

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY H.E. JOHN OBIERO NYAGARAMA
DURING THE OCCASION OF JAMHURI DAY HELD AT
NYAMIRA BOYS GROUNDS ON 12TH DEC, 2019.**

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's another precious moment in our Kenyan history, as we mark the date when Kenya became an independent republic. This day gives us the opportunity to salute the patriots and pay tribute to the freedom fighters whose compromises, blood and hard work freed our country from the shackles of foreign rule. Thanks to them, for they bestowed upon us the much awaited freedom and independence.

The founding fathers that led us to freedom not only perceived independence in terms of transfer of political power, but also considered it as a stepping stone of nation building and healing. Their main aim was to improve the life of each individual, family and society as a whole.

Fellow citizens,

Jamhuri day gives us the chance to reflect our achievements as a Nation as well as challenges and prospects for the future. Since the advent of devolution we have made great strides in trying to eliminate poverty, diseases and economic instability.

In line with the tenets of the Big Four Agenda spearheaded by H.E. Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, my government has also adopted a similar approach aimed at transforming the lives of the people noting that:

- Significant proportion of county residents still lack access to basic services such as; affordable housing, Universal Health Coverage, safe drinking water and basic sporting facilities.
- Acquisition of land, for developing public infrastructure projects
- Increase in prices of food and basic items resulting in high cost of living

My government has therefore, developed the “Big Four” Agenda plan 2018-2022 The plan will;

- Focus on initiatives (programmes) that guarantees food security and nutrition to all county residents by 2022.
- Provide Universal Health Coverage thereby guaranteeing quality and affordable healthcare to all county residents
- Provide at least two thousand (2000) affordable new houses to the residents by 2022 and thereby improve the living conditions for the citizens
- Investment in water projects
- Expanding the rural access roads and transport network
- Expansion of sports facilities to sub-counties by building modern Stadia

Infrastructure,

Infrastructure plays a critical role in facilitating and accelerating socio-economic development in the county. My county government has continued in its efforts to develop

efficient and effective infrastructure, which is a key sector for development as envisaged in Kenya vision 2030.

We have taken bold steps in addressing issues relating to infrastructure development as follows;

- a) 7 KM of roads opening per ward, totaling to 140 KM in the entire county under the Mechanical Transport Fund (MTF).
- b) Upgrading Borabu, Police line, Nyamira Boys and Nyabite road to a bitumen standard under the support of World Bank
- c) Opening and maintaining of access roads under the roads levy fund in all wards.
- d) Construction of County Headquarters administration block
- e) Maintain at least 125 KM of roads under regular routine maintenance
- f) Construct of at least two thousand (2000) affordable housing units.
- g) Construction of at least five (5) sports stadia, one in each sub county to enhance identification and nurturing of youth talents in sports. Manga stadium is under construction and Nyamaiya will be commencing soon.

Its noted that, despite heavy rains we have not experienced any major roads and bridges destruction. We thank God for that.

Agriculture

Nyamira County's economy relies heavily on Agriculture with over 80% of population depending directly or indirectly on

agriculture. The performance of Agriculture Sector is thus very critical in influencing the overall economic growth and development of the County.

My government has therefore, prioritized on the following programmes;

- I. Promotion of Dairy production and marketing to increase milk production and household income
- II. Promotion of fish farming and local utilization to improve fish production and income from aquaculture
- III. Promotion of avocado production through distribution of seedlings to farmers
- IV. Subsidize maize production to poor and vulnerable farmers to improve maize production for food security and nutrition
- V. Increase of banana production and marketing to improve banana value chain and income
- VI. Increase of Local chicken production and marketing to improve chicken production and income
- VII. Establishment of soil testing facilities to increase agricultural productivity
- VIII. Increase of root crops for food security through the production of sweet potatoes and cassava.

IX. Provide credit facilities to farmers to increase their production.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad that the department of Agriculture, Livestock and fisheries Development recently, held a Trade-Fair exhibition and Fun Fair show which brought people from all corners of the county with an aim of enhancing technology in agribusiness and social integration. It was a great move, for in the past our people used to travel all the way to Kisii County for the same. I hope our farmers learnt a lot from the exhibitions and they will put the knowledge they gained into practice.

