

RESEARCH

# Sleeping sickness war stepped up

Scientists working on better detection and treatment methods against fatal disease

By GATONYE GATHURA

Experts have said they may develop a more effective kit for detecting sleeping sickness and medication against the condition in the next three years.

Scientists at the Institute of Primate Research (IPR) in Nairobi and their counterparts from the European Union are currently working on what they say are more effective ways of diagnosing and treating the disease in humans, which is also known as nagana in livestock. Scientifically, it is called trypanosomiasis.

According to the coordinator of the project, Prof Stefan Magez, the consortium of local and international research organisations will exploit already developed nanotechnology principles to create new products to confront the disease.

"The project involves training on and transfer of this new technology to Kenya and Mozambique, and mounting awareness campaigns in countries where the

disease is endemic," says Prof Magez. "Despite the high-technology approach, the technique will be relatively easy to adopt for laboratories of participating African partner groups."

Health and veterinary officers in western Kenya have been on high alert since April this year over a possible tsetse fly re-infestation from countries neighbouring Lake Victoria. Tsetse fly is the disease's main vector.

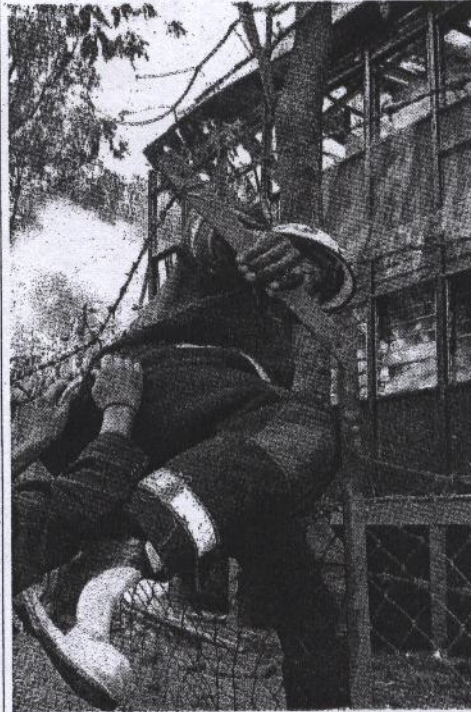
### Irreversible disorders

If the disease is not detected early enough, it may lead to irreversible disorders in the nervous system. It also falls under the category of ailments classified by the World Health Organisation as neglected diseases. The availability of treatment for trypanosomiasis, for example, is limited due to the fact that only very few drugs are registered for use, and all can cause serious side effects on treated patients or animals.

The disease is known to be fatal if untreated.

**'Technique will be relatively easy to adopt for laboratories in participating countries'**

WHEN DUTY CALLS



A fireman is helped through a fence to help put out a fire at the AP camp at Community area in Nairobi yesterday. Several houses were burnt as 120 families were left homeless. One person was injured. Story and more pictures on Page 4. Photo/WILLIAM OERI

# Galgalo widows agree to end property row

By NATION Correspondent

The two widows of a former MP have agreed to resolve their two-year succession battle out of court.

Ms Bernadetta Okoti Sharma and Ms Rehema Jaldesa yesterday asked Justice David Onyancha to supervise the subdivision of former Moyale MP Wilson Guracha Galgalo's multi-million shilling estate.

Dr Galgalo died in plane crash in April 2006, alongside five other MPs in Marsabit.

Lawyer Cecil Miller for Jaldesa opened the window for the out of court settlement when he told Justice Onyancha: "My client is willing to take as little as Sh6 million out of the vast estate of Dr Galgalo."

"She sympathises with the first wife, whose Karen Estate residence has been taken away by a bank due to an outstanding loan."


### Final decision

Mr Miller said an earlier move to broker an out of court settlement hit a snag when the widows failed to agree.

Justice Onyancha told the widows he would "chair" the negotiations while Mr Miller and Mr Alfred Nyandieka, Ms Sharma's lawyer, would guide the process.

"The two lawyers will only guide the process and ensure justice is done to both parties. The settlement will be recorded as the final decision and order of the court," the judge said.

Mr Justice Onyancha said the widows will participate in the process, which begins this afternoon at the High Court.



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