

Nkozi university finalist shot by armed robbers

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and Nicholas Wassajja

Rafael Walugembe was a lively 23-year-old boy, who wanted to be a great entrepreneur, but armed robbers cut his dream short.

On Tuesday night, Walugembe was gunned down by robbers that had been trailing a mobile money dealer, identified as Denis Kigongo Mwesigwa, from Kisenyi in downtown Kampala, to Kitunzi zone Lungujja in Rubaga Division.

Walugembe was pursuing a bachelor's degree in business administration at Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi and was set to sit for his final exams on Monday.

According to Walugembe's mother, Mary Zzimbe, a resident of Lungujja-Kitunzi, Church zone, her son was killed at about 10:30 pm.

"We were watching news on Bukedde TV at about 10:23pm when my son, after having dinner, picked his backpack to go and spend the night at his sister's place, who had just had a caesarian section. But as soon as he stepped outside, I heard gunshots," she narrated.

"I panicked and tried to rush outside to meet him, but all the doors had been locked. Amid the scampering, a bullet penetrated one of my glass doors, that is when I realised that Walugembe had been killed."

"It was during the scuffle to have someone rush him to hospital that I found out that the armed robbers that killed my son were trailing a businessman, who they cornered in my compound, but when they saw Walugembe moving out with a backpack that had his books, they got scared and shot him," said Zzimbe.

Eyewitnesses said Walugembe suffered several bullets in one of the ampits, neck and chest.

Mwesigwa's account

Mwesigwa said he left Kisenyi at 9:00pm in his car, a Spacio Toyota, with his wife and two of their children. However, at the turn to his house in Lungujja, he found a car moving out.

"They flashed full headlights at me, indicating that they wanted me to give way. Since the exit path was small, I drove past my place to Zzimbe's compound, which is a stone's throw away. However, they followed me and before I knew it, four men surrounded my car, pointing guns at my head. they asked for all the money I had," Mwesigwa recounted.

He said he hurriedly handed the robbers the sh400,000 he had, while his wife gave them sh210,000 and their two phones. He said the robbery lasted about 10 minutes, before the shooting started.

Mwesigwa said by the time he got up from the ground, where he had been instructed to lie, Zzimbe and other members of her household were out wailing that Walugembe had been shot dead.

The Kampala Metropolitan Police spokesperson, Patrick Onyango, said: "The suspects are still at large, but we have so far recovered seven bullet shells from the crime scene to kick off our investigations. We have also alerted other sister security agencies to assist us in the hunt for the suspects, who will be charged with robbery and murder once arrested."