

Ugandan soldier strikes photojournalist on duty

 By [Walter Wafula](#)

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Yusuf Kavuma, a photojournalist with *Sky Magazine* in Uganda has been assaulted as he tried to take pictures of a military man beating up supporters of Forum of Democratic Change (FDC) party president, Dr. Kizza Besigye.



"A soldier has beaten a photojournalist who tried to take his photo at Kitara, where Besigye's convoy has reached," said Don Wanyama, the chief sub-editor *Daily Monitor* newspaper who was on the scene.

The journalist was assaulted along the Entebbe-Kampala highway -the main airport route, as he covered the heroic return of the FDC leader from Nairobi, Kenya, where he has spent almost a week on treatment.

The leader was flown out of Uganda last week after he was sprayed with tear gas that left him partially blind. The leader has been a key figure in the current Walk to Work protests against the high food and fuel prices that were launched by Action 4 Change, an advocacy group against the high standard of living in the country.

Opposition leader stranded in Entebbe

Besigye was due to return to Uganda on Wednesday, 11 May, but was made to disembark a Kenyan Airways flight after the airline's management was informed that its plane would not be allowed to land with Besigye aboard. The opposition leader is currently stranded on the Entebbe Highway where his convoy was blocked from proceeding to Kampala. Besigye's coming coincided with the swearing in ceremony of President Yoweri Museveni who won the 18 February 2011 presidential elections.

Thousands of Besigye's supporters were lined up along the highway to receive their president, videos on local television channels indicated. The army and the Uganda police were reportedly fighting the supporters off the highway with tear gas and sticks. The melee resulted in the injuring of Kavuma.

In April, at least 10 journalists around the country were allegedly tortured by the police as they covered the Walk to Work protest that turned violent on 18 April. The Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ) moved to help the affected reporters sue the army and police over the violation of their rights. But on Wednesday, G.W. Ssebagala programmes coordinator HRNJ said most of the journalists who were allegedly tortured by the army and police on 18 April, are not interested in pursuing legal action against the security forces due to fear.

The journalists' rights body is now pursuing the case of Issa Aliga, an NTV correspondent in Masaka district, and George Fidel Arinaitwe of the *Red Pepper* newspaper. Those that did not follow through with the legal action include; Ali Mambule a *New Vision* journalist and Norman Kabugu who works with *Kamunye*, a vernacular tabloid, and Jane Anyango a senior reporter with Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Television.

ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

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