

# TESTING OF OIL PUMPS STARTS

## STATIONS

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By Martin Kitubi

Civil works on the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project have hit the peak period, with testing of the pumps that will be used to push the oil through the pipeline.

The testing of the facilities in both Uganda and Tanzania is meant to prepare for the first oil expected in July this year, according to senior government officials of Uganda.

At the marine storage terminal in Tanga, Tanzania, which will store Uganda's crude before export, the four oil tanks have been erected and hydro-tested, with thermal insulation ongoing. This is meant to detect and seal any leakages.

According to the project schedule seen by *New Vision*, more tests, dubbed commissioning activities, will commence this month and run up to March 2025. Over 12,000 workers have been deployed in Uganda and Tanzania to ensure completion of the pipeline on time.

During this period, the commissioning contractors will start the Electrical Instrumentation Telecommunications and Safety (EITS) tests at Pump Station 1 in Hoima (Uganda), as well as at Pump Stations 4 and 5, both located in Tanzania.

The EACOP facility will have a total of six pump stations, one in Hoima and another in Sembabule within Uganda, while four others will be in Tanzania.

The pump stations will play a critical role in ensuring that crude oil goes through the EACOP facility from Hoima to Tanga Port in Tanzania. In addition, the EACOP facility will have two further pressure reduction stations and an oil terminal in Tanzania. During this first quarter of 2026, the EACOP commissioning contractor will carry out pipeline hydro-testing, Tanga Terminal EITS, as well as tests at the Jetty and load out facility, which will load Uganda's crude oil onto vessels for the global market.

*New Vision* has learnt that Kent Energies, a UK firm and Inspecta Africa, a Ugandan company, will undertake the EACOP commissioning activities as joint venture partners.



Seated from left: Ugandan Ambassador to Tanzania, Col. (Rtd) Fred Mwesigye, Nakabirwa and her Tanzanian counterpart, Ndejemb with other officials after a meeting in Tanzania yesterday

The two firms are expected to be officially announced in the coming days and will have boots in Uganda and Tanzania.

## THE VISIT

The development comes at a time when Energy Minister Ruth Nakabirwa is currently on a fact-finding visit to EACOP facilities under construction in Tanzania. Nankabirwa, who is in the company of officials from the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC), EACOP and the energy ministry, will be assessing the readiness of the facilities ahead of the first oil.

On the first day of her five-day visit yesterday, Nankabirwa held meetings with her Tanzanian counterpart, Deogratius Ndejemb, who was accompanied by officials from the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation and the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority.

In a communiqué shared by UNOC, Nankabirwa explained that her visit to Tanzania is intended to allow her ministry gain a deeper understanding of the EACOP implementation status.

The minister emphasised the strategic role of EACOP in enabling the transportation of crude oil to international markets and strengthening regional energy trade.

On his part, Tanzania's energy minister (Ndejemb) highlighted the importance of the EACOP project as a flagship regional integration initiative and Tanzania's role in facilitating land access, regulatory approvals, and financing instruments to enable smooth implementation.

## CONSTRUCTION

According to the project status report

## THE EACOP ROUTE

The EACOP is a 1,443km crude oil export pipeline that will transport Uganda's crude oil from pump station 1 (Kabaale - Hoima) in Uganda to the Chongoleani Peninsula near Tanga port in Tanzania.

It will have a peak capacity of 246,000 barrels of crude oil per day. The 24-inch insulated pipeline will be buried along its entire length with the top of the pipe being one metre below the surface. A number of above-the-ground facilities are also part of the EACOP system.

In addition to the pipeline, high-voltage electrical cables and a fibre-optic cable are laid and buried along the same right of way.

A total of 296km of the pipeline will be hosted in Uganda while Tanzania will host the remaining chunk of 1,147 kilometres. In Uganda, EACOP will traverse a total of 25 sub-counties from 10 districts. The affected districts include Hoima, Kikuube, Kakumiro, Kyankwanzi, Mubende, Gomba, Sembabule, Lwengo, Kyotera and Rakai.



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seen by *New Vision*, the overall EACOP project progress stands at 79% as of December 31, 2025.

In the last quarter of 2025, the project report indicates that land acquisition was fully completed, which allows uninterrupted pipeline laying along the route.

All the EACOP pipes had been coated in Tanzania as of December 27, 2025 and the last kilometres of the insulated pipes are currently being transported to the construction sites in both Uganda and Tanzania.

According to the report, the pipeline construction alone stands at 62%, with more than 1,400km welded and 500km fully buried under the ground.

On the above-ground installation work front, the report indicates that progress stands at 68%, while the onshore terminal itself shows 53% overall progress.

In addition, the report indicates

that the jetty is now fully connected with the onshore terminal, progress exceeding 86%. According to the report, the offshore works are still ongoing to finalise the mooring dolphins, which help the vessels to dock properly.

The jetty is expected to be fully ready in the second quarter of 2026, the same time when final commissioning activities will be undertaken.

According to sources, all these indicators are lined up to achieve a ready for start-up on July 31, 2026, and the loading of the first oil tanker in Tanga is then expected to occur in October 2026, the time when filling the pipeline and completion of commissioning activities are expected.

## UGANDA TO EXPORT MORE POWER

Apart from the anticipated oil revenues, Uganda is expected to earn more from the export of electricity to power the EACOP facilities in both Uganda and Tanzania.

Electricity will be required for the pipeline's operation at pumping stations, terminal operations and to maintain the crude oil temperature (for heating the pipeline).

Sources explained that the power will be primarily sourced from Uganda, while a small portion will come from Tanzania to reduce carbon emissions that would have emerged from power generated directly from crude oil.

However, backup generation will also be available from upstream fields in Uganda and from EACOP generators in Tanzania.

Electrical production at the terminal will also be complemented by a solar firm.