

How boy who delivered Valentine flower to girlfriend was killed

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KAMPALA. When we arrived in Mabanda Cell, a few kilometres off a feeder road in Gombe Division, Wakiso District, yesterday afternoon, residents were still reeling from a teenage romance that had ended in tragedy. The incident occurred on Saturday, February 14 - Valentine's Day.

The scene of the incident is a family home built out of bricks and iron sheets, which has since been abandoned.

Martin Bukenya, 18, a student at Hillside Senior Secondary School in Matuga, Wakiso District, and a resident of Kirinyabigo, Kawanda, Nabweru Division, Wakiso District, was beaten to death by a man identified as Hebert Lumu.

The attack happened after Lumu found Bukenya with his 14 year old daughter inside his house in Mabanda Cell, Gombe Division, Nansana Municipality, Wakiso District.

Bukenya had reportedly brought a



What witnesses said.

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Valentine flower to Lumu's daughter, Christine (her only known name), who attends the same school. They were both in Senior Two.

Ms Betty Nansubuga, a resident in the area, said the deceased was pronounced dead while on the way to the clinic.

Police position

Kampala Metropolitan police spokesperson Racheal Kawaala said the victim succumbed to injuries sustained during the assault.

Following the incident, the suspect reportedly fled the scene together with

his family. Efforts are ongoing to trace and arrest him," Ms Kawaala said.

When the scene of crime officers arrived they deployed a dog but it lost track of the suspect's movements.

"When we returned the body at home, we found the father and his other family members had escaped, then we informed police from Matuga, who came and cordoned off the areas," Ms Nansubuga said.

She said the home was locked immediately when police conveyed the body to city Mortuary Mulago.

Neighbours recounted that the incident unfolded after Lumu discovered Bukenya at his home. They said the father locked himself inside with the boy and began punching, kicking, and caning him mercilessly.

"The beating seemed intentional; there were many other ways to handle the situation. He didn't even ask to analyse the whole situation before acting because school colleagues usually visit each other," said one neighbour, who

witnessed the attack.

The neighbour added that residents tried to intervene by breaking doors and windows to stop the assault but were unsuccessful. By the time police arrived, Bukenya was already dead, and Lumu, with his family, had vanished into thin air.

GROWING TREND

A total of 1,339 cases of murder as a result of assault were reported to Police in 2024 compared to 1,142 cases reported in 2023, giving a 17 percent increase in this crime category.

According to the report, 1,340 persons were assaulted to death, of whom, 1,091 were male adults, 156 were female adults, 69 were male juveniles and 24 were female juveniles.

"The beating estimate lasted for an hour or more, and it seems as if he also used stones in the attack," the resident added. Ms Robinah Nalujja, the village chairperson where the incident took place, decried Lumu's act, describing it as "uncontrolled anger of a parent that has no place in society."

View of local leaders

"It's alleged that Lumu married his wife when she was just 13, and his daughter is now nearly 18. So how can you reach an extent of killing someone for a circumstance you have a history about," she added.

The mother of the deceased, Emelda Nakiyemba, was informed about the incident at about 11pm of the same day.

Murder by assault in urban areas is a hard nut to crack, often driven by a cocktail of social, economic, and psychological factors, including alcohol and drug abuse, family disputes, mental health challenges, and the breakdown of social support systems.