



Laikipia

The official newsletter of the County Government of Laikipia

**WEEKLY
BULLETIN**

Madaraka Day Edition

Nanyuki is 100 Years Old



The ongoing revival of the railway line linking Nanyuki to Nairobi coincides with the biggest event for Nanyuki town: its 100th birthday.

As the resumption of train services edges closer to fruition, Kenyans and foreigners alike can only be hopeful for a nostalgic ride between the two towns for the first time in over 20 years.

Nanyuki turns 100 years this November, an event that is set to attract local and international tourists to the world-renowned town. The town, which is the gateway to northern Kenya, is rich in history. From its Maasai name that is said to translate to 'River of Blood' following an inter-communal war, to the age-old old attachment to de-



Top: Nanyuki Town as it is today. (above) Nanyuki in 1950s

fense activities, Nanyuki's significance is simply unmatched for a town its size in Kenya.

The Commonwealth War Graves here point to its long standing military significance.

Founded in 1907 as a small trading outpost for European farmers who had settled in the area, the town has over the decades grown significantly in scale, population and role. The highlight of the

town's history include the establishment of a post office in 1920, the arrival of the railway in 1931 and the establishment of the Kenya Air Force base in the early 1970s.

Currently, the town is home to a large size of military population, hosting bases for the Kenya Air Force, Kenya Army, and the British forces training units.continued to page 2

**Laikipia Covid-19
Hotlines:**

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At 100 years, Nanyuki's Charm for Adventurers Remains Intact

It is in this town that a strange by-law that restricts female donkeys from entry was passed in the 1970s, following an incident where male donkeys went on the rampage after a potential mate happened to passed by.

Thanks to its growing role as a commercial, tourism and defense town, Nanyuki is home to one of the most cosmopolitan population, where Kenyans and foreigners live and interact in their daily lives.

Hotels, supermarkets, banks countless curio shops lining the roads are prove of a vibrant tourism industry. The story of Nanyuki town is a fascinating one. An age-old narrative about the town's irresistible charm talks about railway engineers who got lost in merry, and in the process ended up losing the map that would have guided the extension of the line to Northern Kenya and Ethiopia. Although the construction of the railway line ended abruptly after the British-Italian war ended in Ethiopia in 1941, few people believe this explanation, choosing instead to go by the lost map story. Decades on, the tale of the lost map has been retold through music, writings and legends, earning the town the nickname 'Mwisho wa Reli', Swahili for end of the railway. The railway, which reached Nanyuki in 1931, would serve to transport cattle, farm produce and people to Nairobi and supply factory products to Nanyuki.

Transformation



The development of Nanyuki Town has continued over the years. Silverbeck was a popular hotel in 1950s. There has been a lot of development from the time Nanyuki Post Office was gazetted in 1921 to today. Contrast the streets 100 years ago and how they look like today.

County is organizing Celebrations to mark Nanyuki@100

According to the county executive committee member for administration Ms Rose Maitai (*pictured*) the county government has from as early as March embarked on an ambitious plan to organize a colourful event to celebrate the birth day of the town, whose fame for hospitality traverses the Kenyan border.

The event would serve to highlight the transformation Nanyuki has undergone from its humble beginnings to the current status.

Laikipia County plans to persuade the national government to hold Jamhuri Day celebrations for the first time in Nanyuki, according to Ms Maitai.

“Preparations are on top gear. Despite Covid-19, we are preparing ourselves to treat Kenyans to a surprise fanfare that would thrust Nanyuki into the limelight as a local and global tourist destination,” the county executive said.

“We are in talks with national government to see if we can have the president celebrate Jamhuri Day here with us,”

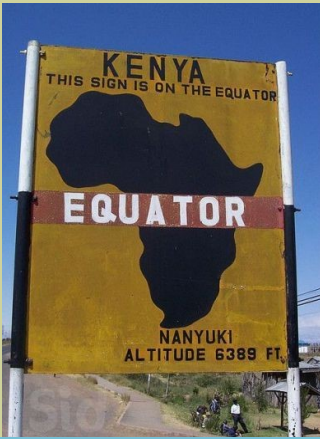


said the Administration executive, adding that the highlight of the event will be the issuing of title deeds to residents of Likii and Majengo areas.

Laikipia County plans to use the event to celebrate 100 years of Nanyuki Town to boost ‘Destination Laikipia’, the platform that markets the county as a premiere hospitality destination. On this, the county has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce Laikipia Chapter, private ranches, Laikipia Wildlife Forum, the private sector and the public to make this objective a success.

