

# Okello mentally fit to stand trial, medical report states

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**KAMPALA.** A medical report from Luzira Upper Prison has confirmed that Christopher Okello Onyum, the prime suspect in the Ggaba daycare killings, is suffering from sickle cell disease but is mentally and physically fit to continue standing trial.

The report was presented yesterday before the High Court presided over by Justice Alice Komuhangi Khaukha after she had directed prison authorities to assess the accused's health following his complaint on Wednesday that he was unwell and unable to proceed with the hearing.

"Before we start the business of the day, yesterday (Wednesday), before we broke off, the accused (Okello) informed the court that he was not well and was unable to proceed with the proceedings of the day," Justice Komuhangi said.

She added that the Deputy Registrar had been instructed to write to the officer-in-charge of Luzira Upper Prison to furnish the court with the accused's health status.

According to the judge, the report, dated April 16 and authored by Dr Charles Kajjora of Murchison Bay Hospital, confirmed that Okello has been a sickle cell patient since childhood.

"The report summarises that the accused was admitted to Luzira Upper Prison and informed the medical team that he had a history of being a sickle cell patient since childhood, although he had no supporting documents. A laboratory test was carried out, and the sickle cell disease was confirmed," Justice Komuhangi said.

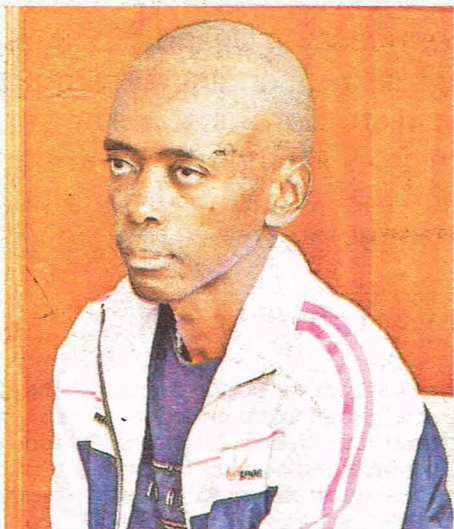
The court further heard that the medical team established that Okello had not been taking his sickle cell medication for two months prior to his admission to prison.

The judge said prison health officials immediately placed him on treatment and also noted that he was underweight at the time of examination.

"They put him on sickle cell medication, and they also established during the examination that he was underweight. The report says he has greatly improved; he is in a stable state of health and mind," she said.

The report concluded that despite the illness, Okello was in a stable mental condition and capable of following court proceedings.

After the report was read out, Justice Komu-



Christopher Okello Onyum  
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hanghi sought confirmation from the accused on whether he was ready to continue with the trial.

"Mr Okello, you heard the report of the doctor who was taking care of you. He has informed us that you are on medication, you have improved on that medication, and you are in a stable state of health and mind. So I want you to confirm that, and we proceed," the judge said.

In response, Okello told the court that he was ready to continue.

"Yes, yes, my lord, I can confirm that I'm in a stable state," he said.

The confirmation paved the way for the resumption of the murder trial, with the prosecution producing two landlords, Paul Mukasa and Jeol Makai, where Okello rented in Bunga, and Kyanja, respectively, who narrated how he came to rent their houses.

Proceedings had been halted on Wednesday after Okello complained that he was unwell. However, when asked by the judge to explain the exact nature of his illness, he failed to clearly state the problem, prompting the court to order an immediate medical assessment by prison authorities.

Okello had just said his problems are a "script".

The trial relates to the killing of four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme on April 2, allegedly by Okello.