

■ Ramin-Tifa

Ramin-Tifa: The pond of death

By Tijjani Ibrahim

Ramin-Tifa is a gargantuan pond located in a community popularly called Kuwait in Tudun Murtala quarters of Nassarawa Local Government Area, Kano State.

The over forty-year-old pond is about half a kilometer long, about 300metres wide and about 50metres deep.

Ramin-Tifa, as the name implies, started as a pond where trucks used to pack sand for building purposes.

According to the Ward Head of Kuwait, Alhaji Nuhu Muhammad, one Alhaji Yahaya Gemu bought the farmland about 40 years ago and converted it into a source for sand for the residents and neighbouring communities.

"At that time there were no buildings around the area, but now, with the increase in population, you can see that there are buildings surrounding the

area and it has become dangerous for not only the people around the area but also for other passers-by," he said.

He added that the residents had lodged their complaints before the relevant authorities with a view to addressing the problem, but nothing had been done yet.

"I learnt that some days ago some government officials have come to inspect the place, but nobody contacted me from government," Muhammad said.

Ramin-Tifa has now become a death trap not only to the host community but also to passers-by especially those who are not aware of its existence. It has so far claimed many lives.

Maryam Shu'aibu is a member of one of the families that lost their loved ones to the pond. She told *Chronicles* that her brother Isma'il Shu'aibu, 13, died in the pond.

"He left home for school on the fateful day and he fell into the pond and only his corpse was returned to us for burial," she recalled.

Malam Salmanu Ibrahim, who also lost his seventeen-year-old son, Sani Salmanu, said he had made effort to form a committee to tackle the problem, but did not get the needed support from other members of the community.

"When I realised that I could not get the support of other residents, I took the issue to the media in order to draw the attention of the public. The pond is claiming peoples' lives and something must be done to stop it. We need to put our heads together to address this problem," he said.

Chronicles gathered that efforts were made by the community to secure government's intervention to prevent further deaths of innocent people, but to no avail.

A resident of Kuwait, Malama Fatima Tijjani, said a lot of people had lost their lives in the pond attributing the development to existence of some 'evil spirits' inside the pond.

"No one can tell you the number of people that either lost their lives or sustained serious degrees of injury in this place," Fatima said.

Malam Saidu Amadu, another resident told our reporter that accidents occurred mostly when young people went into the pond to take bath.

"In most cases, young men are drowned while taking bath, but sometimes people riding on vehicles, tricycles and even motorcycles used to fall into the pond, especially those who were oblivious of the existence of the large pond," he said.

Kabiru Usman said the residents had made several efforts to build wall around the pond but because it was made by mud bricks, it did not last long.

He called on government to build a concrete wall so that peoples' lives could be spared.

"I know a lot of people who lost their lives in the pond including tricycle riders that have fallen in with all their passengers," Usman has said.

Chronicles observed that the major concern of the residents is for government to come to their rescue by providing lasting solution to the problem.

Contacted, the Director of Planning and Monitoring, Kano State Ministry of Environment, Dr Garba Sale Ahmad said, the ministry had not received formal complaint regarding the pond from the residents.

Dr Ahmad said the residents should formally write to the ministry, assuring that, "once the ministry get the formal complaint, we will send experts to the area for assessment after which the ministry will write to the government for proper solution to the problem."

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