



**Paulson
Luttaguzi
Semakula**

Now Nakaseke hospital renovations on course

The Government on January 31, 2014 contracted Yanjian Uganda Company Ltd (YULTD), a Chinese company, to carry out rehabilitation works at the 120-bed capacity Nakaseke hospital at a cost of \$5m (about sh18b), for a period of 18 months ending July 31, 2015, with a one year defect liability period (DLP).

However, last February, the MPs on the Parliament committee on government assurances and implementation (CGAI) ordered YULTD to refund sh18b to the Government Consolidated Fund (GCF) over shoddy works done on Nakaseke hospital.

The decision was reached during an interface with the Ministry of Health officials, Nakaseke district CAO, Edith Mutabazi and the hospital director, Bernard Okongo, following a report by members after a field visit.

The committee forced the Chinese construction company to re-do quality works as agreed in the awarding contract.

The committee also recommended YULTD to be blacklisted. Apparently, works at the facility is done in the defects liability period and is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Last year, as the area MP and a member of the committee, I visited the renovated facility. I was shocked to find that the works were substandard and needed a revamp.

I wrote to the committee chairperson, Kaps Fungaroo, indicating that 70% of the work done was shoddy, yet the contractor wanted to hand over the facility to the Government. This prompted the committee to carry out a sport check at the premises.

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secured \$5.2m
from the World
Bank \$40 (sh143b)
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Practical completion of works was achieved on September 14, 2015, but it has been extended pending rectification of terrazzo floor cracks, cracking ceiling joints and replacement of the damaged roofing sheets and poor quality plumbing systems.

World Bank project
The Government through the Ministry of Health in 2013 applied for financing from the International Development

Association (IDA) towards the cost of the Uganda Health System Strengthening Project. About \$5.2m from the World Bank's \$40 (about sh143b) under the (IDA) project was secured for the construction and renovation of nine hospitals of Entebbe, Moroto, Iganga, Mityana, Nakaseke, Kiryandongo, Moyo, Nebbi and Anaka. All were awarded to the same contractor.

Parliament committee's recommendations

The committee ordered the health ministry PS to return to the committee with the project managers, monitors and evaluators who are said to have connived with the contractors.

The PS, who supported the proposal for YULTD to refund sh18b, said this should serve as an example to other construction companies who fail Government programmes.

However, the rehabilitation project of the 120-bed capacity Nakaseke government hospital, which is going on, is now impressive and reflects value for money.

Physical progress is moving steadily, involving putting new terrazzo on the hospital floors of the delivery suite, maternity, pediatrics wards.

Also renovating laboratories, medical operating theater, fixing new doors and windows, plastering and painting the finished buildings is seen.

The writer is the Member of Parliament for Nakaseke South