**Lightning kills three, injures one in West Nile [Uganda]**

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Experts have advised the public to take extreme precaution against lightning during the ongoing rainy season. Photo/File

The injured Suraya Ayub is currently admitted at Lodonga Health Centre IV and the bodies of the two deceased are awaiting burial today.

Lightning has killed three children and injured one in two separate incidents in West Nile.

**Event 1**

The incident occurred in the evening of  September 5 in Rokoze Village, Paladru parish, Drajini Sub-county in Yumbe District during a light downpour.

Speaking to Monitor on Tuesday night, Mr Bashir Ahumad, an uncle to the deceased children said the incident happened when the children were in the kitchen.

It is unfortunate that we have lost Fahad Bangutu, 12, a primary three pupil of Lodonga Black Primary school, and Zaidin Ayub, 9, a primary one pupil at the same school. While injured the 12 year-old, Suraya Ayub sustained injuries,” he said.

Mr Bashir added that; "They were in the kitchen boiling water for bathing. However as they were in the kitchen, lightning struck and threw them outside. We rushed them to Lodonga Health Centre IV where my sons Bangutu Fahad and Zaidin Ayub were pronounced dead by the medical workers.”

The injured Suraya Ayub is currently admitted at Lodonga Health Centre IV and the bodies of the two deceased are awaiting burial today.

**Event 2**

Similarly, in Arua City, a 16 year-old boy only identified as Sabir was struck dead by lightning at Kebir Cell, in Kenya Ward in Central Division.

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Last year, a heavy downpour with hailstorms caused destruction in the same area where food crops, animals and buildings were ravaged.

The Yumbe District Chairperson, Mr Abdulmutwalib Asiku said "It is quite unfortunate that this happened in this period when we are changing the designing of our structures especially schools and Health centres to have lightning arrestors. Ideally if it's not because of poverty, every household is supposed to have lightning arrestors but currently I am yet to get technical guidance on how we shall handle this." He said they had already instructed all public institutions like schools and hospitals to have lightning arrestors to avoid such occurances.

"Parents should ensure that children remain in safer places when it is raining because some of the areas are lightning prone and even people who are aged should be at home whenever it is raining," he added.

He called upon parents to be vigilant and protect the children during the rainy season.

The meteorological department has warned that the country will receive El Nino rain in the months of September to December. There is a possibility of disasters like floods and lightning as a result of the heavy rains. He asked people to be prepared for such disasters.