

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KAKAMEGA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**SPEECH BY H.E. HON. WYCLIFFE AMBETSA OPARANYA, E.G.H., C.G.J.,
GOVERNOR KAKAMEGA COUNTY DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
THIRD SESSION OF THE KAKAMEGA COUNTY SECOND ASSEMBLY ON 26TH
FEBRUARY, 2019**

Mr. Speaker

Honourable Members

It gives me great pleasure to join you this afternoon on the occasion of the official opening of the Third Session of the second Kakamega County Assembly.

As you are aware, today's ceremony would have taken place on the day the Assembly resumed business after recess; but due to a very busy schedule occasioned by my national responsibilities as Chairman of the Council of Governors, I requested for adjustment of the programme and I am grateful that the Speaker kindly obliged.

I wish also to commend Honourable Members for their enthusiasm and renewed energy after their well-deserved recess.

Mr. Speaker

I note with satisfaction that during their recess, the Honourable Members came back and held a special Session to consider and approve the Supplementary Budget which they unanimously passed. The Budget has now been gazetted and is awaiting uploading on the IFMIS for implementation.

I wish also to inform Honourable Members that the preparation of the Fiscal Strategy Paper is in progress. Public participation has been done and the policy document will be submitted to the County Assembly by 28th February 2019.

As this august Assembly continues to play its rightful oversight role, the Executive is always keen to receive feedback and act accordingly to ensure that the common *Mwananchi* consistently enjoys delivery of quality services.

Mr. Speaker

The Budget preparation process started in August when a budget circular was issued. The process is currently on-going to ensure that the proposals are submitted to the Assembly by 30th April, 2019.

As Honourable Members are aware, during my last speech, I promised action on the issue of collection of revenue. We need to do more on collection of revenue to supplement the equitable revenue share. The County Government is committed to streamlining the collection of revenue through use of modern technology. To this end, our Treasury is in the process of implementing the e-Payment system otherwise known as the Cashless Revenue Collection System, to seal revenue losses occasioned by human intervention. The tender for the same has been awarded and the winning firm is on course in piloting the system.

In order to deepen transparency and accountability in our County, we have fully implemented e-procurement in compliance with the executive Order No. 2 of 2018. Implementation of the system is being done in tandem with sensitization of marginalized groups including women and People Living with Disabilities to ensure their full participation in tendering and supply of goods and services in accordance with the law.

Mr. Speaker

As I have stated in this august Chamber before, it is our commitment as County Government to partner with the Assembly to implement our common agenda of spearheading development and bringing about transformative change in the lives of our people. We therefore look forward to your support as we build a vibrant economy that will stand out in this region and the country at large.

As you are aware, our Agriculture sector is facing a serious setback following the collapse of the sugar industry and the consequential negative economic impact on the farming community. This together with the fact that we have a weak manufacturing base, has triggered unacceptably high levels of unemployment and widespread poverty.

However, our efforts to transform and diversify agricultural production is on course to ensure improved productivity and increased income for farmers. Our commitment to achieve the County's food security is supported by the following programmes:

- Farm Inputs Subsidy programme; whereby subsidized fertilizer and maize has positively impacted production. Timely delivery of inputs is our major focus. The overall program service delivery in 2018/19 has greatly improved due to our new program design and stakeholder engagement to ensure timely supply of the fertilizer and seed before the onset of rains. There has also been more efficient farm inputs distribution at ward level to ensure increased access by farmers.
- County Artificial Insemination Service; aimed at improving the dairy animal genetics for sustainable improved milk production. The AI service is subsidized.
- Pest and Disease control; enhanced through the periodic livestock vaccinations in the County. The recent launch of the Kakamega Veterinary laboratory is a major breakthrough in improvement of livestock health
- Kakamega Dairy Development Cooperation (KDDC); which now operates as a body corporate with improved management structure to ensure sustainable development of the dairy sector and establishment of a dairy factory

- Agriculture Cess Bill; which was recently enacted to enhance County revenue and management of County development programmes
- Donor funded programmes; whereby we receive support from GIZ in dairy development and FAO for fisheries.

