

Uganda domestic radio and newspapers, November 29th, 2010 (covering November 22nd to November 28th 2010)

By Laura Schülke, MIGS reporter for Uganda

1) State-owned media

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. November 24, 2010, in English

"Police most hostile to journalists, says report" by Josephine Maseruka

- The police have ranked highest among perpetrators of hostility against the media, according to the just-released Press Freedom Index Report. The police actions against journalists included illegal detentions and beatings, as well as destruction of their equipment.
- J.B. Wasswa, a lecturer at Makerere University's mass communication department, who presented the report, said most of the incidences involved junior police officers.
- The report also said the police were not doing enough to prosecute individuals who perpetuate violence on journalists. The report, which covered 10 months from January, also pinned resident district commissioners (RDCs) and local security committees. "They force radio stations to cancel shows with opposition leaders, and even order the arrest of journalists at will," the report said.
- The report is from a study conducted by the Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ-Uganda), an independent advocacy network for media rights.

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. November 26, 2010, in English

"USA to disarm Joseph Kony rebels" by Barbara Among

- The government has welcomed the plan by the US to disarm the Lord's Resistance Army rebels. US president Barack Obama on Wednesday presented Congress with a plan to disarm the LRA. The strategy responds to a law Obama proposed and Congress passed six months ago to defuse the spiraling bloodshed in central Africa, protect civilians and bring LRA leaders to justice.

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. November 28, 2010, in English

"Kony war caused by poor governance" by Patrick Okino

- [Opposition] Uganda Federal Alliance presidential candidate Beti Olive Kamya has blamed the two-decade Lord's Resistance Army war in northern Uganda on bad governance.
- She said although Uganda got independence in 1962, the British system of governance still exists. "We must change from the dictatorial and exploitative system to a democratic system," Kamya said.
- She said the term limit would be reinstated in the constitution and the power of the President reduced if she is voted into power.

Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) Radio Kampala, 0400 GMT. November 25, 2010, in English

- Col. Fred Mwesigye of Uganda People's Defense Forces has quit the army and opted to join politics.

2) Privately owned media

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. November 22, 2010, in English

"Museveni accuses opposition of lies" by Moses Akena

- President Museveni yesterday criticized his political opponents for "misleading" Ugandans that it was the government escalating the insecurity in the north.
- The NRM presidential candidate said the critics are "useless and dangerous opportunists" since they knew his government was involved in many war fronts with Sudan, the Allied Defense Forces and the Lord's Resistance Army, coupled with a weak local machinery.
- Mr Otunnu has persistently accused the president of deliberately orchestrating "genocide" in the north, while DP leader Norbert Mao has also in the past accused the president of shunning peaceful means to end the conflict.

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. November 22, 2010, in English

"Army harassing us, says opposition" by Tabu Butagira

- As nomination of parliamentary candidates gets underway this week, the military is facing allegations of intimidating and sabotaging opposition candidates, particularly in Karamoja region. Two senior army officers have been accused of intimidating potential parliamentary and local government flag bearers, raising questions about the neutrality of the UPDF as required by law.
- The two senior officers denied the allegations in telephone interviews with this newspaper, and challenged their accusers to produce evidence to back up the claims.
- The constitution, the UPDF Act and election-related laws bar serving military and security officers from engaging in partisan politics.
- The Supreme Court in 2006, however, ruled that the army violated this principle of neutrality and instead perpetuated violence during campaigns.

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. November 26, 2010, in English

"ADF in fresh calls for peace talks" by Isaac Imaka

- The Allied Democratic Front has issued a fresh request for truce with the government despite several botched attempts in the past. The group, which has waged hostilities from its base in the Mountain ranges of the Rwenzori in Kasese since 1986, now says it is "serious" about peace and has petitioned the Amnesty Commission to intercede with the government.
- Amnesty Commission chairman, Justice Peter Onega, told reporters yesterday that the rebels want to end hostilities because "they believe the fighting will not help and they now want to return home and settle".
- There have been several attempts in the last four years to talk peace with the ADF with the most recent being in 2008. Justice Onega said he was not at liberty to release the document to reporters because it is not yet public, but added that he met the ADF's second in command, Ahmed Asinja, in DR Congo last week.
- The ADF is headed by Jamil Mukulu, a catholic-cum Muslim belonging to the Tabliq sect. Asked to comment on the timing of this latest demand, Justice Onega said it has nothing to do with the current election season.