

# Niger flood claims 2, properties destroyed

ADELOWO OLADIPO - MINNA

TWO unidentified scavengers were, at the weekend, drowned and swept away by a raging flood while searching for valuables inside a river in Suleja Local Government Area of Niger State.

A downpour, which was said to have begun in the early hours of last Friday and lasted for several hours, rendered many residents of the council area homeless while commercial and social activities were also paralysed.

*Nigerian Tribune* gathered that the downpour also caused Kantoma bridge within the township to be submerged by flood that threatened some commercial outlets and residential buildings around the river bank.

It was further learnt that a community around the Madalla junction in the council area known as Monkey Village was not also left out, as the village was also said to have been submerged by flood following the downpour that lasted for about six hours.

Further checks revealed that many residential buildings were flooded while household items such as mattresses, electronics, furniture and documents like credentials, documents of properties, cheque books and vehicle particulars, among others, were also washed away by the flood.

An eyewitness account told our reporter, at the weekend, in Suleja that about 12 residential buildings and several shops were either partially or completely destroyed.

Some of the victims who

spoke with the *Nigerian Tribune* on condition of anonymity, blamed the disaster on the blockade of the drainage constructed by the Suleja Local Government Area authorities.

Also, the District Head of Madalla, Malam Musa

Saidu, who spoke with the *Nigerian Tribune* in Suleja, on Sunday, said that concerted efforts were being made by the appropriate authorities to avert similar crisis in the nearest future, particularly around the council areas and its environs.

Malam Saidu stated further that the flood had impacted negatively on the communities, while condemning the perceived negative attitudes of the residents towards environmental sanitation, which he said contributed to the flood.

## UNIMAD gets funds to conduct research into extremism, insurgency

CLEMENT IDOKO - ABUJA

THE Federal Government has approved special funding support to the Regional Centre for research and production of knowledge at the University of Maiduguri, to counter extremism.

Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Dr Abdullahi Bichi Baffa, made this known while inaugurating the President Muhammadu Buhari Senate Building at the University of Maiduguri, Borno State.

Borno State had been the hotbed of Boko Haram attacks, but Baffa told the university community that TETFund funds had been approved to support the Regional Centre in researching in that direction.

He revealed that from 1999 to 2018, over N12 billion had been allocated to the University of Maiduguri, out of which the university had accessed over N11 billion and used same for various projects, including the ones that were inaugurated.

While describing the university as one of the top

notch in terms of beneficiary institutions that accessed TETFund intervention quickly, Dr Baffa lamented that some institutions still had allocations for several years waiting for them.

He added that University of Maiduguri had already accessed up to the 2016 allocation, which he noted was commendable.

Other projects inaugurated by Dr Baffa, aside from the Senate Building, were the Centre for Instructional Technology; Veterinary Teaching Hospital Complex, and 2,200-seat capacity mega lecture halls Complex.

Speaking during the inauguration, Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Tertiary Education and Services, Honourable Aminu Suleiman Goro, called for upward review of accruable Education Tax to TETFund.

He insisted that the clamour for upward review of accruable education tax to TETFund was justified, given what was seen at the university, adding that tertiary institutions in Nigeria would have been mere glorified secondary

schools without TETFund interventions.

According to the lawmaker, who also inaugurated the Senate Chambers of the university, the projects that were sited on the campus of the University of Maiduguri, through the intervention of TETFund, was a clear picture of what judicious utilisation of public fund should be in Nigeria.

"Over the years, I have had the privilege of visiting, inspecting and inaugurating public buildings, if you will not accuse me of sentiment or being biased, I want to say the clamour for upward review of the percentage that is accruable to TETFund needs to be looked into.

"For over two years, we have been debating, there is a huge resistance from other demanding sectors that we should not increase provision for TETFund.

"But everyone needs to know that TETFund has justified the call for upward review, there is no two ways about it. We all agree that without TETFund, our tertiary institutions would have just been glorified secondary schools," he said.