

Mbarara court releases suspect in land probe acid attack

MBARARA

By **Abdulkarim Ssengendo**

High Court in Mbarara has granted bail to the speaker of Mbarara municipality, Bonny Tashobya, who is facing charges of attempted murder.

Tashobya was arrested on Thursday last week to help the Police with investigations in a case where Amos Katureebe was attacked with acid, a day before appearing before the Justice Catherine Bamugemereire-led land probe commission. He was to testify about the giveaway of government land in Mbarara. Katureebe is fighting for his life at Mengo Hospital.

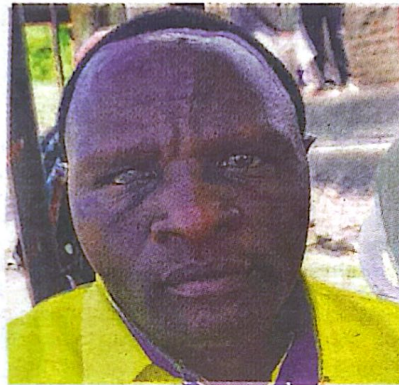
Tashobya's arrest followed allegations by Katureebe that he masterminded the attack. Katureebe claimed that he heard Tashobya's

voice calling him and when he turned, acid was poured onto his face.

The Chief Magistrate, Mariam Akello, ordered Tashobya to pay sh1m cash as bail money. At the court, Tashobya received a warm welcome by relatives and friends who had camped there from morning up to 3:00pm, when he was released.

His sureties included former Mbarara district chairman Deus Tumusiime, Stephen Muganga, the chairman Biharwe sub-county; Teo Kataratambi, the councillor representing Nyakayojo sub-county; Kubule Muliwa, the councillor for Biharwe sub-county and Henry Mushabe, the community development officer in Mbarara municipality. Each was ordered to pay sh10m, not cash.

"The accused is presumed innocent until proved guilty. His sureties are



Katureebe before the attack

substantial. They should be able to guide the truth. We have no objection granting him bail," Akello stated.

Speaking to journalists at court, Tashobya denied allegations and

Katureebe was attacked with acid a day before appearing before the land probe commission

urged his supporters to remain calm and wait for Police investigations.

He said those who carried out the attack will face the law.

"I want to tell Ugandans and the people of Mbarara that as a normal person and at my level as a speaker,

I cannot do such an inhuman thing. I had no conflict with him (Katureebe). I want to thank all people who stood with me during the four days I have spent in Police cells," Tashobya said.

Katureebe, a councillor for Nyamityobora ward, was attacked with acid on Wednesday night last week. He was rushed to Mbarara Hospital and later transferred to Mengo Hospital, where he is currently admitted in critical condition.

Earlier in the week, Bamugemereire had warned that some of the witnesses were being threatened. She visited the home of Katureebe and later visited him in the hospital and promised to take up the matter. Katureebe's wife, Jacline Mugabe, said she was worried as her other family members might also be attacked by assailants who attacked her husband.