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Uganda police shoot politician in hand at protest



Posted by Musa

Uganda Police beat a protester, Thursday, April 14, 2011 in Kampala, Uganda. Witnesses in Uganda say police fired tear gas into a hospital during a skirmish with stone-throwing protesters. A hospital worker, Mary Nabu, said patients were affected and that some mothers moved sick children from their beds to get away from the gas. The police had surrounded opposition politician Kizza Besigye, who was walking to work to protest high gas prices. Ugandan youths allegedly began harassing the police

KASANGATI, Uganda (AP) - Military police officers shot Uganda's top opposition politician in the right hand Thursday and fired tear gas into a hospital as demonstrations against rising fuel and food prices broke out in several locations across the country, officials said.

The opposition politician, Kizza Besigye, was walking to work to protest high gas prices. A spokeswoman for the Ugandan Red Cross, Catherine Ntabadde, said Besigye was hit by a bullet that was fired by military police as they tried to disperse the crowd of supporters around Besigye. Ntabadde said she did not know if it was a rubber bullet or a real one.

"Military police coming from Kampala confronted the crowd," she said. "They could have shot him accidentally. We took him to hospital for treatment." A police spokeswoman, Judith Nabakooba, confirmed that Besigye has been shot at. She said the police were investigating the circumstances.

The skirmish broke out after police surrounded Besigye, who was walking to work to protest high gas prices. Ugandan youths then allegedly began harassing the police. Some demonstrators sought shelter in a nearby hospital, from where police officer Ronald Okello said the demonstrators threw rocks at authorities. Okello said police then fired tear gas.

Ugandans to the rescue



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A hospital worker in the town of Kasangati, just outside Uganda's capital of Kampala, said patients were affected and that some mothers moved sick children from their beds to get away from the gas. The worker, Mary Nabu, wiped tears from her eyes from the gas as she spoke.

Besigye was arrested on Monday, along with several members of parliament, during a similar march to protest high fuel and food prices. The police called it an illegal demonstration. He was taken away by authorities again on Thursday.

Besigye is Uganda's top opposition politician. He took second place in Uganda's February presidential election to President Yoweri Museveni. Uganda on Thursday saw protests in at least four other cities. West of Kampala, in Mbarara, motorcycle taxi drivers used their bikes to block the road. Demonstrators say they are protesting the rising price of fuel and food. The price of a liter of gas has increased in Uganda from about \$1.05 a liter to close to \$1.50 over the last month.

The inspector general of police, Kale Kayihura, called the protests illegal and said police would arrest those who got involved. The youth who surrounded Besigye chanted slogans about how the protests in Tunisia and Egypt led to new governments. More than a dozen were arrested.

Nabakooba, the police spokeswoman, said police also instructed gas stations not to sell fuel in containers after police received reports that some demonstrators would try to set buildings on