

Malindi traders reap from international marathon

By **ROBERT NYAGAH**
EXPRESS Writer

More than 200 Dutch and German tourists who visited Malindi for an international marathon and a weeklong holiday spurred business in the resort town and earned business establishments more than Sh1.5 million.

The highest beneficiaries of the carnivore were handicraft dealers, tour operators, travel agents and taxi operators. Owners of restaurants and nightclubs also earned a sizeable amount of money from the tourists.

Although the tourists were booked at Eden Roc Hotel while their main tour operator was Southern Cross company, the general manager of Eden Roc Hotel, Mr Harry Wanderi, said the visitors' arrival and stay was felt across the town.

Since the arrival of the tourists who raised Sh3 million during first Kenya Jambo Marathon, evenings at the Eden Roc Hotel were marked with colour, traditional dances, wood curving shows, fashion and African cultural shows which included a display of items for sale.

The moments brought smiles to the faces of the many traders, traditional dancers and owners of



ORIGINAL: Ms Dorcas Gathungu of Malindi carries baskets to the week-long exhibition held at the Eden Roc Hotel. The event was meant to give Kenyans a chance to market their crafts to the more than 200 tourists who participated in a marathon run recently. Picture: CORRESPONDENT

fashion and design establishments who were allowed to mix freely with the tourists and to exhibit curios and African garments.

Dorcas Gathungu of the Marafiki Cultural Designers, who displayed her African baskets, leather sandals and Kanga and Kikoy for sale expressed joy and appreciation to the hotel for allowing the traders to do business with the visitors.

"The tourists bought several baskets which are made

from local raw materials and are environmentally friendly ... curio dealers also made good money," said Ms Gathungu whose outfit works with women's groups from rural parts of Malindi.

More than 20 curio dealers from the African Curio Market exhibited at the hotel, according to the chairman of the market, Mr Anthony Mwilu.

"More hotels should organise such exhibitions when there are good arrivals," he said.