

ing saying if the disease is detected early, it can be treated. Mr. Tibarila also urged participants to continue supporting the noble fight against cancer. [Dennis Edema]



POOR ROADS

Residents resort to using donkeys

A man guides donkeys loaded with goods in Bumbo Market Namisindwa District. Residents have resorted to using donkeys to transport their goods as roads become impassable due to heavy rains.

PHOTO BY YAHUO KITUNZI

Nsinze Health Centre IV patients sharing wards with dead bodies

Issue. Health workers at the facility revealed that due to lack of enough rooms, patients are currently sharing wards with dead bodies.

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NAMUTUMBA. Although being operational for the last 27 years, Nsinze Health Centre IV still has no mortuary and an anaesthetist to handle surgeries, besides constant drug shortages, leaving patients and health workers in a dilemma.

Speaking to *Daily Monitor* in an interview recently, health workers at the facility revealed that due to lack of enough rooms, patients are currently sharing wards with dead bodies.

While narrating the ordeal, Mr. Tom Kamize, the officer in-charge of the facility, said the lack of a mortuary has put the patients' lives at risk

besides traumatising them.

Mr. Kamize noted that the health centre has no essentials such as refrigerators used in preserving the bodies meaning patients are exposed to bad odour and germs.

He said despite having a theatre room and equipment, the facility has never carried out surgeries due to the absence of an anaesthetist.

An anaesthetist is an officer who assists with the administration of drugs during surgery.

The lack of such an officer, according to Mr. Kamize, has made it difficult to get affordable surgical services as they have to part with not less than Shs250,000 to have a caesarean delivery from the nearest health facilities such as Iganga Referral Hospital.

"Our wives die on their way to Iganga hospital because of a non-functional theatre and lack of an anaesthetist officer," Mr. John Baptist Bagise, the Nsinze Sub-county chairperson

KEY ISSUES

Speaking to *Daily Monitor*, Dr. Brian Sserunjogi, the head of Nsinze Health Centre IV, decried the lack of personnel. He revealed that the facility only has one medical officer.

said. According to Ms. Loy Naigaga, a resident of Kisiro village in Bulange Sub-county, she needs a minimum of Shs500,000 to meet bills at Bugiri Referral Hospital, which is 30 kilometres from her village.

"I would be spending less money if Nsinze Health Centre IV which is just 12Kms from my home had an operational theatre," she said.

Established in 1990, the health centre serves more than 1 million people.

It receives about 400 patients on a daily basis which has seen the facility run out of drugs often times.

Currently, all referrals across the 12 sub-counties in the district are referred to Nsinze whose facilities are still wanting.

More complex cases such as caesarean deliveries are referred to Iganga hospital.

Speaking to *Daily Monitor*, Dr. Brian

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briefly

FDC's Amuriat campaigns

KAMULI. Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party presidential aspirant Patrick Obai Amuriat on Sunday took his campaign to Busoga sub-region and promised to offer 'leadership with action'. While meeting Buyende and Kamuli FDC party delegates, Mr. Amuriat tabled his five-point campaign programme in which he pledged to take lead in building party cohesion, reclaim party victory, make youth and women development agenda, and create vibrant party structures. [Sam Caleb Opio]

Female enrolment still low

JINJA. Despite government constructing a multi-million hostel for female students at Jinja Vocational Institute, the turn up is still low. According to the Institute's board chairperson, Mr. Edison Mpango, only 94 female students have been enrolled. "Government built the hostel to attract female students to pursue vocational courses but most rooms remain empty," he said. The institute currently has 666 male students. [Tausi Nakato]

Nsinze operates without mortuary, anaesthetist

Voices

"I would be spending less money if Nsinze Health Centre IV which is just 12Kms from my home had an operational theatre."

LOY NAIGAGA,
RESIDENT KISIRO
VILLAGE

"Though I am capable of performing the operation, I am not practicing what I studied because of the absence of the anaesthetist officer."

BRIAN SSERUNJOJI,
HEAD OF NSINZE
HEALTH CENTER IV,

"The problem is that our district [Namutumba] is in a rural area and anaesthetist officers find it difficult to work here."

JAMES KIRYA,
NAMUTUMBA DISTRICT
HEALTH OFFICER

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Sserunjoli, the head of Nsinze Health Centre IV, decried the lack of personnel.

He revealed that the facility only has one medical officer.

"Though I am capable of performing the operation, I am not practicing what I studied because of the absence of the anaesthetist officer," he told *Daily Monitor* last week.

Mr. Kamize revealed that drugs that are supposed to last for two months get finished within the first two weeks after delivery because of the increasing number of patients.

When contacted, the district health officer, Mr. James Kirya, acknowledged the lack of an anaesthetist but defended that the district advertised the post for several years but no one has applied. "The problem is that our district [Namutumba] is in a rural area and anaesthetist officers find it difficult to work here," Mr. Kirya observed.

He added: "We are working hard to at least get a retired anaesthetist officer to assist us."

Mr. Kirya said although they also contacted the National Drug Authority over lack of a hematology analyser at the facility, nothing has been done.

Ms Madina Nabirye Byakika, the Nsinze Sub-county councillor, in a recent interview said they tabled a motion to have the Shs100,000 ambulance charges lowered to Shs30,000 in vain.

Ms Byakika said many mothers continue to die in taxis and on boda boda on their way to Iganga and Bugiri hospitals because they can't afford Shs100,000.

She, however, decried the situation of patients sharing wards with dead bodies.

"We are asking government and Namutumba District local government to construct a mortuary at the facility," she said.

The Namutumba Woman Member of Parliament, Ms Mariam Namutumba Naigaga, last week called for government's immediate intervention to avert the problems.