



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF WATER, SANITATION AND IRRIGATION
THWAKE MULTIPURPOSE WATER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PHASE I

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Press Release (For Immediate Release)

Makueni, Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Thwake Multipurpose Dam construction moving within timelines despite COVID-19 challenges, CS Kariuki

The construction of the multi-billion Thwake Multipurpose Dam in Makueni County is moving well within the timelines despite the global challenges caused by coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Cabinet Secretary Mrs. Sicily Kariuki, EGH, has said.

Speaking on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 during a tour of the project which is jointly funded by the Government of Kenya and the African Development Bank (AfDB), the CS said that the State will ensure all the necessary strategies are put in place to make sure the project succeeds.

“This project is already at 37 per cent in terms of the level of completion. However, there has been a delay of about five per cent owing to cutting down of the number of workers currently standing at 800 as a measure to control Covid-19. I have already agreed with the contractor that going forward, the

400 workers who were stopped must be brought back so that we catch up with time lost,” she instructed.

Noting that the project is a key Vision 2030 flagship facility by the government, the CS guaranteed that Thwake Multipurpose Dam Project is poised to change the lives of close to 1.3 million rural inhabitants of Makueni, Kitui and even parts of Machakos County. She added that the government is acquiring additional land to be occupied by the dam while most compensation issues have been sorted by the National Land Commission (NLC).

The CS who was accompanied by Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) Dr. Andrew Tuimur, Makueni MP Daniel Maanzo, Secretary Administration in the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Mr. Joseph Keter, Water Secretary Eng. Samuel A.O Alima, Program Coordinator for Thwake Multipurpose Water Development Program Mr. Musembi Munyao and a section of senior ministry officials, project contractors and consultants, added that the ministry will employ workable strategies to support the project and ensure its completed within the given timeframe.

On water pollution from Nairobi River, she said that the ministry is collaborating with agencies and neighboring county governments to ensure no effluent is thrown to River Athi.

“My ministry is working with collaborating ministries including Environment and the counties to ensure water that will supply Thwake Dam is clean and usable. We have made it our business to clean the Athi and Nairobi rivers so that by the time water gets to Thwake, it is not polluted,” she assured.

The upper part of Athi River basin will be used as the key catchment area for Thwake Multipurpose Dam. The upstream of the river has been facing pollution challenges.

Earlier on, the CS made a courtesy call on Makueni Governor Prof. Kivutha Kibwana and County Commissioner Mr. Maalim Mohammed.

Prof Kibwana said there is need for neighbouring counties of Makueni, Kitui and Machakos to strategize on best ways to utilize the water from Thwake Multipurpose Dam in order to avoid conflict. On his part, Mr Maanzo said that

the envisioned Konza Techno City in Machakos County will also get its water supply from Thwake dam.

“This project is critical for our counties. It has come at the right time. Once complete, it will control the perennial floods downstream. The Gulalu-Galana irrigation scheme will also benefit a lot ensuring food security for the country,” said the legislator.

Thwake Multipurpose Water Development Program, once complete, will create thousands of jobs, spur emergence of small scale industries, boost healthcare and sanitation, ensure food security and irrigation in Makueni and Kitui counties.

Already, the ongoing civil works in phase one and related activities has created direct and indirect employment of more than 1,200 locals. The project will also improve sanitation and hygiene hence minimizing threat of diseases amongst the rural inhabitants in Makueni, Kitui and Machakos counties.

The first phase, which is currently on course, involves construction of an 80.5m high multi-purpose dam (688 million cubic meter storage capacity) and associated preliminary works needed to enable implementation of other three phases.

Phase Two of the work will involve construction of hydropower and substation development expected to generate at least 20MW of installed capacity.

The program’s third phase will involve development of water supply system to treat and distribute up to 150,000 cubic metres of treated water per day to millions of rural inhabitants of Kitui and Makueni counties and inhabitants of Konza City in Machakos County and its environs.

The last stage of the project, will see development of irrigation works for up to 40,075 hectares of land in Kitui and Makueni counties (approximately 100,000 acres of land).

By supplying water and power to the envisioned Konza City, this project will hugely contribute to the smart city's rise where innovative groups will develop and apply modern technology powered by a thriving and reliable water and power infrastructure.

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