



Press Release

THE JUDICIARY

Plot 2, The Square High Court Building
P. O. Box 7085, Kampala Uganda

IN ANY CORRESPONDENCE ON
THIS SUBJECT PLEASE QUOTE NO.

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Chief Justice Condemns Hooliganism in Dr. Nyanzi Case

KAMPALA: The Chief Justice, Bart M. Katureebe, is dismayed by the acts of hooliganism that culminated into yet another assault on a judicial officer in the course of her duties. He described them as uncivilized, offensive and disrespectful of the sanctity of the courts.

On Friday (August 2), a charged group of political activists overran security at the Buganda Road Chief Magistrate's Court, vandalizing court property, including videoconferencing and security equipment.

They also hit Ms. Gladys Kamasanyu, a Magistrate Grade One, in the face with a bottle, while delivering her verdict in a case of social activist, Dr. Stella Nyanzi. The magistrate convicted Dr. Nyanzi on the offense of cyber harassment and sentenced her to 18 months in prison.

The Chief Justice, who commended the Magistrate for remaining calm throughout the proceedings and the assault on her, said acts of hooliganism have no place in a civilized society.

"This kind of thing is not acceptable...we condemn this kind of hooliganism in the strongest possible terms. We hope the culprits are quickly identified and brought to book," he said.

"We're working hand-in-hand with relevant authorities to ensure that there is adequate security for all judicial officers. I have already asked the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to raise the matters of Courts' security as a matter of urgency in Cabinet."

Judiciary's Permanent Secretary, Mr. Pius Bigirimana, who was equally concerned about the assault of a magistrate, has strongly condemned the attack, adding that "judicial officers must be protected as they perform their duties," he said.

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The Chief Registrar, Ms. Esta Nambayo, said Judicial Officers are merely neutral arbiters who carefully hear both parties in a matter before making a verdict in accordance with the law. “The law gives dissatisfied parties a right to appeal any judicial decision up to the Supreme Court.

“We know that Her Worship Kamasanyu dutifully played her part in the case of Dr. Nyanzi, and anyone dissatisfied with her decision has a right to appeal rather than engaging in violence,” she said.

She said the Courts simply adjudicate cases and the public is always allowed to follow the proceedings. “We find it callous for litigants to organise crowds to try and undermine judicial independence. If we want to be governed by the rule of law, then we must allow institutions to operate and that is why the Constitution provides for the courts,” said Ms. Nambayo.

ENQUIRIES

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