

In Kenya, hospital staff said to have attacked journalist

NEW YORK: Four employees of the Wajir District Hospital attacked journalist Abdi Hassan Hussein at the hospital on Saturday, 18 June 2011, the reporter told the Committee to Protect Journalists. Hassan, a reporter for the Wajir Community Radio Station in the far north-eastern corner of the country, said he visited the hospital with three colleagues to investigate complaints from patients.



Hassan said he had interviewed one patient, who complained of treatment at the hospital, when a manager directed him to an office where employees kicked and punched him. Hassan received treatment for bruising at a local clinic, although he said he still suffers from chest and neck pain.

The journalists who accompanied Hassan to the hospital said they were outside the room where the attack was said to take place, but they could hear the altercation and made an audio recording. The journalists said they filed a police report. Police Chief Ronald Ngallo told CPJ that officers have taken the statements from the journalists and plan to investigate further this week. Repeated calls by CPJ to the hospital seeking comment went unanswered.

"Beating a journalist for simply doing his job is totally unacceptable," said CPJ East Africa consultant Tom Rhodes. "Police must take immediate action."

Wajir Community Radio, launched last year, is aimed at the communities living near the Kenya-Somali border, according to local reports.

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