

SHUT DOWN. The affected institutions are Busoga University and Lijif International American College of Health Sciences.

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KAMPALA. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) has closed two private universities and issued a notice of intention to close another in six months unless the university reverses its current pathetic governance and financial status.

In a December 1 gazette, Prof John Asibo-Opuda, the NCHE executive director, revoked the provisional licence for Busoga University and Lijif International American College of Health Sciences for failure to recruit qualified staff, teaching unaccredited courses and graduating students who do not meet the minimum academic standards.

According to information from NCHE, Stafford University in Kampala was also given a notice to address its poor governance and financial performance within six months short of which it will also be closed.

According to NCHE's notice, Busoga University in Iganga and Lijif International American Colleges of Health Sciences in Kampala have ceased to operate and are not allowed to advertise and admit new students.

When contacted yesterday, Busoga and Stafford universities said they had not received communication from NCHE about their fate. We were unable to reach Lijif International American

Govt closes two private varsities, warns another

Colleges of Health Sciences for a comment. Dr Samuel Bagabo, the Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academics at Busoga University, however, admitted that NCHE had warned them of impending closure but said the news of licence cancellation was shocking because they had since improved on some of the defective areas.

Dr Bagabo said following NCHE's warning, they sent their staff for further studies to improve their academic credentials and terminated services of those who were unqualified.

He said the university also terminated its affiliation to one of

the South Sudanese institutions indefinitely. The closure of the university leaves the future of 3,000 students in jeopardy.

At Stafford, the fate of 450 students hangs in the balance if NCHE proceeds to cancel its licence after the six months deadline.

The grace period has been given to allow the institution address poor governance, lack of premises and illegal graduation of students, among others.

"The National Council intends to revoke the provisional licence... six months after publication of this notice. The university shall submit an explanation showing cause the revocation should not be issued," NCHE's notice reads in part.

The notice was issued on November 27 and published in the Uganda Gazette on December 1.

However, Prof Opuda said his team will work with the affected universities to relocate the affected students to recognised universities or other tertiary institutions.

Some board members at Stafford University yesterday accused each other of fuelling persistent conflicts and running down the institution.

Mr Sam Egeduno, the university's director of finance and operations, accused his colleague, Mr. Henry Egesa, of breaking away and taking

their staff and students to start a breakaway campus along Nsambya-Ggaba Road in Kampala without the knowledge of the other directors.

Mr Egeduno said Mr Egesa had only been adopted to help them register the university with NCHE and was given shares equivalent to two per cent for his contribution.

He said they will compensate Mr Egesa and start afresh in January.

"We have the money to run the university. The problem is Egesa who divided us and started running another campus with our name. We had included him because we wanted him to help us on paper work," Mr Egeduno said.

However, Mr Egesa accused his co-board members of trying to run the university as a family business. He said they mismanaged the finances, forcing him to break away.

"I am no longer with them. I do not know where they disappeared to. The university is now in a new place. Those ones failed to run the university when they issued fake transcripts," Mr Egesa alleged.

Prof Opuda yesterday said the universities, whose licences have been revoked, should reorganise themselves, put in place what is missing and reapply to be allowed to operate after two years.

“There was a time when NCHE said they wanted to revoke our licence. We have much better staff today than when we started. We are not perfect and you can't find that anywhere in sub-Saharan Africa. Many things they had alleged were not true and we tried to improve in other areas. If they have revoked our licence, it will be a shock.”

SAMUEL BAGABO, DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR IN CHARGE OF ACADEMICS AT BUSOGA UNIVERSITY.