Mr. Speaker

The Agricultural sector initiatives are geared towards improving the citizens’ production capacity in order to produce enough food for consumption and income. However, this can only be sustainable if they have access to properly managed and equipped health facilities and services.

The County Government’s agenda for the health services is to improve the quality of services being offered and make them accessible and affordable to all the citizens of Kakamega.

We are undertaking the following programmes and initiatives to achieve this:

- Construction of a state of art health facility; the 750-bed capacity Kakamega Teaching and Referral Hospital to provide comprehensive healthcare and promote health tourism. We have engaged international partners and donor community to fast-track its completion. Phase 1 will be equipped and commissioned soon. We intend to borrow Kshs 2 billion to facilitate the equipping of the new hospital and the two Level 4 hospitals of Shiamakhubu and Mumias.
- Upgrading health centres at Sub Counties where such facilities need improvement including Khwisero, Shinyalu, Mumias East and West as well as Navakholo; we plan to strengthen Sub County hospitals by posting specialists to the facilities. They will be supported by referrals of consultant doctors thus cutting down costs for patients seeking the services at the County General Hospital.
- The County Government in partnership with UNICEF is in the process of restructuring the *Afya ya Mama na Mtoto* Programme – Oparanyacare – to make it more efficient and link it to the community strategy being developed to achieve comprehensive family health and welfare. We are grateful to the County Assembly for approving the relevant Bill that has made restructuring possible to cover key areas such as capacity building, review of the management information system and linkages to empowerment of beneficiaries. These special empowerment programmes will cover family planning and economic empowerment of women.
- The County Government, as a way of supporting the community to increase universal health coverage, is in the process of identifying and registering the most vulnerable citizens to the NHIF medical insurance scheme. The exercise of registering 144 beneficiaries per Ward is ongoing and will soon be launched.
- Supporting Kakamega County Community to register for the NHIF medical scheme in line with the Big 4 Agenda on universal health coverage. So far, we have registered

8,840 vulnerable individuals plus 200 old people spread out in all Wards of the County. This will enhance access to health services.

Mr. Speaker

One of our key strategies to get our people engaged in meaningful economic activities in order to support the economy and their families is to revitalize trade and generate incomes through construction of modern markets. Our focus is to complete the remaining five modern markets in Malinya, Bukura, Mumias, Nambacha and Kipkaren. These are in addition to the operational ones in Khayega, Butali, Shianda, Matungu, Matunda, Mulwanda and Butere.

Mr. Speaker

We ultimately plan to build one modern market per Sub County. The next phase will be construction of 10 open air markets per year that will improve trade in every part of our County. Construction of modern kiosks, a wholesale hub and one ultra-modern market and a database for all traders is underway as we move to implementing the Trade and Markets Act.

Mr. Speaker

Industrialization is top on our agenda and we have developed a manufacturing plan that has prioritized crops and animal products to be value added. Energy production from waste is also part of the plan to grow the industrial base.

The County Government in collaboration with EPZA will establish an export processing zone at Mumias township on 200 acre plot. The layout and initial designs on how the site will look like are ready and initial infrastructure development and purchase of additional 188 acres of land are underway.

Mr. Speaker

The construction of two flagship factories for processing tea and dairy products is now at the design stage and they will be launched soon. We also plan to construct jua kali sheds, two per Sub County, to spur our industrial growth.

Tourism development is also in focus with six heritage sites proposed for gazettelement by the National Assembly. They include Mawe Tatu in Likuyani, Kambiri Hills in Shinyalu, Mugai Caves and Stones in Malava, Misango Hills in Khwisero and Nabongo Shrines in Matungu. We plan to develop two such sites per year. The growth of Eco-tourism through fencing of Kakamega forest and development of an Eco-lodge to serve guests is part of the joint collaboration initiatives with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Kenya Forest Service, KWS and Rhino Ark.

