

MAN PROPOSES, GOD DISPOSES



Press Conference Address on the Complaints about the 2025 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) Results by the Registrar, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Prof. Is-haq Olanrewaju Oloyede, CON, FNAL, at the Boardroom of JAMB National Headquarters, Bwari, Abuja, on Wednesday, May 14, 2025

MAN PROPOSES, GOD DISPOSES

1.0 First of All

Gentlemen of the press, it is with deep feelings and a high sense of responsibility that I address you today on the subject of the 2025 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) results, which has generated some traction in public discourse and social space. I want to begin by appreciating you for gathering here today, especially to the press, whose extensive coverage has highlighted the release of the 2025 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) results, formally announced on Friday, 9th May 2025. Similarly, we appreciate all those who have lent their voices to the strident complaints on the results we released because you all did so out of concern. I appreciate our critics immensely because they could have chosen to be indifferent. I agree with the person who said that *the opposite of love isn't hate, it is indifference; the opposite of art is not ugliness, it is indifference; the opposite of faith is not heresy, it is indifference; and the opposite of life is not death, it is indifference*. By not being indifferent to JAMB, we are grateful.

Today marks a moment we shall not soon forget - a day that should have been filled with celebration for what was, until recently, regarded as our most successful UTME exercise. Regrettably, this joy has been overshadowed by an easily avoidable error by one or two persons.

Without equivocation, there has been a lot of hoopla since the results of 2025 UTME were released last Friday, 9th May 2025. Despite the fact that JAMB is a responsive organisation, the unusual level of public concerns and loud complaints has prompted us to do an immediate audit or review of what happened, which we ordinarily would have done in June. I want to make it clear that our review and investigation reveal that there are grounds for the complaints about our 2025 UTME results and this press conference is convened with a view to unveiling the bitter truth of our findings openly and objectively.

We are all human after all but before any other thing, it is imperative that I shed light on the extent that JAMB goes to ensure quality in its processes and activities.

2.0 JAMB and Quality Assurance

Gentlemen of the press, quality assurance is cardinal to the operations of JAMB. I can assure you that we scale all heights, fathom all depths and traverse all horizons to ascertain that quality assurance mechanisms permeate all our operations from the take off point to the finish line. We burn the midnight oil and we set our standards high. This is why we have guidelines, checklists and protocol guiding our activities right from the time of registration to the points of monitoring and supervision to the processing of results.

As we know we cannot clap with our sole hand as a single entity, we have several committees in place that are part of our quality assurance system. There are Peace Monitors, of 41 women of substance who are or have been Principal Officers of Nigerian universities; we have Chief External Examiners (CEEs), who are Vice-Chancellors, Rectors and Provosts of universities, polytechnics and Colleges of Education. Each state also has Chief Technical Adviser, a reputable professor who is an expert in computing and cybersecurity. We have Peace Monitors, Civil Society Group, Equal Opportunity Group, the General Monitors Group, High-powered Opinion Leaders, the Roving Group, Technical Advisors Group and the Virtues

Vanguards. All of these groups play critical roles and complement our staff in ensuring quality and troubleshooting challenges.

Furthermore, we also have an in-house consultant and expert in software development and cybersecurity. Besides, we have introduced mock examinations since 2017 as primarily a quality assurance measure to test our systems and intervene where necessary prior to the time of our examinations, knowing the nature of technology. Our Technical Officers annually take tests before the successful ones are deployed to the field so that at no point would incompetence set in. All our examination officials are profiled with their NINs to ensure efficiency and accountability. We also have a robust team of in-house electronic testing experts led by a renowned professor of Software Engineering.

We deploy our systems to the use of high-profile organisations within and outside Nigeria as part of the broader strategy of ensuring that everything works well when we need it to work. As part of our preparations for this year, we upgraded our system from form-based to the single item-based examination, the latter of which is the international standard now. We simulated this system, streamlined our Autobot and Autotest systems and still went ahead to develop our own JAMBTEST, a software innovated in-house by a small team led by own staff, Dubem. We improved on the examination system, simulated everything end-to-end before the examinations and we thought everything was perfect. All the layers, including using dummies, were deployed this year but despite that, an error happened. It is a classical manifestation of the axiom that man proposes but God disposes.

