**THE 7TH PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY H.E. PRESIDENT UHURU KENYATTA ON 23RD MAY 2020**

* The Coronavirus pandemic will continue undermining our efforts to revitalize the economy for the unforeseeable future. The rate of infections may **surge** upwards if we **fail** to comply with the protocols issued by the Ministry of Health.
* We have cumulatively tested 57,650 samples, out of which 1,192 persons have tested positive for the Coronavirus disease, with 50 of our compatriots having so far, succumbed.
* In order to assist those who have had their livelihoods taken away from them as a result of this pandemic, every week my Administration has been dispatching KSH 250 million to vulnerable families.
* Our nation is made up of 70% of young people. This is a good thing when it comes to the amount of energy that can be used to fight the virus. However, we must also involve them in Initiatives to keep their energy directed in the right ways.
* The National Hygiene Programme, known as Kazi Mtaani Initiative, is meant to engage our youth in restoring public hygiene standards, urban civil works and other undertakings.
* In the current trial period, we have 26,00 youth but we plan to engage 200,000 youth across the country very soon.
* Today, my administration is rolling out an 8 point Economic Stimulus Programme amounting to KSH 53.7 Billion. The elements of this programme are as follows:
1. Infrastructure: Following ongoing rains, the Government will undertake to repair damaged roads and footbridges. 5 billion shillings has been allocated to hire labour and but local construction materials to undertake this.
2. Education: The Ministry of Education has been allocated KSH 6.5 Billion to address upcoming plans and programmes for the education sector such as hiring 10,000 teachers and 1,000 ICT Interns to support digital learning even as we plan on how schools will reopen.
3. Small and Medium Enterprises: KSH 10 billion has been allocated to fast track payment of outstanding VAT refunds and pending payments. KSH 3 billion has been allocated as seed capital for the SME Credit Guarantee Scheme to provide affordable credit for small and medium enterprises.
4. Health: The government plans to hire an additional 5,000 healthcare workers with a diploma/certificate qualification for up to 1 year. Further, KSH 1.7 billion will be allocated to expand bed capacity in our hospitals.
5. Agriculture: KSH 3 billion will be prioritized for the supply of farm inputs through e-vouchers targeting 200,000 small scale farmers. An additional 1.5 billion shillings will go to flower and horticultural producers to access international markets.
6. Tourism: The Administration will provide soft loans to hotels and related establishments through the Tourism Finance Corporation (TFC) and a total of 2 billion shillings will be set aside to support renovation of facilities and restructuring of business operations by actors in the industry. Additionally, 5,500 community scouts under the Kenya Wildlife Service will be engaged at a cost of 1 billion shillings and 160 community conservancies will be engaged at 1 billion shillings.
7. Environment: KSH 850 million will be set aside to mitigate the impact of deforestation and climate change. A further 1 billion shillings has been set aside for flood control measures and 540 million for the “Greening Kenya” Campaign.
8. Manufacturing: The 8th and Final measure focuses on “Buy Kenya, Build Kenya” policy. The Government will set aside an investment of 600 million shillings to purchase locally manufactured vehicles to sustain the operations of local motor vehicle manufacturers and attendant employment of workers.
* I encourage Parliament to consider this plan a priority and therefore speed the process of approval of tax measures that will spur the economy and reduce the corporate tax burden as an incentive to business enterprises.