

# Mbarara woman charged with trafficking in human organs

By Farooq Kasule

A businesswoman from Mbarara municipality has been charged with aggravated human trafficking of her employee in order to get his kidney for her ailing husband.

Yesterday, Miria Rwigambwa was committed to the High Court for trial by the Nakawa Court Grade One Magistrate, Noah Ssajjabbi.

"Since investigations in this case are complete. I do hereby send you to the High Court to stand trial in the next convenient session," Ssajjabbi ruled.

Prosecution alleges that in July 2014, Miria by means of deception, organised, facilitated,

prepared and sent Brian Arinaitwe to India, where her husband, John Rwigambwa, was to undergo a kidney transplant operation.

Miria, who owns a hardware business in Mbarara municipality, is also accused of forging Arinaitwe's birth certificate. She claimed the certificate had been issued by Mbarara municipal council whereas not.

On the birth certificate, Miria portrayed herself as the biological mother of Arinaitwe.

She is also accused of forgery of a citizenship verification form 'B' with serial number 235720, which she registered in the name of Brian Arinaitwe.



Miria Rwigambwa

Court documents indicate that Arinaitwe (now in his late 30s) was integrated into the family of the late John Rwigambwa in 2013 after he rescued his son, Michael Arinda, who sustained injuries during a school brawl between Ntare School and

Mbarara High School. The brawl left a number of students nursing wounds.

According to the indictment, Miria offered Arinaitwe a job at the family hardware shop in Mbarara town.

"After working for a few months, the accused approached Arinaitwe with a request to donate a kidney to her husband. However, Arinaitwe's mother, Nnalongo Busingye Kyabalongo, stopped him," the indictment reads in part.

According to the State, this forced Miria to promise Arinaitwe a huge reward in return for the kidney. The reward included part of the family business complex

(shopping arcade) and plots of land in Makenke and Katete in Mbarara municipality. Arinaitwe agreed to donate his kidney.

Miria then took Arinaitwe to Mulago Hospital and Aga Khan Hospital in Kenya to ascertain whether he was a suitable donor to her husband. The results were positive.

The State further says Miria processed a passport for Arinaitwe using forged information. He was transported to India, where he donated his left kidney to Miria's husband. However, Rwigambwa died a few days after the transplant.

Prosecution alleges that Miria instead turned against Arinaitwe and her stepson Dickson

Tumwebaze and accused them of conspiring to murder the deceased. She then cancelled the promised benefits.

At court yesterday, Susan Kushaba, a daughter of the deceased, told *New Vision* that some sections of the family want her stepmother (Miria) to compensate Arinaitwe because he is entitled to the benefits, having donated a kidney to their father although he died.

"We have no problem with our stepmother. We only want her to compensate him," Kushaba said.

Kushaba said she wanted to donate a kidney to her father, but her stepmother blocked the move and took Arinaitwe.