

Six more Lagos ocean surge victims' bodies discovered

By [Yusuf Alli, Abuja](#) 21/08/2012 01:23:00



•A crowd of fun seekers on the Bar Beach, Lagos enjoying the Eid-el-Fitri holiday...yesterday. On the other side is Kuramo Beach, after its demolition

-Police name victims
-Ex-Kuramo residents count their losses

Six more bodies were yesterday hauled out of the restive ocean on Kuramo Beach, Lagos.

The recovery of the bodies by government emergency rescue officials and local divers has raised the death toll in the surge that swept

the Beach on Saturday to 10. The search for the remaining six bodies continues.

Lagos police spokesperson Ngozi Braide said the six bodies were recovered on Monday.

The remaining bodies are expected to float back to the sea shore.

The six victims are: Joseph Oke, Olorunwa Babatunde, Daniel Ajose and Alhaji Babatunde Benson, popularly known as KC. Others whose surnames are not known yet are Olumide and Mary.

Officials of the State Environmental Health Management Unit(SEHMU), who were at the scene, said the bodies had been deposited at the mortuary.

Our correspondent learnt that SEHMU recorded five retrieved bodies. The others were recovered by divers and others.

SEHMU officials, who confirmed that the bodies were recovered on the shoreline early yesterday, said they were bloated.

Kuramo Beach is now a shadow of its old throbbing self. Gone are the crowds of revelers and itinerant musicians as well as women of easy virtue. The long rows of shanties have been demolished by the Lagos state government.

The incident has affected patronage at the nearby Bar Beach as holiday makers stay away despite the ongoing Eid-el-Fitri break.

State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), General Manager Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu explained the government's effort to restore sanity to the area.

He said despite the fact that the government was sand filling the place to prevent the surge from spreading to other areas, the surge expected in November could be more disastrous.

Commissioner for Waterfront Prince Adesegun Oniru, who was also at the scene supervising the palliative measures, said: "What we need here is permanent solution to the problem, like we did on the

Bar Beach. That is why you see the whole of Ahmadu Bello Way is not flooded.

“This problem is not a Lagos problem; it is a national problem. The Federal Government should come to the aid of the state government. A huge amount of money is required to put a permanent solution and the state government alone cannot finance this,” he added.

The demolition continues and the traders who hitherto earned their living on the popular beach are counting their loses.

A petty trader, Adekunle Sabitiu, lamented that the surge has swept away her only source of livelihood.

She said: “They did not warn us of anything. It was after the tragedy occurred they came to tell us to leave our places.

“We were not allowed to take anything, until the next day (Sunday), and when we came, many of our things were already levelled.”

She said they pay ground rents to representatives of the Water-front Board, but none of the officials has come to address them.

“We pay N30, 000 a year to the board, but since the incident happened, nobody has come to address us,” the woman said.

Another trader, who owned a cabin lodge on the beach, Mr. Raheem Dosunmu, also said the government did not notify them of the impending surge.

“We were not told that something of such was going to happen. It was even the next day after the incident that we saw people from the government,” he said.

Dosunmu, noting that it was not a usual occurrence in the area, stressed that provisions for emergency relocation should have been put in place.

“We have been abroad and we’ve seen how things are done there; they inform the people before hand and also provide a temporary place for them during emergencies, such as this,” he noted.

“We pay to Allesh and Madols who represent the government, and they have been insensitive to our plight.

“I have a family to cater for and now I don’t know how I’m going to go about feeding them. So also 500 and more people working on this beach,” he added.

According to John Kabiru (alias Maisuya), the hope of making money during the sallah holiday has been dashed by the incident.

“We are not happy with what happened here at all. People have died and all our plans for the sallah to make small, small money are gone and the government has brought caterpillar to demolish everything. We do not know where to go.”

Another former occupant of one of the demolished shanties said they had nowhere else to go as the beach was their only source of livelihood.

He said: “This place is not a small place. If you stay here, you will know how much people make here every day. Do you know how much we will lose in this demolition? This is the only source of livelihood we have. I don’t know what I would do now that this place has been destroyed. Apart from that, we maintain these sheds with a lot of money.”

Fred, another former occupant, blamed the surge on the state government's Eko Atlantic City project.

His words: "For me, the cause of this surge came from the Lagos State government. Since 2009 when the Lagos State Government commenced the construction of the Eko Atlantic City, the surge has been increasing. And this year, the work got to Kuramo Beach.

"It happens yearly, especially from August to November, when the ocean current always rises. And because of the ongoing work at the Eko Atlantic City, the ocean current had nowhere to flow and it flowed to the shore to demolish our structures.

"Before the state government embarked on the construction of the city, during this time, what we normally experience is high tide and within hours, it would have subsided. The only thing that would be affected by the tide was the structures.

"Since they began the construction of this Eko Atlantic City, it has been from one issue to the other. And the reason is because we are middle class earners. The government is busy constructing homes for the rich, abandoning the downtrodden. Despite this, we pay ground rent to the government, liquor licence and other levies."

But the Lagos State Government has always denied that its development of the Eko Atlantic City is responsible for the Ocean surge.

Oniru said the project has no environmental impact on the area as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been duly conducted and certified okay.

He blamed the disaster on the Federal Government's neglect of

coastline development.

“You will recall that we came here about three months ago with President Goodluck Jonathan to show him the enormity of the ecological disaster looming on the waterfront here.

“From that time till now, we have lost about 10 metres of our land to the ocean surge and people’s lives and properties are constantly threatened,” Oniru said.

Like 3 people liked this.

Add New Comment

[Login](#)



Type your comment here.

Showing 6 comments

Sort by popular now



Mikeudeh10

sorry to d Family of those who lost their lives on ocean surge in Lagos,may d Lord comfort them.pls they should stay clear of d place for nw. d ocean has not finsh yet.

1 week ago 1 Like

Like Reply



Bethouperfect

Atlantic city, Atlantic ocean. The Atlantic ocean is seemingly against the building of the Atlantic city.....food for thought.

1 week ago

Like Reply



tuns

lagos govt has been proactive enough. our people should listen and be wise. when the govt warned the makoko residents of not expanding to the lagoon many asked for the head of brf. can we now see! and when things like this happen we're quick to blame it on the govt. must this always happen before we listen. may GOD comfort the families of the bereaved. and those alive, may we not be stiff-necked.

1 week ago

Like Reply



Alade Abiodun

There is no way nature can be cheated,Lagosian should stop playing with Atlantic ocean.

1 week ago

Like Reply



Akin

I feel for the families of those who lost properties and loved ones. May the Lord comfort them.

1 week ago

Like Reply



Anthony Illoegbunam

The ocean is not done yet with lagosians, people should keep away from the beaches for now.

1 week ago

Like Reply

[M](#) [Subscribe by email](#) [S](#) [RSS](#)

Reactions

