

Thugs attack UMA president outside his home

By Cecilia Okoth

Uganda Medical Association (UMA) president Dr. Ekwaro Obuku escaped death after a group of unknown 'thugs' attacked him outside the gate to his home in Kira municipality, Wakiso district, on Wednesday night.

Police spokesperson Emillian Kayima Uganda yesterday that Obuku was attacked by criminal elements yet to be identified. However, according to eyewitnesses who spoke to the Police, Obuku was attacked as he approached the gate and his car was hit by stones which injured his nose. They also took his mobile phone.

Police also learnt that another woman identified as Joy Achigwa who is related to Obuku was assaulted as she drove towards Obuku's house.

Kayima adding that the assailants used a saloon car to flee from the scene.



Dr Ekwaro Obuku

Speaking to *New Vision* at Case Hospital in Kampala yesterday, Dr. Fauz Kavuma the UMA spokesperson said Obuku, currently at the hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU), bled profusely and sustained nose and head injuries.

"Obuku had stayed up late in

office that day, completing research for his PhD. He later made a stopover at a saloon in Kiwatule where he met a colleague (Dr. Joseph Nyanzi) before heading home," he said.

Kavuma said despite the injuries, Obuku is currently conscious, stable and improving steadily.

As the Police continues with investigations into the matter, Kayima noted that the area where the crime occurred was initially a village and has since attracted many criminals due to massive settlements.

Obuku is a researcher at the African Centre for Systems Reviews and Knowledge Transformation at the Makerere University College of Health Sciences. He also lectures students in epidemiology both at Makerere and the London School of Public Health and is a PhD student of health policy at Makerere University.

Obuku rose to prominence as

he took the mantle to advocate for better pay for the striking doctors a few weeks ago.

Doctors under their umbrella (UMA) last month laid down their tools citing poor working conditions. Eventually the Government, agreed to start giving doctors in public health facilities duty facilitation allowances as part of its commitment to the doctors to call off their strike, which had paralysed health sector across the country.

Other offers include paying of senior house officers (doctors pursuing masters' degrees), who have not been earning a salary for their work in hospitals during the time of study. The Government also agreed to resume paying bachelor's degree medical interns monthly allowances of sh940,000 each. The Ministry of Health had slashed the interns' monthly allowances to sh740,000 per person recently because of the high numbers.