

Residents protest abandoned drainage

• '500 lives lost in four years'

By Adeyinka Aderibigbe
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RESIDENTS of Abule-Oki and nine other adjoining communities in Alimosho Local Government Area last Thursday stormed the Governor's Office and the Lagos State House of Assembly to protest an alleged abandonment of the dredging and concrete lining of Arigbanla Canal.

They claimed the abandonment, which usually caused heavy flooding in their communities had claimed no fewer than 500 lives of residents, including women and children since 2012.

Alhaji Kamorudeen Bamidele, the chairman of Committee on canal dredging of Abule-Oki, Onajole, lower Akinola, Raji Rasaki, Alabede, Aboru and Cele Water, among others, alleged

that the project contractor, Messrs Dully Dredging and Construction Company Limited, had collected N1.9 billion out of the N2.7 billion project vote before abandoning the site last year.

Bamidele said they resorted to protest to call attention to the dire need of the over 300,000 residents of the 10 communities, whose lives are being threatened by the incessant flooding of their homes.

He expressed sadness that a project which was meant to last for 12 months when it commenced in February 2012, had taken over four

years, with no end in sight.

"It has taken over four years and not even one tenth of the work had been completed," Bamidele claimed.

He further alleged that attempts by the Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Samuel Adejare, to mediate in the crisis failed as the chairman of the construction company, Femi Pearse declined to show up at the meeting.

According to Bamidele, the canal requires proper attention because the area is the melting point for about eight separate canals as it collects all the water from Abattoir, Ahmadiyya, Agbelekale/Ekoro, Papa Ashafa/Mulero, Orile Agege/Dopemu, Oke

Shagun, Akinola and Oke Odo/Abule Egba.

Speaker Mudashiru Obasa, who was represented by Lanre Ogunyemi said the Committee on Works and Infrastructure has received the communities' protest letter and the House would make a pronouncement on the development before the year ends.

Ogunyemi said: "The report concerning this matter is already before the Committee on Works and Infrastructure of which I am a member and we are assuring you that the House will speak on this matter before the end of the year".

Also speaking Bisi Yusuf, the lawmaker representing the communities, said he is passionate to see the issue resolved soon.

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