The County Government is in the final stages of creating two micro credit and investment corporations - Kakamega County Micro Finance Corporation and Kakamega County Investment and Development Agency – whose board members will be unveiled soon. The Micro Credit Corporation has developed products to be piloted from March 2019 using the modern market model and the investment corporation has already mapped out investment portfolios that will be complemented with JICA’s resource map to pave way to stakeholder’s participation.

Mr. Speaker

On land use and development of urban areas, the County Government of Kakamega is on course to ensure promotion of equitable access to land, provision of quality housing particularly in Kakamega and Mumias and proper coordination of urban development.

The World Bank has availed a funding of Kshs 383 million to support infrastructure in Kakamega and Mumias towns.

Kakamega is on course towards upgrading into city status by 2022. An Ad Hoc committee is finalizing its report on conferment of Mumias to Municipal status. Four more urban centres are being considered for upgrading into municipal status.

Mr. Speaker

A good road network is critical in growth of trade and the economy. The County Government has so far upgraded 69 Kms of gravel roads to bitumen standard covering the entire county, thus reducing the annual cost of road maintenance. We now have an effective and efficient road transport network that is the talk of residents and visitors alike. Our plans are to have 200 Kms of upgraded roads by 2022.

In addition, the 10 Kms per ward project is on course. To date, the County Government has successfully achieved over 600 Kms of gravel roads. Considering the positive impact of this programme in the community, it will be rolled out every year so as to increase the road network to 3,600 Kms.

As regards bridges, construction of 46 structurally sound bridges in our County is complete. This has enabled citizens to traverse the County and beyond as they go about their business. Trade has been enhanced and connectivity to neighbouring counties within the Lake Region Economic Bloc is now a reality.

Installation of 48 high masts at main market centres has been completed. With security enhanced, traders can now engage in longer hours of business thereby contributing to economic growth. Our goal is to erect 100 high mast lighting by 2022.

Mr. Speaker

Reliable and affordable access to electricity by the citizens is a key priority for the County Government. Through partnership with the Rural Electrification Authority (REA) we are in the process of connecting people to the national grid. We have committed Kshs 60 million a year to the programme. With a similar amount per year from REA, the project will definitely be a game changer in improving the quality of life of our people.

Mr. Speaker

Our people need safe drinking water within reach the way they need electricity. Our goal is to ensure this happens by 2022. To this end, the County Government has embarked on construction of a 5,000 cubic metres water storage tank in Kakamega town at a cost of Shs 87 million. This project comes at a time when plans are underway to upgrade Kakamega town into city status and it is therefore necessary to prepare for the anticipated rapid growth in population.

With regard to Mumias, the County Government is doing the last mile connectivity by expanding the town's water network at a cost of Kshs 35 million.

We are also transiting from Kenya Power dependence to use of solar for our pumping schemes to reduce operation and maintenance costs. In Likuyani, we are piloting a containerized water treatment plant at Lumino dam at a cost of Kshs 55 million. Upon success, the technology will be rolled out to the other 11 Sub Counties.

The County Government in partnership with Kenya Red Cross is undertaking flagship water project in Khwisero at a cost of Kshs 40 million. This will ensure that three quarters of the Sub County will have water distribution network.

Mr. Speaker

On the environment, we are all entitled to a clean and healthy environment as provided for in the Constitution. In this regard, we are grateful to the County Assembly for approving the Kakamega Environment Management Bill which will go a long way in ensuring a clean and healthy environment in our County. We will do our part to implement the Act particularly with regard to creating public awareness on solid waste management and pollution. Shortage of Solid waste management sites remains a major challenge to the County Government. Plans are underway, through partnership with an international investor, to establish a waste to energy plant at Mung'ang'a in Mumias East Sub County.

