



# The BMA Newsletter

World Class Centre for Maritime Education and Training



## Charlene Ruto Inspires Maritime Students at Bandari Maritime Academy

By John Ndegwa

Laughter, energy, and excitement filled the air at Bandari Maritime Academy (BMA) in Mombasa as students welcomed Youth Champion Charlene Ruto on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025 in a visit that will be remembered as one of the most inspiring moments in the Academy's history.

From the moment she arrived, Ms. Ruto's vibrant personality, warmth, and ability to connect with the youth turned an ordinary day into a celebration of hope, leadership, and purpose.

Her arrival at the Academy was met with cheers and smiles from students who eagerly gathered to meet the woman whose advocacy for youth empowerment has touched lives across the country.

As she walked through the Academy grounds, Ms. Ruto's charm and genuine interest in the students set a lively tone. Selfies were taken, conversations flowed easily, and laughter echoed through the campus – a true reflection of the connection between a leader and the young people she continues to inspire.



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# Photos of the Month



*Youth Champion Charlene Ruto inspects a Guard of Honour mounted by Bandari Maritime Academy students during her official visit to the Academy where she engaged with leadership and interacted with Cadets and trainees.*



*Bandari Maritime Academy cadets share a light moment with Youth Champion Charlene Ruto during her visit to the Academy in November 2025.*

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Leadership begins with service and self-belief. You don’t need a title to lead; you just need the courage to act and the passion to make a difference.”  
**Charlene Ruto**

Accompanied by BMA Board Chairman Eng. Lung’anzi Chai Mangale and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Eric Katana, Ms. Ruto toured the institution’s state-of-the-art training facilities.

From the Bridge simulator to the Marine engineering workshops and Aquatic Training Centre, she witnessed firsthand how Bandari Maritime Academy is shaping the next generation of seafarers and professionals for Kenya’s growing Blue Economy.

Impressed by what she saw, Ms. Ruto commended the Academy for its continued investment in practical, hands-on training and for positioning itself as a Center of Excellence in Maritime Education and Training.

The highlight of the visit came during a vibrant interactive session at the Academy Amphitheatre, where Ms. Ruto engaged directly with students in an open, candid discussion. It was more than just a speech, it was a heartfelt conversation. With her relatable approach, she encouraged students to cultivate self-belief, resilience, and integrity as they pursue their dreams.

Her words resonated deeply with the students, many of whom later described the session as a life-changing encounter.

“Meeting Charlene Ruto in person was like meeting a mentor we didn’t know we had, She made us believe that greatness starts with believing in ourselves,” said Maureen Wanjiru, a Maritime Transport and Logistics student





### **By Gabriella Wangui, DMTL Student.**

The Maritime transport and logistics field plays a vital role in moving goods worldwide, requiring strong skills and commitment. My time at Bandari Maritime Academy has been a transformative journey that has prepared me for this demanding industry. Beyond gaining knowledge, I have learned the discipline, flexibility, and forward-thinking mindset needed in logistics.

When I joined BMA, my goal was to understand the practical aspects of cargo movement—documentation, customs procedures, cargo safety, and efficient transport planning. The Academy has provided rigorous training, but what stands out most is its supportive learning environment. Students are encouraged to share ideas, making the training more relevant to real industry needs. This open approach has sharpened my problem-solving and decision-making abilities, especially for high-pressure situations in ports and warehouses.

My greatest achievement has been combining classroom learning with practical skills. I have excelled academically while building key competencies such as teamwork, communication, and ethical leadership—essential qualities in logistics operations.

As I prepare to join the maritime sector, I am focused on future opportunities driven by technology and sustainability. I aim to contribute to greener, more efficient port operations and embrace digital tools to enhance cargo handling and documentation. With the foundation BMA has given me, I am ready to support a safer, more efficient, and environmentally responsible logistics industry.

*“Bandari Maritime Academy has shaped me into a disciplined, flexible, and forward-thinking professional ready to drive efficiency and sustainability in the logistics industry,” Gabriella Wangui.*

## **Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishments**

*By Karen Gathoni, Diploma, Nautical science.*



Looking back on where I began, I realize that my journey into Nautical Science has been far more than an academic pursuit—it has been a path of discipline, responsibility, and transformation. When I chose this career, I did not just step into a profession; I embraced a life defined by tides, charts, precision, and the courage required to guide others at sea. Today, my ambitions remain bold. I aspire to become the best female Captain in Eastern and Southern Africa and a future Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy, and Maritime Affairs. My recent experience aboard PV Doria, under Captain Nathan Kiptarus, has deepened my exposure to patrol operations, Maritime security, and real-time decision-making, reinforcing my commitment to excellence. To junior cadets, my message is simple: discipline is your greatest asset. The sea does not forgive mistakes, but it rewards courage, preparation, and vigilance. Every sunrise at sea reminds me that despite the challenges, this is exactly where I belong.



