

Officials from Centenary Group inspect the Tier III data centre in Masaka on Wednesday. PHOTO/ COURTESY

First Tier III data centre set to open in Masaka

BY BUSEIN SAMILU

KAMPALA. The Centenary Group is set to unveil Uganda's first Tier III data centre in Masaka, a facility officials say will serve as the backbone of the country's digital economy ambitions under the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV).

The centre, scheduled for official launch in July, guarantees 99.982 percent uptime, equivalent to no more than 1.6 hours of downtime per year. Data centre uptime measures the period during which a facility's infrastructure—power, cooling, and network—is fully operational, ensuring uninterrupted service.

Officials, led by Centenary Group Executive Chairman Prof. John Ddumba-Ssentamu, said the facility will incorporate multiple power sources, N+1 redundant cooling systems, and several network connections. N+1 redundancy means the centre has one additional unit beyond the minimum needed to handle the full thermal load, ensuring fault tolerance.

"As the government drives the Digital Transformation Roadmap to support Vision 2040 and NDP IV, this data centre is key to enhancing Uganda's ICT infrastructure and boosting GDP growth," Prof Ddumba-Ssentamu said.

The facility is designed with open-access connectivity, allowing all internet service providers to deliver services through it. Upon launch, Centenary Bank's own operations—serving more than three million account holders across 134 districts—will immediately benefit.

"But the open-access design extends to banks, telecoms, government agencies, and enterprises that require reliable, sovereign data hosting," officials added.

Mr Peter Kahiigi, the chief technology officer of Cente-Tech which is Centenary Group's technology arm, said: "We are completing this facility to Tier III standards. Green technology integrated into this data centre sets new regional benchmarks."

Officials noted that the facility will promote competition, improve service quality, and reduce monopolistic lock-in, ultimately lowering internet access costs for businesses and consumers across the region.

On Wednesday, Prof Ddumba-Ssentamu, flanked by the Cente-Tech executive team and construction partners, toured the near-completed floors. Civil works and technical installations are now complete.

"This data centre embodies our promise of equitable social and economic transformation for all Ugandans," Prof Ddumba-Ssentamu said.

Once operational, the facility will prevent Uganda's digital data from being exported to Nairobi (Kenya), Johannesburg (South Africa), or Dubai (United Arab Emirates).

"Sensitive banking data, government records, health information, and business operations will remain under Ugandan law and control," he said.

Dr Grace Ssekakubo, the CEO of Centenary Technology Services, said: "As a Tier III facility, we will provide telecom companies with a reliable Internet Point of Presence and support critical national infrastructure projects, including the East African Oil Pipeline."

UNIQUE FEATURES

Power: Multiple power sources with backup systems
Cooling: N+1 redundant cooling units for fault tolerance
Network: Multiple internet connections, open-access for all ISPs
Green Technology: 40 percent lower power consumption, solar integration, energy-efficient cooling

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