

Pregnant woman, children drown in River Aswa

Arrested. The LC 3 chairman of Aromo Sub-county, Mr David Elich, said police have arrested the two boys who were rowing "the killer boat" and they are being held at Aromo police post as investigations continue.

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LIRA/MBALE. A 37-year-pregnant woman and her two daughters died on Friday after their boat sank on River Aswa in northern Uganda. The deceased and her children were crossing the river to go to the garden.

Ms Esther Adar, a resident of Ogot village in Aromo Trading Centre, was travelling with her daughters Nancy Atim 16 and Hilda Amuge 10.

Mr Daniel Adar told *Sunday Monitor* that his wife was about to give birth. She was eight months pregnant.

He also explained that her wife and their children were crossing Aswa River to go and dig in there garden, which is located in Atede village, Awere Sub County in Pader district.

River Aswa separates Aromo Sub-county in Lira District, Puranga and Awere Sub Counties in Pader District.

Mr Jasper Ocen a resident of Adagani village in Otara Parish said he was among those who arrived at the scene after about 20 minutes, but found that the three bodies had sunk deep into the river and local divers were reluctant to rescue the victims from the deadly waters.

Mr Ocen, however, blamed the boat accident on the negligence of one the rowers who sat on the edge of the boat, forcing it to capsize and plunging their clients into the river. Local residents insist that a combination of the absence of a police rescue boat on the river and inexperienced rowers could have complicated matters.

Mr Ocen explained that the boat belonged to Mr Ben Obonyo and was being rowed by two boys identified as Innocent Abwangu, 15 and Denis Ojuka, 18 who were transporting the deceased with her daughters.

It is alleged that when the boat reached the middle of the river Ojuka sat on the edge of the boat forcing it to tilt to one side. He fell into the water and managed to swim the other side unhurt.

He added that when Ojuka fell off, water started seeping into the boat. At this point, Ms Adar and her daughters started panicking and immediately started screaming.

Abwangu who was rowing the boat, lost control and the boat capsized throwing the remaining four occupants into the river.

Ms Adar and her two children drowned because they didn't know how to swim. Abwangu swam across the river and escaped unscratched.

The LC 3 chairman of Aromo Sub-county, Mr David Elich, said police have arrested the two boys who were rowing "the killer boat" and they are being held at Aromo police post as in-

vestigations continue.

"We want them to tell us what exactly caused the accident that led to the loss of four lives from the same family including the unborn child," Mr Elich told *Sunday Monitor* on Friday afternoon.

He said the two suspects were transferred to Agweng Police station after the relatives of the deceased came from Alois sub-county in Alebtong District on Friday afternoon and raided Aromo police post with the intention of lynching the suspects.

By press time, police authorities were still searching for the bodies of the deceased.

"Their bodies are not at the spot where they drowned. We believe their bodies have been carried away by the water. We have alerted residents who live near the river to help us in searching for the bodies when they float," Mr Elich said

Lira District Police Commander, Mr Joel Tubanone re-

gretted the incident.

He cautioned the public not to risk crossing the river using unsafe vessels, especially during the rainy season which has led to the rise in water levels.

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**DAVID ELICH, LC 3 CHAIRMAN
OF AROMO SUB-COUNTY**

13 year-old- child drowns in River Namatala

And in a related incident, a 13-year-old drowned in River Namatala in Mbale District on Thursday. The body is still missing. The deceased was in Primary Four at Nyanza Primary School. Her mother and children were heading to the swamp to cultivate but unfortunately the deceased child drowned in the process. The child has been identified as Daphin Nakipa. She was the daughter of Mr David Nanghido, a resident of Nyanza village, Kamonkoli parish in Budaka district.

Mr Sowali Kamulya, the Bukedi Region police spokesperson, confirmed the incident, saying that both residents and police authorities were still searching for the body. He, however, advised the farmers crossing makeshift bridges in the area to be careful, cautioning that the water levels have risen as a result of the rainy season.

Blamed

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