## By Zeinab Matano, Diploma, Nautical Science.

I want to remind each one of us that we belong here. This field is not just for men, and we should never doubt our place in it.

Every day, whether in class, during drills, or out at sea, I see how capable we are. We have the skill, the discipline, and the determination to excel in navigation, engineering, port operations, and every other area of the Maritime world. Nothing limits us except the doubts we allow.

Let's support each other, let's show up boldly, and let's challenge the old beliefs that once held women back. The Blue Economy is expanding, and there is space for us to lead, innovate, and transform this sector.

Being at the Kenya Coast Guard Services for my internship program has shown me that our dreams are valid and achievable. So, let's stay empowered and ready to take our place. Our time is now.

*"To my fellow female cadets, the Maritime and Blue Economy is full of opportunity. Let's stay confident, empowered, and ready to take our place because this field is not just for men. Our time is now." - Zeinab Matano*

# Industrial attachment experience at the Kenya Maritime Authority

By Tracey Awuor, Diploma, Maritime Transport & Logistics.

My industrial attachment at the Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA) has been a highly enriching experience that deepened my understanding of Maritime logistics, port operations, and the regulatory frameworks guiding Kenya's Maritime sector. Working within an institution that plays a central role in Maritime governance exposed me to the administrative and operational aspects of the industry.

Throughout my attachment, I engaged with key departments such as Maritime Safety, Marine Environment Protection, and Maritime Training and Education. This interaction enhanced my appreciation of how different units collaborate to uphold safety, security, environmental protection, and efficiency across Kenya's Maritime domain. I have gained firsthand insight into policy implementation, compliance procedures, and the decision-making processes that shape the sector.

A major highlight has been acquiring practical knowledge of Maritime safety protocols, documentation, and regulatory compliance. Understanding how International conventions such as SOLAS, MARPOL, and IMO regulations apply in daily operations helped bridge the gap between theory and practice.

*This experience has strengthened my ambition to pursue a career in Maritime logistics, with particular interest in Port operations, Maritime safety, and Marine environmental protection. To fellow BMA cadets, I encourage approaching attachment with professionalism, curiosity, discipline, and respect, as every task contributes to building a strong foundation for a successful Maritime career.*



# BMA Secures Landmark Partnership with Regional Maritime University in Ghana

By John Ndegwa

Bandari Maritime Academy (BMA) has marked a historic step forward in its quest to strengthen Maritime education and expand its global footprint. The Academy officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the prestigious Regional Maritime University (RMU) in Accra, Ghana—an alliance set to reshape opportunities for students, faculty, and the wider Maritime sector.

The partnership, described as a major milestone for both institutions, aims to enhance academic collaboration and elevate Maritime training standards across the continent. Through this agreement, students and lecturers will benefit from exchange programmes, shared learning experiences, and improved access to advanced Maritime technologies and expertise.

The MoU also paves the way for joint research, curriculum development, and capacity-building initiatives, all aligned with the fast-evolving demands of the global Maritime and Blue Economy industries.

BMA's delegation to Accra was led by Director of the Board, Ahmed Elyass, accompanied by Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Eric Katana. The MoU was signed on behalf of RMU by Acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Jethro W. Brooks Jr., who noted that strengthening regional cooperation is essential for improving Africa's Maritime competencies and raising the quality of seafarer training.

Also present were BMA's Corporate Secretary and Head of Legal Services, Saidi Gongo, and Office Administrator, Fatima Shemni underscoring the Academy's united commitment to fostering meaningful international collaboration.



*“By joining hands with RMU, we are expanding our global footprint and ensuring our learners gain access to world-class Maritime training and innovation,” Dr. Katana*



# From Classroom to Open Seas: Four BMA Cadets Return Home After Global Maritime Training in South Korea

By John Ndegwa

A burst of applause, bright smiles, and national pride filled the arrivals hall at Moi International Airport, Mombasa as Bandari Maritime Academy (BMA) welcomed home four cadets who had just completed the rigorous Global Onboard Training Programme (GOBT) in South Korea. The colourful reception marked more than a homecoming—it celebrated a milestone in Kenya’s journey toward producing globally competitive seafarers.

For three months, the cadets trained at the Korea Institute of Maritime and Fisheries Technology (KIMFT) under a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions. The partnership is designed to deepen practical maritime training, immerse cadets in international best practices, and sharpen their readiness for careers on the world’s oceans.

