

Dr Besigye falls ill again in prison, lawyers say

The Uganda Prisons Service, however, dismissed the illness claims of the four-time presidential candidate as exaggerated.

BY ANTHONY WESAKA

Opposition politician, Dr Kizza Besigye, who is on remand at Luzira prison on treason charges, is reportedly unwell again,

lawyers have said. The latest reports about Dr Besigye's health emerged yesterday through one of his lawyers, Mr Eron Kiiza, who said the veteran politician was too weak to meet visitors.

"Dr Besigye is ill and very weak, failing to meet his guests. The prison conditions continue to undermine his health," Mr Kiiza said.

Another member of the defence team, Mr Erias Lukwago, also confirmed receiving reports about Dr Besigye's deteriorating condition and said he was heading to Luzira prison to assess the situation.

"Yes, I got this report from some people, and that is where I'm headed to, to find out exactly his condition. I was told he can hardly move, has an irritating cough, and has some other illnesses. Generally, his condition is unstable, so let me dash there," Mr Lukwago said in a telephone interview yesterday.

However, the Uganda Prisons Service dismissed the claims as exaggerated.



Dr Kizza Besigye appears before the High Court, where he applied for bail last year. He is accused of committing treason. PHOTO/IBRAHIM KAVUMA

Mr Frank Baine, the spokesperson of the prisons service, described the reports as "alarmist", insisting that Dr Besigye was recovering from a cold he had

had a few days back.

"Once they feel they are overshadowed on the radar, they come up with such allegations. True, he had a cold, but

he is now fine. That is an alarmist statement by those peddling it," Mr Baine said.

This is the latest reported health scare involving Dr Besigye since he was remanded to Luzira prison in November 2024.

Earlier this year, shortly after the Electoral Commission declared President Museveni the winner of the January 15 General Election, the People's Front for Freedom (PFF) announced that their leader had fallen critically ill.

At the time, party officials claimed he had been rushed to a private hospital in the middle of the night in Kampala.

Before then, Dr Besigye had also reportedly gone on a hunger strike, appearing frail during court appearances.

Dr Besigye is charged with treason alongside his aide, Obedi Lutale, and Capt Dennis Oola.

Prosecutors allege that the trio, together with others still at large, between 2023 and November 2024, in various countries, including Switzerland, Greece, Kenya, and Uganda, plotted to overthrow the government by force of arms.

The accused were arrested in November 2024 in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, where Dr Besigye and Mr Lutale had travelled to attend a book launch hosted by the country's former Justice minister Martha Karua.

The accused have since denied the charges.

The treason case is currently at the preliminary hearing stage, with state prosecutors seeking court permission to conceal the identities of six out of the 10 witnesses lined up to testify against the accused.

The matter will return to court on May 28 before Justice Emmanuel Baguma.

2024
BESIGYE DETAINED
OVER TREASON