

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF BUNGOMA**

**COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF BUNGOMA**

**COUNTY ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

**THE DAILY HANSARD**

***SPECIAL SITTING***

**THURSDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2025**

**Afternoon Sitting**

# COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF BUNGOMA

## THE DAILY HANSARD

**THURSDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2025**

(Special sitting convened vide Gazette Notice No. 3556 of 21st March 2025)

Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

(The County Assembly met at thirty minutes past two at the County Assembly Chamber)

### **ARRIVAL OF HIS EXCELLENCE THE GOVERNOR**

*(His Excellency the Governor Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka entered the chamber escorted by the Speaker and accompanied by the Mace at thirty Minutes past two O. Clock)*

*(The Mace was placed on the Table)*

*[His Excellency the Governor Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka took the Chair of the County]*

*(National Anthem, East African Anthem and Bungoma County Anthem were played)*

### **PRAYERS**

**Mr. Speaker:** It is now time for us to get prayers from our spiritual Leaders

*(Prayers were said by Imam and County Chaplain)*

### **COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR**

Your Excellency, Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka, CGH, Governor of the great County of Bungoma, Hon. Members of the County Assembly, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, Section 30(2) (K) of the County Governments Act 2012 as read together with section 4(2) of the Bungoma County State of the County Address Act 2023 requires the Governor to deliver an annual state of the County address not later than 30<sup>th</sup> March of each calendar year and at any given other time.

Further, section 4(4) of Bungoma County State of the County address Act, 2023 requires the Governor to once every year report an address to the County on all the measures taken and progress achieved in the realization of the County values referred to in Article 10 of the constitution of Kenya, implementation status of the County policies and plans and performance reports of the County Executive committee and public service based on the performance

management plans, citizens participation in the affairs of the County Government and any other information that the Governor may deem fit.

In this regard Hon. Members; by way of a message to the Speaker, His Excellency the Governor conveyed his desire to address the sitting of this House today the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Therefore, pursuant to the provisions of the Standing Order No. 26 of the County Assembly, by Gazette Notice No. 3556 which was published in the Kenya gazette on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025, I gave a notice of this special sitting of the County Assembly to the members of the County Assembly. So this special sitting is properly convened.

Your Excellency, it is the custom of the County Assembly to recognize invited guests seated in our galleries, both the Speakers gallery and Public galleries, I therefore wish to recognize the guests who are seated in the Speaker's gallery and Public galleries.

As I call your names, please be upstanding for recognition and then resume your sits accordingly.

We are honored to have the following people in the Speaker's gallery:

1. Thomas Angei -County Commissioner
2. Francis Koli - County Police Commander
3. Jeremiah Abuka - County Administration Police Commander
4. Moses Koech -Director National Intelligence Services

Hon. Members, we can appreciate their presence in our traditional way.

*(Applause)*

Your Excellency and Hon. Members, I am pleased to present to you the following distinct delegations who are with us today here;

1. Hon. Ronald Ochalo	- Deputy Speaker - Busia County Assembly
2. Hon. Bett Mwale Makhanga	- Deputy Speaker - Trans Nzoia County Assembly
3. Hon. Joyce Situma County Assembly	- 1 <sup>st</sup> Chairperson Speaker's committee - Kakamega
4. Hon. Julian Wanyama Busia	- Deputy Minority whip - County Assembly of
5. Hon. Betarice Akinyi Okwapo County Assembly of Busia	-Vice Chairperson, Culture and Sports committee -
6. Hon. Benjamin Were representing Bunyala Central Ward	- MCA County Assembly of Kakamega
7. Hon. Suri Nyongesa Assembly	- MCA specially elected - Kakamega County
8. Dr. Donald K Amanyala	- Clerk of County Assembly of Kakamega
9. CPA Gabriel Osongo Erambo	- Ag. Clerk County Assembly Busia
10. Colleta Nafula Kisiska	- Deputy Clerk - Trans Nzoia County Assembly

11. Mr. Jacob Omalo	- Director, Hansard, Research and Information Services - County Assembly of Busia
12. Mrs. Everlyne Mwaro	- Director, Legislative, Plenary and Committee Services - Busia County Assembly
13. Awaya Nicholas	- Director, Procedure, Legislative and Committee Services - Kakamega County Assembly
14. Peter Mutoka	- Director, ICT - Kakamega County Assembly
15. Roselyne Wesenza	- Principal Administrative Assistant - Trans Nzoia County Assembly
16. Benard Omondi	- Senior Procurement Officer - Kakamega County Assembly
17. Stephen Mabunde	- Senior Clerk Assistant - Kakamega County Assembly

We have commissioners of the County Assembly

1. Dr. Anthony Mabele
2. Mrs. Jessicah Mayabi

Hon. Members, let us appreciate them in our traditional way

*(Applause)*

Your Excellency, these delegations from regional County Assemblies represents dedicated individuals who continue to work tirelessly for the betterment of their counties and welfare of their people. Their role in shaping governance, strengthening legislative process and promoting democratic values are vital to ensuring effective and responsive leadership at the County level.

