

# DAILY NEWS

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## Muhimbili Hospital secures key modern devices

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THE Muhimbili National Hospital is usually a serene place, but yesterday the scene was dominated by broad smiles, cheers and ululation as President Kikwete inaugurated several life-saving state-of-the-art medical facilities.

The hospital now boasts of a world class emergency medical department, as well as units offering renal dialysis, dental services and intensive care for patients.

Also inaugurated yesterday were ultra-modern radiological devices such as the computed tomography (CT) scanner and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which are used in diagnosing internal structures of the body including tissues, muscles and bones.

Thanks to the Abbott Fund that financed the newly set up US\$ 3 million (about 4bn/-) Emergency Medical Department (EMD) at MNH -- a great boost in attending casualties in road accidents and other injuries.

"Patients could simply die at the hospital reception, as doctors and other attendants helplessly watch due to lack of these vital facilities," President Kikwete said, adding that "but we now have world-class equipment and specialised personnel ready to save many lives."

The Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Professor David Mwakiyusa, said patients with severe injuries would now undergo emergency treatment at the department, before they were transferred to other sections.

He said the department would also be used as a training centre for emergency care professionals to manage other hospitals in the country.

Before the establishment of the new department, MNH had no specialist doctors, nurses and technicians in emergency medicine, thanks to the Abbott Fund which has also funded training of 40-plus staff to run the wing. MNH receives at least 100 patients daily who need emergency services.

MNH officials said the cost for MRI would be 350,000/- for private service, 200,000/- for patients under cost sharing arrangement and free for those proven to have no ability to pay. Charges for CT-Scanner services would range from Zero to 170,000/-

The new dental unit which has been financed by the Miracle Corners of the World (MCW) would provide services to patients and used for training to students of Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS).

Deputy Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Ms Gaudensia Kabaka, said Tanzania was in need of qualified dentists, noting that each region in the country was supposed to have 10, as opposed to one at present.

"With these new facilities, we are now able to double enrolment of students at the school of dentistry from 20 to 40 and we expect that within seven years we shall be able to meet the national demand for dentists," she said.

MCW Executive Director Eddy Bergman urged patriotism among graduates of the MUHAS School of Dentistry, calling them to remain in the country and serve Tanzanians instead of going abroad because people here needed them the most.

President Kikwete said further that the government had sent Tanzanian experts abroad for studies on cardiological and renal disorders in a move aimed at ensuring treatment of such diseases was available locally to a large extent.

He said regional and district medical facilities were being strengthened to handle as many patients as possible so that only a few complicated cases were taken to referral hospitals like MNH.

MNH statistics show that at least 400 Tanzanians require dialysis -- the process of filtering metabolic wastes from patients with impaired kidneys.

