

PRESS RELEASE ON ALLEGED "Sh7 MILLION" NYAMIRA COUNTY HOSPITAL GATE DUBBED "HIGHWAY TO GRAFT."

In the past few days, reports have been circulating across sections of the media that the County Government of Nyamira spent Sh7m on building a gate for the Nyamira Level Four Hospital.

Not only are these reports uninformed and malicious, but they are also part of a wider scheme to portray the County Government as corrupt, ineffective and unreasonable in using tax payers' money.

Being a county that respects the rule of law and one that is anchored on integrity and accountability, I wish to clarify and provide more information of the said facility.

Previously known as Nyamira District Hospital, the facility was established in the year 1979. Since that time, about 36 years, there has never been a facelift or uplift of the hospital.

When the county government of Nyamira came into office after the 2013 general election, Nyamira Hospital did not have a fence, piped water or even toilets.

The situation was so saddening that patients admitted in wards had to go outside the hospital for a toilet visit.

There was no main entrance or exit. Almost the entire fence of the hospital was destroyed and the whole facility was exposed to intrusion and insecurity.

The roofs of most of the buildings in the hospital including the kitchen, radiology room, mortuary and wards were leaking. In those 36 years, the hospital had rooms that could not be used after years of neglect- the walls were unpainted, plumbing and electrical destroyed, and the rooms smelly from stagnant waters.

Bodies could not be stored in the cold room as the mortuary was prone to leaking through the roof and walls.

In fact, our people used to joke that if you wanted to get sick, the only thing you needed to do was to visit Nyamira Hospital!

In the last two and half year, the Nyamira County government has invested massive resources so as to improve services and facilities at the hospital.

Among the flagship initiatives is to upgrade the facility from a Level Four Hospital to a fully-fledged Level Five Referral Hospital.

The alleged "Sh7 million Nyamira Hospital gate" is part of this flagship project. In fact the correct amount is Sh7, 680, 831 million.

Due to misreporting, this amount has been said to be only spent on construction of the gate. This is further from the truth. A photo circulating online of the unfinished gate has further exposed the county to ridicule and embarrassment.

The correct position is as follows:

1. KSh 2,581,406.50 Million for the Main Gate

It's unfortunate that individuals eager to taint the image of the county, took a photo of the unfinished gate and claimed that it will cost Sh7 million. This is malicious and inaccurate.

The County is spending Sh2.5 million to construct a main gate that will have a sentry room for guards, washrooms for the guards and visitors and a waiting bay for both patients and visitors.

Since the gate is located about 15 metres from the main road, these funds will also be used for the construction of two walls on both sides and a drive way along the stretch.

The same funds will also assist in the start of the construction of the first phase of a perimeter wall around the hospital so as to ensure that we have only one entry and exit to the facility.

2. KSh 3, 570,000 on refurbishment.

For 36 years the hospital degenerated to an eye sore. Almost all the electric switches and sockets were destroyed. It was difficult to ascertain the original color of the walls since the walls were littered with dirty writings sometimes from human waste and paints plucked.

We have invested the stated amount of money to paint the entire hospital and repair destroyed walls. The funds have also been utilized in repairing damaged roofs and now for the first time patients can sleep in a ward at the hospital without fearing leaking roofs.

The above stated amounts plus 16 per cent VAT that totals to kSh 1, 059, 425 million and kSh 470,000 for provisional sums and contingencies push the figure to about kSh 7.6 million.

From the above explanation, it's clear that the county government of Nyamira has NOT WASTED even a single shilling hardly earned by taxpayers.

The reports that the county has spent kSh 7million on just a gate are partly connected to politics and enemies of devolution.

OTHER INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE COUNTY

Since we came into office, the county has also managed to do the following:

I. Erected water storage facilities totaling above 160,000 litres.

Before the establishment of the county government of Nyamira, the hospital was served with a steel tank with a capacity only enough to supply the hospital with water for a day.

The washrooms were blocked since there was no water to use. Wards did not have

water and doctors had to borrow water in 20 litres jerricans to use in the hospital. We have since constructed 160,000 litres high and low level water storage facilities and we have pumped water into the toilets and wards.