It is a privilege to have them here today and we commend their on-going commitment to public service.

Your Excellency, we are truly honored to have such distinguished delegations from across the Counties of Western region.

We are privileged to have with us

1. Prof. Ipara Odeo - Vice Chancellor of Kibabii University

We have the pleasure of recognizing all the distinguished educationists present today

1. Mr. Edward Bikala	- Chair, Kenya Secondary School Heads Association
2. Mr. Paul Wanyonyi Weloba	- Chief Principal, Kamusinga Boys
3. Dina Cheriot	- HSC Chief Principal, Lugulu Girls
4. Mr. Nicholas Okedo	- Chief Principal, Kibabii Boys
5. Mr. Enock Andanje	- Chief Principal, Bungoma Boys
6. Mr. Luketelo Augustine	- Executive Secretary of KUPPET

7. Kennedy Wafula Luketelo - KNUT Bungoma Representative

Hon. Members, can we appreciate them?

*(Applause)*

Your Excellency, we are grateful for the presence of these esteemed educationists whose tireless work continues to shape the educational landscape and nurture the leadership of tomorrow. Their unwavering dedication to advancing education and the shaping of the future of our youth is truly commendable. Both have played significant roles in the education development of our region and continue to advocate for the welfare and professional growth of educators.

Your Excellency, may I also accord the special recognition to all the County Executive Committee Members present in this House led by the Mr. William Nasongo - County Secretary and Head of the Public Service, Dr. Janet Manyasi - Chief of Staff, County Chief Officers, invited guests from the civil society, religious teams, members of the fourth estate, public and our staff who are seated in the public gallery and the media galleries may you all be upstanding. Kindly resume your seats.

*(Applause)*

Members, we can appreciate their presence accordingly.

To all invited guests, welcome to the County Assembly of Bungoma. In accordance with Standing Order No. 28(2) of the Bungoma County Assembly Standing Orders, when delivering an address to the County Assembly, the Governor shall be heard in silence. An address shall not be followed by any comment or question thereafter. This principle, overlying the Governor to address the County Assembly in a peaceful, uninterrupted manner reflects our commitment to ensuring that such an important address are delivered without disturbance. It is with this understanding that in the spirit of respect that we all receive the Governor's address today following the same respectful tradition as set by this House before.

I urge all Hon. Members of this House to listen attentively, engage thoughtfully and consider how we as members of the Counter Assembly can work together in a bipartisan manner to achieve the aspirations of the Kenyans and the people of Bungoma. Let us remember that the strength of our democracy lies in the respect of the separation of powers, the rule of law and the unwavering commitment to the interests of our citizens.

Hon. Members, distinguished ladies and gentlemen it is now my singular honor and privilege to invite His Excellency the Governor of the County Government of Bungoma to a very special seating and the County at large. Your Excellency, welcome to address the House accordingly.

*(Applause)*

## **ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCE THE GOVERNOR**

**H.E. Rt. Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka:** Hon. Emmanuel Situma, Speaker of the County Assembly of Bungoma, Hon. Members of the County Assembly, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen it gives me great pleasure to deliver my State of the County Address for this year in fulfillment of the requirements of Section 32 (K) of the County Government Act.

The County Assembly is the most critical stakeholder in our county government and is key not only to service delivery but also to sustaining Devolution. The demands on your time and support are high, and as a sub-national Legislature, you lay the foundation for the execution of development in the County.

As I stand to enumerate our achievements, it is worth commending the central role of this Assembly in aligning legislation to the performance of the Executive. Allow me Mr Speaker to emphasize the central role of this house and the members in shaping and changing the lives of our people; I want to urge all of us elected Leaders from our County to desist from imputing bad motive on this house and give our Honourable members of the County Assembly the Respect and Honour they deserve; you are the people's closest representatives and the people's choice reigns Supreme.

