



**WEDNESDAY, 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2022**

**PRESS CONFERENCE: MEDIA BRIEFING BY UIPE PRESIDENT ON KEY ENGINEERING EVENTS IN THE COUNTRY OVER THE LAST 3 MONTHS (JUNE-AUGUST 2022)**

**1). Industrial Parks:**

UIPE notes and applauds the GOU's efforts to accelerate industrialization through creation of industrial parks which will result in creation of more jobs and Forex from exports. The latest figures indicate a target of developing 25 industrial parks in the country. As the engineering fraternity, UIPE will reflect and draw lessons (through our research agenda and discussion spaces) from the recent unfortunate flooding of the Mbale Industrial Park and the City. UIPE will work with partners to promote research utilizing these lessons for sensitivity analysis on design of other Industrial parks. Our specific interest is in the areas of adequacy and resilience of support services (such as drainages) to extreme climatic conditions. UIPE will also be paying attention to compact technological solutions for treatment of industrial effluent in industrial parks, which is another frontier for sustainable development. UIPE will be associating with likeminded partners from the research and practitioner's perspective so that we can contribute to evidence base that can guide government policy on industrial parks in terms of set up and standards.

**2). Lottis Towers**

UIPE wishes to acknowledge the vigilance of the building occupants in raising a red flag. In equal measure, UIPE acknowledges the swiftness of the Engineers at NBRB, actions by KCCA and the developer's structural Engineer. The actions of the structural engineer to show up and take charge of the affairs at the building in question serves to highlight to the public the true benefits of working with registered engineers. In the alternative, we have seen cases where the alleged site engineer vanishes. Mitigation measures have been undertaken to secure public safety as independent investigations continue. Drawing from the experience of Lottis Towers, as the engineering fraternity, UIPE advocates for regular inspections of all buildings in the country to timely detect any deterioration or defects in line with Section 36 of the Building Control Regulations, 2020.

**3). The 'switch to electric cars'**

UIPE recognizes the vision of Government, as communicated by H.E. The President, to promote usage of electric vehicles. UIPE also acknowledges that tremendous steps have already been undertaken through Kiira Motors Corporation with Kayoola buses already in operation and at Individual level for saloon cars, like the case of one individual who bought and has been using an electric powered 2013 Model Nissan Reev since 2019. The piloting of electric powered motor cycles by the International University of East Africa is yet another good case study. These in country examples provide good bench mark lessons and should inspire confidence on possibility of shifting to electric powered cars. As the engineering fraternity, UIPE would like to associate with and support realization of this vision. Through our research agenda, UIPE will focus on opportunities for enterprise value around motor vehicle manufacturing, carbon credits



calculations for electric car owners and support service options for electric cars in areas with low or no electricity service coverage. The demand for auto-electricians is also likely to go up and UIPE will enrich its training menu as well as collaborate with the academia to develop a critical mass of practitioners with these skills in the medium to long term.

#### **4). Isimba Hydropower Dam**

UIPE would like to acknowledge the efforts by Government through MEMD and UEGCL for taking charge and restoring the dam operations at Isimba HP station following the flooding on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022 in a record time of 10 days. UIPE applauds the team of Engineers at UEGCL who delivered the front line efforts. These are our 'un-sung heros'. This team of Ugandan engineers demonstrated the extensive technical capacity the country has developed in the sector and their efforts should be applauded. UIPE has however noted negative emphasis on presence of 'young engineers' and unregistered engineers in charge of the Dam through some media narratives in the aftermath of the flooding. As UIPE, we are aware that UEGCL like any other typical engineering set up has a mix of registered engineers, graduate engineers in transition to registration and technicians. The important aspect is that the engineers in the decision making at strategic and operational levels are registered engineers and their assistants in the lower ranks who work under their direction and supervision are in the process of registering.

Therefore, our view as the engineering fraternity is that the discussion and decisions should focus on;

- i). Closure of the well documented snags identified through efforts of the UEGCL team.
- ii). Immediate implementation of the well documented recommendations from; the dam safety consultant and the O&M technical support consultant

Government is accordingly urged to do all in its powers to compel the EPC contractor to fully mobilize and act on the issues that have already been elaborately documented. Continuous extension of the Defects Liability Period is not in itself an ultimate solution as snags can potentially increase in complexity and present more risks if the action is further delayed. UIPE also notes that the original Owner's Engineer (OE) for Isimba Dam was replaced towards the end of the construction period with a new OE to ensure the intended performance is realized. With that precedent, Government should additionally consider radical options of engaging alternate experienced dam contractors to resolve the high priority defects that cannot be further delayed and utilize the EPC contract safeguards to manage the contractual relationship with the current EPC contractor.

**PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE**

**Eng. Andrew Muhwezi**  
**President -UIPE**