

# Four die in Abaji windstorm

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

TRAGEDY struck at Abaji Area Council on Saturday evening when four persons including a 9-year-old boy died, while 15 others mostly children sustained various degrees of injuries after a wind storm struck the town.

The heavy wind storm which lasted for about 15 minutes destroyed property worth millions of naira, as many residential houses in the heart of the council collapsed, while some had their roofs removed by the wind.

An eyewitness, Malam Abdulahi Usman, while narrating how the nine-year-old boy died at 4:12 pm, said the boy who was in company of other children from an Islamiyya School, ran to hide at the back of a fence opposite junior staff quarters in order to avoid the heavy wind but the fence collapsed on four of the children, killing the year old boy on the spot.

Malam Usman, who is a staff of the Federal Government Girls College, Abaji, expressed shock over the incident, saying since his

17 years stay in the council, he has never witnessed such a disaster.

Another eyewitness said three other persons were killed by the storm, including a middle-aged woman, who were on their way home from market, when one of the blown off roof tops landed on them, killing them instantly.

The areas worst affected included, Abatoir, Ayaura Pipeline, Anguwar Gwari, Naharati, junior staff quarters.

Our reporter who visited the hospital Sunday morning observed that seven of the vic-

tims, including three children were receiving treatment, while a nurse disclosed that two others who had fractures were taken by their parents to a native doctor.

The Minister of State for FCT, Chief Chuka Odom visited Abaji on Sunday to commiserate with the victims and their families.

The minister, who also visited the Ona of Abaji's palace, informed him that he was in the town to assess the damage and sympathise the traditional ruler and the victims over the incident.

Chief Odom directed the coun-

cil chairman to liaise with the Metrological Agency in Abuja in order to know whether there is the need to evacuate residents of the area, adding that the FCTA will urgently send relief materials to the victims.

Areas visited by the minister were the Federal Government Girls College Abaji, where he inspected damaged classrooms, hostels, and administrative blocks, promised to liaise with the Education minister to make adequate arrangements for the students.

PIC: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH



DAMAGES caused by windstorm at Abaji ...Saturday.

## Task force arrests food vendors, hawkers

By Usman A. Bello, Samuel Olotu & Doris Afoma West

THE Abuja Environmental Protection Board's task force yesterday arrested food vendors and hawkers at Wuse bus stop in Abuja.

Our reporters who observed the incident saw food vendors and hawkers fleeing to evade arrest, while the task force officials had a field day packing their wares into their vehicle.

Those who were arrested were seen inside the vehicle begging the task force officials to release them promising not to come back to the area.

One of the food vendors who escaped told City News that they had to escape to avoid facing a mobile court, where they will be made to pay a fine.

A member of the task force who spoke on the condition of anonymity said they had warned the street hawkers severally not to either sell food or hawk in the area but they are adamant as well as contribute to littering the area with dirt.

Meanwhile, the board's Public Relations Officer, Samuel Musa, said AEPB will not rest until the city is cleared of such nuisances.