*Max DePree says: “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”*

When I took my oath of office, I defined the reality for the people of Bungoma for five years. We are right in the middle of the term, and I want to thank you for helping me achieve the elusive cohesive Leadership and a vibrant mechanism for constant collaboration and consultation as elected Leaders.

This was powerfully demonstrated by the large turnout of County leaders, led by the Speaker of the National Assembly and yourselves, at the County Leaders & Stakeholders Consultative Engagement forum, which I recently convened at Kibabii University. I will seek to institutionalize this forum as a periodic engagement.

We have spent the last two years championing the cause of Devolution; we have progressed from humble beginnings to greater heights, making this a year of action. We must continue to focus on the things that unite the people of this County, regardless of region, party, age, or socioeconomic status; we must possess the profound belief that tomorrow can be achieved through hard work.

Today, our challenges are even more significant; expectations are higher, and the road ahead remains uncertain. As a County Government, we have set out to provide our citizens with a better service delivery experience. In my second term in office, I remain committed to people-centred solutions. There are many successful local entrepreneurs engaged in various business activities that produce goods and services for both our County and the Country at large.

I am committed to harnessing this to reinvest in capitalization, enhancing the competitiveness of our economy while simultaneously creating opportunities for employment in the informal sector. To this end, my government is constructing modern markets that will enhance the trading environment and ensure longer trading hours for our people.

Since my last address at this Assembly on 18th October 2022, we have continued to deploy our resources to ensure our development scorecard remains on track and uphold the aspirations that our people have for devolution. We were honored to host The National Celebrations of our 60<sup>th</sup> Madaraka Day 2024, an event that not only put us on the map but also brought Diplomats, Dignitaries, both local and foreign.

Subsequently, we hosted the County Assemblies Sports Association (CASA) games in October and closed the year with the National Celebrations of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in December. These events have strengthened our deep drive for National values.

Our fiscal space continues to shrink even as prices continue to soar. We must, therefore, continue to up our Source revenue mobilization to support the implementation of various on-going programs. The County Treasury has initiated a redesign of its taxation policies to make them more supportive of economic activity.

This will boost revenue collection from the current Kshs 1.02 billion in FY 2023/24 to the target of Kshs. 2.26 billion in FY 2024/25 and will be achieved through the implementation of the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy for the period FY 2024/25 – 2026/27, which provides a combination of tax administration and policy measures to enhance revenue mobilization.

Regarding human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination, and the protection of the marginalized, we have prioritized human health and well-being by ensuring access to quality healthcare, education and other essential services.

The County has scaled up service Delivery and ensured the availability and readiness of the same at our health facilities.

We have constructed more early learning classrooms to bring Early Childhood and Development closer to our people. We have also ensured that all wards receive an equal allocation of funds for community empowerment, thereby boosting development.

Internally, we have met the threshold for the requisite numbers of women, youth, People with Disabilities, and minorities, as seen in the composition of the County Executive Committee, starting with my very own Deputy, who is both female and from a minority group. We observe strict Compliance with “Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO)” laws. The County allocates 30% of the County procurement opportunities to youth, women, and persons with disabilities. ,

*Abraham Lincoln said: The greatest fine art of the future will be the making of a comfortable living from a small piece of land.*

Recognizing the importance of our agriculture-rich county, my government has initiated infrastructure development of the road networks to open up the major production areas of the county, thereby promoting the growth of the agricultural industry, which contributes 16.6% of the Gross County Product (GCP), second only to transport and storage services. We have prioritized the development of the sector to spur inclusive growth and development, aligning with Vision 2023, Medium Term Plan (MTP) IV, and the Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS).

To enhance livestock productivity and increase income among the farmer groups, the Department, through Ward-Based Projects, supplied and delivered 108 dairy Cows and 40 goats to registered farmer groups in various Wards within the County. Additionally, the Department plans to reduce poverty and contribute to economic growth by establishing community-based animal health workers, providing veterinary drugs and vaccines, constructing livestock markets, and developing value chains for livestock products such as milk, meat, honey, eggs, and hides through the Kenya Livestock Commercialization Project.

To enhance crop productivity in the County, we purchased certified fertilizer and Maize seed for 21,900 farmers in the forty-five Wards through the Farm Input Support Programme. We procured and distributed avocado and coffee seedlings. Our County continues to stand out for

exemplary program implementation and in December 2024, we were awarded special recognition for the best-managed NAVCDP in the country.

