

## elections 2016

# Aspirants protest suspension of poll

**Background.** The Tuesday court ruling froze the February 18 parliamentary elections for Upper Madi-Okollo for 60 days.

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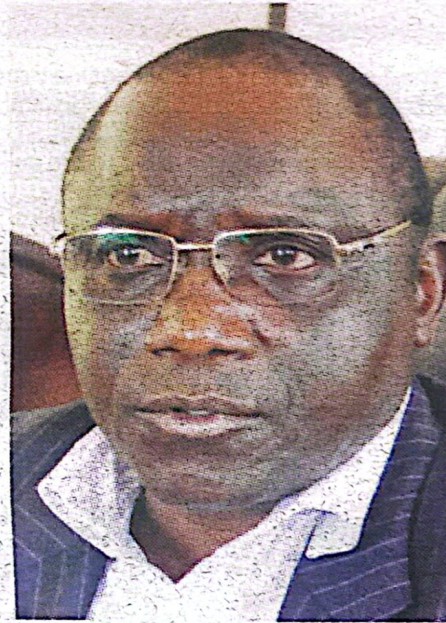
**ARUA.** Candidates in the race for Upper Madi-Okollo parliamentary seat have protested last Tuesday's High Court ruling which froze the parliamentary elections, saying it was unconstitutional and illegal.

The court ruling froze the Febru-

ary 18 parliamentary elections for 60 days until the NRM party fields a flag bearer.

However, the five candidates, who include Mr John Arumadri (FDC), Mr Jimmy Madira, Mr Oyemy Antes Ase-dri, Mr Bruno Onzima and Mr Martin Drito, say the ruling was unprecedented and had no legal justification.

"We are challenging and filing an application to review the ruling, we have also put the Electoral Commission on notice not to implement the decision of the High Court which is unconstitutional," Mr Madira said.



Madi Okollo County MP Martin Drito

The ruling arose out of a restraint order filed by Mr Martin Drito against

Mr Isaac Etuka (NRM primaries winner) on grounds that the primaries were not free and fair hence restraining Mr Etuka from being nominated as a parliamentary candidate. Mr Etuka defeated Mr Drito in the NRM party primaries.

Court presided over by Justice Vincent Okwanga ruled that Mr Drito voluntarily walked out of the NRM party when he offered himself to stand as an Independent candidate which made him lose locus to restrain an NRM candidate.

Mr Onzima said the ruling was an abuse to the justice system in the country.

The candidates argued that a dispute within the NRM party should not affect others since the beneficiary (Etuka) was not even a candidate as he had not been nominated.

Mr Arumadri said the ruling will only serve to demoralise and demobilise the voters.

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