

...um, 58-year-old mother of nine and other pupils of Ojwina Primary School Lira waiting to enter an examination room

82-year-old pupil misses PLE

By Vision Reporters

Eighty two-year-old Iddi Murangira Mutaka, of Bundibugyo district, was upbeat on Wednesday evening as he prepared to sit for his Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) that kicked off yesterday.

Clad in his Bundibugyo Muslim Primary School uniform – orange shirt and faded grey pair of trousers – the wrinkle-faced father of four hid himself and conducted intensive revision from his home in Bundibugyo town council.

"I wanted to learn how to write my name. After PLE, I will enroll at Lubiri Secondary School in Kampala and later pursue my dream of becoming the district chairman," Mutaka, who started school in 2012 at the age of 77 in Primary Three, told *New Vision*.

But as fate would have it, Mutaka was knocked by a speeding bodaboda at 6:00pm on his way from school after the pre-exams briefing that evening. Good Samaritans rushed him to Bundibugyo hospital where medics discovered he had suffered internal bleeding in the head.

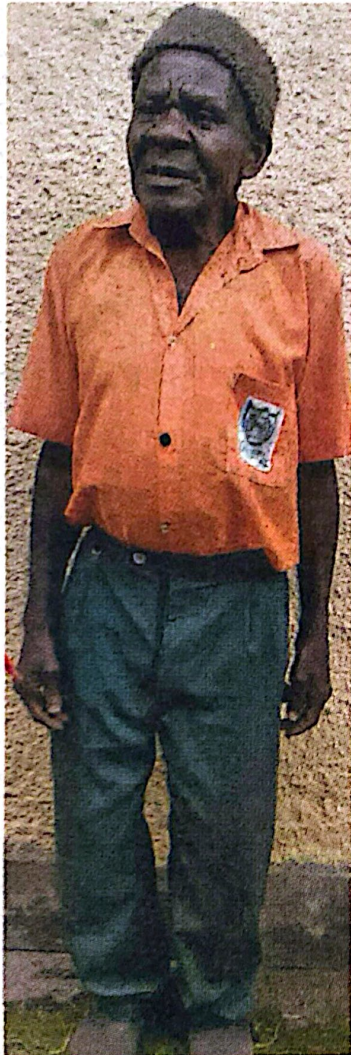
By the time PLE started at 9:00am yesterday, Mutaka was still unconscious, although the district education officer (DEO), Peter Bamwikirebye, had offered to take question papers to him in the hospital. According to Bamwikirebye, Mutaka will have to re-register for PLE next year.

The school headteacher, Mwajuma Katusabe, described Mutaka as a good time manager and regretted the incident.

Apart from this, PLE kicked off smoothly across the country with a few anomalies reported.

The candidates started with mathematics in the morning and social studies in the evening. Today the candidates will sit for the English and science papers.

There is an extra 5,220 pupils who registered for PLE this year



Mutaka after briefing: This was just before the accident

compared to last year's 640,860.

Majority (51.6%) of the candidates sitting for this year's exams are female, according to the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB).

President Yoweri Museveni sent a message to the candidates, wishing them success in their examination.

In Kampala, the exams went on smoothly, save for cases of delayed delivery of question papers and absenteeism of some candidates.

"We warn all schools against further teaching after the briefing of candidates. We further warn schools against any exam malpractice." Odongo

At Nakasero Primary School in Kampala, candidates were ready to enter examination rooms at 8:30am, but the examination sheets were not delivered until 9:05am. The candidates started the exams at around 9:30am.

At Kiswa Primary School in Nakawa division, candidates sat for exams at 9:15am.

Stella Tusiime, a UNEB scout, confirmed the delay in the delivery of exams.

"Apart from the delays, we have also a case of absenteeism of some invigilators, which interrupted the set timetable," she explained.

At Nakasero Primary School in Kampala, *New Vision* met two pupils who sustained major injuries in car accidents prior to the final exams.

Mother of nine sits for PLE

Among this year's PLE candidates is Aida Okello Otim, 58, who sat for her exams at Ojwina Primary School in Lira district. Married to an Anglican priest, Aida started her education in Primary Four in 2014.

She says she needs literacy skills

to communicate with her visitors and her children's friends who may not understand her native language, Langi.

The mother of nine said she wants to fulfill her childhood dream of becoming a nurse. Her childhood education was cut short by the bad terrain in Okwang sub-county, Otuke district where she hails from. Whenever it rained, the river flooded and children could not cross to go to school. She said the situation still persists today.

UNEB intensifies security

To avoid examination leakages witnessed in the ongoing Senior Four examinations, UNEB beefed up security.

The executive secretary of UNEB, Dan Odongo, said they increased the number of security personnel to protect the exam storage centres.

"We warn all schools against further teaching after the briefing of candidates. We further warn schools against any exam malpractice," Odongo cautioned.

Polly Namaye, the deputy Police spokesperson, said the Police will continue to support UNEB in ensuring exams are delivered to their various destinations.

Eighty students surface

In Soroti district, the exams went as scheduled and no case of exam malpractice was recorded, according to Everest Okello, the district education officer.

In Namayingo district, exams went on smoothly with no glitches, unlike the previous years, according to the district education officer, Kawo Nayi Kawere.

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