

Besigye appears in two courts on same day

By Caleb Bahikaho and
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The former the former Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) presidential candidate, Dr Kizza Besigye yesterday appeared in two courts and was granted bail. Besigye first appeared in Rukungiri Magistrates Court and later Mbarara Chief Magistrates Court.

Rukungiri Court

The case in which Dr Kizza Besigye and his co-accused are charged with inciting violence, malicious damage and disobeying the Public Order Management Act was adjourned to February 20.

The Rukungiri Chief Magistrate, Julius Kyaka Borere, hoped that by that time, the state attorney will have returned back from strike that started two months ago.

Besigye, Ingrid Turinawe, the FDC secretary for mobilisation, Patrick Oboi Amuriat, FDC party presidential aspirant and Innocent Tashobya, the Rukungiri district councillor were arrested in Rukungiri

Amuriat and Munyagwa were also granted bail by the Mbarara Magistrates Court

on October 19 as they headed to Kabale district to address a rally and later released on bail.

Defense lawyer, Mark Mwesigye of Mwesigye and Company Advocates had asked the court to dismiss the case since the state had not produced any representative in court.

"Mark Odongo, who represented the prosecutors last time is not in the court to tell us how far he has gone with investigations. It is like the Police intends to deprive the rights of the accused to associate with public and

freedom of speech. I ask this court dismiss the case so that the accused get freedom," he said.

Mwesigye added that after giving the accused bail on October 25, Police re-arrested them inside court premises. There were no charges preferred against the accused.

He said Amuriat was being detained by the Mbarara Police.

The magistrate said if the state does not produce evidence to pin the accused, the case will be dismissed.

Driven to Mbarara

After the court session, Besigye, Turinawe and his driver Fred Kato were driven away in Police vehicle under tight security and taken away to Mbarara where the Police said they had another case to answer.

Rukungiri Municipality MP Rolland Mugume Kaginda said the arrest of Besigye would not stop them from continuing with the struggle.

"We know why Besigye is facing all these, but we shall not sit until peace is prevails in this



Ingrid Turinawe (left), Dr Kizza Besigye (second-right) and their co-accused in Mbarara Chief Magistrates Court yesterday. Photo by Abdulkarim Ssengendo

country. They fear how masses have opposed the amendment of the Constitution. We shall fight to make sure our Constitution is protected," he said.

Kigezi regional Police commander Denis Namuwoza said he was not after arresting Besigye and his group but only to take them back where they had come from.

Mbarara court

In Mbarara, Besigye and his co-accused were granted bail on six accounts which include inciting violence, assault and malicious damage of police property.

Besigye together with Turinawe and Kato were

arrested in Mbarara where they had gone to address rally which the Police said was illegal.

Kawempe South MP Mubarak Munyagwa and Amuriat were also bailed by the same court on similar charges.

Court presided over by Grade I Magistrate Santu Mukasa, heard that Besigye and his co-accused on the November 14, at Mahembegente in Muti cell, Kakoba division in Mbarara Municipality, assaulted Police officers. The officers included Nelson, Patrick Opoka, Joseph Mwenge and Michael Oyet who were on duty. They were also accused of inciting violence in Mbarara town and damaging Police property.

The accused were released on sh5m non-cash bail each and each of their sureties sh5m also non-cash. They will again appear in court on January 16, next year.

Stanley Katembeyi and George Tumwesigye both businessmen in Mbarara stood surety for Amuriat and Munyagwa.

While eight people, Imamu Makumbi, Amon Akankwasa, Joseph Twinomujuni, Zaid Wasswa, Pricilla Muhirwe, Juma Lubyayi, Senex Tamale and Mutesi Zulik stood for Besigye, Turinawe and Kato.

After the court session, Besigye and his co-accused were escorted by the Police to an unknown place.