

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THARAKA NITHI COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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H.E THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH DURING JAMHURI DAY  
CELEBRATIONS ON 12<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2014 AT KATHWANA COUNTY  
HEADQUARTERS.

H.E the Deputy Governor,  
Honourable Member(s) of Parliament,  
Speaker of Tharaka Nithi County Assembly,  
Members of the County Assembly,  
Friends of Tharaka Nithi,  
Distinguished guests present today,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is another great day we come together as citizen of our beloved country to commemorate a day where Kenya became a republic and gained full independence 12<sup>th</sup> December 1963.

This is a time for us to express our gratitude for the freedom we are enjoying and celebrate our Kenyan way of living , and the values that stand within our society.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

May this day remind us of where we have come from as a nation and most important of all reminds us of our core duty in maintaining the greatest form of harmony amongst us.

This day tells of our past which is important because when any nation recognizes its past and acknowledges it, it equips itself with strength, zeal and determination to face the future.

As a county, we celebrate 51 years of independence, a journey that has been characterized by so much as we struggled to gain stability after our fore fathers fought and snatched back our birth right from the colonial rule.

Moreso, we now enjoy these fruits that have bore so many other among them devolution which has seen 47 counties come into place, amongst them, Tharaka Nithi County.

It has equally not been easy but so far as the Governor of Tharaka Nithi, I can say through your support, we are past the teething problems that came with commencement of devolution all set to face the future.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Many have said a lot in regards to my leadership both negative and positive which has all been appreciated by my government and has been a driving force towards better service delivery.

Part of my key agenda was to improve the people's lives and livelihoods by developing projects that empower you socioeconomically.

My manifesto was largely pegged on the pro-poor agenda and how I could empower and make people's lives better.

In regards to this, I would like to mention that in the first financial year, we faced a lot of challenges in implementing some of these projects.

Indeed, we received a total of 2.3 billion as allocation to our county but soon after a large chunk of money was deducted by the national government which had paid salaries of workers who were later devolved and additional donor money.

We were left with only Shs 1.3 billion which was well utilized on key projects mostly in health, water, education, agriculture, tourism, as well as roads and infrastructure

The national government had also promised 60 Million for commencement construction of the County headquarter which did not materialize.

That notwithstanding we have been committed to the needs of our people and continue note achievements and milestones in the period the government has been in office which is promising.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Today I would like to emphasize on the importance of unity and harmony amongst ourselves which will take us far, this includes ensuring what we as leaders and people of Tharaka Nithi enhances harmony amongst us.

Through support and working together of all sub counties we are bound to shed off the tribal and sub tribal elements that have posed a challenge in driving our development.

Again, I would also urge those going round peddling rumours of our county headquarters location to stop this malicious acts as I repeat as I have done severally in the past, that the county headquarters are in Kathwana.

More to this, I am currently operating from Kathwana where my office is and so are the other county officers. What remain in Chogoria Chuka and Marimanti towns are the sub county offices.

We will not tire in urging investors to come and start businesses at the county headquarters where a lot of services are needed as we make Kathwana our city.

As we end year 2014 and head to 2015 I can confidently say my government has been busy this financial year and we are indeed walking the talk by implementation of projects that we promised as a government.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

To touch on the department of education past two weeks we have been launching distribution of cheques worth Shs 50 Million for development of Infrastructure in learning institutions.

This money has been piped to ninety four primary and secondary schools, eight polytechnics, an ICT Centre and a Community Library,

A total of 27 Primary schools and Secondary Schools will also receive electricity installation to facilitate better learning. One Police Post and a Public Stadium where schools can use for their activities have also benefited.

This is phase one of the money set aside to develop infrastructure, phase two commences next term and we hope the management of these institution will utilize the money as required for the benefit of the youth and community as a whole.

We can now prove that the money has not been misappropriated as others claimed which would be an injustice to our young generation who we look up to as future leaders.

Evidently, education may not be entirely devolved but we are keen to see that we support the entire education sector through working with the stakeholders.

We have not been able to employ the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Teachers due to the tussle with the KNUT AND TSC on devolution of the department.

We are however supplementing the community's effort that has been paying them and set aside a monthly kitty of Shs10, 000 for every public primary school with ECDE classes to facilitate their day to day activities.

The county is going to automatically absorb 40 Polytechnic instructors that had been employed by the national government on contract under the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) that has since expired from November.

