

SCRIPT ITEN ATHLETICS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

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LEAD

The dream of many boys and girls.
To become an athlete, and to participate in local and international competitions.
For many young people in the developing world it's the only way to build a future,
especially in Africa.
There athletes are more and more starting to train in a place called Iten, in the heart
land of Kenya.
Many from there are winning medals, and are making good money for them and their
communities.
But according to some in Iten the athletes are posing a threat.

BETA LENGTH 2'06"

Sun rise in Iten in central Kenya.
The first athletes already started
their seemingly endless journey.
The village is popular because of its high altitude, at 1,700 meters above sea level.
Here a group of athletes is cooling down.

QUOTE ATHLETE

- What's so nice about Iten?
Because of the high altitude, and the training is very hard.

QUOTE ATHLETE

When the altitude is high, the oxygen is low.
That makes it good for training.

Athletes from round here are international medal-winners.
Like 20-years old Asbel Kipruto, who was number 2 in the 1,500 meters in Beijing.
but got the gold medal after winner Rashid Ramzi failed a drugs test.

QUOTE ASBEL KIPRUTO

Well I was only a little bit excited because I had information before.
Everybody knew that Rashid Ramzi had used dope during the 2008 Olympic Games.

Depending on the season Iten hosts up to 2,000 athletes,
On a population of 4,000.
An influx that's not without effects on the local economy.
Street trade is flourishing, like athletes buying second hand sport shoes.

QUOTE JOHN NDUATI, sport shoe seller (secs, Kiswahili)
When the season is there many are coming.
They come here, and we are getting good money.

Also luxury hotels are springing up in Iten.
But there are people who are less happy.
Drivers in public transport complain they can't move anymore.

QUOTE SAMSON MAGETO, driver
They come as a group.
You're forced to slow down.
Some times we give them way.
But the problem is our roads are very narrow.

Given the success of the athletes, it's likely more will come.
The mayor of Iten now wants to limit the number of training camps.

QUOTE MARY RUTO, Mayor Iten
These camps will be paying a certain fee to the council.
And we will not allow more.

The money will be used to mark specific routes.
And to refurbish the athletics stadium.
All to support Iten's runners on their road to prosperity.