Life at sea proved to be the ultimate classroom. From shipboard operations and safety drills to marine engineering routines and professional seamanship, the cadets gained hands-on experience that textbooks alone cannot provide. Just as importantly, they learned the rhythms and responsibilities of global maritime work—discipline, teamwork, and cultural sensitivity forged through long days onboard and collaboration with peers from different backgrounds.

Their achievements were lauded on arrival by BMA trainer Kipruto Menego, who represented Eric Katana, the Academy’s CEO, and Titus Kilonzi, Deputy Director for Maritime Education and Training. They commended the cadets for their discipline, resilience, and unwavering commitment to excellence throughout the demanding programme.

The returning cohort reflects both diversity and determination: Belinda Adhiambo Abong (Female Deck Cadet), Aisha Mueke Ahmed (Female Engineering Cadet), Mahmoud Daudi Bodha (Male Engineering Cadet), and Gene Kipchimba Kipruto (Male Deck Cadet). Together, they embody the Academy’s drive to empower talent across disciplines and genders.



In a message to the cadets and stakeholders, Dr. Katana reaffirmed BMA’s commitment to expanding international training opportunities through strategic partnerships. Such programmes, he noted, are vital to producing seafarers who can compete—and lead—on the global stage, while strengthening Kenya’s standing in the international maritime sector.

**“As the four cadets step forward into the next chapter of their careers, their journey stands as a testament to what global collaboration can achieve—turning ambition into capability, and local training into world-class readiness,” Dr. Katana**



# Voices of the Future: Bandari Maritime Academy Debate & Innovation Club Shaping Thought Leaders

By Samuel Dube and Selina Igadwa

Founded in 2024, the Bandari Maritime Academy Debate & Innovation Club has quickly grown into a vibrant space for critical thinkers, confident speakers, and creative innovators. Established to nurture students who can shape National and regional conversations, especially within the Kenya Blue Economy Debate and Innovation Competition, the club provides a dynamic platform for leadership development, public speaking, and innovative problem-solving.

Meeting two to three times weekly, members engage in debates, discussions, and idea-building sessions on topics such as the Blue Economy, technology, governance, and public policy. This environment equips students with the skills to become articulate leaders capable of influencing policy and driving meaningful change in the maritime sector.

In 2025, the club proudly represented the Academy at the Kenya Universities Debate Championship (KUDC) held at KCA University, Nairobi. Bandari Maritime Academy fielded two teams: Team A (Khalid Mohammed & Elsy Karina) and Team B (Abdullah Mohammed & Nicole Sulu).

Both teams showcased strong analytical and communication skills, with Team B advancing to the quarterfinals—becoming the first team from the Coast region, and the only college team, to do so. Abdullah Mohammed also earned recognition as the Best Speaker from the Coast Region.



This success builds on the club's earlier achievements, including becoming runners up in the 2024 Kenya Blue Economy Debate at the Technical University of Mombasa and progressing to regional competitions at Pwani University.

Looking ahead, the club aims to expand membership, enhance training, and pursue more national titles. More than a club, it is a training ground for future leaders committed to shaping Kenya's maritime and national development agenda.

***“By encouraging open debate, we nurture professionals who question wisely, respond thoughtfully, and lead responsibly—qualities that are essential for excellence in the Maritime World,”***  
**Samuel Dube – BMA Career Services officer and Debate Club Patron.**



# From a Spark to a Stage: The Rise of the Bandari Drama Club

By Selina Igadwa and John Ndegwa



What began as a simple dream shared between two passionate students has blossomed into one of the most vibrant and inspiring clubs at Bandari Maritime Academy the Bandari Drama Club.

The Bandari Maritime Academy Drama Club was pioneered by Laura Kimanthi and Bruce Madiba, born out of a shared love for acting and a vision to create a space for students to express themselves beyond the classroom.

“We wanted to bring life to stories and create a platform where creativity could thrive at Bandari,” recalls Kimanthi.

Since its humble beginnings, the Bandari Drama Club has rapidly evolved into a hub of energy, teamwork, and artistic expression. The group recently captured the attention of the entire Academy and beyond during the visit of Youth Champion Charlene Ruto at the Academy in November 2025.

The performance was not only a proud moment for the club but also a major turning point. “Performing before such an esteemed guest boosted our confidence and showed us that our passion could take us places,” said Kimanthi.



Even more inspiring was Ms. Ruto’s encouraging response. She pledged her support for the young troupe a gesture that ignited a new wave of motivation among members.

Behind every performance lies the collective spirit of a 16-member team. What started with just two visionaries has grown into a tightly knit group of dedicated individuals who share one goal to tell powerful stories through drama.

