

Cancer machine installation starts on Monday - Mulago

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KAMPALA. The Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) in Mulago has finally received the long awaited cobalt 60 radiotherapy cancer machine that was shipped into the country last week.

Unveiling the wrapped pieces of the machine to journalists yesterday, the Institute's executive director, Dr Jackson Orem, said the engineers from the Czech Republic's UJP manufacturing company, who are going to install the machine, are expected to fly into the country on Monday next week to start work immediately.

"The process of installation and also testing before commencement of services or commissioning roughly will take about one month and both we (cancer institute) and the supplier are committed to make sure that the services are restored as soon as possible," Dr Orem said.

On Wednesday, an event organised for the Health minister,



Finally. Wrapped pieces of the cancer machine being offloaded at the Cancer Institute in Mulago Kampala yesterday. PHOTO BY MOSES NDHAYE.

Dr Ruth Aceng, to unveil the long-awaited machine to journalists was cancelled before its release from the Uganda Rev-

enue Authority's warehouse in Nakawa.

Subsequently, the wrapped pieces of the machine were on

Wednesday evening moved to the institute following the resolution of shipping payment obligations.

Dr Orem also re-echoed the institute's plans to introduce a fee for patients accessing the machine as part of the cost-sharing and to eliminate under-the-table pay allegedly solicited by its staff unlike previously where they were treated at no cost.

When it starts operating, Dr Dan Kanyike the head of the radiotherapy department at UCI, revealed that they are proposing to have the machine this time work for 12 hours to give it time to rest.

Previously, the old machine would be run 24 hours for seven days.

"We expect to work on about 80 patients per day," Dr Kanyike said.

The supply of the machine is also expected to be coupled with training of the local engineers who will be equipped with skills on how to handle the new machine thought to have more advanced technology.

In one month, the cancer institute officials insisted that the engineers will have finished the installation and testing to ensure that what it does is of quality before it is commissioned.