Nanyuki at 100 coincides with an exciting period, coming at a time the government is reviving the railway line to linking the town to central Kenya and onwards to Nairobi. Travelers can only hope for the fight against Covid-19 to be won before November for them to take a nostalgic rail trip from Nairobi to Nanyuki for the fanfare.

What Makes Nanyuki Tick?



For revelers keen for a special vacation or weekend getaway from Nairobi or even abroad, Nanyuki town ticks all the right boxes.

For as long as one can remember, the town’s captivating charm for visitors has been retold through music, books, and internet reviews more than any other town its

size in Kenya. Here is a sneak peek into what makes Nanyuki town tick:

Location

Nanyuki town sits astride the equator. The internet is awash with photos of the equator sign as travelers make

stops to capture themselves standing on the imaginary line that passes right through the centre of the earth. Equally captivating is the snow-peaked Mount Kenya. The paradox of snow on a mountain found on the region known to be hot is too tempting not to explore for a firsthand experience. The mountain’s scenic views are worth the numerous local and international tourists visits.

History

Nanyuki town invokes memories of historical incidences that go back centuries that are captured in varied literature. From a trading post in 1907, the town grew its significance when it was connected to the railway in 1931. Although the railway construction to the North Easter region stopped after the end of the British-Italian war in Ethiopia, few people actually believe the narrative, and instead think that the engineers were lost in the town’s merry and ended up losing the map. Today, the phrase ‘Mwisho wa Reli’ Swahili for End of the Railway, is syn-

onymous with Nanyuki town.

Wildlife tourism

Nanyuki town borders several wildlife conservancies that attract thousands of visitors all year round. Wildlife Conservancies such as Olpejeta, Oljogi, Loisaba among many others in and outside Laikipia source their fresh foods and other supplies from the town.

Visitors to these conservancies make stops in the town for rest in the world class hotels such as Fairmont, Maiyan, Nanyuki Sports Club and many others.

Defense

The town is home to military bases for the Kenya Defense Forces and British Army Training Unit Kenya, which are critical in sustaining the town’s economy. The military presence is seen as a key contributor to the town’s security, giving it the investor confidence. This has contributed to the heavily cosmopolitan population that calls Nanyuki town home.

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From a thatched settler store in 1907 to modern shopping complexes and high rise buildings, the town has over undergone transformation in leaps and bounds. Perhaps the more notable transformation to Nanyuki has been witnessed recently, as the government in the recent past has embarked on a major town upgrading programme that has seen it transform into a clean and organized urban centre in a short time span. The modernization programme has seen the tarmacking of more streets, parking lots, and the planned beautification of parks and walkways. The town has grown to a significant regional administrative and commercial hub, with Laikipia County Government operating from here from here. In addition, the town is the supply point for the neighbouring large-scale horticultural and grain farms, ranches and wildlife conservancies.

Transit route

Nanyuki town has something for everyone. From high end hotels to the lower costs budget accommodation suites, all are catered for on this transit town. The town is strategically placed on a crucial transport linking southern Kenya to the northern parts. This is the start-

ing point for adventurers venturing out for a climb into Mount Kenya through the Sirimon and Burguret hiking routes. Thanks to the strategic location of the town, Vivo Energy has established an 11.5 million litre fuel depot, the largest outside Nairobi, to serve parts of central, northern, north eastern Kenya as well as southern Ethiopia. To tap into this market, the government is creating a conducive environment for investments in accommodation for the travelers making a stop on their trips to northern Kenya. Currently, Nanyuki is the supply point for both fresh and processed foodstuffs for tourist hotels in the conservancies in Laikipia, Samburu and Isiolo Counties. High end hotels and restaurants, endless lines of curio shops, and a vibrant air travel to boot all point to a brilliant tourism industry. While its proximity to the snow-peaked Mount Kenya plays is a major factor, the town’s historical significance contributes a significant amount of tourist traffic. Also, the town sits right on the equator and the presence of a snow-capped mountain in this region is a paradox that tourists would want to experience firsthand. Wildlife Conservancies around Nanyuki attract large numbers of tourists to

