

60,000 to get free yellow fever vaccination

BY ANDREW BAGALA

abagala@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. More than 60,000 people are expected to receive free vaccination against yellow fever starting today at Kololo Independence Grounds.

The spokesman of National Medical Stores (NMS), Mr Dan Kimosho, said more doctors and nurses have been deployed to deal with the huge numbers.

"We have increased the number of medical officers to 20 doctors and 100 nurses to deal with the numbers of people who will come for yellow fever vaccination. After three days, we expect to have vaccinated 60,000 people," Mr Kimosho said yesterday.

Yellow fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes and half of those who contract it die within seven to 10 days, according to World Health Organisation. Yellow fever vaccine remains in the body for 10 years.

In public medical centres, a vaccine jab for yellow fever goes for Shs100,000 while in private hospitals the bill may be as high as Shs180,000.

The vaccination campaign by NMS was extended to this week after thousands were left out in the Uganda Revenue Authority's Taxpayers appreciation week held between September 27 and 29.

Many countries require travellers from yellow fever affected areas to present a yellow fever certificate as proof that they have been vaccinated.

In some countries such as South Sudan, a fine as high as Shs20,000 from each traveller who has no yellow fever card is levied.

Many of the people who turned up for vaccination last week were young and middle aged people. Mr Kimosho said a big number of people vaccinated are those with hope of travelling out of the country soon.

"But we also saw many who wanted be vaccinated to prevent themselves from acquiring yellow fever," he said.

Mid last year, there was an outbreak of yellow fever in central Uganda. The World Health Organisation sent more than 700,000 doses to vaccinate people.