With regard to our natural resources including forests, rivers and gold deposits, the County Government strongly supports arrangements where fair and equitable sharing of benefits between the local community and investors is respected. We are in partnership with GIZ in efforts to spearhead Access Benefit Sharing (ABS) of genetic resources. Some of the Honourable Members of this Assembly have been involved in on-going discussions with the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining on the best way to protect the interests of artisanal miners in our gold mines.

Mr. Speaker

In this era of phenomenal innovations in the ICT sector, it is widely recognized that new technologies are vital enablers of business and service delivery with linkages to enhancement of efficiency, greater connectivity and security as well as a more secure environment. It is against this background that the County Government has committed significant resources to key flagship projects in the ICT sector.

They include the County connectivity project, the cashless revenue collection system, the integrated security surveillance system as well as the e-Government and the Enterprise Project Planning (ERP) projects.

The County connectivity project will connect all County Government offices and facilities including hospitals and health centres with the sole purpose of enhancing revenue collection, improving efficiency in service delivery as well as access to health services by reducing unnecessary referrals to distant health facilities.

The integrated surveillance and security system will improve security for government infrastructure and major towns. It will also enable monitoring of various activities within major public and business places with a view to ensuring a more secure business environment. We will also implement an e-citizen self service portal to enable wananchi to apply and pay for services from the comfort of their offices and homes.

The ERP system will also be implemented to ensure that the County Government administration and businesses are housed under one system to create a paperless environment. The system will consist of several modules including human resource management, fleet management and revenue collection. These modules will greatly enhance efficiency in management and reporting for easier decision making.

A County production studio will be established to facilitate production of radio and television programmes to cut down on outsourcing costs as well as create opportunities for talent development among youths in the County.

Mr. Speaker

As we roll out administrative structures to community areas, the County Government's public service reform agenda involving designing and rolling out a performance management plan to evaluate performance of the county public service and implementation of county policies is underway. It is intended to ensure enhanced productivity, discipline and delivery of quality services to the citizens.

The Government is conscious of the ever increasing wage bill, which now stands at 36.9% of Government expenditure. In order to rationalize the wage bill and ensure that it reflects the correct position of the employee numbers vis a vis the payroll, the County Government will undertake an electronic registration and head count of all its employees in order to consolidate the headcount data into an integrated database. The database will be used to provide critical information on employee metrics; like age profile, education, qualification, length of service, salaries among others, which will be used to align the human resources to the County Government's Strategic goals for economic development. The County Government will also undertake a comprehensive payroll cleansing exercise to weed out any anomalies and/or ghost workers.

Other measures being undertaken are a head count for County government employees, introduction of a clocking system, culture change management and confirmation of academic and professional qualifications of each employee. All these measures will be completed in March this year.

Mr. Speaker

With the recent recruitment of Community Area Administrators, the County Government has fulfilled the provisions of article 48 (e) of the Constitution by ensuring that the Government is devolved to the lowest unit of devolved structures. The Administrators at Sub County, Ward and Community Area levels will ensure that Government services are delivered upto Community Area level. They will also undertake key tasks including coordination of service

delivery, provision and maintenance of public service infrastructure and facilities and exercise any functions and powers delegated by the County Public Service Board under Section 86 of the County Government Act.

Mr. Speaker

Construction of an ultra-modern international sports facility in Kakamega is one of our key priorities. Phase I of Bukhungu Stadium is complete and we have now advertised for tenders to commence construction of Phase 2. Ultimately, the stadium will attain 25,000 seating capacity. This facility will go a long way in promoting sports tourism and help in nurturing sports talents among our youths.

The County Government of Kakamega has recruited and deployed 3000 servicemen and women under the County Youth Service and Women Empowerment programme this financial year.

