

Flood Kills Three, Sacks Community

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FLOOD has ravaged another community in Cross River State, as three persons were feared drowned in a flood, which ravaged the Agwagune in Biase, Cross River State. Over 1400 persons are displaced.

The persons including two 12-year-old girls and a 55-year-old man were swept away by the flood, which has completely engulfed the six villages of the community.

Efforts by the community divers for about four days and covering over 6 nautical miles along the Cross River to retrieve the corpses proved abortive as none could be found.

Over 60 houses were washed away while about 100 are at the verge of collapsing as water has taken substantial part of them.

While some of them have relocated with some property they were able to salvage by canoe to higher ground for safety, most were reluctant to move due to lack of finance to erect buildings upland and no places to squat either.

Many of the residents were seen overwhelmed in their flood houses, waiting for the worst to happen.

One of the victims, Mr. Unoh Eyama Eko, 30 years, who had half of his house swept into the river, said "where would I go with my three children and wife? Government, please help us. We are dying."

Mrs. Eso Eghe who lost substantial quantity of her hair dressing property to the raging flood said that she nursed no hope of staying back as she is not sure that her home will survive this year's flood.

Chief Onun Ogban Bassey, who is the Secretary of the Council of Chiefs of the submerged Imomoro village, said that though flooding in the community has been perennial this year, it instilled fear into residents that they could be drowned someday by floods.

Assessing the disaster, the Director General, Cross River State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Mr. Vincent Aquah advised immediate evacuation of the victims. "This is no drill, leave immediately. Do not bother so much about your property. Safety first."

The Director General, who was represented by the Assistant Director (Information) David Akate advised the people to squat anywhere available at the upland, including public buildings such as schools and markets.

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