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Rain disrupts power supply

KAMPALA. Electricity consumers should brace for more power outages, now that it is raining every other day.

Power distributor, Umeme Uganda Limited, has taken to *Twitter*, a social networking site, stating that downpours could topple some electricity poles.

When poles fall, the transmission utility will turn off supply.

During an interview for an article this newspaper published last year, the chief executive officer of Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited, Mr William Kiryahika, said to protect electricity users from electrocution and gadgets from damage, many electricity feeders are programmed to automatically switch off supply during downpours or storms.

Umeme's warning comes on the heels of an alert by the meteorological authority that it will be raining in most parts of Uganda, excluding Karamoja over the next three months.

Already, electricity users in different parts of the country have been voicing their concerns via social networking sites, about the outages.

Whereas some have been



At work. UMEME staff jump over a channel of running water after a heavy down pour in Kampala yesterday. The rains have affected the power supply the country. PHOTO BY WANDERA O. OJUMBO

complimenting Umeme, which has one million customers, for doing its work, many have expressed displeasure with the interruptions.

Outages mean some business operators have to spend on either buying generators or diesel to power their activities.

Areas where the network has

been refurbished more recently experience few outages.

In 2014 Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) newsletter, ERA's then director of technical regulation, now CEO, Ms Ziria Tibalwa Waako, suggested that the utilities should continuously upgrade their electricity systems to keep pace with bet-

ter technologies. However, the amount of money required to improve the electricity generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure is high.

Umeme alone would need at least \$1 billion (Shs3.6 trillion). The transmission company, too, could require a similar amount.



Tomorrow.
 Chance of rain.
High: 21C
Low: 18C



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