More importantly we are happy that our polytechnics are equally growing and receiving support by the community and we as a county are going to pay these instructors who are playing a key role in raising the education standards

### **People of Tharaka Nithi,**

As I move to the ministry of trade, industry and co-operative development we have already awarded tenders for rehabilitation of 17 markets with contractors expected to move their plants and equipment to the site by 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2014.

However tendering for two markets i.e. Kaanwa and Kathwana has been delayed due to lack of Bill of Quantity BUT this is being addressed by Public Works Department.

Once the markets are rehibited, we shall embark on street lightning (solar) and also construction of sheds for key markets.

We have also embarked on thorough marketing of County's Agri Based Products where the recently launched Bairunyi Honey Youth Foundation Project from Chogoria - Maara Sub County participated in Council of Governors' initiated Jua Kali Exhibition held at Bomas of Kenya.

Notably, it was also selected to participate in Kenya's Industrialization week held at Kenyatta International Conference Centre - Nairobi and the 15<sup>th</sup> Edition of East African Community Jua Kali/Nguvu Kazi exhibitions held at Kigali - Rwanda. At Kigali the Association exhausted their products within the first two days of the exhibitions an indication that we have ready market.

The Regional exhibitions held at Kigali were organized by Micro and Small Enterprises Authority in Collaboration with East African Community member States and private sector organizations such as Kenya Commercial Bank.

Five Tharaka Nithi County staff attended the exhibitions and they are to learn how other countries and counties are managing their SME sector. Nairobi and Mombasa- Kwale were represented by more 60 and twenty respectively

Impressively, Tharaka Green Gold products have been selected to participate in Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry Exhibition to be held in United Arabs Emirates - Dubai scheduled to take place from 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2014 - Dubai.

It was formed by women group from Tharaka Constituency deals with packing and polishing of green Grams, Sorghum and pigeon Peas participated in Kenya's Industrialization week held at Kenyatta International Conference Centre - Nairobi.

As established during the Tharaka Nithi Investors Forum in Mombasa August this year we have identified Middle East as a key market for cereals and especially Green Grams and Pigeon Peas.

In addition, the newly registered Tharaka Nithi County Staff SACCO is scheduled to start members recruitment campaign by the middle of December, 2014. All the staff of the county are requested to join, myself and my able deputy governor are going to lead by example by being the first lot to join.

Re-organization Tharaka Nithi County Cereals Marketing Co-operative Union starts next month with a motivation that there are now signs of good markets - such as Unga Limited, BIDCO Oil Refineries, Jomo Kenyatta University of

Agriculture and Technology - JKUAT for their Breakfast Cereals plant at Juja and probably East African Breweries for Sorghum and possible Middle East for Green Grams and Pigeon Peas.

Extension of Trade loans to the business community which I announced during Mashujaa Day (20<sup>TH</sup> October, 2014) has attracted many Traders who have completed and Submitted loans application forms for consideration for loans.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

On tourism, water environment and natural resources ministry, we are set to take the county to the next level whereby in the upper zone, renovation of Kinondoni lodge has started and we are encouraging our local people to tour the mountain.

Also, lets us encourage our family and friends who reside outside the county to venture these areas during this festive season.

In addition, construction of Chiakariga cultural center as the main county tourism market starts in January 2015. All architectural drawings, designs are ready and we are in the process of getting a contractor. Topographical survey is currently being undertaken.

My government promised that we will enable majority of our households to access clean water by 2017. We have been distributing pipes to enhance water distribution for the last one month. We have embarked on serious water harvesting so that we can create reservoirs enough to supply water to the entire county.

It is in order to say that this is a major investment and therefore I'm calling upon the good people of Tharaka Nithi to give us time and you will see us deliver on this.

Notably, we have completed survey and designs for four major rivers that we hope are going to transform the livelihoods of our people. These will also give us enough water for irrigation.

By the end of this financial year, several community water projects are going to benefit with 57 million being pumped into the projects.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

On environment and natural resource, we launched tree planting on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov 2014 where we started our drive to plant 6 million seedlings. The theme is plant your age to restore our forest cover.

So far a total of 96 schools across the county have benefited from the program and we are targeting more schools in the new year.

In regards to this, many individuals have also planted seedlings and we are happy to note that there is positive attitude change towards tree growing. As the governor of Tharaka Nithi County, I take this opportunity to encourage everyone to plant their age.

We are endowed with various natural resources. I'm happy to note that we have embarked on a program to restore and protect our hilltops and the mountain. The fence that is being elevated to eliminate human animal conflict is on course.

