

## Journalists survive thunderbolt

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/688334-1190308-akuj9wz/index.html>

aclenet.org/ups/2015/05/Journalists-survive-thunderbolt-uganda.pdf

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By David Livingstone Okumu

### Gulu

Daily Monitor reporter and NTV correspondent Moses Akena, including four other journalists, survived death when lightning struck and slightly burnt a radio station they were in. The Sunday incident happened during a two-hour downpour which put the radio off air.

Mr Akena said the first bolt of lightning damaged the power changer for Uganda Telecom, located within the radio premises, and minutes later, they heard a big bang that forced them to scamper for safety. "We were shocked by a loud thunder at about 1:30pm and within minutes, we all rushed out to find the studios burning," he said.

The lightning struck the station's fixed landline phone in the room the five were in, before spreading to the studio. Mr Akena said he and three others were in the manager's office before two sports analysts who were in the studio, joined them after electricity went off 15 minutes earlier.

Others who survived were Willy Choowo, the station's news editor, Walter Akena, the deputy news editor, sports anchors Genesis Latigo and Alfred D'bongo and Mark Atile, a researcher with ACODE.

The studio sound proof equipment as well as the ceiling board were completely destroyed by the bolt of lightning.

The deputy fire commandant of the police fire brigade in Gulu, Ms Florence Amukia, said although the premise had a lightning conductor, it had become faulty due to wear and tear. "Sometimes it (lightning conductor) can fail when it over stays which makes it easy for lightning to affect it," she said.

Three other people including a six-year-old Emmanuel Lubangakene and his 15-year-old sister Barbra Goretti Adong have been admitted to Gulu Regional Referral Hospital for treatment. At least three people were killed and 50 others injured by lightning in Akura Sub-county in Alebtong District over the weekend.