Nanyuki. The presence of a large size of military population gives Nanyuki the stability crucial for investments and settling. The town is home to the Kenya Defense Forces and the British Army bases. The military personnel are crucial in driving the town’s economy, sustaining businesses such as supermarkets and financial institutions that employ scores of people. Nanyuki supplies the expansive horticulture and grain farms, cattle ranches and the wildlife conservancies in Laikipia and beyond. Although small businesses take up a large chunk of trade in Nanyuki town, large commercial organizations are making a steady entry into the cosmopolitan town. Vivo Energy joins other companies dealing in energy, finance and motor vehicle sales currently in town. The town also is home to prestigious private education institutions such as Braeburn Group of International Schools. Plans are also underway to establish a university in the town, where military science will be one of the major courses to cater for the military establishments within. With the revival of the railway currently underway, Nanyuki is set to reaffirm its position as a regional commercial hub and the gateway to the north

Laikipia Car Ready for Mass Production after Kebs Certification



Left: BJ50 prototypes at the Nyahururu assembly line (above) Governor Ndiritu Muriithi and Laikipia west MP Patrick Mariru arrive for a function at Ndururumo high school in one of the Laikipia cars

The production of BJ-50 has made a major milestone after the Kenya Bureau of Standards approved two prototypes presented to it.

The development heralds a critical phase for the Nyahururu-based manufacturer, who is now edging closer to mass production after overcoming years of technical and financial hurdles.

Kenya Bureau of Statistics last week said the Chief Mechanical and Transport Engineer has approved the prototypes, having passed all the evaluation criteria.

The standards organization said it will avail two technical officers to ensure that the third prototype of BJ 50, the four-wheeler tuktuk, is done with the compliance with applicable standards.

“We wish to reiterate our commitment and interest in seeing this innovation succeed,” KEBS said, and reached out to M/s Sagak Enterprises to make an application for permit to use the standardization mark.

KEBS has committed to support M/s Sagak Technical Enterprises, the effort behind BJ 50 production, with the identification and availing of all the relevant standards, getting all the technical stakeholders to understand the requirements of the standards through trainings.

In addition, the standards organization has extended its support to assist the technical team in developing a quality management system,

which will include schemes of supervision and control, operating procedures, work instructions and company products standards. KEBS support will also cover supervision of designs from the technical stakeholders conform with applicable standards, in addition to inspecting and testing for parts and components for standards requirement. This milestone is a combination of coordinated efforts by the Laikipia Innovation Development Programme that saw the convergence of various stakeholders to make the dream a reality. On this Dekut has been instrumental offering technical assistance including Computer Aided Designing, with Laikipia University offering its input to help the enterprise navigate the corporate world through business training. Kenya Industrial Training Institute on the other hand, has been helping the manufacturer through the process, of product patenting, with KEBs being roped in to offer guidance on standardization guidelines. The development comes at a time the government has set aside Ksh. 600 million to buy locally manufactured vehicles as part of the Economic Stimulus Programme to reduce the negative impact of Covid-19. Nyahururu VTC is among the stakeholders making the BJ-50 a reality, as they are involved in manufacture and supply of bolts and other components.

Tigithi Vocational Training Centre Starts a Bakery



Tigithi VTC in Laikipia East is blazing the production trail, as it embarks on the production of bread and pastries to tap into the growing local market. Last week, the institution announced that it will announce the ceremony for the official production, after carrying out successful test runs on the baking machines. The institution boasts of modern baking, which has the capacity to produce 750 loafs per hour. The institution will be partnering with retailers to stock the products in Nanyuki and the neighbouring shopping centres. This will complement the retail outlet and cafeteria coming up outside Nanyuki VTC, which will be serving the customers around the neighbouring Old Market.

Laikipia VTCs are targeting schools and communities around them as their primary customers for the goods they produce.

Wiyumiririe VTC, on the other hand, is making progress on the carpentry front. It is making desks to supply the schools neighbouring it and beyond. Together, Laikipia VTCs have been able to produce and distribute over 3000 face masks to help fight Covid-19 pandemic. By engaging students in their production operations, the vocational training centres are not only facilitating experience gain, but also bridging the long existing unemployment gap that is as a result of training more students than the market can take.

