



Saturday Vision

SEVEN DAYS, ONE PAPER

Chopper for heart patients good idea

The Uganda Heart Institute has asked government to provide it with two helicopters to deal with emergencies.

The heart institute's director, John Omagino, says the country has only one catheterisation laboratory in Mulago, yet there are many people with heart complications in many parts of the country.

A catheterisation lab is an examination room in a hospital with diagnostic imaging equipment used to visualise the arteries and chambers of the heart and treat any abnormalities that are detected.

This request should be considered because delays associated with ground transport have a potential to worsen a patient's clinical status.

Besides, moving patients from upcountry hospitals has been a great challenge because some roads are impassable and ambulances are few. Even where ambulances are available, often there is no fuel and patients are asked to pay.

Because of ignorance, many patients with heart complications sometimes know too late that they have a heart condition.

But it should not be just ordinary choppers. They should be medical choppers fitted with lifesaving equipment, with medical crew able to rescue patients, even at night. This will greatly decrease the response time. The choppers can also be used to rescue accident victims. Instead of buying a chopper for Parliament, let us venture into air rescue for all Ugandans.

As we hunt for the money for the choppers, let us increase awareness on the leading causes of heart disease and the symptoms. We should also address the appalling state of the regional referral hospitals.

