

Playtime turns tragic as lightning kills four

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Tragedy struck three families at a village in Nandi North District after lightning killed four children at the weekend.

The lightning struck the minors aged between seven and 11 as they played football under a tree at 4pm on Sunday afternoon. The minors were pupils at Kaiboi Primary School and Father Toror Lelei Academy.

A sombre mood engulfed the Kaiboi after residents were informed of the news of the tragic deaths. They thronged the homes of the affected families in large numbers and converged at one of the open grounds to console the bereaved families and relatives.

Ms Celestine Kebenei, 35, who lost her seven-year-old daughter and son aged 11 is yet to come to terms with what befell her family. "I had sent the boy to go and look after the cows and told her younger sister to help me draw water from a river. They later joined their friends in a playfield," said Kebenei amid sobs. She added that after a few minutes her children left the house to play, the lightning struck followed by screams.

"It was drizzling by the time they were playing. I thought the thunder was to pave the way for heavy rain," said Kebenei. After the roar of the thunder, she said, a child rushed to her house and when she asked the whereabouts of her children, the child said they were lying under the tree. Ms Benedicta Korir, 48, who lost her ten-year-old daughter recalled running to the scene and found the minors strewn apart and unconscious. They took the children to Kaiboi Health Centre where they were pronounced dead upon arrival. "My daughter was helping me with house chores when her peers came and asked her to join them at the playfield," she said.

"I refused to let her go and join them because it was raining but she insisted on joining them. Moments later I was informed of the incident," Kori told The Standard.

Ms Rael Birgen, who had gone visit her daughter at a secondary school on the fateful day, told The Standard she could not hold back tears when she was informed she had lost her 11-year-old son.

"I learnt the incident from a neighbour who called to inform me," she recalled. Area DEO George Oloo who arrived at the scene to condole with the families said a brother and sister lost two children to the lightening. "This is an unfortunate incident and we will express our support to the affected families," said Mr Oloo.