Laikipia's Urban Renewal Still Rolling



The ongoing construction of Liberty Petrol Station-Aga Khan road in Nyahururu

Urban centres across Laikipia are undergoing a re-birth, thanks to the upgrading projects being implemented currently. In a span of few weeks, for instance, the three main towns of Nanyuki, Nyahururu and Rumuruti have seen unprecedented change, as contractors engage tens of workers to turn streets, parking yards, bus parks and pedestrian walkways into ideal spaces. In Nanyuki and Nyahururu towns, multiple roads and streets have been tarmacked, as parking lots and walkways get cabro paving. Cobble-stone technology is introducing durable alternative for streets and bus parks construction in Rumuruti, Nanyuki and Wiyumiririe. The technology is famed for longevity, as centuries old civilizations that employed it show. Smaller towns across Laikipia, such as Sipili, Kinamba, Naibor and Wiyumiririe have not been left behind in the historic transformation that is turning ordinary trading centre into modern smart towns that are ideal for businesses to thrive in.

The projects, which are monumental in scale, are set to spice up investment activities as new businesses make entry to make exploit a conducive business environment. Upgrades in the transport, water and lighting infrastructure, and green spaces and social amenities in the well-planned urban centres will not only be conducive for working, but will be ideal for living for the rapidly urbanizing population. The urban transformation projects are part of a wider government plan make business-friendly environments to spur commercial activity, which is crucial in creating more jobs for the people. Rumuruti town, for instance, is experiencing a surge in business activities as more investors pump in cash to establish commercial buildings to accommodate the many businesses springing up. Laikipia County ranks high on the ease of doing business index, standing at position countrywide on the latest rankings by Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis, KIPPRA. Other factors that contributed to the high ranking are the automation of the business licensing and revenue collection systems, a step that has ensured transparency of the process. This has in turn promoted tax compliance and business takeoff.



A newly paved Rumuruti municipality street

Dropping out of Law School Did not Deter Kamau Contributing to Society

In these challenging times of Covid-19, nothing is more satisfying as seeing the society benefiting from your invention. Such is the joy Anthony Kamau, a 32-year-old man from a humble background in Mahianyu village, Laikipia West sub-county.

Few know the story of the great mind behind the disinfection booth that has been installed in New Market in Nanyuki town. Without any formal training on fabrication, the innovator, whose full name is Anthony Kamau Kamau, has actualized what many would think is a task too complex for anyone.

Having been orphaned since childhood Mr. Kamau dropped out from law school at Inoorero University for lack of fees. However, this never killed his determination to make something out of his life, and he learnt the art of fabrication and welding through keen observation in Kiarifa Juakali in Nanyuki Town, rather than by formal training. It is through this, Mr. Kamau says, that his family earns the daily bread.

After internet research on how the machine works, Kamau rose to the challenge of producing a similar installation to make his contribution on the fight against Covid-19. The machine is automatically set to detect and disinfect someone who goes through it.

"This machine that I made is effective in that it is time efficient. You don't have to pause to be disinfected but rather you just walk in and you are disinfected once you get out through the other side," explains the innovator.

By spraying a fine mist of disinfectants, the machine is able to kill virus on the surfaces of anything that goes through it, including clothes and handbags that someone is carrying.

It bridges the gaps in other ways of killing the virus, in that the washing of hands or use of hand sanitizers, for instance, is limited to killing the virus on the hands alone. Although hands are a bigger threat on transmission of the virus, clothes and other body parts also transmit the corona virus transmission.

As a way of promoting local investments in the county the Department of Trade through the Laikipia Innovation Development Programme has played a pivotal role from incubation and



marketing, and, more importantly, buying the equipment.

"We have facilitated the innovator with ideas of developing a gadget that will help the society curb Covid-19. We have been marketing the invention. We are the first customers as a way of showing that the product meets the stringent high quality standards," said Winnie Mwangi, director of the county innovation programme.

"It is very important for it to be installed in places with many people as there is no sure way of knowing who is carrying the virus and who isn't," he stresses.

Out of his innovation, the Nanyuki based innovator has managed to rope in two more people to assist in the construction process, creating a line of income for them.

The innovator's project needs a sizeable investment to succeed. According to him, at least half a million shillings goes into making an effective disinfection booth. This is inclusive of material and labor.

Improvement

Following the successful completion of his first disinfection booth, Mr. Kamau has set his sights on extensive research to improve

on areas that will make his future design more effective. On this, the innovator plans to install a temperature-reading gadget to the set. That way, apart from one being disinfected, the machine will also screen one's temperature for any abnormal readings, the basic indicator for flu-like symptoms associated with Covid-19. The innovator is also working on further improvements that will see a hand washing point to precede the disinfection booth. This way, someone passing through the booth will have their hands clean first before getting disinfected, maximizing hygiene that is critical in lowering the chances of survival for the virus. The innovator is quick to advise the youth not to be choosy when it comes to job searching. He believes provided there is a legal job opportunity, one should go for it whether it is in their line of profession or otherwise. So far the county government has installed three disinfection booths in a bid to mitigate spread of the deadly virus. One is at the entrance of Nyahururu County Referral Hospital, at the Old Market in Nanyuki town and this one which is at the New Market.

