

Directive. It is said that President Museveni ordered for the cancellation of the contract.

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KAMPALA Government has terminated the contract of Energy Infratech PVT Ltd, an Indian firm providing consultancy services at the Isimba hydropower project.

This newspaper understands that the firm's services at the Karuma hydropower project have also been put under scrutiny pending a decision on recommendations in the "reimbursement claim review" report, a copy of which this newspaper has seen, by Uganda Electricity Generation Company Limited (UEGCL), the implementing agency of the multimillion dollar hydropower project.

President Museveni in a handwritten letter to Dr Badru Kiggundu, the chair of a project steering committee set up to oversee the successful completion of the hydropower projects, is said to have ordered the cancellation of the contract.

"It has not been an easy ride and therefore has led to repetition of works, which is costly in terms of time lost," Dr Kiggundu said, adding: "We try not to cause any loss to Ugandans. Ultimately, the overall performance was looked at, that it should require a new breed, new life."

Dr Kiggundu yesterday told *NTV-Uganda* that the government will hand over the responsibility to a new company to-

Govt sacks Isimba dam consultant

morrow (Thursday) at Isimba.

He also listed a plethora of wrongdoings by the company, including the lack of "appropriate technical personnel for some specific applications" such as "geotechnical specialists who are versed with background training in analysis of soils".

It was the UEGCL report that suggested the termination of the contract.

President Museveni had earlier faulted the company for the mess at the two dams (Isimba and Karuma), calling the firm "unserious."

In the UEGCL report about Karuma dam, the company is accused of generating fictitious expenses and cooking up human resource figures to defraud government to the tune of Shs3 billion.

Last week, this newspaper reported that the company's finance manager, Vinit Khosla and assistant administrator Henry Kayembe, had been charged with causing financial loss to government.

The duo is out on bail pending trial at the Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court. V. P. S. Chauhan, the project manager of Energy Infratech PVT Ltd,



Received letter. Dr Badru Kiggundu, the chair of the project steering committee. FILE PHOTO

told *Daily Monitor* yesterday that their contract was due to expire on September 7, and had earlier applied for an extension, which was not granted.

Mr Chauhan also explained that their application addressed to the sacked Energy permanent secretary, Dr Stephen Isabalija, was sat on for two months and he only wrote to them on August 8, technically denying them an extension.

He said they were dismayed

with the decision government took because they supervised 75 per cent of the construction and would have loved to see the project to the end.

"For reasons best known to them (government) they want to bring in another consultant. They will engage that consultant at a much higher cost. It is not a good decision. We would have loved to continue. If we did anything wrong, we would be the first to leave," Mr Chauhan said.

The decision to end the company's role at Isimba also comes days after President Museveni fired Dr Isabalija. It is not clear whether the mess in both Karuma and Isimba hydro power projects played in the end of Dr Isabalija's tenure at the Energy ministry.

President Museveni did not give reasons for his decision to sack Dr Isabalija less than 10 months into the job.

Last year, *Daily Monitor* broke the news of how government officials supervising the Isimba and Karuma hydropower projects accused each other of shoddy work and corruption and prompting the intervention of President Museveni.