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# Belgian tourist dies in Queen Elizabeth National Park



Jean-Michel Albert Hausman's passport that was found with his colleagues at the scene.  
PHOTO BY ENID NINSIIMA

## In Summary

- Police said the tourist was on a paragliding machine before he lost control as a result of heavy winds and hit the ground.
- He noted that much as they were not in the hands of the park by the time of incident, UWA was working with sister forces to see how the body would be taken back for burial.

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By ENID NINSIIMA

Police in Uganda are investigating circumstances under which a Belgian tourist died in Queen Elizabeth National Park on Thursday.

The Kasese Police station OC/CID, Mr Peter Tindyebwa identified the deceased as Jean-Michel Albert Hausman, adding that the incident happened at around midday at Kasenyi landing site.

He further noted that Hausman fell down when one of the paragliding machine Propeller broke.

“It is true we lost one of the tourists who had come to Queen Elizabeth National Park. Hausman died in an accident because he was in a parachute connected on a Paragliding machine whose propeller got broken due to too much wind. He fell down helplessly,” Mr Tindyebwa said.

Mr Tindyebwa noted that the deceased had three other colleagues he came with from Belgium and Rwanda for a tour and has been in Uganda since October 27.



The propeller that got broken loaded on a police vehicle as exhibit. PHOTO BY ENID NINSIIMA

“These four tourists including the deceased have been in the country from October 27, 2017. They were in Bwindi for two days before coming to Queen Elizabeth on October 29, 2017,” he explained.

Police said the tourist was on a Paragliding machine before he lost control as a result of heavy winds and hit the ground.

Mr Sebastien Hobven, a colleague who was found at the scene told Daily Monitor that it was “a stupid accident”, adding that the deceased made a mistake midair.

“It is a motor bike game in air. We have been doing it for a long time. We have been here since October 29 doing the same things. We reached here in the morning at 6 am and everything was okay but it pains to see one of us gone like that,” Mr Hobven said.

He said that the deceased had a wife and two children in Belgium, who he said practice the same game.

“Our colleague lived in Uganda for four years until 2014 when he went back to Belgium. We returned with him and have visited all the parks in Uganda doing the same sport. He made us like Uganda because he told us it had a conducive environment for our sport”, Mr Hobven explained.

By the time of filing this story, his body had been taken to Mbarara hospital mortuary for proper management as they wait for arrangements to fly it back home for burial.

“We regret the accident but we believe that his time had come because the wind was strong. He was just about 5 meters above the ground,” one of his colleagues said.



Police at the scene accessing the parachute and paragliding machine that caused the death of the tourist. PHOTO BY ENID NINSIIMA

Police said the Belgian Embassy has already been informed about the incident and are helping in the process of repatriating the body.

Mr Simplicious Gessa, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) public relations officer said the incident happened in the area outside the active park operation.

“We regret the incident that claimed our long time guest though he was not yet our official guest at the time of the incident. The deceased and the colleagues wanted access to film the park but they did not have clearance. They were told to go back and clear and pay the required amount to film in the park before they went back only to hear that one of them died.”

Mr Gessa noted that one of the requirements for them was to get clearance for filming in the park, clearance for the paragliding machine because it makes a lot of noise and safety measures which they did not have by the time of the accident.

He noted that much as they were not in the hands of the park by the time of incident, UWA was working with sister forces to see how the body would be taken back for burial.