

# Italian govt donates radiology equipment to Gulu Hospital

GULU

By Arnest Tumwesige

Gulu Hospital has received a fully pledged radiology department from the Italian government.

The equipment, costing over sh2b, has had clientele at the hospital rise from 184 to 1,535. The machinery, which was launched at the hospital recently, comprises a radiology unit with computerised data acquisition.

Others are an ultrasound machine with printing accessories and an electrical protection power supply unit.

Dr. James Elima, the hospital director, noted that the digital X-ray unit will be linked to the physicians' rooms through tele-links, an innovation that will help patients to stop paying for X-ray films.

Elima said the hospital has not been getting X-ray films from National Medical Stores for a long time.

"When we run out of these films, it causes outcry. The patients, too, cannot afford them because they are expensive," Elima explained.



Aceng (wearing purple) admires the X-ray machine as Fornara (left) and other officials look on at Gulu Hospital recently. Photo by Arnest Tumwesige

The cost of one packet of six small X-ray films is sh160,000. The most expensive is sh300,000.

Elima, however noted that the blockage by the National Identification and Registration Authority for the hospital to use an alternative Internet service may stall the innovation.

Domenico Fornara, the

## BETWEEN THE LINES:

The machinery comprises a radiology unit with computerised data acquisition.

Italian ambassador to Uganda, said the radiology department was early this year approved

by Uganda Atomic Energy Council, thus allowing it to enter into full operation.

Fornara was happy to observe that previously, radiology services were hardly available to the people of Gulu.

The facility is part of the activities of the Italian Agency for Development Co-operation in Uganda.

Health minister Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng commended the Italian government for supporting northern Uganda in the provision of health services.

Aceng noted that the completion of the radiology unit at Gulu Hospital was long overdue.

She also said the Government would install a CT scan machine.

CT scans are special X-ray tests that produce cross-sectional images of the body, using X-rays and a computer.

Aceng encouraged health workers to persevere with the current working conditions, adding that as per the Government's pledge, the ministry will improve the working environment. "Our focus is to create conducive working environment to attract a robust human resource," she explained.

Aceng asked the hospital administrators to begin planning for the construction of staff quarters.

The function was also attended by Dr. Giuseppe Masala, the representative of the Italian Agency for Development Co-operation.