

Lightning strikes 3 homes, 1 dead, another critical

January 18, 2016 Headlines, Top Stories

Sukulwenkosi Dube Plumtree Correspondent—

A WOMAN from Bulilima died and a 33-year-old man was severely burnt when three homesteads in the area were struck by lightning. Gugulethu Dube, 23, failed to escape from a burning hut and was burnt beyond recognition while Bigboy Tshuma, who was in a separate hut at the same homestead, was severely burnt in an incident that occurred at Dupute Village in Makhulela Ward on Friday at around 4PM.

Both Dube and Tshuma were employed as domestic workers at the homestead. Two other huts at two different homesteads in the same village were also struck by lightning but no one was home at the time of the incident.

Tshuma, who survived the incident with severe burns all over his body, said he fled from the burning hut while his clothes were engulfed in flames. He said he took a nap when the rains started and the hut was struck by lightning while he was asleep.

The Chronicle visited Tshuma who is admitted at Plumtree District Hospital and he narrated his near death experience. "I was awakened by screams from people who were shouting and running towards our homestead. At that time the entire roof was in flames and thick smoke had engulfed the room. I had locked the door from inside and out of fear and confusion I failed to open the door on time," said Tshuma.

"My clothes caught fire and I started burning. When I finally managed to open the door I was already badly injured." He said he managed to escape but Dube was burnt to death in the kitchen hut.

Tshuma said the rains started at around 2PM and he went to his bedroom hut to sleep while Dube remained in the kitchen hut preparing food. He said the rains persisted for more than an hour.

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