Our approach to people-centred service delivery was recognized as the panel examined the sensitization of stakeholders, the presence of community-driven development committees, the identification of Farmer Producer Organizations, the training of community institutions, and the support of SACCOs.

To realize the dream of Universal Health Coverage and bring health services closer to the people, the county has embarked on various interventions aimed at: i) Promoting Primary Health Care; ii) Halting and reversing communicable and non-communicable diseases; iii) improving Health Infrastructure; iv) Promoting Universal Health Care financing, v) ensuring the digitization of health information vi) creating a health workforce.

Health remains a key concern for my government, and our commitment to strengthening the healthcare system remains unwavering as we work towards ensuring equitable and accessible healthcare services to all. We have made significant strides across the six building blocks of health. Effective service delivery in healthcare encompasses quality, accessibility, safety, and coverage.

A performing workforce comprises effective human resources management, relevant skills, and well-defined policies. My administration has varied terms for 196 healthcare workers, both medical and non-medical. We recruited 235 healthcare workers on permanent and pensionable terms, promoted 190 healthcare workers across all cadres, and recruited an additional 548 healthcare workers. To entrench health practices at the household level, we have a total of 3,580 community health promoters who receive a stipend and serve as our first line of response.

In terms of health infrastructure, we have sought partnerships to expand our speciality hospitals. Together with the M-PESA foundation, we are constructing a mother-and-child hospital in Naitiri Sub County Hospital. In conjunction with the Kenya Pipeline Company, we have built a modern theatre at Cheptais Sub-County Hospital. We have also completed a 60-bed facility in Bumula and a 100-bed facility in Sirisia, both of which are awaiting equipping. For the balance of FY 2024/2025 and FY 2025/2026, we will make deliberate budget allocations and source external partnerships to ensure adequate resources are available to equip these hospitals.

A well-performing system ensures the production, analysis, dissemination, and use of timely and reliable information. We have initiated the process of automating our healthcare services through the installation of a Health Management Information System, which will enhance efficiency and facilitate the timely generation of data across all service areas.

Effective leadership and governance in health ensure the existence of strategic policy frameworks, effective oversight, coalition building, provision of appropriate incentives, attention to system design, and accountability. To this end, we appointed and inducted Hospital Management Boards for Levels 4 and 5 and established Health Facilities Management Committees for Levels 1 and 2. The Department is reviewing the Bungoma County Health Services Act 2019 to align it with the Facility Improvement Act 2023. We will soon present this, along with the regulations, to this house for approval. I request your support to pass these policies to enhance service delivery to our people.

Under Trade and Industrialization, we are focused on enhancing the livelihoods of our people by fostering a robust, market-driven, and 24-hour economy. We have pursued this agenda through key initiatives in the Department of Trade, Energy, and Industrialization. The County Aggregation and Industrial Park (CAIP), currently under construction at Sang'alo, will be a special zone that provides value-added centers for agricultural products, as well as storage facilities.

Under the Urban Centers Street Lighting Program, we continue to install solar lights despite significant challenges at the outset, primarily due to vandalism of solar lights and their accessories. However, our dedicated staff remained resilient, conducting repairs and replacements as needed. This program is crucial in enhancing security and promoting a 24-hour economy. The first batch of Kshs 12 million trade loans benefited 1,000 small-scale traders, primarily Mama Mboga businesses, fostering economic growth and financial independence. Our County Aggregation and Industrial Park (CAIP) has realized significant progress despite inordinate delays in receiving the National Government's co-funding. While we have spent over Kshs 90 million, the National Treasury has only disbursed Kshs 61.5 million of the allocated Kshs 250 million. With the proposed County Government Additional Allocation Bill, Bungoma will receive an additional Kshs 105.3 million to accelerate the development of the industrial park in Sang'alo.

Our market infrastructure development program has undergone a facelift at Chwele Market, which is currently 90% complete, while the construction of the Kipsigon and Kamukuywa markets is on schedule. Additionally, we have constructed 30 metal stalls and an auction ring at Dorofu Market in East Sang'alo Ward, as well as another 30 metal stalls in Maraka Ward.

Through the Energy Partnership, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC) for a matching fund

project, with both the County and REREC contributing Kshs 45 million each. Under Phase 1, 21 transformers have been installed in 21 wards, benefiting 660 households. Phase 2 will target the remaining 24 wards. The Bumula Energy Centre, launched in September 2024, is set to be a game-changer for Bungoma County. I hereby direct the Department of Lands to resolve the ownership issues so that the project can proceed without any further delays.