Lisha Jamii Initiative Receives Boost from well wishers



The County Government's food support programme targeting vulnerable households has received a major boost after Bakex Limited donated 500 bales of wheat flour in support of the cause. The 500 bales hold 12 two-kilogramme packets of whole meal wheat flour each. Governor Ndiritu Muriithi and other officials received the donation from the Thika-based miller last week. The milling company joins a growing list of organizations and individuals whose contribution has served to strengthen the food subsidy programme that will go a long way in cushioning vulnerable households from the effects of job losses and poor economy. Unison Sacco, the Laikipia-based financial institution recently donated Ksh. 1 million as part of their efforts to give back to the community. The initiative has been successful, thanks to the generous support of the people of Laikipia who continue to contribute their donations in kind to the many collection points spread across the entire county.

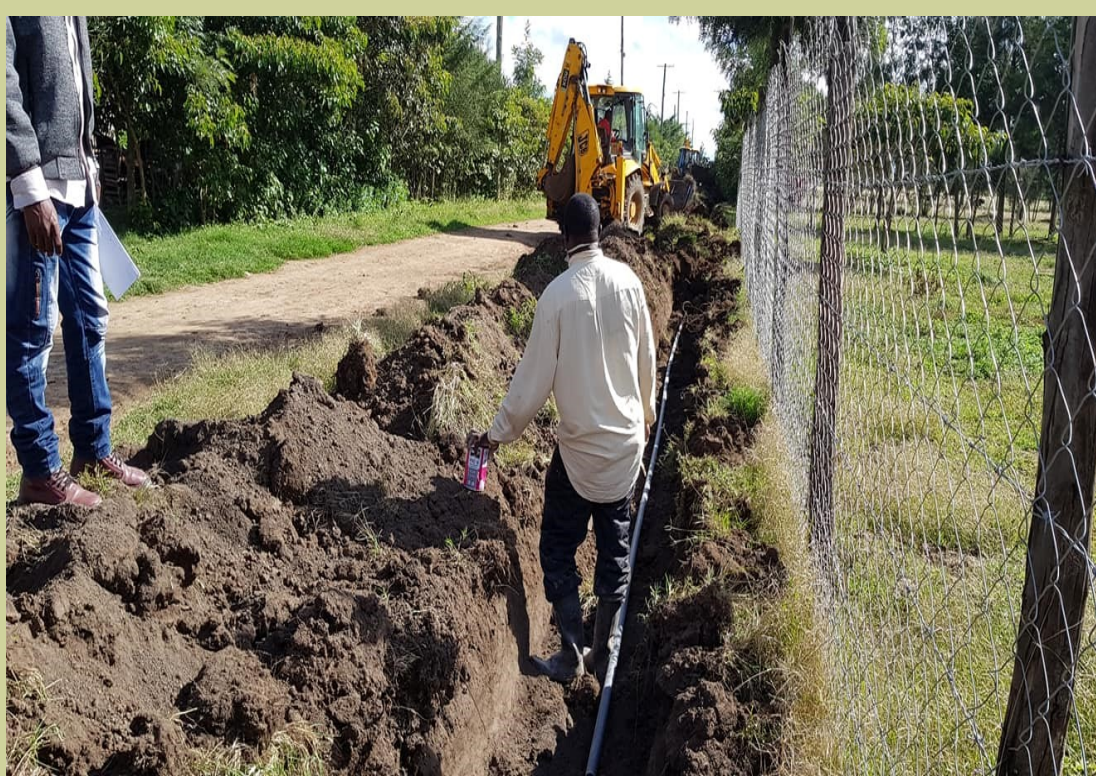
Water for Production Pledge is Materializing



A new borehole in Seger ward



Solio water: connecting the last mile



Solio water: connecting the last mile



The construction of Kariguini dam in Ngobit ward

Events in Pictures

Construction of a pavement at Marina area of Nanyuki town as part of the Smart Town initiative



First Lady Maria Mbeneka lends a hand in distributing food to the vulnerable to ensure they stay home safely amid the Covid-19 outbreak



Let's celebrate who many times go out of their way to keep our town clean all the time