

Some of the key issues in the taxation sector to understand the role of Uganda's illicit financial flows and their impact on the economy. They will also make presentations on tax system. He urged URA to use the training to educate the judges on some of the tax terminologies.

Government procures second cancer machine

By Violet Nabatanzi

The Government has procured a second radiotherapy machine for the treatment of different types of cancer. The machine worth \$3.5m (about sh12.6b), is expected to be installed at the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) before the end of this year, the executive director of UCI, Dr Jackson Orem, has said.

The new machine will work alongside the one procured and installed late last year. Orem is optimistic that by 2020, there will be six radiotherapy machines at the institute.

Radiotherapy involves the use of high energy radiation to treat cancer. Almost half of all people with cancer have radiotherapy as part of their treatment plan.

The current machine is treating 80 patients per day, while the new one is expected to treat about 120 daily.

In Uganda, cervical cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma, prostate cancer, breast cancer and cancer of the oesophagus are the top five most common cancers as ranked by the number of new cases, according to the Ministry of Health.

Cervical and breast cancers are the most common among

women, while prostate cancer and Kaposi's sarcoma are common among men. The ministry data shows that the number of newly diagnosed cancer cases is on the rise in Uganda.

For instance, cervical cancer in women has been reported to have increased from 1,300 new cases in 2014 to 1,500 in 2015 and 1,800 new cases in 2016. Likewise, prostate cancer in men has shown the same trend between the same years.

After the breakdown of the old radiotherapy machine in 2016, arrangements were made by the government and Agha Khan University

Hospital in Nairobi to treat 400 cancer patients free of charge. The old machine, which used to treat over 75% of cancer patients, was donated to the institute in 1995.

Uganda Cancer Institute was recently upgraded to an East African treatment reference centre, treating patients from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan and DR Congo.

Speaking during the national cancer symposium at the institute, the Prime Minister, Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, said efforts are underway to acquire new radiotherapy machines in both government and private

facilities.

Cancer is one of the three most common causes of death globally. Currently, 8.8 million deaths annually are attributable to cancer. The economic cost of cancer is estimated at \$1.16 trillion globally.

The health minister, Dr Ruth Aceng, said the Government is implementing immunisation against hepatitis B for all children through the early childhood immunisation programme.

"This is important for us as a country because over 60% of cancers in Uganda are associated with (such) infections," she said.