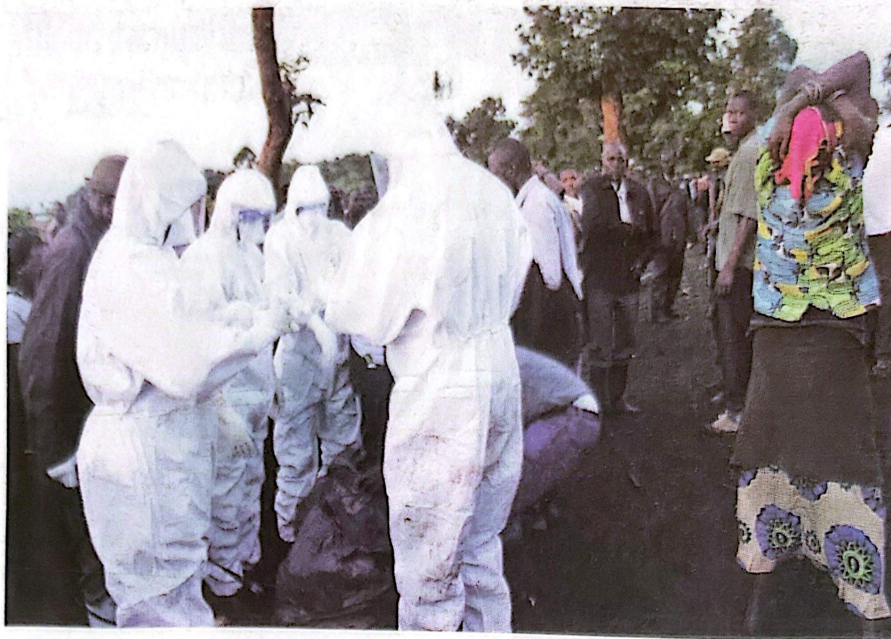




RIP. Health experts prepare to bury the third marburg victim in Kamwam village on Thursday. PHOTO BY JOYCE CHEMITAI.

Residents attack health workers, police as 3rd marburg victim is buried

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KAMPALA. A third victim of the marburg outbreak has died in Kamwam village, Kapchorwa Sub-county in Kween District, the health ministry has said.

"This patient is a 38-year-old male, brother to the confirmed case and the probable case. Because of his close contact with the probable and confirmed cases, he was listed as a high risk contact. However, he refused review and follow-up by the contact tracing/surveillance team, despite several attempts to do so," a statement by the health ministry released on Thursday, reads in part.

It adds: "On the October 24, however, he accepted to speak to the contact tracing team, which noted that he had developed marburg-like symptoms. He was transported to the isolation unit with fever, body weakness, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, joint pains and history of vomiting blood while at home. Despite the tireless efforts from a dedicated case management team to revive this case, he unfortunately passed away earlier today [Thursday] (RIP)."

However, during the burial on Thursday, the residents attacked

THE ATTACK

Accusations. During the burial on Thursday, the residents attacked the health workers and police officers, claiming there is no Marburg in their area but the health officials are just hoodwinking government in order to get cash.

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The residents attributed the death of the latest marburg victim to witchcraft.

"You are using us to get money from donors. We have no marburg here. Why is it that the same family is affected? This is something, a cultural omen that the family and clan should sit and deal with," an angry mourner shouted at the medics and the police officers.

During the attack, a doctor and a police officer were hit by stones as the locals insisted they should go away and leave them to bury their own.

Mr Micheal Mwanje, the Kween

District chief administrative officer, said he regretted the incident and blamed the community for failing to support the affected family in explaining the cause of death. He asked political, religious and clan leaders to join the fight against the disease.

The ministry also in its statement said there is another suspect case of a 25-year-old female from a village known as Government lodge, Kawowo parish, Kapchorwa District.

"She has since been isolated and a sample was collected for confirmation. A pregnancy test was done and is positive. Her condition is, however, stable," the ministry said in its statement. The ministry also revealed that a new probable case is a 23-year-old male from Toywo village, Western Division, Kapchorwa Municipality.

They explained that this suspect's bed was next to the deceased's and that a blood sample was collected. The case is still under isolation at Kapchorwa hospital, in stable condition.

Statistics from the health ministry indicate that the total number of contacts under follow-up currently stands at 130, 85 and 45 from Kween and Kapchorwa districts, respectively.