*(Applause)*

With a budget of over Kshs 600 million, it will connect over 5,400 households to electricity and serve as a hub for renewable energy initiatives, clean cooking solutions, and environmental conservation.

Our County is both vast and rugged in terrain in many places. To enhance our road network and improve mobility, we have prioritized the development, expansion, modernization, and maintenance of sustainable transportation infrastructure, facilitating the efficient movement of people and goods. Under our Road Maintenance and Upgrades initiative, we opened and graveled 953 km out of the targeted 1,100 km of roads, constructed six bridges and 40 box culverts across all 45 wards, and upgraded 11.5 km of urban roads to bitumen standards in Bungoma Town.

Lisa Haisha says: *Great leaders don't set out to be leaders; they set out to make a difference. It's never about the role; it's always about the goal.*"

One of my legacy programs is the 20.85 km Misikhu-Brigadier Road upgrade, and I am proud to say that the project is currently at 50% completion. The National government has since taken over the site, and I can confirm that it will be completed entirely within this financial year. To enhance public safety and transport, we have overhauled the Kanduyi Fire Office and commissioned the Webuye Fire Station.

We installed 130 light masts on the 6.5 km Musikoma-Kanduyi dual carriageway and fast-tracked the upgrading of Matulo Airstrip to facilitate passenger services. Over the medium term, the county government will prioritize the development, expansion, modernization, and maintenance of sustainable transport infrastructure to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people and ensure compliance with the globally accepted building standards through continuous monitoring and inspection of all public and private works; Promote public and transport safety; Strengthen the institutional framework for infrastructure development; accelerating the completion of sector priority projects; Partner with the National Government and other stakeholders to develop and sustain access to opportunities in the transport industry.

This will open up rural areas, enabling the movement of goods and services to accelerate economic growth.

My government is committed to empowering women and providing them with viable and affordable credit. I have always said that women hold half the sky; let us support them to keep it better. By building the capacity of our women, we open doors to unparalleled growth, promoting the depth and strength of the family unit. We uphold social empowerment and cultural preservation.

I thought the women would clap for me

*(Applause)*

In Sports, we are on the path to becoming a sports powerhouse, having successfully hosted the County Assembly Sports Association (CASA) Games, where our County Assembly emerged victorious. In my first term, I had a vision for building the capacity of our athletes as well as those of our neighbors. I invested in the Chemoge High Altitude Training Center. Phase One is now complete and is scheduled to open in April 2025, accompanied by a marathon to mark its launch.

*(Applause)*

This facility will provide world-class training facilities for athletes both in our County and outside.

We have embarked on the modernization of Masinde Muliro Stadium, with Phase One now complete and Phase Two currently underway. The National Government supplied 10,000 seats for the terraces. These were delivered and are being fixed in the stadium.

*(Applause)*

2,000 additional seats will be coming in the course of time.

In recognition of our rich culture and exchange, as well as our role in policy development, we organized key cultural events, including hosting the Bamasaba King (Omukuka) and participating in the Embalu ceremony in Mbale, Uganda. The County Assembly has also passed critical policies, including the Youth Policy, Sports Policy, Gender Mainstreaming Policy, Disability Mainstreaming Policy, and the Children's Policy, and these will go a long way in preserving our culture.

On land tenure regularization, we are issuing leases to current occupants of Nang'eni settlement lots under the land tenure regularization program. Urban development remains a cornerstone of my administration's agenda, and we have embarked on Municipality Expansion with Bungoma

and Kimilili Municipalities fully functional, while Webuye and Chwele Municipalities are at an advanced stage of operationalization.

Under the Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project (KISIP2), the County is implementing a Kshs 378 million facelift project for Mjini Settlement (Bungoma Town) and Landi Matope (Chwele), focusing on road upgrades,

*(Applause)*

Drainage systems, water supply and street lighting, this should be ready by the end of April.

We are poised to modernize our markets by constructing new facilities and upgrading existing ones. We handed over the construction sites for the Soko Kubwa Market in Bungoma Town and Chwele Market, which are set to revolutionize trade and commerce. The Soko Kubwa Market is at a cost of Three hundred seventy-three million state-of-the-art facilities will feature modern trading stalls, ICT hubs, revenue offices, toilets, a lactation room for mothers, and parking spaces, among other essential amenities. The four-storey market is expected to be completed within 18 months, providing traders with a conducive business environment.

