

Security

Caution

Ransom

Rape

By Eddie Ssejjoba and Jackie Nambogga

Thugs kidnap Luwero student, demand sh10m

The Police were yesterday still making efforts to hunt down criminals who kidnapped a Senior Four Schoolgirl and demanded a ransom of sh10m.

Rehema Naluzze, 18, a student of Kiyindu Secondary School in Luwero district, was reportedly kidnapped on Saturday as she waited for a taxi to go back to school after picking her school fees from Lugazi, Buliwe district.

By press time, Naluzze was allegedly still being held by the kidnapers in an undisclosed place, probably in Kampala city or its suburbs, according to family members.

The kidnapers made a phone call to her parents and threatened to rape and kill her as a punishment if they did not deposit the ransom on a mobile money number they forwarded to them.

The Ssezibwa regional Police spokesperson, Hellen Butoto, said the parents had filed a case at Lugazi Police Station.

She said the Police had contacted the Flying Squad to help in the hunt, with hope of rescuing the victim.

Naluzze, who was in a boarding section, was on April 4 asked by the school administration to clear the school fees balance of sh100,000, according to the Police.

She first went to her grandmother Aisha Namirimu who lives in Luwero. Her grandmother was unable to get the money. She instead sent her to her mother, Hasifa Nakakawa, a petty trader in Kikambwe, Lugazi municipality, Buliwe district.

Nakakawa told the Police that it took her time to get the money. On Saturday she asked her to prepare to return to school after securing the required money.

According to her statement, she escorted her daughter, but left before she reached the main stage at Kiteezi. She told the Police that she asked her to walk to the stage and find a taxi along the Jinja-Kampala highway. She returned home and was hopeful she would reach well.

Naluzze did not have a cellphone and only carried sh100,000 and her taxi fare in her bag.

The call

On Saturday evening at about 9:00pm, the mother received a phone call from Naluzze's sister, a one Aisha Nantume, who lives in Nanteete Kampala. Nantume told her that she had received calls from mysterious people who claimed they had kidnapped Naluzze.

According to Nakakawa, the callers demanded sh10m to hand back the daughter or else they would kill her. Nantume forwarded the telephone number to her mother so that she could verify the



Naluzze's mother (right) with a friend. The kidnapers told her to find sh10m to rescue her daughter



Naluzze (right) with her mother Nakakawa in an old family picture

information.

Nakakawa said the kidnapers repeated the demands and threats to kill her daughter if she did not respond in time.

They allegedly boasted of having kidnaped several

others and that she would not be the first victim.

To confirm their demands, the kidnapers allegedly allowed the mother to briefly talk to her daughter on phone, but before she asked her for details, they hung up.

However, Nakakawa says she heard the daughter say she was at Mukwano Arcade in Kampala.

"I pleaded with them not to kill my daughter. I told them I did not have the money. They

asked me to stop joking," she said, adding that they told her to look for money or trace her remains.

Family sources say the mother called the kidnapers again and asked for two more days to enable her sell her land and pay them sh5m. That the kidnapers told her not to involve the Police

BETWEEN THE LINES

Police spokesperson Emilian Kayima has warned the public against some unscrupulous persons including spouses and children who are stage-managing kidnaps to defraud their partners and parents.

Police cautions public

Police spokesperson, Emilian Kayima yesterday told journalists at the Central Police Station in Kampala that they were grappling with increasing incidents of kidnap involving criminals demanding ransoms from the victims' families.

He said they threaten to harm or kill captives if their demands are not met within a specified period of time.

He, however, warned the public against some

spouses and children who said were taking advantage of the ongoing wave of crime to fake and stage-manage kidnaps to defraud their partners and parents.

He said the incidents had caused a lot of tension but family members after the kidnapers warn the victims' families against reporting the matter to the Police.

Kayima, however, said some victims had been rescued as a result of vigilance by the public and fast Police action.

Over the weekend, Kayima said, the Police rescued a two-and-a-half-year-old baby that had been kidnapped from her home in Kiteezi, Kasangali sub-county in Wakiso district by a couple from the same village.

Galvin Nakitende, the daughter of Deborah Namugga and Musa Katende, both residents of Kiteezi, was rescued from a house where two other toddlers were found by the Police after a month's hunt.

She went missing from her home on March 16 and was recovered on April 14. The kidnapers kept her in a house a few metres from her parents' rental room and demanded a ransom of sh30m. Katende is son of the Kampala Central division chairperson, Charles Sserunjogi.

Kayima said five suspects, Aziz Balikoowa, John Asasira, Ambrose Kavuma, Joseph Katerega and another only identified as Natureeba were arrested and were still detained by the Police as investigations in the matter continued. The suspects allegedly told the Police that all they wanted was the money. The baby has been handed back to the parents.

Mariam Uwase case

Kayima said the Police was also still investigating a case where 21-year-old Mariam Uwase faked a kidnap and demanded a ransom of sh25m from her new boyfriend.

Kayima said Uwase connived with a former boyfriend and manipulated her voice. She made teary calls to her new boyfriend, saying she was about to be killed.

"The new boyfriend, out of desperation, deposited sh700,000 and pleaded for more time to send more money," Kayima said.

He instead reported the matter to Old Kampala Police Station and after a hunt, Uwase was arrested from a house without any sign of torture. She told the Police that she needed money to look after her siblings.

She is still being detained at Old Kampala Police Station on charges of giving false information.

"We have received several cases of fake kidnaps where children and spouses stage-manage kidnaps to extort money from unsuspecting