Water and Environment

Nyamira County is endowed with natural water resources, namely, rivers, shallow wells, springs, dams, and boreholes. The resources are plenty during the rainy season and scarce during the dry periods. In order to address inadequate and safe water, my government has focused on the following programmes and projects that enhance access to safe and clean water;

- Construction of rural water supplies at Magwagwa, Kemera, Nyansiongo and Mekenene
- Drilling of water boreholes in all county wards
- Boosting water harvesting programmes through water tanks supply
- Protection and conservation of water catchment areas by removing eucalyptus trees from Riparian Land

Universal Health Coverage

Under Universal Health Coverage my government has undertaken the following projects and programmes;

- i. Establishment of Renal unit at Nyamira County Referral Hospital
- ii. Constructed New operation theaters at Kijauri, Nyamusi, Manga, Gesima and County Referral Hospital
- iii. Installed Oxygen generating plant at Nyamira County Referral Hospital
- iv. Installed CT-SCAN at Nyamira County Referral Hospital
- v. Installed Diagnostic machine in Lab and radiology
- vi. Construction of Amenity ward with a Doctors 'Plaza at Nyamira County Referral Hospital
- vii. Construct New in-patient wards in Nyamusi, Manga, Magwagwa and Gesima
- viii. Construct a new 350 bed level 5 hospital in Nyamira.

- ix. Ensure adequate essential health products are available in all Health facilities

We shall continue partnering with various stakeholders to ensure that health matters are well addressed for the benefit of our community. In this regard, I want to thank the US ambassador, Kyle Mcarter for visiting us recently and promising to support Agriculture, Health, and Clean Energy among other sectors.

Education and Vocational Training

In the financial year 2018/2019, my government disbursed KSH. 131,500, 000 million to benefit 36,000 needy students in all wards.

In 2019/2020 budget, the county will disburse Ksh. 133,000,000 Million and already 36,000 bursary application forms have been released to ward offices, for application. I therefore, urge all the needy students to apply and be beneficiaries of this fund.

The county also targets to support tertiary and vocational training students through the same fund and a total of 4000 application forms have been released to wards.

In an effort to improve the learning and teaching environment for the ECDE children, my government has constructed 414 new classrooms to support 42,663 ECDE learners.

A total of 1357 ECDE caregivers have been hired to support the teaching and learning of our learners.

My government has also continued to procure and distribute ECDE assorted teaching /Learning materials, furniture, and a 5000 litres water tanks to ECDE centers.

My administration is keen on improving and setting higher standards for our children. Our aim is to move swiftly towards a coherent, high quality pre~primary education service backed by more professional and financial support. I'm happy that a number of serving teachers are advancing on their education to obtain degrees or higher qualifications through part time studies. To encourage continuous professional development and flexibility, we shall partner with tertiary institutions to provide refresher and short courses for teachers willing to learn.

Trade and Investment

My government is determined to make Nyamira County a middle income economy and towards this end we have allocated funds to each ward to renovate or build a new market. A number of markets have thus, been constructed to provide a conducive business environment for small traders including: Mosobeti, Mokomoni, Ikonge, Magwagwa, Nyabite, Magombo, Nyansiongo among others.

Youth Development

My government recognizes that the youth are the engine of change for our county's present and future growth. A youth empowerment policy has been developed with an aim of providing equal opportunities and environment for youths to grow economically, politically and socially.

My government intends to focus on programmes and interventions aimed at;

- Promoting youth participation in Agriculture and value addition in agri-business
- Liaising with stakeholders in talent identification and development
- Encouraging private sector participation, in promotion of arts and sports among others
- Supporting youth to attain knowledge, skills and experience required to enable them effectively participate in National development
- Increasing and equipping the vocational and technical educational institution

Fellow Citizens,

Despite various challenges, I'm glad we have lived up to our pledges. However, to achieve more progress, we must remain united, work hard and focus our energies on development, we must learn that although politics is an important component of our national discourse, we must place more emphasis on the economic empowerment of our people, since a stable economy brings about progress and peace.

I commend our president, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta and former prime minister, honourable Raila Odinga for the handshake that gave birth to the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). That's meant to unite Kenyans and all future generations. I'm hoping that the report recommendations will be embraced by everyone so that we can move ahead as a Nation. I want to urge each and every one of you to read and understand the document and avoid propaganda. On the other hand, the leaders who are using the report to spread hate should stop and seek amicable solutions. The peace that our fore fathers fought for, should not be destroyed by selfish leaders. Let's all learn to accommodate one another.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lastly, on behalf of my government I wish you all a happy Christmas and prosperous new year. I also want to urge all motorists to exercise caution on the roads, remember safety is key. Thank you and may God bless you abundantly.

Happy Independence Day,

Barikiwa Sana.