

By Jeje Muhinde;

Kigali Arena, the iconic 10,000-seater multipurpose venue, will be unveiling its new identity on top of announcing its naming rights partner.

According to South African firm QA Venue Solutions Rwanda (QAVSR) which manages the arena, the deal will be signed on Monday 16th, 2022.

The deal is said not only to be the first of its kind in Rwanda's Sports and entertainment history but the biggest on the continent.

Together with the support of the Government of Rwanda, QAVSR is reported to have been able to negotiate this record-breaking agreement to further position the venue as a progressive, trendsetting environment that will be fully immersed in the world of sports and entertainment in Africa and globally.

In October 2020, the company signed a seven-year agreement with the Government of Rwanda a deal worth US\$ 2.4 million to manage the state of the art venue.

When asked about the revenue generating opportunities of the stadium, Kyle Schofield, the QA Venue Solutions Director in 2020 said that they can allocate various rights, naming rights, suit rights, retail rights and marketing rights.

"Naming is a very big generator of revenue. As a management company, that is something we are pushing for. We are encouraging people to come and talk to us about these opportunities. There is a big opportunity for any firm that would take up naming rights," He said.

Stadium naming rights have become common as the fans in the arena. They have evolved especially with the money involved.

In countries like the USA; different brands are paying millions of dollars to have their names be brought up as the players hitting a clutch bucket in basketball.

For instance, AT & T Stadium, formerly Cowboys Stadium, is a retractable roof stadium in Arlington, Texas that serves as the home of the Dallas Cowboys.

The facility is owned by the city of Arlington, it is used for a variety of other activities such as concerts, basketball games, soccer, college and high school

football contests.

The concept of naming rights is said to have started in the 1920s most notably with the Wrigley Field in Chicago and in the 1980s a boom started to emerge.

In November 2021, Staples Center, home to the Los Angeles Lakers and Clippers, sold its naming rights to Crypto.com for \$700 million which is a \$584 million increase from when Staples bought the rights in 1999.

California has been a hotbed for new stadium rights deals; back in 2013, the San Francisco 49ers and Levi's reached a record-breaking deal at the time to secure a name on the new stadium.