

Both the speaker and deputy speaker, according to the KCCA

LORD COUNCILLOR SSEBUWUFU JOINS BATTLE FOR CITY HALL SPEAKER



Speaker contender: Luyombya



Eyeing speakership: Paul Kato

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

Under section 8 of the KCCA amended Act of 2019, the speaker is elected through a secret ballot.

The law states that a person shall be declared a speaker or deputy speaker unless that person gets more than 50% of the votes, of all members of the council cast, in his or her favour.

When the winner does not obtain 50%, the election shall be repeated between the two candidates, until one of them gets more than 50% of the votes.

The entry of John Mary Ssebuwufu into the City Hall speakership race has complicated the game plan for National Unity Platform (NUP). However, the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) officials say the post should be earmarked for them, writes **BRIAN MAYANJA**

Leaders in the National Unity Platform (NUP) are facing a political dilemma as the race for City Hall speakership heats up.

Insiders said the entry of the Nakawa division councillor, John Mary Ssebuwufu, into the race has complicated the equation for NUP.

The election for Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) speaker is slated for May 20, a day after city councillors have been sworn in.

Both the speaker and deputy, according to the KCCA Act, are elected by council members, including the Lord Mayor.

"The dilemma we are facing as NUP over KCCA speakership is that Ssebuwufu has rejected the deputy Lord Mayor position. His argument is that the Lord Mayor is from Nakawa division, where he also hails from. So, he has expressed interest in the speakership job. And the party is supporting him. This has left many councillors grumbling," a NUP city councillor said.

Some insiders within the party revealed that the leadership at Kavule, the party offices, had wanted that Ssebuwufu be appointed as the deputy Lord Mayor.

The city councillor added: "We thought he would accept the position, but when he came out of prison, he insisted that he wants to be the speaker. However, we had already identified another councillor for the job."

According to the composition of the City Hall council, NUP has 18. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) follows with 16 seats. For the first time in the history of City Hall politics, independent candidates do not have any seat in the council.

"I don't know how our principal, Robert Kyagulanyi, will handle this issue because if the speakership matter is not handled well, it will sharply divide the party at City Hall. And also, the NRM party is keenly watching. Those who are against the NUP candidate for speakership are likely to side with the NRM candidate," a NUP city hall councillor said.



THE LORD MAYOR AND I COME FROM THE SAME DIVISION, NAKAWA. POLITICALLY, WE CAN'T SERVE IN THE SAME OFFICE.



Lord councillor Ssebuwufu

Apart from Ssebuwufu, four NUP councillors have also expressed interest in the speakership. These include Umaru Magara, Godfrey Luyombya and Paul Kato. Oliver Namazzi, Mushi Ssendi, James Mubiru and Sulaiman Ssenyonjo are vying for the deputy speaker position.

SSEBUWUFU'S TAKE

When contacted, Ssebuwufu said:

"I can execute the position of the deputy Lord Mayor well because of my experience, but I want to use my brains to manage the council better as the speaker. Also, Ronald Balimwezo, the Lord Mayor and I come from the same division, Nakawa. Politically, we can't serve in the same office."

Unlike the deputy Lord Mayor position, which is purely by appointment

by the Lord Mayor, the KCCA speaker and deputy speaker are directly elected by lord councillors.

"Even if all the candidates contesting for KCCA speakership come from Nakawa division, nobody will complain. If such complaints arise, we ask them, who stopped other divisions from fronting candidates," Ssebuwufu said.

According to insiders, the party loyalty question is one of Ssebuwufu's top cards.

"Ssebuwufu is the most loyal party cadre I know and he deserves to take that office. However, I doubt whether loyalty will be a major factor in NUP. If it was the deciding factor, I would have been the KCCA speaker in 2021. But the seat was given to Zaharah Luyika, whose loyalty still remains questionable," Jeremiah Mwanje, the outgoing city lord councillor, said.

However, veteran journalist and political analyst John Kakande said loyalty will be a key factor.

"The fact that he was appointed by his party to manage elections, it means he is loyal to NUP. He also understands the city politics. Ssebuwufu is also a trusted man, I have never heard any story that he got involved in corruption. The only problem, he comes from Nakawa division. And the Lord Mayor also hails from the same division. This is the only challenge his party is likely to face because it