The programme is aimed at reducing unemployment and poverty levels among the residents of Kakamega. The Service men and women will work for two years as many more join the programme. During their engagement, the youths will get opportunity to acquire technical skills in trades of their choice from the nearest County Polytechnics. Their fees will be paid by the County Government. All the 3000 servicemen and women have been enrolled into the NHIF medical scheme and a mandatory SACCO where they will save for the period they will be in the programme. The savings will help support their future self-employment ventures.

On social protection programme for vulnerable groups in our community, the County Government has undertaken construction of low cost housing units for the elderly, widows, widowers, child-led households and other vulnerable population within the County for the last three financial years. A total of 1080 people have benefited from this programme spread out equally in all the wards of the County.

During this Financial Year, the County Government set aside a budget of Kshs 52 Million to implement the fourth phase of the Shelter improvement programme. The BQs have been reviewed to include plastering of floors, hence making it easier for the occupants to maintain hygiene and general cleanliness.

With the support of Honourable Members we intend to ensure that only deserving cases are covered by the programme as we plan to increase the number of structures from six to a minimum of 10 per Ward per year.

Mr. Speaker

At this juncture, I wish to reiterate the need for Kakamega County community to be wary of corrupt practices which threaten to undermine the noble objectives of devolution as set out in the Kenya Constitution 2010. The County Government will take all necessary measures including use of modern technology such as e-Procurement and the cashless revenue collection system to reduce corrupt practices. I therefore wish to give notice to the County Staff, suppliers and rate payers that their days are numbered. The office of Ombudsman is

fully operational in the Office of the Governor to follow up on any divergencies to our resolve to eradicate the scourge.

Mr. Speaker

We are proud of Kakamega County's youths and their talents. Last December our music and cultural teams scooped all the major trophies during the Kenya Music and Cultural Festivals that were held in Meru County. This was the 5th consecutive year that our County was declared the best in the country. This is by all means a major achievement which calls for celebration by leaders and people across the County.

Furthermore, the County Government is planning to conduct the Governors' Cup Festivals during this financial year in the month of April, 2019. The festivals will focus on identifying, nurturing and marketing raw talents among our youth starting from the Community Areas to the County level. Plans are underway to conduct stakeholders' meetings where all MCAs will be brought on board to discuss best ways to ensure this programme succeeds.

On the transport sector, the County Government will continue to explore ways and means of supporting the boda boda operators with a view to enhancing discipline and revenue collection as well as promoting public transport safety. We intend to come up with new approaches to sensitize them to form boda boda SACCOs at the Ward level.

Mr. Speaker

Kakamega County's Performance in national secondary examinations is facing a major challenge which can be attributed to among others, the delocalization policy by the National Government. County leaders recently held a forum where their concerns were recorded. Our view is that the policy should be rationalized to ensure that competent principals are allowed to manage our schools regardless of whether they come from within the community or not.

This notwithstanding Mr. Speaker, the County Government is committed to continue supporting improvement of the learning environment and facilities from ECDE Centres with an enrollment of 112, 219 pupils presently, up from 76,983 in 2015. In polytechnics, student enrollment has increased from 3,000 to 7,186 over the same period.

We are also on course in staffing and equipping County polytechnics, alongside support for establishment of centres of excellence and County HELB loan programme as well as bursaries for needy students.

Mr. Speaker

Finally, I wish to extend invitation to Honourable Members of the Assembly to the Council of Governors 6th Annual Devolution Conference that will be held in Kirinyaga County from 4th to 8th March, 2019. We expect the usual high turnout with participation from the National and County Governments, the diplomatic community, development partners, potential

investors, the academia, the private sector and the civil society among many others. The theme of the Conference is “*Deliver, Transform. Measure. Remaining Accountable.*”

Mr. Speaker

In conclusion, I wish the Honourable Members a productive Session in which the interests of our great County of Kakamega will be our inspiration and guiding light.

With these remarks, it is now my great pleasure to declare the Third Session of the Second Kakamega County Assembly officially open.

Thank you and God bless you all.