

BY JAMES OWICH

GULU. A 16-year-old student has succumbed to injuries he sustained after being attacked by criminal gangs at Awere Sports Ground in Bar-Dege-Layibi Division in Gulu City at the weekend.

Leon Joshua Otim was attending a campaign rally for the National Unity Platform (NUP) presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi, alias Bobi Wine, when he was hit on the head with a blunt object.

He died from a brain haemorrhage yesterday afternoon at St Mary's Hospital Lacor at around 2pm yesterday following a three-day coma.

Ms Margret Abalo, Otim's mother, said on the fateful day, her son left home between 4:30pm and 5pm.

"He told me that he was going to attend a campaign rally at Awere Grounds. I advised him against it because I was worried about the volatile situation. But he assured me that he will be safe and will return safely. Unfortunately, he did not make it back," she

16-year-old dies after attack at NUP rally

narrated.

"If I had known that he was never going to come back to me alive, I would have done everything possible to stop him," she added.

Ms Abalo said her son fought for his life until Tuesday afternoon at around 2pm, when all the vital organs stopped working.

Otim died three days after returning home from school. He was a student at Excel High School in Mukono.

His mother said he was a brilliant and obedient child who listened to advice.

"I am in pain but I don't want my son's death to be used for political purposes. I don't want politicians to use his death as a tool for a campaign. I want them to allow us to mourn our loss. I am still in pain, I want them to understand that," she said.

She noted that she does not know why her son was killed.



Tragic.

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— Ms Margret Abalo, Otim's

"The death of my son reminds me of the death of his father, my husband. Ever since he died, I am still searching for answers," she adds.

Her husband, the late Col Justine Anywar, a senior Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) commander, died seven years ago.

Otim's body has since been taken to

Gulu Military Hospital Mortuary in Gulu City pending post-mortem.

Abalo said her son's head was crushed, leaving him with little chance of survival.

By press time, no suspect had been arrested in connection to the incident.

Seven others were injured in the scuffle.

The matter was reported at Gulu City Central Police Station.

ASP David Ongom Mudong, the Aswa West Region Police spokesperson, when contacted, said the death of the student has not yet been brought to his attention.

ASP Mudong, however, said they are investigating theft cases under the general inquiry file.

"On December 6, 2025, Mr Robert Kyagulanyi, alias Bobi Wine, the National Unity Platform (NUP) party presidential candidate, held his campaign rally

at Bar Awere grounds in Gulu City. He entered Gulu City through Gulu-Kitgum Road via Unyama after reaching the Bank of Uganda junction. He defied the agreed route and decided to use the main street on foot, where he encountered a scuffle with officers as they were trying to plead with him to use the agreed route," he said.

"However, he successfully managed to use the main street up to his rally venue at around 1647hrs and addressed a gathering of approximately 300 people up to 1743hrs. After his address, he still defied the agreed route and jumped into the main street to Kampala. There was some excitement as he was going, which attracted the crowds in the middle of the road, hence escalating a scuffle between his supporters and some unknown goons that gave them leeway to steal from civilians' shops, but police responded and quelled the situation," he adds.

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