

Silverbacks caught up in Alexandria

By Chrispus Baluku

Uganda's Silverbacks are stranded in Egypt following a difficult outing in the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 African Qualifiers where they lost all three games in Alexandria.

The team was scheduled to fly out of Alexandria on Monday night through Dubai International Airport.

However, much of the Middle East airspace closed due to escalating tensions caused by the US-Israel-Iran war that broke out on Saturday.

Team manager Albert Ahabwe told Vision Sport that they are waiting for clear communication from their travel agents.

"Right now, we are waiting for an answer from our travel agent. Our flight was scheduled for Monday at 10:45PM through Dubai. We haven't got a final word yet, so it's a bit premature for alarm," said Ahabwe.

With major airlines suspending flights indefinitely, the team may be forced to look for alternative and more expensive travel arrangements.

Despite the uncertainty, officials say there is calm in the camp as Uganda's basketball leadership remains in Alexandria with the players.

On the court, the Silverbacks finished bottom of Group D with a 0-3 record after defeats to Angola, Mali and Egypt. They closed the window with a heavy 91-52 loss to Egypt at the Borg El Arab Arena.

Uganda briefly led 2-0 and 4-2 in the opening minutes, but Egypt responded with an 18-0 run between the first and second quarters and controlled the game for more than 37 minutes. The biggest gap reached 39 points late in the fourth quarter.

Coach Mandy Juruni admitted the team struggled throughout the window.

"We had different problems in all three games, giving out transition points and not taking care of the game. Against Egypt, we were very flat and low energy. We missed a lot of chances," Juruni said.

"We need a team which is deep. The guys were tired and fatigued. We do miss a lot of players but that's not really an excuse.