The Chwele Market at a cost of Three hundred forty-three million shillings will feature cold storage rooms for perishable goods, a conference facility, ICT hubs, and dedicated loading zones. This market will serve over 1,000 traders, strengthening our position as a regional trade hub.

Further, the degazettement of Kiwanja Ndege Airstrip paves the way for the expansion of Matulo Airport, where my administration is in the process of acquiring 50 acres of land for runway extension and terminal construction, facilitating commercial flights.

*(Applause)*

To ease congestion in Bungoma town, we are constructing the Kanduyi Bus Park, where modern market stalls will be developed to accommodate traders. This market is also expected to be completed by end of April this year.

*(Applause)*

As an Insignia to our Government, we have commenced construction of the Executive offices of the County Government, reinforcing our commitment to efficient governance and service delivery by establishing a central point for all our Departments to serve the people.

As I continue to present to you the progress, challenges, and the path ahead, I want to assure you that our commitment remains steadfast to build a resilient, prosperous, and inclusive Bungoma County.

As John Maxwell says: "*A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.*" Education is a key pillar in our development agenda. In recognition of the need for diverse skill set, we have invested in our Vocational Training Centres, which have seen exceptional, exponential growth in terms of institutions and enrolment rates. This is because they provide opportunities for youths to acquire skills in employment and entrepreneurship.

The rapid change in technology and the dynamics of the Labour market requires that VTCs link with industries to update skills and training. To address this, the County, in partnership with the *Zizi Afrique* has sensitized communities to the importance of VTCs through radio talks and road shows campaigns. The County has confirmed 303 VTC instructors to permanently and pensionable term to facilitate the value of technical and vocational training in providing skills, knowledge, and competencies.

The County Department in charge of vocational education shared a report with this House. The gaps identified in the assessment will guide decision-making in future planning and to bridge these gaps. We have partnered with the various partners, specifically GIZ, to offer conservation agriculture.

In recognition of the Public Service Management and Administration, my administration has prioritized a responsive and an efficient public service to enhance service delivery across the Bungoma County. We have improved our infrastructure by constructing new Ward offices to reduce rental costs, and plans are underway to equip and fully utilize them. And I'm also happy to report that most County offices will also be moving to the stadium office spaces to actually cut out the rent that we have been paying in a rented building. So far about seven offices will be moving there in the next two weeks.

We have developed a County Integrated Performance Management Framework whose implementation will ensure that the entire County is pulling in the same cohesive strategic direction and can effectively measure achievements towards the Governor's manifesto and global sustainable development goals, SDGs, as integrated in our third generation CIDP. All County employees signed performance contracts and appraisal for financial year 2024/2025, aligning their work with the County's development goals.

Furthermore, in line with the global trends and in the spirit of strengthening human resource capacity, we have trained 600 staff members, re-designated 888 staff, and absorbed 194 casual workers into permanent roles to leverage their existing knowledge and experience in service delivery.

In a historic move, my administration has implemented a scheme of service for County Enforcement Officers, a long overdue step that will facilitate promotions and career progression for over 200 officers. Additionally, we have initiated an in-house training for specialized services, including the County band, VIP drivers, VVIP protection, and protection units, paving the way for the establishment of County Courts. We introduced a structured promotion plan to address stagnation in administrative ranks, which, when fully implemented, will see clear succession planning in our public service.

To enhance accessibility and efficiency, we are establishing Ward service centres in all the 45 Wards where citizens can access County services. We are also establishing ICT centres in every ward, ensuring stable internet connectivity to facilitate e-governance and service delivery. Additionally, we are implementing a robust hospital management information system, like I said, across major hospitals, supported by stable internet infrastructure. Once it's done, I will be able to monitor the operations of that hospital, and even with your phone, if you are given the password, you will be able to know how many patients are seen in a day, how much has been paid, and through which means. This is going to ensure we have efficiency, and it's also going to cut on corruption cartels that have been reigning and ruling in our health facilities. These reforms and initiatives reflect my administration's unwavering commitment to an efficient, transparent, and responsive public service that truly serves the people of Bungoma County.

