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Kenyan Police Arrest Man Suspected of Tricking People Into Joining Russian Army

By AFP

February 26, 2026



Moskva News Agency

Kenyan police have arrested a key figure in a network that sent more than 1,000 Kenyans to Russia, where many were forcibly conscripted into the army and sent to Ukraine.

Festus Omwamba, 33, was caught in Moyale, a border town with Ethiopia, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) said on X late Wednesday, describing him as having played a critical role in an "extensive human trafficking syndicate."

Omwamba founded a recruitment agency, Global Face Human Resources, which he used to send Kenyans to Russia.

More than 1,000 Kenyans have joined the Russian army in recent months, Kenyan MP Kimani Ichung'wah told parliament last week, citing a joint report from the intelligence services and

DCI.

Many had no military experience and were promised lucrative civilian jobs in Russia, only to be forced to sign contracts with the army and sent to the front lines in Ukraine with limited training, where some have been killed.

Related article: Over 1K Kenyans Sent to Fight With Russian Forces in Ukraine, Intel Report Says

AFP recently spoke with four Kenyans who made it back home. One thought he was going to Russia for a job as a salesman, two thought they would be security guards and the fourth was a high-level athlete.

All were recruited through Global Face Human Resources and had denounced Omwamba's role in the deception, along with one of his employees, Edward Gituku, who is currently being prosecuted for human trafficking.

The Russian embassy in Kenya denied the accusations last week, calling them a "dangerous and misleading propaganda campaign."

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