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Hospital renovated after Besigye visit

A section of the newly-renovated Abim hospital. The health facility had not received a face-lift since the 1960s.

PHOTO BY STEVEN
ARIONG



Boost. Abim hospital received Shs700m for renovation from government last month.

BY STEVEN ARIONG
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ABIM. Abim Hospital in Karamoja sub-region has received major renovations following the controversial visit to the hospital by Forum for Democratic Change presidential candidate Kizza Besigye.

While campaigning in the sub-region last December, Dr Besigye

made an impromptu visit to the referral hospital which had not received a facelift since it was built in the 1960s. The hospital has been without a resident doctor for nearly two years.

The rot was widely covered in the media and three nurses who talked to Dr Besigye about the rundown of the hospital nearly lost their jobs.

They were severely reprimanded by government for taking the FDC candidate around the hospital and exposing the despicable state of the health facility.

However, the hospital has since

undergone renovations after Abim District received Shs700m from the Ministry of Finance last month.

The hospital is now in a better state compared to the previous situation where rodents and snakes had nearly infested the facility.

"I thank Dr Besigye for visiting Abim Hospital. If he had not visited, this hospital would not have not been renovated," said Mr Peter Okidi, a resident.

Ms Sarah Awilli, a mother, said the smell of bats' urine that used to hang over the hospital no longer exists.

"Some of us used not to go to Abim

hospital because you would go there and become worse than before you went there," she said.

However, the chief administrative officer, Mr Moses Kasiba Nandalah, denied the residents' claim that the hospital was renovated following Dr Besigye's visit. Mr Kasiba said Dr Besigye had no power to cause the renovations.

He said the renovations were agreed upon last year after the district council went to Parliament to protest the poor state of the facility.

"It's then that we received communication from the Ministry of Finance, who first advanced the district Shs300m. By the time Dr Besigye visited Abim, we had already done a ground-breaking ceremony for the hospital renovations. It is only the procurement process that had delayed us," he said.

BEDS, STAFF UNDERWAY

The chief administrative officer, Mr Moses Kasiba, said government had already promised to buy beds and mattresses for the hospital, adding that by next month, the facility will be well equipped. "The government has also allowed us to recruit four qualified doctors and the District Service Commission has drafted the advert so we are moving, but not because of Besigye," he said.