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President Uhuru defends multi-billion energy projects

By Wainaina Wambu | Updated Mon, May 1st 2017 at 00:00 GMT +3

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President Uhuru Kenyatta. (Photo: Moses Onusula/Standard)

Kenyans will access electricity more cheaply and without delay courtesy of the Government's multi-billion-shilling investments in energy. President Uhuru Kenyatta has said.

The President last Friday commissioned the 75MW Olkaria Wellhead and oversaw the ground-breaking ceremony for the 158MW Olkaria V Power Plant.

"This is a great step towards the transformation of the country's economy by providing access to affordable energy for all Kenyans," State House Spokesperson Manoaah Esipisu said in a statement to newsrooms later.

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The Olkaria Geothermal Wellhead project is made up of 14 wellhead units, which the President termed "unique innovation success story which has enabled us to fully adopt early generation of electricity from available geothermal wells using a reliable and affordable technology".

He said the period, from drilling the first well to the time geothermal power plants are installed, had been cut to between two and three years from five to seven years.

Kenya, he noted, had in a short period managed to reduce power rationing and hiring of expensive emergency thermal power to keep key sectors of our economy functioning during droughts such as the one being experienced.

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Mr Kenyatta also said a 105MW Public Private Partnership project would be completed in the "coming months" which will guarantee Kenyans more access to electricity at a cheaper rate.

The President also hailed the Sh70 billion 310MW Lake Turkana Wind Power (LTWP), one of largest private investments in Kenya's history, saying it would provide reliable, low-cost wind power to Kenya's national grid for 20 years after completion.

To evacuate power from the wind farm, Kenyatta said his government was building a 428km, 400kV transmission line running from Suswa to LTWP site via Naivasha, Gilgil, Nyahururu, Rumuruti, Maralal and Baragoi.

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