BUSIA BUSINESSMAN KIDNAPPED

By Simon Masaba

Although the overall crime rate countrywide has declined, kidnappings, domestic violence and organised urban gangs continue to be reported in Uganda this week.

The most alarming case last week involved the abduction of a 34-year-old businessman in Busia district, with kidnappers demanding a ransom of sh15m.

According to the Police, Mubarak Rashid Magayani was lured out of his home in the early hours of Wednesday after receiving a distress phone call.

Bukedi South regional Police spokesperson Moses Mugwe said the victim stepped outside his gate at around 1:40am, only to find a white vehicle with waiting for him.

"He was immediately grabbed, forced into the vehicle and driven to an unknown destination," Mugwe said.

Investigations indicate that the kidnappers have since contacted the victim's family, demanding sh15m for his release.

The Police have since launched a manhunt to find the victim and arrest the perpetrators.

PHOTOS BY MIRIAM NAMUTEBI



Ochaya (left), the police undersecretary Aggrey Wunyi and members of the police force appearing before the Public Accounts Committee at Parliament on 10 March

KAMPALA

In Kampala, the Police have intensified night patrols following the arrest of two youth, who were found in possession of dangerous weapons. The suspects were intercepted early yesterday morning during a routine patrol by officers from Kikoni Police Station.

Kampala Metropolitan Police spokesperson Racheal Kawala said officers became suspicious after encountering a group of six young men loitering near Nyumbani Hotel.

"Upon seeing the Police officers, the group attempted to flee, prompting officers to go after them," Kawala said.

Two suspects, Omirambe Nizara, 18,and Daniel Ochom, 23, were arrested, while others escaped. Police recovered a panga and a knife from one of the suspects.

MBALE

In Mbale city, four victims remain hospitalised following an explosion that left four people injured in St Andrew's Cell, Industrial division on Tuesday.

Elgon regional police spokesperson Rogers Taitika said the victims were injured while offloading scrap metal from a vehicle.

"One of the workers threw down a sack containing metallic items, triggering off a loud explosion," Taitika said.

Those injured include scrap dealer Dan Madanda, Arafat Namulembwa, Eva Nafuna and businessman Hassan Maganda.

The Police recovered fragments believed to be from an explosive device, including a broken cartridge and a rusty sub-machine gun magazine.

A nearby vehicle was also damaged in the blast.

The victims were rushed to Mbale hospital as the Police's bomb squad analysed the scene.

LAKE VICTORIA BOAT TRAGEDY

In Mayuge district, a boat carrying 14 passengers capsized near Bugoto landing site on Tuesday.

Initially, it was reported that three people died in the tragedy, but the death toll has since risen to six, according to Busoga East regional police spokesperson Michael Kasadha.

Eight passengers were rescued. The deceased, including women and children, have now been identified as Zalika Naiwumbwe, Badiru Gabunga, Faruk Mudoli, Awori Kisakye, Blessing Nabuzale and another one only identified as Rebecca.

"The likely cause of the accident is overloading," Kasadha said.

Survivors were rushed to Kigandalo Health Centre IV for treatment, while search operations have since scaled down following the recovery of the missing people.

TEACHER ARRESTED

In Budaka district, police arrested a 30-year-old primary school teacher accused of attempting to defile a 16-year-old pupil.

Eria Odongo, a teacher at Nampiido Primary School and resident of Kibuku district, allegedly lured the Primary Seven pupil out of class with the intention of defiling her.

Bukedi North regional Police spokesperson Wilfred Kyempasa said the suspect claimed the girl's mother had called her home to prepare for Eid festivities.

Instead, he reportedly took her on a motorcycle to a hotel room in Budaka, where he attempted to sleep with her.

"The victim raised an alarm after the suspect began touching her, prompting people to intervene," Kyempasa said.

The suspect is currently detained at Budaka Central Police Station.

TORORO

In Tororo district, a domestic dispute ended in tragedy after a man stabbed his wife to death.

Christine Achom, 25, was reportedly killed by her husband, Martin Ibatani, 28, in Kangura B village, Kwapa sub-county.

According to the Police, the suspect attacked his wife after she threatened to leave the marriage, accusing him of theft.

"He stabbed her multiple times in the face and abdomen, killing her instantly," Mugwe said.

Preliminary investigations reveal that the suspect had earlier been implicated in the theft of a pig.

After stabbing the wife, the suspect reportedly surrendered himself to a local council leader, who alerted the Police.

He is now in custody, while the body of the deceased was taken to Tororo Municipal Mortuary for postmortem.

CRIME CRACKDOWNS

The incidents come amid ongoing nationwide operations targeting criminal gangs and hotspots.

Recently, Deputy Inspector General of Police James Ochaya told Parliament's Public Accounts Committee that at least 7,159 suspects were arrested across the country in January and February.

Of these, 3,724 have already been arraigned in courts of law. Within the Kampala Metropolitan Area alone, 3,512 suspects were arrested, with 1,935 taken to court.