

# Hope dims on Kwara flood disaster victims

**T**HERE were indications yesterday that residents of Obbo-Ile in Ekiti Local Council area of Kwara State have given up hopes of finding the remaining 12 bodies of persons swept away by flood on Monday night.

But contrary to earlier reports, the tragedy did not occur at Osi, Afolayan's hometown but at Obbo-Ile, few kilometres from Osi. However, it was confirmed that the victims were all casual labourers with the Special Royal Farms, owned by a retired naval boss.

All the victims were females of school age, according to sources within

*From Abiodun Fagbemi,  
Ilorin*

the community. Their ages were given as ranging between 10 and 20 years. Investigations by *The Guardian* showed that the five bodies recovered from the disaster have been buried beside the river but there were no signs of rescue operations any longer.

Residents said they were not sure of what to do again, three days after the incident. They lamented that they could not call on fire fighters on the first day to assist them with rescue operations because of lack of communication facility. Some personal effects of the victims,

such as handbags, shoes and food containers still littered the scene of the incident.

The incident occurred on a small bridge, which links River Ihija with Special Royal Farms and some other communities beyond the farm. The bridge was said to have been built by the former naval chief after a similar floods washed away two smaller ones said to have been built by government.

The naval chief was said to have participated in the initial rescue effort as sources claimed that he worked with the rescue team till late in the night and did not go home until about 11p.m. He was, however, said to have

traveled out of town yesterday.

A resident of the community, Mr. Femi Olowokere and the manager of the farm Mr. Samuel Ajiboye, in separate interviews, attributed the disaster to alleged impatience of the victims. They both said the victims could have waited for just about two hours to allow the flood subside. Olowokere confirmed that all the victims were female who could not swim to safety. All the male workers were said to have either swum to safety or got rescued. He said over 50 volunteers from the community were involved in the rescue operation.