

# Nebbi truck victims admitted to Mengo

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Three students of Uringi Secondary School in Nebbi district are admitted in critical condition at Mengo Hospital in Kampala, following a fatal accident that occurred on Tuesday.

Jonathan Oyeny, Mary Phionah Paramu and Tracy Oyiru sustained severe injuries to their heads, arms, and legs.

The children were airlifted to Kampala aboard a Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) helicopter, which landed at Kololo Independence Grounds, where they were picked by medical personnel in ambulances.

The three some of the 49 students of Uringi Secondary School who were involved in a fatal accident on Tuesday, when the Isuzu truck they were travelling in lost control and veered off the road, before overturning about one-and-a-half-kilometres away from the school.

Hassan Hiwumbire, the officer in charge of Goli Police border post, identified the dead as Lindah Akech, a Senior Three student from Alebtong; Isaac Manano, a Senior Four student from Parombo and Victory Thojwiga, a Senior Five student from Mamba in Nebbi district.

Franco Bithola, a teacher at the school, said the students were going to a Young Christian Society music, dance and drama competition organised by Nebbi Catholic Diocese.

Grace Kwiycwiny, the state minister for northern Uganda, said the three students died on the spot, while 26



Uganda People's Defence Forces officers lifting Mary Phiona Paramu, one of the students who were airlifted to Kampala for better treatment at Mengo Hospital. Photo by Abou Kisige

others and a teacher are still admitted at Nebbi Hospital, with fractured limbs.

The driver, according to the Police, was arrested.

Kwiycwiny said the ones who were airlifted had head injuries. She said the airlifting was ordered by President Yoweri Museveni.

"The Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) was kind enough to send this aircraft very early in the morning. The victims have been taken to Mengo Hospital and their treatment will be paid for by the UPDF," she said.

Kwiycwiny said the President, upon learning about the accident

through the First Lady, who is also the education minister, directed the army leadership to airlift them to Kampala for better medical attention.

She said the President and the First Lady promised to send money to the bereaved families.

"When I told the First Lady about the

## BETWEEN THE LINES:

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accident, she immediately informed the President, who asked the CDF to ensure that the students are airlifted to Kampala for better medical attention. We are so grateful to the President," Kwiycwiny said.

She, however, did not mince words about headteachers who put the lives of students at risk by loading them onto trucks.

Kwiycwiny said such headteachers should face the law because that mode of transport was banned by the education ministry.

The education ministry issued guidelines three years ago stopping school headteachers from using open-roofed vehicles to transport children.

However, in Nebbi and other parts of West Nile region, the directives remained on paper, with many schools using tipper trucks to transport learners for co-curricular activities.

Jessica Ongeirho, the Nebbi district deputy chief administrative officer, asked school heads to acknowledge the fact that trucks are no longer used for transporting students.