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Tanzania short of 200 dentists

By Vicent Mnyanyaika

The country is facing an acute shortage of dentists, leading to thousands of dental cases to go untreated in local hospitals, the Government has revealed.

Deputy Minister for Education and Vocational Training Gaudensia Kabaka said there was one dentist in every regional hospital, which translates into a shortage of 200 personnel.

"We have very few dentists in the country due to lack of training facilities," she said at a ceremony to launch an ultra-modern facility at the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (Muhhas).

The \$3-million facility was officially inaugurated by President Jakaya Kikwete yesterday.

Ms Kabaka said the new facility was a result of efforts by the Government and its development partners to make up for the shortage.

She promised that plans were afoot to train more dentists over the next seven years.

President Kikwete said the Government was keen to see to it that Tanzanians did not travel outside the country seeking treatment for various ailments.

"We want every Tanzanian to get health services in our hospitals here. We are now concentrating on building capacity of our major hospitals to deliver quality and affordable services," said President Kikwete.

He listed some of the advanced services already offered at Muhimbili as dental clinics, neurosurgeon and kidney dialysis.

The dental unit was established with support from Abbott Foundation in partnership with the Miracle Cor-



President Jakaya Kikwete is briefed on how a renal dialysis unit operates by Dr Linda Ezekiel, a consultant nephrologist, during the opening of various renovated buildings and equipment services at Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Left is the Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Prof David Mwakiyusa.

ners of the World (MCW) all from the US. Apart from dental building and facilities, President Kikwete also inaugurated emergency services facilities, the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), CT-Scanner, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the Renal Dialysis Unit.

The MCW Executive Director, Mr Eddy Bergman, appealed to the Government to improve conditions for professionals as a way of stemming the problem of brain drain that affects dentists as well.

"I ask the Government to encourage medical experts to stay here. Tanzanians badly need their services," also call on medical experts to remain here and serve their people," said Mr Bergman.

On his part, the Muhhas Vice Chancellor Prof Kisali Paliangyo said the donated facilities would help in setting up a medical centre of excellence in the region.

IPTL turbines miss 'switch-on' deadline

By Florence Mugarika

IPTL's turbines were still switched-off yesterday with no official explanation as to why they were not turned on the day before as the Government had announced.

The Minister for Energy and Minerals, Mr William Ngelela, promised the public that the IPTL and Tegeta power plants would start generating 145 MW by November 1 to mitigate power rationing problem.

However, until yesterday, there were no signs of generating power from the two plants and the Government officials were not available to talk on the matter. One of the IPTL's workers told *The Citizen* that the management was not in position to talk about the matter because there were some misunderstandings between the Government and IPTL. "I guess something is wrong between the two sides, the officials are not ready to talk about the matter—even to us who are in the same office," said the worker.

Efforts to reach the minister and his deputy, Mr Kigoma Malima, proved futile, as their mobile phones were unreachable.

Commenting on the state of power rationing, Tanesco public relations manager Bada Masoud said that the company had a deficit of 125MW in the national grid.

According to Ms Masoud, an additional 20MW from Songas power plant a week ago had helped to reduce power rationing and that more efforts were ongoing to end the problem.

However, she declined to explain IPTL's failure to turn on their turbines.