

Airtel Pan-African youth tourney kicks off

The Airtel Africa Championships officially kicked off today in Nairobi, Kenya. The soccer tournament which brings together Africa's best talent in the boys and girls under 17 categories began on 21 August and will continue until 25 August 2012.

The championship is the culmination of regional and national tournaments in 15 countries in the African continent. The tournament is part of the [Airtel Rising Stars](#) program, a soccer talent initiative that is focused on identifying and nurturing soccer talent from the grassroots onto a national stage. The tournament attracts approximately 18 000 youth teams and 324 000 youth players from 15 countries. The program has also broken new ground by introducing girls to a pan African tournament.

The Airtel Africa Championship was officially opened by Kenya's Prime Minister, The Rt.Hon. Raila Odinga accompanied by the tourney sponsors - Airtel Africa - led by Manoj Kohli the CEO (International) and joint MD of Bharti Airtel.

The championships also unveils two specialised Airtel Rising Soccer Clinics run by soccer coaches from the Manchester United and Arsenal Soccer Schools. Present at the launch were officials from both clubs namely: Jonathan Rigby, marketing director, Manchester United and Angus Kinnear, marketing director, Arsenal Football Club. The two clinics will be attended by two of the club's legends Peter Schmeichel and Ray Parlour.

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