

News

Borno flood killed 150 persons, displaced thousands, says SEMA as FG constructs dam in Benue

From Njadvare Musa, Maiduguri

THE Director-General of Borno State Management Agency (SEMA), Dr Mohammed Barkindo, has affirmed the death of 150 persons and displacement of over 120,000 others in last month's flood disaster in Maiduguri and two other council areas.

According to him, the September 10 catastrophe submerged communities located on the banks of Rivers Yedzaram and Ngadda that cut across Maiduguri.

Barkindo unveiled the casualty figure yesterday in a live programme.

He said the state's Flood Relief and Assessment Committee (BFRAC) had embarked on victims' identification for support and rebuilding of destroyed houses and critical infrastructure at N10 billion.

The SEMA regretted that the victims were not providing accurate information on family members and destroyed property to the committee.

Citing a household in the Fori community, he said: "It's very unfortunate for some of the flood victims to declare killed relations in the floods, while they are alive," stating that victims' "false declarations" to the committee were to claim compensations for the lost property, including the destroyed houses.

Besides the false declarations, he added that some traditional rulers in the affected communities of Fori, Gwange

I & II, Gambouru and Moro Moro convinced some of the affected residents to declare false ownership of houses and farmlands.

On the rescue of flood victims, he, however, noted that SEMA had to overcome the challenges of inadequate facilities and logistics in the state.

Barkindo stated that it was the Adamawa State government, military and other security agencies that provided motorised boats to reduce the casualty figure.

IN the meantime, the Federal Government had commenced construction of a multi-purpose dam upstream of the River Dura in the Bu-

ruku Local Council of Benue State to contain the heavy water that flows from that axis.

The Deputy Director of Hydrology at the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation, Robert Umezulike, made the disclosure at the weekend at the weekend, while assessing the Makurdi-Gboko-Katsina-Ala highway, which was affected by the overflow of the River Dura that spilt onto the road.

Umezulike explained that the flood was caused by continuous sediment deposits in the river, which have reduced its depth and capacity to hold water.

He said the assessment team would evaluate the situation

and report to the minister for immediate action.

"Over time, many of our rivers have become shallow due to sediment deposits in the water channels, which reduce their capacity to contain water. Consequently, when there is even a small amount of rain, the channels can become overwhelmed, resulting in flooding.

"Based on our observations, there is a need for a water reservoir upstream of the River Dura. In this regard, the ministry has already awarded a contract for the study and design of a multi-purpose dam that will help contain the water flowing from that axis," the director added.



Former President, Muhammadu Buhari (right), received former Governor of Katsina State, Aminu Bello Masari at his residence in Daura at the weekend.