

Karuma dam power house to be overhauled

BY STEPHEN OTAGE

KAMPALA. The Ministry of Energy has directed the Karuma Hydropower Project contractor to deploy more engineers on site and correct all the wiring and electromechanical defects on the power house.

Sino Hydro Corporation Ltd, a Chinese company, is constructing the power plant.

Addressing journalists during the project site tour of the Karuma Hydropower plant yesterday, Ms Ruth Nankabirwa, the Energy minister, said most of the cabling in the six power generating units need to be redone because the ones which were installed do not meet the contract specifications, are sub-standard, and they were installed without approval from government.

“I have come here to see the defects we have been reading about. The work is huge. Initially, the contractor bundled all the cables together. Staff houses were supposed to be ready before construction of the dam started, but they are not yet complete,” she said.

Asked who is footing the bill for rewiring the power dams and why such work was allowed to proceed before correct-



Energy Minister Ruth Nankabirwa (centre) and officials from Uganda Electricity Generation Company Ltd and Sino Hydro Power Generation Company Karuma inspect some of the electrical installations at Karuma Hydropower house yesterday. PHOTO/ STEPHEN OTAGE

ing the defects, Ms Irene Batebe, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Energy, blamed the first owner’s engineer (consulting engineer for government) for failing to investigate and verify the work done.

“At the inception of the project, the owner’s engineer didn’t do good work. We got a better company that investigat-

ed the defects and we are now confident we shall commission the project in June 2022,” she said.

Asked how much the defects have cost the country, Mr Harrison Mutikanga, the chief executive officer of Uganda Electricity Generation Company Ltd, said during such projects, defects are usually expected but it is important that they

are corrected immediately so that the project is handed over.

Mr Albert Musoke Byaruhanga, the project manager, said the defects requiring correction include mechanical installations, electrical cables, and general cabling where some cables do not meet contract specifications and international standards.



Issues.

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houses were supposed to be ready before construction of the dam started, but they are not yet complete,” **Ms Ruth Nankabirwa, the Energy minister.**

Mr Byaruhanga said if the plant was commissioned as it was with the defects it could catch fire, there would be many power outages and would not be safe for the people working there.

He said in the last nine months they rectified 40 percent of the defects and in the next nine months they should be able to finish the rest.

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