
Floods kill 24 in Kano

From Yusha'u A. Ibrahim, Kano

TWENTY four persons including children were

killed and many others injured yesterday after torrential rains flooded the highly populated Fagge

area of Kano city leading to collapse of many buildings.

Two families lost five persons, three of them

housewives and two school children, while five of the survivors sustained fractures.

More than 100 homes were damaged by the heavy rainstorm, which residents of the area said was the first

of its kind in a very long time. More than 300 people were displaced.

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Initial information put the figure of the dead at six, with relations giving the names of the deceased as Hadiza Labaran, Binta Labaran, Bashir Labaran, Aisha Labaran, Abubakar Abbas and Yusuf Abbas.

But a BBC Hausa report last night said 24 people were confirmed dead as a result of the rain-storm.

Kano state fire service chief Kassim Musa was quoted by the Associated Press news agency as saying that the rains flooded a neighborhood in the city of Kano because of poor drainage. He said about 150 people have been displaced and at least 27 houses

destroyed.

Resident of the area Aliyu Jibril told Daily Trust that the major cause of the flooding was erection of illegal sheds along the only drainage of Kwarin Gogau.

Alhaji Labaran Umaru, who lost four children in the disaster, recounted the incident to Daily Trust: "We were sleeping upstairs when the wind started, followed by heavy rainfall. We all rushed down because we fear that the building might have collapse.

"The building first collapsed on my wife but fortunately she was rescued. Hadiza my daughter went back to upstairs to rescue her sisters but in the process the building collapsed on them and they died."

He said Hadiza, a secondary school student, died on the spot together with her sister Aisha, a primary school pupil.

Umaru added: "I accept the loss in good faith because we all came from God and we must one day go back to Him."

Hajiya Altine Usman Fagge, one of the survivors, said, "I was rescued through a window shortly after part of the building collapsed. I was busy trying to rescue my kids when part of the upstairs collapsed. Myself and the kids were rescued through a window."

She said the Fagge community had been facing this problem for almost seven years now even though they have complained to

the governments many times.

Alhaji Abbas Ado, who lost two family members, said, "When rain water flooded the downstairs of my house, we transferred the children to the upstairs but minutes later the building collapsed and two of them died. Right now I am staying in my neighbour's house. I lost all I have to the flooding. I am appealing to government to come to our aid."

The interim Management Officer of Fagge Local Government Area, Alhaji Abdulmalik Isma'ila Roggo, sympathized with victims of the incident and assured them of government's intervention.

"Fagge Local Government will

cooperate with state and Federal Government to address the problem once and for all. We will not allow flooding to consume our people," he said.

He said the Local Government has set up a committee to ascertain the level of damage caused by the flooding.

Authorities say flooding last year displaced about 500,000 people across the country, mostly in the North. The National Emergency Management Agency recently warned state governments in the North to take preventive measures against floods after weather forecasts showed that rains would be even heavier this year.