3.0 Between KAD and LAG

Let me disclose part of how we operate in JAMB for the first time in public. Conscious of the fault-lines of Nigeria, we use two operational ‘vehicles’ to traverse Nigeria under the code names of KAD and LAG. The KAD vehicle contains the Northern states excluding Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Niger, Kogi and FCT but it includes the six South South states. The LAG vehicle, on the other hand, consists of Southern states excluding the 6 South South states but it includes Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Niger, Kogi and FCT. These ‘vehicles’ are deployed to serve Nigerians as a whole, the South being part of the North and the North being part of the South. So, there is no distinct North or South.

After the mock examinations this year, we reviewed our LAG (which includes South West and South East states as earlier indicated) and KAD examination engines. We realised that in the LAG category, options to the items of our examinations were not shuffled. We insisted that the shuffling must be effected. After this was done, we tested the update as usual and we were satisfied. We thereafter still did what we call *dummy*, a simulation, a day before the examinations and everything seemed to be okay. In other words, we believed we were ready to deploy the items after some layers of testing the processes.

However, on the second day of the examinations this year, which was Friday April 25, 2025, we discovered that there was some omission in the items within the LAG category. An update for correction and grading adjustment was instantly made and it was tested on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. The update was applied after 12 a.m. on Tuesday morning and it was successful. That was why all the examinations from Tuesday till the end of UTME had no problem. To correct and re-upload the responses (i.e. results) from LAG for the pre-Tuesday glitch, the service providers concerned with LAG were deployed to effect the patch but there were patch errors in some centres (servers) for the first three or four days in only two locations. In simple terms, while 65 centres (206,610 candidates) were affected in Lagos zone (comprising only Lagos

state), 92 centres (173,387 candidates) were affected in Owerri zone, which includes the South East states. In clear terms, in the process of rectifying the issue, the technical personnel deployed by the Service Provider for LAG (Lagos and South-East zones) inadvertently failed to update some of the delivery servers. Regrettably, this oversight went undetected prior to the release of the results.

Recall that last year, we overhauled our reporting system, which made obvious what has not caught much public attention and thus sparked significant backlash from the Nigerian public. In response to widespread concerns about what many referred to as a “failure rate,” we made adjustments this year. Only professional educators who know the difference between achievement test and selection test (which UTME ranking test is) were not concerned, we felt with adjustment made during the preparation, better performance statistics will emerge. We were therefore not surprised when the best score in 2025 (374) was the best highest in the last one and half decades as shown below.

List of Best UTME Candidates for the Past Twelve (12) Year

| S/N | YEAR | REGISTRATION NUMBER | NAME | SCORE |
|------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | 2024 | 202440343695GA | Olowu Joseph Oluwasijibomi | 367 |
| | | 202440097040EF | Alayande David | 367 |
| | | 202440089418GA | Orukpe Joel Ehijeje | 367 |
| 2. | 2023 | 202330325356GA | Umeh Kamsiyochukwu Nkechinyere | 360 |
| 3. | 2022 | 202211075576JA | Adebayo Eyimofe Oluwatofunmi | 362 |
| 4. | 2021 | 10054281ID | Monwuba Chibuzo Chibuikem | 358 |
| 5. | 2020 | 21398306DF | Maduafokwa Egoagwuagwu Agnes | 365 |
| 6. | 2019 | 96630270JC | Ezeunala Ekene Franklin. | 347 |
| 7. | 2018 | 86034528DA | Galadima Israel Zakari | 364 |
| 8. | 2017 | 75902784CB | Akingbulugbe Precious Ayomide | 353 |
| 9. | 2016 | 65290500BI | Akenbor Adesuwa Osarugue | 359 |
| 10. | 2016 | 65740193BF | Anonye Victory Emenike | 359 |
| 11. | 2015 | 55395199EB | Ilukwe Lottachukwu Geraldine | 332 |
| 12. | 2014 | 47049891HB | Onomejoh Princewill | 299 |
| 13. | 2013 | 37207292AB | Olise Israel Chukwunalu | 299 |

