

NEW CABINET SECRETARY MAIDEN VISIT TO KWS HEADQUARTERS

Cabinet Secretary Najib Balala, now in charge of the expanded ministry of Tourism and Wildlife on February 8, 2018 made his maiden visit to KWS headquarters in Nairobi where he held a meeting with senior management before addressing staff.

Previously the minister headed the docket of tourism but with the recent reorganisation of the Kenyan government after the last general elections, the president added the Wildlife portfolio to his ministry hitherto domiciled in the ministry of Environment and Natural Resources.

The minister who addressed staff after a short guided tour of facilities at the headquarters stated his appreciation for the wildlife component being added to tourism noting this is the key product for the country's tourism industry.

"Today I have come to learn about the wildlife product and the challenges facing its conservation; from outside I used to admire KWS but did not know what you people go through", the minister said when he addressed staff outside Simba Court at KWS headquarters.

He congratulated the staff for being faithful custodians of the country's heritage that brings a lot of revenue to the country. He promised to spend more time to understand KWS operations with a view to giving strategic leadership to enable it fulfil its mandate.

He committed to visit all the eight KWS regional conservation areas to learn more about opportunities and challenges facing

the country's premier conservation body, which he described as one of the most iconic parastatals .

“ The establishment and welfare of this organisation caught my attention during my briefing, and I know if you don't take good care of people an institution fails”, Balala said. He however said he was not committing to anything for the time being because he is still learning but promised to be a conservation and welfare champion.

During the visit, the minister was accompanied by the Principal Secretary, State Department of Wildlife, Dr. Margaret Mwakima and other senior ministry officials.