Kimura new Dean of the Faculty of Commerce.*

# STAFF MATTERS

## 1.1 NEW APPOINTMENTS

NAME	POST	DEPARTMENT
Mr. W. Waliaula	Junior Res. Fellow	H.R.D.U.
Dr. R.A. Burachara	Lecturer	Crop Science
Dr. P.O. Ayiecho	Lecturer	Crop Science
Dr. J.O. Nyabundi	Lecturer	Crop Science
Dr. L.M. Ogwal	Lecturer	Zoology
Dr. P.B. Gathura	Lecturer	Public Health
Mr. S.O. Akatch	Lecturer	Urban & Reg. Planning
Dr. P.O. Ondiege	Lecturer	Urban & Reg. Planning
Mr. H. Gichunge	Asst. Lecturer	Land Development
Mr. T.E.M. Ahmed	Senior Lecturer	Design
Dr. A. Aurotaona	Senior Res. Fellow	H.R.D.U.
Mr. E. Khakame	Deputy Finance Officer	Finance Department
Mr. P. Igiria	Deputy Finance Officer	Finance Department

## 1.2 PROMOTIONS

Dr. J.K. Gathuru	Lecturer	Biochemistry
Dr. L. Muthuria	Lecturer	Biochemistry
Dr. M.O. Imbuga	Lecturer	Biochemistry
Dr. P.M. Wanjohi	Lecturer	Biochemistry
Dr. C.S. Gitau	Lecturer	Biochemistry
Mr. M.M. Manene	Asst. Lecturer	Mathematics
Mr. F. Njui	Asst. Lecturer	Mathematics
Dr. J.A. Ogur	Senior Lecturer	Chemistry
Dr. A. Ngeny-Mengech	Senior Lecturer	Chemistry
Mr. Z.B. Oganda	Academic Registrar	Academic Division
Mr. J. Muriuki	Deputy Finance Officer	Finance Department

## 1.3 RESIGNATIONS/EXPIRY OF CONTRACTS

Dr. E.T. Okosdinossian	Lecturer	Medical Physiology
Dr. G.J. Consolmagno	Lecturer	Physics
Dr. R.C. Gupta	Lecturer	Mechanical Engineering
Mr. E.M. Ndabarasa	Asst. Lecturer	Philosophy
Dr. V.K. Talwar	Lecturer	Dental Surgery
Dr. G. Wanene	Lecturer	Medical Physiology
Prof. H. Kayongo-Male	Assoc. Professor	Animal Production
Prof. K.M. Barbour	Vis. Professor	Geography

Continued from page 6

The Kenyan Athletes included:

1. Chepkwony, D.K.
2. Sitonik J.K.
3. Ng'eno A.K.
4. Njeru J.M.
5. Mogoa E.G.M.
6. L.L. Kibisu
7. D.M. Mwenja
8. Shitandayi G.M.
9. P.G. Miti
10. Simon M. Maingi

All the athletes were coached and managed by the Games Tutors of both University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University.

The Chef de Mission was the Dean of Students Kenyatta University.

Meanwhile other sporting activities are scheduled to take place as follows:

1. The East, Central and Southern University Games will take part in Lesotho this year (1985) in December, (After Christmas).
2. The East African University Games will be held at Makerere University Uganda next year (1986) in December.
3. The revived All African University Games (FASU) will take place in Zimbabwe from 5th January, 1987 to 15th January, 1987.