

Kirumira was also charged with neglect

Kirumira in vain. *New Vision* has learnt that

the gate took them over two hours of pleading, he said. "I am happy that they eventually allowed me to meet

him to instruct his lawyer, Jude Mbabali, to object to his trial by the Police tribunal. "He has given me an order to instruct his lawyer Mbabali

his son has no faith in the tribunal's chairperson. Kawooya also said his son believes that he being witch-hunted by some senior officers in the Police who have all

Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI), said the Police should have summoned him by way of a letter to appear before the tribunal instead of breaking into his house.

Education ministry licenses 1,444 schools countrywide

By Henry Sekanjako

The Government has issued licences to 1,444 schools across the country since last year.

According to the higher education state minister, Dr. John Chrysostom Muyingo, since the commencement of the process to close schools without operational licences in 2017, there has been a good response by institutions in ensuring they meet requirements.

"The licensing of schools is proceeding smoothly and will help improve the education standards in our country," Muyingo stated in a statement to Parliament.

A total of 89 Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) institutions, 348 secondary schools and 1,007 primary schools were given licences to operate.

In November 2016, the ministry asked all inspectors and district education officers to put schools that were not licensed on notice for closure.

According to Muyingo, unlicensed schools are a serious safety and security threat to the learners.

"We issued both area-based (by district authorities) and national notices through circulars and press statements from the ministry," Muyingo said.

Muyingo further explained that on March 16, 2017 the issue of illegal schools closure was presented to Parliament, which instructed the committee on education and sports to examine it.

The committee, according to Muyingo, in its April 2017 report to the House, recommended that the

decision of the ministry to close the affected schools was justified.

However, Kibuku County MP Herbert Kinobere asked Parliament to block the closure of about 1,300 schools.

BETWEEN THE LINES:

Minister Muyingo told the MPs that the ministry had continuously disseminated the 2014 guidelines to schools.

About two weeks ago, the education ministry announced that over 1,300 private schools would be closed effective February 2018 because they did not have licences to operate.

Some MPs in a press conference, however, opposed the move saying

it would leave the affected students with nowhere to go as the school term begins this week.

The MPs also noted that the Government needed to first improve public schools before closing the private ones.

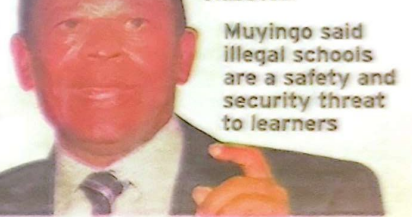
However Jacob Oulanyah, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament ruled in support of the ministry, saying the closure could not be halted since enough time was given to the affected schools, to acquire licences.

"We took a decision to extend closure of schools last year. This was to allow schools that were to be affected to organise themselves. It might not be right to go back on this decision," Oulanyah ruled.

Muyingo told the MPs that the ministry had continuously disseminated the 2014

guidelines for the establishment, licensing, registration and classification of private schools and institutions in Uganda to various districts and schools.

He added that the ministry had also issued constant reminders to the proprietors, headteachers, district leadership and the general public to adhere to regulations regarding licensing, but some were stubborn.



Muyingo said illegal schools are a safety and security threat to learners