Regarding Water, Environment, and Climate Change, the County's forest cover stands at 15.55 percent, which is above the recommended 10 per cent. As of 2019, the tree cover is 21 per cent. However, the forests and trees are not evenly distributed. Hence, there is need to plant more trees, especially in areas with limited tree and forest cover. To further enhance this, the County will continue to implement its tree growing program as part of the National Government's plan to plant 15 billion trees nationwide by 2030. In the past year, 600,000 tree seedlings were planted and nurtured across the County.

To enhance access to safe, clean water for domestic use, the county has made significant progress through interventions such as sinking boreholes across the county under the Community Empowerment Fund and the FLLOCA program, extending water pipelines for last-mile

connectivity and protecting high-yielding water springs. Through the national FLLOCA program, the department has enhanced community resilience and livelihoods and developed adaptive capacities to enable the community to respond to climate stresses and shocks. The FLLOCA program has funded 30 water schemes by upgrading high-yielding water points with solar installations, distributing Hass avocado and fruit tree seedlings for livelihood projects, developing apiaries and fodder banks, and rehabilitating river lines with indigenous trees to protect riparian areas, as well as institutional greening and tree nursery development.

This program is expected to contribute to climate change mitigation, adaptation and employment creation for vulnerable groups, including youth. In addition, the County Government, in collaboration with the National Government and development partners, will continue to commit funds towards the national tree growing program. This will contribute to the protection and conservation of the environment through the restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands and ecosystem.

The journey towards a prosperous Bungoma is a shared responsibility. I extend my deepest gratitude to this House and all stakeholders who have contributed to the success of development agenda. Your commitment and collaboration have been instrumental in driving transformative changes across the County.

I did mention during my opening remarks that this house must be respected by all. All of you are elected from the President, the Governor, the Senator, Members of County Assembly and Members of the National Assembly. We all have a stake in this County and nobody's going to demean any Hon. Member. And I want you to take your positions, your responsibility so that you uphold your positions.

As we forge ahead, I urge all of us to remain united, steadfast and focused on delivering impactful development. Let us continue to work together, innovate and push forward initiatives that uplift the lives of the people, ensuring that every resident of Bungoma benefits from our collective efforts. I'm repeating that we must take our positions because any of you touched is all of you touched, any of you hurt, any of you abused is all of you abused as a House.

I sincerely appreciate this Assembly for aligning budgetary appropriations with my priority projects as outlined in CIDP III. My administration is committed to creating a lasting legacy by investing in world-class sports facilities and modern market infrastructure, which will enhance

Bungoma's economy for generations to come. I was given a second chance and I want to finish strong. To achieve this vision, my government has prioritized funding for four high-impact legacy projects-The Chemoge High Altitude Training Centre, the Misikhu Brigadier Road, Kanduyi Bus Park and Kamukuywa Modern Market for this financial year. Then I will ensure that every Sub-County has a flagship project across the County so that when I leave, there will be a legacy at least in all the Sub-Counties.

Therefore, I will be coming up with the budgets that will come for your support and approval. These projects are pivotal in unlocking economic potential, enhancing livelihoods and positioning Bungoma as a regional hub for sports, trade and transport corridors. To fully realize these transformative initiatives, we require increased financial support.

I therefore appeal to this House to consider additional budget allocations to accelerate the completion and commissioning of these projects. Increased funding will ensure that our citizens reap the benefits of these strategic investments sooner rather than later. Together, through our unwavering dedication and our shared commitment, we can build a stronger, more prosperous Bungoma. Let us rise to the occasion, unlock new opportunities and secure a brighter future for all of us.

As I conclude, I leave you with the words of Harvey Firestone, who said; "*The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership. Let your most significant duty be the development of our country*". I thank you.

*Applause*

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, His Excellency the Governor. Thank you, Hon. Members. What normally follow is that the Governor will hand over the speech to the Speaker, who will pass over the same to the Clerk, next week it will be part of our agenda. It will be discussed by the Hon. Members for four sittings from next week.

So, as a ceremony, I receive the speech, and then I think Clerk will come forward to have the same received.

*(Applause)*

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr. Speaker:** At this juncture Hon. Members, we come to the end of the Governor's Address to the House. Before we adjourn, I wish to invite our distinguished visitors in Speakers, Public Gallery for a cup of tea and a glass of a soft drink, not a hard drink for that purpose in the cafeteria in the other building. So you are all invited, plus our Hon. Members and our staff. We have enough soft drinks.

So Hon. Members, after the Governor's Address, we adjourn accordingly and resume our sitting on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025, 2:30 p.m. session. We adjourn accordingly.

*The House rose at 3:25 p.m.*