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RAINSTORM KILLS 3, RENDERS 2,000 HOMELESS



Written by ...

Friday, 26 October 2007

Rainstorm destroyed properties worth millions of naira and claimed three lives in Vandeikya, Benue, on Tuesday.

Mr. Dominic Ihyuman, the Chairman of Vandeikya Local Government, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday in Vandeikya that more than 200 houses were affected and some 2,000 people displaced.

"About 1 a.m. on Tuesday morning, there was a heavy rainstorm which blew off the roofs of about 200 houses and displaced more than 2,000 people.

Public and private institutions were affected, while trees were uprooted. Sadly three lives were lost in the disaster."

"A man died in a collapsed building at the palm oil market, while a young lady and a boy of three also died of injuries from collapsed buildings," Ihyuman said.

According to him, the damage is the worst in the history of the town.

"This is the worst disaster ever experienced in the history of this town. Even the 2003 flood disaster was not this bad."

Ihyuman said the local administration do not have the resources to rehabilitate the displaced people and appealed for federal and state government aid.

"From the extent of the damage, the repair work required is beyond the scope of the affected people and the local government council.

"As a result, I am appealing to the Federal government, state governments and donor agencies to come to our aid by providing food, roofing sheets, beddings and building materials.

"With the extent of damage, it will require about N500million to rehabilitate the town itself, because apart from the buildings, the electric poles were also affected.

"I don't think in the next six months, we can have electricity in this town. All the electricity poles were uprooted."

Ihyuman said his concern now was how to rehabilitate the victims who had no place to stay.

"My major concern now is about how to rehabilitate some of the people affected, especially those of them who have no where to lay their heads.

"This is rainy season. I can imagine what will happen when it rains heavily again.

"An emergency meeting of the council has set up a committee to look into how the local government can assist the victims.

NAN reports that the impact of the rainstorm was severe on St. Peter Secondary School, Government Secondary School, Township Health Clinic, the Divisional Police Hq. the Grade One Area Court and the ANPP secretariat where the building collapsed completely.

The court cannot sit as the whole roof of the building has been blown off and all the files soaked with water.

The DPO, Mr. Simon Ujah, told NAN that "the wall of the cell where suspects are kept, has a crack right from the roof to the foundation and can give way anytime."

The proprietor of Jack and Jill Nursery and Primary School,

Mr. James Ortese, said the school, which has about 1,000 pupils, had closed temporarily for him to effect repairs.

"The damage is enormous. This will cost us about N1 million. We have to close the school for repair work, which is currently going on." (NAN)

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