“Every member brings something unique to the table, we’ve learned that drama isn’t just about acting, it’s about teamwork, discipline, and believing in each other,” Madiba said.



Their journey from a small idea to performing for national figures stands as a testament to the power of passion and persistence. The Bandari Drama Club isn’t just telling stories on stage; they’re writing their own one inspiring chapter at a time.

# Students Explore Coastal Heritage in Transformative Kilifi Educational Tour

By John Ndegwa

Bandari Maritime Academy (BMA) continues to strengthen experiential learning after students from the Academy's Guard of Honour team successfully completed a three-day educational tour across Kilifi County.

The immersive excursion was designed to deepen their understanding of Kenya's coastal heritage, Marine conservation efforts, and the rich Maritime culture that defines the region.

Led by Senior Principal Trainer, Nautical Science Maj. (Rtd.) Frankline Toniok, and Nautical Science Trainer Capt. (Rtd.) Jacob Kazungu, the students embarked on a hands-on learning expedition that blended environmental studies, history, and Coastal geography.

The first day took the team to Mida Creek and the historic Gede Ruins. At Mida Creek, students learned about mangrove ecosystems, marine conservation, and the importance of climate-resilient coastal environments. Their visit to the Gede Ruins opened a window into the Swahili civilization, offering insights into centuries-old architectural, cultural, and archaeological heritage.



Day two exposed the students to the breathtaking Mamburui waves and dunes. Known for their golden sands and unique coastal morphology, the dunes provided a natural classroom on maritime weather patterns, shoreline formation, and coastal navigation.

Later, the group explored Hell's Kitchen in Marafa—Kenya's own "Grand Canyon"—where they engaged with geological processes and discussed how such landscapes support ecological tourism and local livelihoods.

The final day saw the team visit Malindi Marine Park and Watamu Public Beach. At Malindi Marine Park, students observed coral reefs, marine biodiversity, and sustainable marine resource management practices, gaining practical insights into the Blue Economy. The visit to Watamu Public Beach allowed them to study coastal ecosystems and community interactions with marine environments.



## Happy New Year 2026!

"As we welcome the year 2026, I extend my warmest wishes to all our students, cadets, staff, partners, and stakeholders. This new year presents an opportunity to reflect on our collective achievements, renew our commitment to excellence, and set our sights on even greater impact.

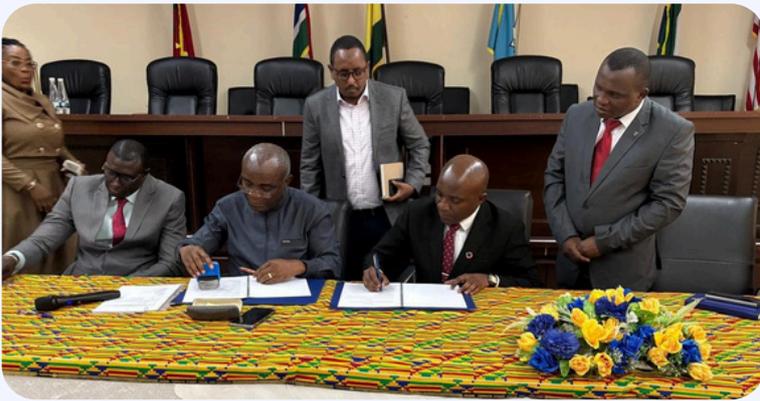
In 2026, we will continue building on this momentum—embracing new opportunities, investing in our people, and driving strategic growth. Together, we will advance our vision, uphold the highest standards, and navigate the evolving landscape with confidence and purpose," **Dr. Eric Katana, CEO Bandari Maritime Academy.**



# PICTORIAL PAGE



Students from Bandari Maritime Academy Guard of Honour team and senior staff at Mambrui Sand dunes during a three-day educational tour across Kilifi County.



BMA CEO Dr. Eric Katana and RMU Acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Jethro W. Brooks Jr. sign an MOU in Accra Ghana, looking on is BMA Director of the Board, Ahmed Elyass and BMA Corporate secretary and Head of legal services Said Gongo



Youth Champion Charlene Ruto share a light moment with Bandari Maritime Academy cadets during her visit to the Academy in November 2025.



Kenya's Ambassador to South Korea, Prof. Emmy Jerono, and renowned Maritime scholar Prof. Elder Bang when they welcomed Bandari Maritime Academy Cadets to the 2025 Global Onboard Training Program during a colorful ceremony held in South Korea on 16th October 2025.



BMA CEO Dr. Eric Katana make his Maritime and Blue Economy education and training presentation during Africa Maritime Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2025

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