

# Police on the spot as rape suspects disappear from cells

When a 16-year-old primary school pupil was raped at about 3:00am on March 21, 2026, as she returned home from a disco club in Obongi town council, Obongi district, she immediately reported the matter to police.

A suspect, Ibrahim Wongita, 21, a businessman and resident of Mundu Cell in Obongi town council, was arrested under reference number OBG CRB 063/2026.

But within days, Wongita and a second suspect, Juma Rasual, who was also arrested for allegedly raping another minor, escaped from police custody under mysterious circumstances. As a result, two police officers have been

arrested in connection with the disappearance of the rape suspects from custody.

North West Nile Region Police spokesperson Collins Asea confirmed that two police officers who were on duty at the time of the escape have since been arrested, although he declined to reveal their names.

"The suspects were being escorted to the latrine at 6:50am when they exploited the opportunity, removed their handcuffs and fled," Asea said.

The escape has drawn sharp scrutiny at a moment when public confidence in the handling of sexual violence



Asea

cases is already fragile. Asea appealed to the public to assist in the hunt for the suspects (Wongita and Rasual).

"We urge the community to

## BETWEEN THE LINES

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report any information on the whereabouts of the suspects to the nearest police station. This will help ensure justice for the victims," Asea said. He noted that children, especially girls, are increasingly being left unsupervised, which exposes them to sexual offenders.

Five months ago, police launched a hunt for three men suspected of gang-raping a 23-year-old woman and robbing her together with her male cousin, Andrew Fungo, near the Golf Course field in Mbale city. As the victim and her cousin were walking past the Gold Course at about 7:30pm on October 17, 2025, three men standing near bushes attacked them.

Fungo was struck on the head with sticks and grabbed by the neck, but he managed to escape after being robbed of sh20,000, two phones, a pair of shoes and a jacket. His

cousin was not as fortunate; the attackers beat her, dragged her into nearby bushes and raped her. Police found the victim injured and bruised after Fungo reported the incident to Mbale Central Police Station. She had been robbed of sh5,000 and a smartphone.

## MORE CASES

National crime data paints a stark picture of rape cases. A total of 1,667 cases were reported to police in 2024, up from 1,577 in 2023. Of the 1,667 cases, 690 were taken to court by the close of 2024, according to the Police report.