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‘Oil production sharing agreements to become public when production starts’



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production starts'

By Billy Rwothungeyo

Added 9th April 2016 05:17 AM

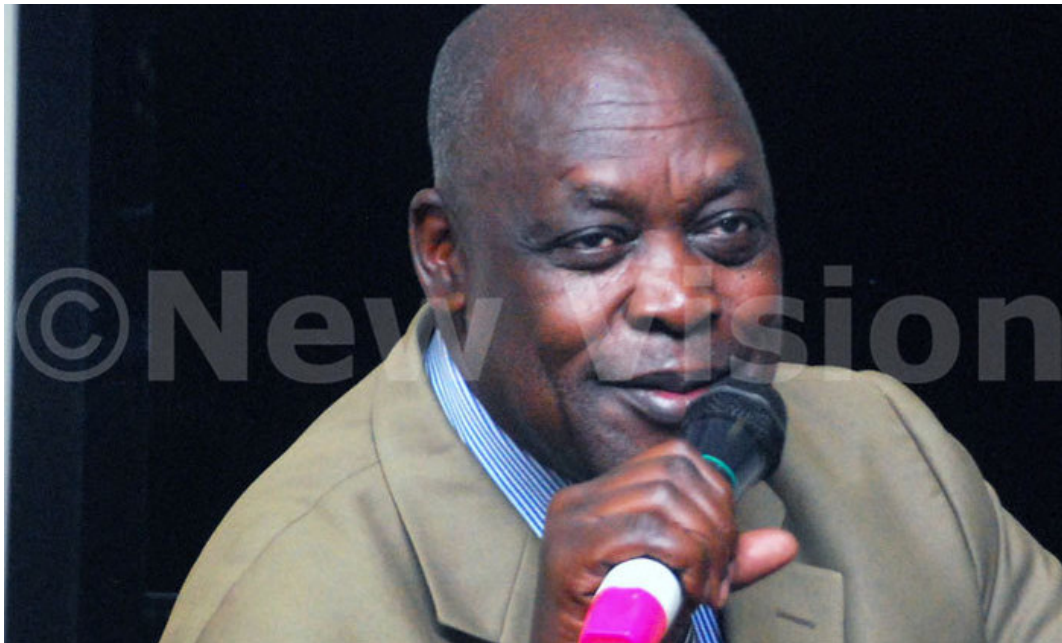
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With oil production licenses yet to be given out, it is not yet clear when production will start, although it is said to be around 2020.



The minister of state for mineral development, Peter Lokeris

In an interesting turn of events, Peter Lokeris, the minister of state for mineral development has revealed that the highly talked about Production Sharing Agreements (PSAs) will be made public once oil production starts.

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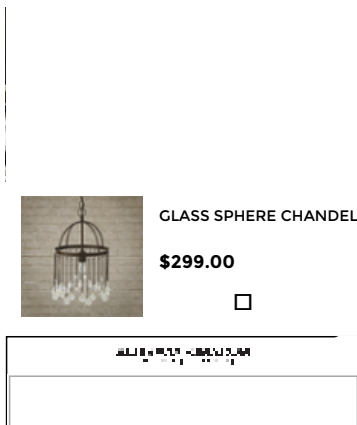
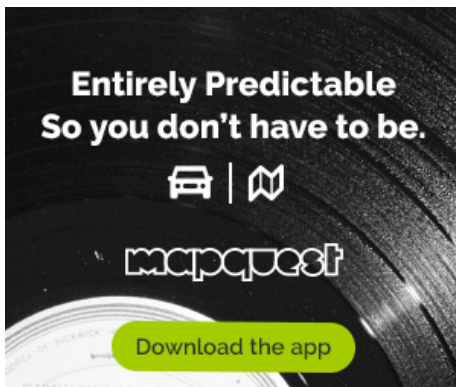
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With oil production licenses yet to be given out, it is not yet clear when production will start, although it is said to be around 2020.



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Speaking Thursday at a two-day workshop on public finance management reforms and managing oil and gas revenues at sub-national levels in Uganda, the minister said the government is committed to more openness in the extractives industry.

“You will know the PSAs so that you also study them. We (government) are not monopolizing anything. When production starts, these (PSAs) will be public information,” he said.

Although government has signed PSAs with the oil companies in Uganda, very little or nothing at all is known about the details of these agreements, prompting many stakeholders from the civil society, international and even parliamentarians to call for these agreements to be made public.

“Citizens need to know how their resources are being managed and how it affects them – that’s why we’ve published these contracts. Contract transparency in the oil, gas and mining sectors is accepted best practice; the Government of Uganda should publish all contracts, existing and future. It is undemocratic not to,” George Boden a Global Witness campaigner said in 2014.

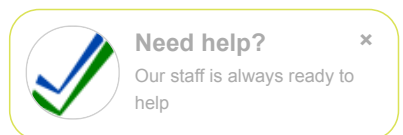
Frederick Ngobi, the chairman LC5 of Jinja district and the head of the Uganda Local Government Association warned his colleagues not to bend the rules in the public finance management act on the use of oil royalties.

“Before you budget, you must be in a position to differentiate between a royalty and a tax. As local government leaders, our bible is the local government act, which stipulates percentages that we must use locally for allowances. This is the first challenge, when you collect royalty, people in council will expect a big portion to go to their allowances.”

The dialogue was organized by the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) in partnership with Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) and Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI).

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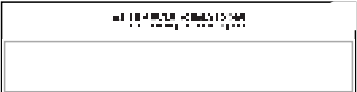




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