

Lower electricity cost, save forests

EDITOR: Recently, the President said there is need to get more villages onto the electricity grid in order to stop the cutting down of trees for charcoal and firewood. This is not a bad idea, but the question is, will the poor people in rural areas afford this electricity?

If one unit of power is close to sh700, I wonder who is going to add that stress on top of high indirect taxes which have multiplied the degree of household poverty three times over.

The argument could be the multiplier of more people being on the national grid ultimately bringing electricity prices down, but short of that, I do not see how this plan is going to work. We are selling a product the people cannot afford. The Government, in my view, must invest in clean energy such as solar that can be affordable to everyone in the country and has

no additional costs after the setup fees.

I think the only solution to conserve our environment and check climate change is to promote solar use, reduce on the cost of electricity and lower gas tariffs, increase its supply, encourage its use in both rural and urban areas and sensitise the masses that these alternatives are cheaper than charcoal.

This then can lower the demand for charcoal and cutting trees down will reduce. I am certain if all those are put in your consideration we shall benefit as a country.

The poor man's standards of living will improve and deforestation will reduce too. Otherwise, there is no way these challenges will stop with high electricity tariffs.

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