

UEDCL disowns probe into theft of electricity equipment

By Vision Reporter

The Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) has refuted reports that some of its top bosses disposed of assorted power equipment without authorisation from the company.

New Vision reported on January 10 that Police were investigating the theft of transformers, conductors and network equipment worth sh857m sold off by senior managers at UEDCL.

Franklin Oidu, the UEDCL's technical services manager, was one of the officials named in the probe for reportedly authorising the disposal of assets of Moroto district power grid.

In a statement, UEDCL dismissed the reports of fraud as inaccurate, maintaining that the disposal of the

assets was done through the process of the law.

"Franklin Oidu never sold any of the recovered assets. Instead, the recovered assets were disposed of as per PPDA (the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority) guidelines and UEDCL policies upon approval by the UEDCL board of directors," the company's statement reads.

Oidu was reported to have sold off the assets against the advice of Louis Banya, the then Moroto offgrid manager.

However, UEDCL says any sales of recovered materials were officially done by UEDCL, not by Franklin Oidu.

"Banya was a station manager at that time and he had no authority or mandate to prevent or advise

BETWEEN THE LINES:

In a statement, UEDCL dismissed the reports of fraud as inaccurate, maintaining that the disposal of the assets was done legally.

disposal of non-required assets," UEDCL states.

Moroto is one of the districts that benefited from a recent power grid expansion network stretching to Moyo, Adjumani and Kalangala district.

Located in the north east of Uganda, Moroto is linked to a 150km 33Kv electricity distribution network that also connects to Soroti to the

Karamoja sub-region.

Formerly, Moroto was powered by a 750kVA generator with an 11KV electricity network. The new 33Kv network resulted into the removal of all existing transformers, conductors, insulators and other gear.

Moroto's new network was commissioned in 2013 and it is managed by UEDCL, which is mandated to manage the distribution network in Uganda on behalf of government.

On claims that Oidu dispatched a self-loader truck and a team to Moroto to collect all the transformers and conductors recovered from the old 11kv network, UEDCL maintains that the process was done legally using a firm procured under proper PPDA guidelines.

The 11 items, according to the

company included assorted obsolete and faulty transformers, which were transported from Moroto to UEDCL stores at Lugogo, Kampala.

In the same light, UEDCL dismissed reports that all the network materials that were illegally released from the Moroto office under the orders of Oidu did not reach UEDCL central stores.

"This allegation is false. All the transported materials were legally released and they all reached the UEDCL central stores as depicted in the attached GRNs (Goods Received Notes) and delivery notes attested by the legally designated and authorised stores staff," the UEDCL letter reads.

The company further claims it has never received any letter from CID pertaining to the above subject matter.