Sunday August, 3, 2025

Kenya vs. DRC in Nairobi

Morocco vs. Angola in Nairobi

Monday, August, 4, 2025

Uganda vs. Algeria in Kampala

Niger vs. Guinea in Kampala

The Kenyan men’s football team, Harambee Stars will kick off their historic campaign at the TotalEnergies CAF African Nations Championship (CHAN) PAMOJA 2024 on Sunday, facing two-time champions DR Congo in a high-stakes Group A encounter at Nairobi’s iconic Kasarani Stadium.

This fixture not only marks Kenya’s long-awaited return to continental competition but also sets the stage for one of the tournament’s most competitive groups, with five teams battling for just two quarter-final slots.

For the hosts, it’s more than just a football match — it’s a litmus test of national expectations and a defining moment in their CHAN journey.

Under the guidance of newly appointed head coach Benni McCarthy, the Harambee Stars enter the tournament with renewed ambition. The South African tactician has brought structure, tactical discipline, and belief to the squad since taking charge in March.

However, the road to CHAN has been anything but smooth. Top scorers Moses Shumah and Emmanuel Osoro, once central to McCarthy’s plans, departed for Zambian side Power Dynamos just weeks before kickoff.

Rising teenage star Mohamed Bajaber also completed a surprise move to Tanzania’s Simba SC, while Bandari defender Pamba Swaleh was ruled out due to medical reasons. Kenya Police midfielder Brian Musa suffered a knee injury during training, further thinning the ranks.

“We’ve had a solid build-up and exceptional support from the government,” he told reporters on Saturday. “The players are hungry. It’s been hard picking the starting XI — but that’s a good problem to have.”

The team also received a morale-boosting visit from President William Ruto, who had breakfast with the squad and pledged generous incentives should they go all the way.

“That gesture lit a fire in the group,” said McCarthy. “It reminded the players what this tournament means — to them, their families, and the country.”

DR Congo arrived in Nairobi with a point to prove. Despite being the most successful nation in CHAN history with titles in 2009 and 2016, the Leopards endured a humiliating group-stage exit in 2022 — failing to score a single goal in Algeria.

Coach Otis Ngoma Kondi, back at the helm, is determined to put that disappointment behind them.

Though their preparation time has been limited, with only one friendly match played, Ngoma is confident in his squad’s readiness and ambition.

The two nations have met seven times previously — with recent friendlies in 2016, 2017, and 2019 resulting in two Kenyan wins and a 1-1 draw. But Sunday’s clash is on a different stage, with higher stakes and a packed 60,000-seater Kasarani expected to roar the Harambee Stars on.

DR Congo, known for their physicality and tactical sharpness, will aim to spoil the party and reassert their dominance in the competition.

After facing DR Congo, Kenya must navigate past Angola (7 August), Morocco (10 August), and Zambia (17 August) — all considered tournament heavyweights. With only two spots up for grabs, a strong start is not just desirable — it’s essential.

Meanwhile, Tanzania made a dream start to their TotalEnergies CAF African Nations Championship (CHAN) PAMOJA 2024 campaign, securing a 2-0 victory over Burkina Faso on Saturday night in Dar es Salaam.

Roared on by a vibrant home crowd at the Benjamin Mkapa National Stadium, the Taifa Stars dominated much of the Group B clash to register their first-ever win in a

CHAN opening match, having lost their initial fixtures in previous editions.

Abdul Sopu calmly slotted home a first-half penalty to give the hosts the lead, before defender Mohamed Hussein doubled the advantage with a thumping header midway through the second half — sparking jubilant celebrations across the stadium.

In the other matches: Co-hosts Uganda begin their TotalEnergies CAF African, PAMOJA 2024 campaign with a challenging fixture against Algeria in Kampala on Monday.

The game marks the second meeting between the two nations at CHAN, and Uganda will hope to rewrite history in front of their home supporters, having never advanced past the group stage in six previous attempts.

Algeria, meanwhile, are among the tournament’s most consistent performers and will be looking to build on their runner-up finish at the last edition.

Morocco will kick off their quest for a third title at the TotalEnergies CAF African Nations Championship (CHAN) PAMOJA 2024 with a high-stakes Group A fixture against Angola on Sunday at the Nyayo National Stadium in Nairobi, Kenya.

Also, Niger and Guinea will open their campaign with a Group C meeting in Kampala on Monday. This marks only the second time the two sides face each other at the finals of the tournament, and both will be eager to start with a positive result.