This marks a beginning to better relations with the mountain. For our hilltops. Reforestation has started in earnest and more than 56,000 seedlings have been planted in different hilltops in the county.

I can confidently say that we have planted more than 1/2million seedlings in the last one month. Thanks to the cooperation between different stakeholders and my government.

Notably, the efforts of KFS and upper Tana cannot go unnoticed. With the support of KARLO, formerly KARI we are ready to plant 50,000 grafted cashew nuts in the next one week across 6 different wards.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

In regards to Agriculture, livestock and fisheries department, our objectives are to increase productivity, improve processing capacity and enhance efficiency in our marketing systems while at the same time ensuring sustainability of our land resources.

Last month we held a field day/ grand exhibition held by Kenya livestock producers association (KLPA) at Kirubia stadium on 27<sup>th</sup>& 28<sup>th</sup> november 2014.

It was aimed at sensitizing and encouraging our farmers on learning modern ways of farming with a goal of using agriculture for economic boost.

Of importance, our agriculture department is working hand in hand with this team and our county is expected to produce 10,000 livestock. In the recent partnership with K-Sales, a three-year project Food for Progress initiative funded by the United States, department of Agriculture (USDA) to improve the competitiveness of the meat value chain to increase productivity and boost marketing and trade. This will be through support of our farmers at all levels.

In addition to this, the county is on the final stages of finalizing procedure to jointly implementing a dairy project with technical support from Afimilk Company from Israel at cost of kshs 350 Million which begins this next month.

This week the Fisheries department has been able to distribute over 40 fingerings of trout fish in the county to fastrack fish growing.

Next week we shall distribute 60,000 vaccines in Tharaka North, South and Igamba Ng'ombe sub counties for animals at these regions.

My government has also been doing farmers training on various issues among them maintaining clean slaughter houses and slabs in the USAID and KSALES project.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

You might have noticed that some of construction of our roads has stalled and as leaders we are disappointed to find that construction of Chuka –Kiang'onde and Chogoria roads were stalled after they begun preparation and they left to Meru County.

We recently went to the National Ministry office to raise our concerns which were considered and we expect the contractor to go on with the work.

We are launching the county road improvements targeting 200 Kilometers which has already been tendered and the contractors are expected on site early next month. This is the same with Ward roads whose commencement is in middle February.



Of great importance is that the contractor for construction of the county headquarters is expected to be on site in March after the end of the tendering process.

We are still alerting those that have built or farmed on road reserves to pull down their structures.

Most of the rural access roads are supposed to be 20 feet apart but in most areas the contractors find roads that are only 10 feet apart which is too narrow for a tractor to access.

On health, I am aware of the go slow the health workers had early this week concerning salaries but I wish they had remained patient because the money was released on Friday last week from the national treasury.

This affected not only the health workers but all the county workers and was not our doing. By Monday salaries had begun flowing in the banks.

We are also looking forward to the commencement of the Kenya Medical Training Centre in our County by the national government and the county has allocated Sh. 10M in support of the construction.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

We are sad to note that our county lost three of its strong men in the last Mandera massacre attack and we still mourn with their families.

My government was able to donate Shs 150,000 for burial expences to the three families, two of which are in Mukothima ward and one in Marimanti.

My Government and I continue to condemn these terrorism acts which have managed to affect each and every one of us negatively.

As a county government we are in support of national government led by His Excellency, The president , Uhuru Kenyatta and his Deputy William Ruto and I believe we are going to overcome this great obstacle that has hindered our economy in quite substantial ways.

I urge the people of Tharaka Nithi to be vigilante and watchdogs during this festive season and let us we co-operate with security agents to ensure we do not to leave loopholes for the terrorists to carry out their attacks.

To deviate from this, I wish to bring to the attention of our County Commissioner that it has been reported that some of the National Government officers are trying to taint the good relationship we have enjoyed since devolution.

It has been reported that chiefs and their assistant chiefs have been in the last few months threatened by senior officers and warned against attending the governors meetings.

It is wrong since we are supposed to be good example of unity and harmony among ourselves for our people to emulate.

**Finally Ladies and gentlemen,**

I wish to take this to wish you all peace and Gods love as we usher in the festive season. Enjoy yourselves and be each other's keeper having in mind that our county and nation depends on us come 2015.

I wish you a Happy Jamhuri day, a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year 2015 in advance.

God bless Tharaka Nithi  
God bless Kenya.

H.E Samuel Ragwa.

Governor, Tharaka Nithi County.