

# NUP's Ssebuwufu granted bail after 2 months in jail



Mr John Mary Ssebuwufu (right) with Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Joel Ssenyonyi at the Nakawa Chief Magistrate's Court yesterday. PHOTO/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

The 50-year-old was arrested on January 14, a day before the 2026 General Election.

BY JULIET KIGONGO

**M**r John Mary Ssebuwufu, a National Unity Platform (NUP) Election Management Committee member and Lord Councillor for Nakawa Division, was yesterday granted bail after spending a couple of months in prison.

The 50-year-old was released on a cash bail of Shs500,000 by Grade One Magistrate Sanula Nambozo, after fulfilling all bail requirements.

He was also ordered to deposit his

passport with the court, while each of his sureties was bonded at Shs5 million—not in cash. Additionally, Mr Ssebuwufu was instructed to upload his National Identification details onto the Electronic Court Case Management Information System (ECCMIS). However, he told the court he had lost his National ID during his arrest, which took place a day before the January 15 general election.

The court heard that Mr Ssebuwufu spent three weeks in incommunicado detention before being arraigned at Nakawa Chief Magistrate's Court on February 6. He faces charges of incitement to violence contrary to Section 79(1) of the Penal Code Act, Cap 128.

Prosecution alleges that between November and December 2025, at various locations, including Kampala, Mukono, Masaka, and Mpigi districts, Mr Ssebu-

wufu incited the public to attack supporters of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party based on political affiliation. The politician denied the charges and was remanded to Luzira Prison until his bail was granted.

In her ruling, Magistrate Nambozo said the court considered the nature and reliability of the proposed sureties, noting that all were family members or close associates of Ssebuwufu. "This fact enhances their commitment to ensuring the applicant complies with the conditions of bail," the magistrate stated.

She added that the close relationship between Mr Ssebuwufu and his sureties makes it unlikely that he would breach bail conditions, as doing so would jeopardise them.

The court also observed that the sureties are well-known residents within

the jurisdiction, providing telephone contacts to facilitate tracing the applicant and ensuring compliance with bail conditions.

Addressing the prosecution's concern that Mr Ssebuwufu could interfere with witnesses or evidence, the magistrate noted that no supporting evidence was presented.

"It was submitted by the State that the applicant is likely to interfere with evidence or prosecution witnesses. No evidence, however, was brought to show how the applicant will interfere with these witnesses," she said, adding that in the absence of proof, the court agreed with the defence that there was no likelihood of interference.

The magistrate also noted a gap in identification documents, as no original National ID had been presented. "The court shall give the benefit of the doubt to the applicant and consider him identified in the interim, having presented a copy of his National ID," Ms Nambozo ruled.

Mr Ssebuwufu is among several NUP leaders arrested either before or shortly after the January 15 presidential polls. His release marks another significant development in the ongoing legal processes surrounding Opposition figures following the elections.

## KEY FACTS

The 50-year-old was arrested on January 14, 2026, a day before the general elections, and reportedly held incommunicado for more than three weeks before being presented in court on February 6. He faces charges of incitement to violence, with the prosecution alleging that he mobilised individuals to attack supporters of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) amid heightened political tensions.