

DRC doctor evacuated after murder attempt

BUKAVU - An award-winning doctor, renowned for his work with women recovering from sexual violence, was "evacuated" from a town in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, two days after he narrowly escaped a murder attempt there, one of his aides told AFP.

Gynaecologist Denis Mukwege's whereabouts were not immediately known but another source said he had left Bukavu with his family. B

Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu province, will be come to a standstill on Wednesday to protest against the attack and rampant violence in the town where at least four people have been killed in the past few days, a public figure told AFP.

Five armed men in civilian clothes broke into Mukwege's home on Thursday, but he was able to flee while a man who tried raise the alarm occupied the attackers.

The doctor was with two of his daughters and one of their friends when the assault took place. A source involved in the police investigation told AFP that a domestic worker was shot dead in the attack.

Rights activists have called on the DRC's government to protect the doctor. The eastern regions of the DRC are plagued by conflict with civilian women frequently being raped by rebel militias or government soldiers.

Police recovered Mukwege's car, which was used by the assailants when they fled the scene. Last Friday, Didier Reynders, Belgium's foreign minister called on the authorities to "do everything possible to make sure Dr Mukwege is safe and to rapidly find those responsible for the attack".

Mukwege founded the Panzi hospital and foundation to help the thousands of women who have been raped in the strife-torn eastern DRC.

His activities have won him several nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Source: *AFP* via I-NET Bridge