The examinations were concluded on Wednesday and the results were ready. By the time the results were generically analysed, they did not depart radically from the tradition of the previous 12 years except that we gladly noticed improvement in the highest scorer. But contrary to our prediction, there was none in the overall as the performance was sadly poorer than that of last year; yet everything fell within the range of the existing pattern.

COMPARISON OF UTME RESULTS SINCE INCEPTION (2013)

| S/N | RANGE | 2025 | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Total Results Released | 1,955,069 (100%) | 1,842,364 (100%) | 1,522,476 (100%) | 1,713,252 (100%) | 1,312,390 (100%) | 1,920,457 (100%) | 1,830,310 (100%) | 1,621,733 (100%) | 1,698,577 (100%) | 1,660,158 (100%) | 1,466,269 (100%) | 1,603,633 (100%) | 1,721,647 (100%) |
| 2 | 300 & Above | 12,414 (0.63%) | 8,401 (0.46%) | 5,318 (0.35%) | 5,833 (0.34%) | 724 (0.06%) | 4,948 (0.26%) | 2,964 (0.16%) | 4,682 (0.29%) | 1,989 (0.12%) | 829 (0.05%) | 40 (0.003%) | - (0%) | - (0%) |
| 3 | 250 & Above | 73,441 (3.76%) | 77,070 (4.18%) | 56,736 (3.73%) | 65,336 (3.8%) | 21,368 (1.63%) | 57,271 (2.98%) | 61,356 (3.35%) | 68,819 (4.2%) | 56,855 (3.35%) | 30,756 (1.85%) | 31,154 (2.12%) | 4,380 (0.27%) | 5,085 (0.3%) |
| 4 | 200 & Above | 420,415 (21.50%) | 439,961 (24%) | 355,689 (23.36%) | 385,807 (22.5%) | 168,650 (13%) | 404,740 (21%) | 433,291 (24%) | 415,225 (26%) | 466,081 (27%) | 568,847 (34%) | 455,780 (31%) | 233,264 (14.5%) | 188,567 (11%) |
| 5 | Below 200 | 1,534,654 (78.50%) | 1,402,403 (76%) | 1,166,787 (76.64%) | 1,327,445 (77.5%) | 1,143,740 (87%) | 1,515,717 (79%) | 1,397,019 (76%) | 1,206,508 (74%) | 1,232,496 (73%) | 1,091,311 (66%) | 1,010,489 (69%) | 1,370,369 (85.5%) | 1,533,080 (89%) |

Between Friday and Monday, the uproar could be said to have reached the highest decibel and it was coming from some respected voices in the society. Though JAMB usually responds to every complaint based on its merit, the nature of the clamour this time made us to fast-track the review process, a post-mortem analysis of the results that we would have done next month.

4.0 A Meeting of Minds

On the morning of Monday, May 12 2025, we issued a tentative press statement which includes “... If it is determined that there were indeed glitches, we will implement appropriate remedial measures promptly, as we do in the case of the examinations themselves.” Apart from officials of JAMB and other Government agencies, such as, Nigeria Education and Research Development Council (NERDC), we also summoned some experts and professionals who graciously responded to us, including a renowned professor of psychometrics and esteemed expert in Test and Measurement, who is from Imo state, Prof. Boniface Nworgu; a technical advisor and expert from the Computer Professionals Council of Nigeria (CPN), Prof. Adenike Osofisan; a CPN Representative, Mr Bayo Onimode; the President of the Nigerian Academy of Education, Prof. Kabiru Isyaku; the National Parent-Teacher Association of Nigeria, the National Association of Nigerian Students, among others. We immensely appreciate them for heeding our distress call.

