

Lightning kills 1, injures 4 in Kibaale

http://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1299860/lightning-kills-injures-kibaale

February 27, 2012 04:39 PM

By Vision Reporter

A woman has died instantly while her 4 children have been admitted in critical condition after being struck by lightning in Rutoma, Mwitanzige Kibaale district.

38-year-old Dinavensi Musimenta died instantly while the four children aged between 8-14 years are admitted at a Mwitanzige health center III paralyzed and with severe burns on their heads.

The tragedy happened Sunday after a heavy down pour as the victims were in the kitchen preparing supper.

Meanwhile, as heavy rains start in various parts of the country, Police have advised schools and building owners to install lightening conductors to avert the fatal strikes.

Kampala metropolitan deputy police spokesperson, Ibin Ssenkumbi told New Vision last week that these fatal strikes are yet to cause more deaths since the rains have just began.

"It is out of concern that the police is warning schools and building owners to have these lightening conductors to save lives in times like this," Ssenkumbi said.

Last June, Government announced plans to have all school buildings insulated against lightning amid a series of fatal lightning strikes that gripped the country, affecting largely school children.

The announcement by Education Minister Jessica Alupo followed the death of 20 pupils of Runyanya Primary School in Kiryandongo district who were struck by lightning, which also left many school children and adults injured.

However, to date most schools have not had the lightning conductors installed. The education ministry has a policy on lightning conductors but it has not yet been implemented.

In 2005, the education ministry Permanent Secretary Francis Lubanga issued a circular to all heads of institutions to install lightning arrestors, but it was never implemented.

Last year, lightning strikes across the country left dozens of people dead and scores paralysed. In November, lightning struck 40 pupils of Kyenzige Model Primary School in Kibaale district leaving 15 of them critically injured.

In July, lightning hit the northern Uganda district of Alebtong, leaving three mourners killed and 15 others injured.

In June, lightning struck 10 pupils of Muni Primary School in Arua district during a heavy downpour and in the same month, it struck Kamwenge and Mbarara districts, leaving three dead and several others injured.

Veteran meteorologist Aloysius Kagoro explains that thunder and lightning are caused when air masses (cumulous and cumulus-nimbus clouds) moving in opposite directions generate heat the same way human hands can generate heat when rubbed against each other.