

Jinja pupils' hopes of joining secondary hang in the balance

BY TAUSINAKATO

JINJA. The hopes of at least 66 candidates from Kiira Primary School in Jinja City, of joining Senior One this year, remain uncertain after the Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb) withheld their Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results over alleged examination irregularities.

The results, released nationally on January 30, excluded the majority of candidates from the government-aided school, leaving pupils, parents and administrators anxious as the academic year gets under way.

Jinja City Senior Education Officer Haruna Mulopa said the matter is under direct investigation by the Uneb, which is probing suspected collusion during the examinations.

"These issues are handled in a special way by Uneb. We are waiting for their invitation at any time this month so

that we can go and address the matter," Mr Mulopa said.

He added that the candidates are expected to appear before Uneb officials to help clarify what transpired during the examinations. "They will call all of them so that they can explain what happened. There is hope that the results will be released after investigations are concluded," he said.

Ms Rose Nakisige, the head teacher of Kiira Primary School, said only one candidate's results have so far been released out of the 67 pupils.

"We had 66 candidates affected. Only one pupil's results were released. We are scheduled to go to Uneb on Tuesday (today) to follow up on the matter," Ms Nakisige said.

Parents lament uncertainty

Parents say the delay has disrupted their children's education plans and caused emotional distress among learners who had expected to transition to secondary school this term.

"My daughter worked so hard, and now her entire future is on hold because of mistakes she did not make," said Ms Joan Birungi, whose child is among the affected candidates.

Another parent, Ms Sarah Namulondo, said the uncertainty could cost learners an academic year.

"My son had his heart set on joining Senior One, but now he may lose a whole year. It is very stressful for him and

for us as parents," she said.

Learners themselves say the wait has been emotionally draining. "I was excited to start Senior One, but now I feel

anxious every day. I don't know if I will go to the school I dreamed of," Juma Kakaire, one of the candidates, said.

Brian Kirunda, another pupil, said watching his peers join secondary school has been discouraging.

"I feel stressed and worried about missing the start of my education," he said.

While releasing the 2025 PLE results, Uneb Executive Director Dan Odongo said some invigilators and scouts were allegedly bribed or intimidated by school administrators to allow external assistance to candidates.

Jinja City registered 6,049 candidates for the PLE, with 816 passing in Division One, 3,269 in Division Two, 929 in Division Three and 535 in Division Four, while 434 were ungraded and 67 absent. The school had emerged as the top-performing school in the city, with all its 67 candidates reportedly scoring Division One.

