

# Clerics ordered to enter defence in child trafficking case

By Hudson Apunyo

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Two Muslim clerics accused of trafficking five children for alleged exploitation have been ordered to open their defence after court found that the prosecution established a prima facie case against them.

Justice Andrew Bashaija of the International Crimes Division of the High Court held that the evidence presented by the State was sufficient to require the accused to respond to the charges.

Sheikh Abdurashid Mbaziira alias Abdu Sewajja alias Muhammad Jamir Buyondo Walikagga and Aramanthan Noordin Higenyi alias Taata Abdul Razak are jointly charged with five counts of aggravated trafficking in children, contrary to Sections 3(i)(a) and 5(a) of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2009.

The prosecution alleges that between 2016 and March 2017, in Busia and other districts, the accused recruited, transported,



Mbaziira and Higenyi appearing at the International Crimes Division of the High Court in Kampala last week

transferred or harboured five children for purposes of exploitation.

The children named in the indictment are Abdu Razak, 8; Hanisah Noordin, 3; Ibrahim Nuwasi, 11; Abdu Gafar Sumaya, 8, as well as Abdu Gafar Ubaya, 3.

The children were allegedly taken to Namasegere village, Kyampisi sub-county, Mukono district.

## PROSECUTION EVIDENCE

The State relied on testimony from several prosecution witnesses, including parents of the children and Police officers.

Trial continues on March 19 when the accused persons are expected to give their defence.

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