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Kenya land invite: National boxing team set to train in Cuba ahead of Commonwealth Games in April

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The national boxing team 'Hit Squad' has been invited to participate in a Four Nations training-cum-tournament camp in Cuba ahead of the April's Commonwealth Games slated for Gold Coast Australia.

Boxing Association of Kenya (BAK) chairman, John Kameta, said the deal for the Four Nations event was realised during the AIBA Congress in Dubai, where he held extensive talks with officials from the Cuban Federation.

"Depending on availability of funds, the Hit Squad shall be traveling to Cuba to join the hosts United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Ethiopia. We are discussing with the government on this issue and we hope all will be well. We also want to establish what the hosts will offer on the event so we can firm up everything," said Kameta.

The national boxing team, which returned from India Open International Championship last Sunday, has been joined by their sparring partners at Police Depot in Mathare Nairobi where they are shaping up under coach Patrick Maina of Prisons. All the losing finalists AT the Kaloleni trials are in the team as non travelling sparring partners.

Kameta said the final team of seven men and four women will be named just before departure to Gold Coast to avoid over confidence by boxers who may be selected.

“We are back at Mathare, where the boxers have been training prior to India event. The one thing with Mathare depot is that its home to Police training base where we will enjoy good teamwork,” Kameta said. Kenya failed to win medals at the India event but Kameta reiterated it was good practice for the boxers ahead of Gold Coast.

The Kenya team is scheduled to begin their final phase of preparations at Madison Square Garden, Nakuru, which is synonymous with Kenya’s world beaters among them Philip Waruinge, who is one of the greatest boxers to have represented the Hit Squad.

Provisional squad for Commonwealth Games—Light fly: Shaffi Bakari (Police), Matayo Keya (KNH); Fly: Mohammed Ali (Kongowea), Simon Mulinge (KDF); Bantam: Benson Gicharu, Isaac Meja (KDF); Light: Nick Okoth (KDF), Ethan Maina (Police); Middleweight: Edwin Okongo (KDF), Erick Otengo (Prisons); Light welter: Victor Onyango (KDF), Joseph Shigali (Police); Welter: Jacob Kimathi (Prison), Boniface Mugunde (Police); Middle: Edwin Okongo (KDF), Erick Otengo (Prisons); Light heavy: Nick Abaka (KDF), Peter Abuti (Prison); Heavyweight: Elly Ajowi, Frederick Onyango (KDF); Super-heavy: David Njuguna (Police), Fredrick Ramogi (KDF); Women: Fly: Christine Ongare (Nairobi), Veronica Mbithi (Dallas); Light Welter: Lornah Kusa (NRB) and Ruth Odongo (Kisumu).

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