II. From a hospital without a single usable toilet, you can now use washrooms in wards, causality and even at the main gate.

III Two years ago, the radiology room was flooded with water due to the leaking roof and largely unusable. Since, then the radiology room has been refurbished. Last year, we installed a 16 slice Computerized Tomography Scan (CT Scan) becoming the first public hospital in the Lake Basin region with such a facility. Currently, the CT Scan serves about five to eight patients in a day. These patients come from various counties within the Lake Basin and we are saving them a lot of money, time and agony.

Before we obtained the CT Scan, patients had to travel to either Eldoret or Nairobi for CT Scans. Many of them died along the way.

At the referral hospitals in Nairobi and Eldoret, they paid KSh7, 000 for a CT scan. On top of that, it cost a patient at least KSh20, 000 to hire an ambulance for transport, Sh10, 000 for a health worker accompanying the patient and other expenses for the care taker.

We have made things possible at the Nyamira Hospital where a CT Scan costs only Sh5,000 meaning that a patient will save costs he or she would have spent to hire an ambulance, health worker and maintaining a care taker.

IV. We have set up a Renal Dialysis Unit.

This unit had brought dialysis services for our people closer and improved treatment management outcome for diabetic patients.

V. After adopting an Intergrated Hospital Management Information System, the county has managed to increase the revenues collected at the hospital by over 300 per cent.

The paperless system is used in top hospitals like the Aga Khan and it saves a patient the agony of waking around the hospital with prescription and treatment papers. All the details are captured in the computer and the only thing that a patient needs is to know his reference number.

The system has also boosted our monthly revenue at the hospital from Sh1 million in May 2014 to Sh3.6 million currently.

VI. Mortuary now a place of honour.

We have repaired the damaged mortuary that has of a fresh coat of paint and for the first time in decades the cold room can be used. We have managed to ensure that even the dead live their last days on the earth's surface in comfort.

VII. Doubled number of doctors

when we came into office, there were only 29 doctors but we have since increased the numbers to 53 and currently every sub-county hospital for the first time in the

history of Nyamira County has a medical doctor. Very soon we will ensure that each of them as an operating theatre.

We are also in the process of recruiting more nurses.

VIII. Ambulances have enhanced Referral Services

This year we are expecting one ambulance that upon delivery will see the number of our modern ambulances rise to six. We are among the few counties in Kenya that have invested in modern Landruiser ambulances that meet all the standards for first response and emergency provision.

CONCLUSION

It will be unfortunate if we let propaganda and innuendos to kill the dream of devolution.

The facts are that Nyamira County is rated the best in the provision of health services among the Lake Basin counties.

Results of the 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey(2014 KDHS) that is implemented by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in partnership with various UN agencies pointed out that Nyamira County led in five out of six key indicators to best health services delivery.

The five indicators that Nyamira County performed better than the counties of Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori and Kisii are use of modern methods of family planning, delivery in a health facility, access to insect-treated mosquito nets, full vaccination rates and antenatal care.

The impressive ratings mean that a newborn is less likely to die during child birth in Nyamira County than in the other counties in the Lake Basin.

The ratings mean that in the region, a woman is more likely to give birth in a health facility, have better antenatal care; both mother and child stay safe from the killer malaria disease and undergo all the vaccinations in Nyamira County than in the counties of Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori and Kisii. If we could not be investing wisely tax payers' money, the above impressive performance in our health sector would not be realized.

I have explained on how the county spent the Sh7.6 million and you can bear witness that the amount has been well utilized.

Anyone who wants to view the documents for himself can request for them from the Office of the Governor at the County offices in Nyamira.

I have also instructed my officers to distribute the documents detailing the works and costs through various social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter and through What Sapp and emails because I believed that an informed taxpayers

cannot fall for simple lies and propaganda.

I also continue to request our media houses to adhere to journalistic ethics when reporting issues. Several media houses have incorrectly reported the issue without giving the county a right of reply.

It's unkind, unethical and unjust to be the judge, jury and executioner.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

JOHN NYAGARAMA.
GOVERNOR, NYAMIRA COUNTY