Within 24 hours of rigorous work, we were able to isolate where the problem emanated from. It happened in 65 centres in Lagos and 92 centres in Owerri zone. In these centres, the patch was not properly applied in some centre servers by the service provider and that failure disrupted the upload of the candidates’ responses within the first three or four days, as applicable to Lagos and Owerri zones. The 2025 UTME that could have been our finest yet, were it not for the carelessness, negligence, and lack of concern exhibited by the agents entrusted with this crucial yet straightforward function. Immediately we realised this, we summoned the Chief External Examiners of Lagos, Imo, Anambra, Oyo, Abia and Ebonyi, the six states affected. Fortunately, they all swiftly responded to join the group. We also invited Prof. Bashir Galadanchi, a leading expert in Computer Science; the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPSS), which was represented by a leading voice in public advocacy, Dr. (Mrs) Bukola Dosumu. A number of our vocal critics were also invited to the interaction such that we could jointly and sincerely examine the situation.

Despite being able to identify the source of the problem and the affected centres, we are conscious of the painful damage it has inflicted on the reputation of JAMB. As Registrar of JAMB, I hold myself personally responsible, including for the negligence of the service provider, and I unreservedly apologise for it and the trauma that it has subjected affected Nigerians to, directly and indirectly. Once again, we apologise and assure you that this incident represents a significant setback for the Board's reputation. We remain committed to emerging stronger in our core values of transparency, fairness, and equity. It is our culture to admit error because we know that in spite of the best of our efforts, we are human, we are not perfect. The only consolation we have in this case is that it is just one of the two service providers that did not do well by uploading improperly but it was not a case of glitches nor sabotage.

By Tuesday morning, with the CEEs, the experts and Mr Osita Chidoka (a former Minister of Aviation) of Athena Centre, we selected samples of responses and reviewed. We compared the results and we are finding interesting correlations except in the 157 centers where distortions had occurred.

We unanimously agreed that each state of the Federation be sampled. No sign of any abnormality so far has been detected in any centre outside the ones mentioned and the laborious exercise is ongoing.

5.0 No Problem without a Solution

We have decided that all the candidates affected in the 157 centres out of 882 centres will be contacted to retake their examinations starting from Friday, May 16, 2025. These candidates are to be contacted through text messages addressed to their registered phone numbers, their email addresses, their profiles and phone calls by JAMB. They are directed to reprint their Examination Slips for the rescheduled examination dates.

While not oblivious of the fact that WAEC examinations are ongoing, we have contacted WAEC and in an unprecedented show of solidarity, the Council has graciously decided to as much as possible accommodate us within the WAEC time-slot. Any candidate with a clash of timetable, particularly for Agricultural Science on Friday, would be rescheduled. However, we have endeavored to ensure that no such exist. Most, if not all, such candidates are scheduled for Saturday. Fortunately, the prescribed texts for SSCE are also the prescribed texts for UTME apart from the reading text of the UTME, which carries just 10 marks in our Use of English test.

6.0 Appeal, Appreciation and Apology

I understand that there are three powerful expressions which contain one word, two words and three words respectively. They are *please*, *thank you* and *I am sorry*. So, I appeal to the candidates and those affected by the error of our system to accept this explanation as the truth of the matter without embellishment, PLEASE. I apologise and take full responsibility not just in words.

Then, I want to say a big THANK YOU to the Honourable Minister of Education for his unwavering belief in JAMB and what the Board stands for. I also appreciate all officers and officials who believe in us for their goodwill in the face of this challenge. We have vowed to uphold integrity as the abiding philosophy of JAMB and we won't waver or depart from it despite the fact that we are not infallible. I am equally grateful to all stakeholders who have lent us their support and expertise in arriving at a logical

conclusion that we have arrived at. And for the inconveniencies, once again, on behalf of JAMB, I say, I AM SORRY to all Nigerians.

Thank you and I can now entertain your questions.