

Killer Pond: Mysterious Nasarawa Pond That Claims Lives

It is the handiwork of water spirits —Fisherman

GODWIN ENNA reports that a pond in Agyaragu community in Nasarawa State has claimed several lives in mysterious circumstances in recent times as residents are torn between avoiding their main source of water and continuing to use it no matter the danger it portends.

By **GODWIN ENNA** On **Jun 30, 2019**

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TO any casual visitor and by extension the Angwan Tiv community in Agyaragu town in Nasarawa State, a pond within a large farm area is a blessing. It used to be a multipurpose pond – for bathing, source of drinking water and irrigation for the farmlands – but not anymore.

The pond has suddenly turned into a death trap now being avoided as much as possible since members of the community began to lose their lives in it from time to time. Not knowing the cause of the mysterious deaths, residents have started attributing them to all sorts of supernatural influences, including water spirits.

Before it began to claim lives, residents had begun to notice some changes about the pond. According to some of them who spoke with ArewaLive, one of the changes was noticed in its colour that had changed. Lightning was also said to have emanated from there, among other mysterious happenings.

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Recently the pond claimed two lives. The two victims, both brothers, had gone to the pond to fetch water with which they wanted to spray herbicide on their farm. One of them, the younger one had gone in to fetch water but was suddenly trapped and could not come out. The elder one then moved in to his rescue, but he was also trapped and got drowned in the process.

According to Arewa Live investigation, about 15 persons have so far lost their lives in the pond, but ironically the authorities concerned said they were only hearing of the casualty figure for the first time when the two brothers died.

Dr Ayuba Akwadu, the paramount ruler of Agyaragu, Zhe Migili, told Arewa Live that: «it was after this thing (death of two brothers) had happened that we were made to understand was has been happening.

“I thought it was the first time but they said it has been happening and nobody has ever reported such a thing to me and now what we might do in our own way is to appeal to our people not to go there again.»



On the contrary and due to the important value of the pond to residents, children, including adults have continued to use the pond on a daily basis for their daily needs.

A Fulani woman who was seen using the pond when Arewa Live visited the area said residents used to bathe and wash items in the middle of the pond but only to a certain point, adding that they had since stopped as the pond continued to expand, thus becoming a dangerous place.

“We are here to wash plates, clothes and bathe by the side of the river, but we don’t drink it anymore as the stream had begun to take human lives. There was a lady who once entered here and couldn’t come out again. She was from Akwanga on a visit to Agyaragu and decided to join her friends to bathe in the stream, but she died.

“There is only one person who enters the pond now to remove corpses. He is one old man who calls himself a fisherman,» she said.

Also Rita John, an elderly woman who told Arewa Live that she grew up in the community said: “people who have died here were about fifteen persons, but for us the Tiv community, this is the first time we are losing two children.



“Sometimes ago, some people came to fish and in the process something came out from the water and returned and the people died thereafter,» she explained.

Nicholas Kwaghtser, the man whose two children got drowned in the pond told Arewa Live that he was saddened by the incident, while calling on the authorities concerned to cordon off the area or fence it to prevent children, especially,

from further entering into the pond.

Explaining how his children's corpses were finally recovered and buried, Kwaghtser said: «an elder brother of one Bakari, a business man who owns many shops here in Agyaragu market, is always the first person to know if such an incident occurred.

«We quickly rushed to him and unfortunately he was not around, but we came with some two boys working with him. When they came, the fire service officers were also there to assist. As they (the boys) arrived, they could not jump into the water immediately, but had to say certain incantation before they entered and Godwin Tehemba (one of the boys) was discovered dead with his brother inside the pond,” he explained.

Arewa Live was lucky to meet the old man, but he was not ready to disclose his name when asked. He, however, explained the mystery behind the happenings in the pond.

“This pond was small before, but as time went on it kept expanding yearly and has already consumed so many lives. There was no year that somebody had not died in this pond. I have removed more than five dead bodies from there. One of my boys also removed two persons and likewise the other one had evacuated two persons in the stream. On the whole, my team had removed nine bodies from this same pond,” he reiterated



The elderly man then took Arewa Live round the pit, explaining areas that are deep and shallow, as well as pointing to points that people should avoid whenever they enter.

He revealed further that there is no special skill to navigate the pond except to avoid some areas which some people unfortunately ignore leading to their death.

“Whether one knows how to swim or not, once the spirits in the water want to celebrate, somebody will definitely die mysteriously,” he explained.

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The elderly man emphasised that he is an experienced fisherman who has travelled all over the country to fish and he is very conversant with rivers and the spirits therein.

“I fish here both in the rainy and dry seasons, but every pool of water has spirits attached to them. The spirits change their positions in the water. For example, before now the deep part was in the western part, but now it has shifted to the middle and eastern parts of it.

“As I entered to remove some victims, the upper layer of the water is neither cold nor hot, but going down deep, the water is cooler than ice, while beneath the water level is always warm. The water does not rise above the level you are seeing it, even during rainy season,” he added.



Asked whether the pond should be filled up as many people suggested, the experienced fisherman said that doing that would stop his fishing business and also deprive many people in the area of access to water. He then suggested that the state government should fence the area instead.

A man whose farm is close to the pond, Bako Dahiru, also narrated how some mysterious events happened on a certain day that he was irrigating his farm around February last year.

He said that on that fateful day, something came out tall from the water, depending on what the eye saw then, and changed the atmospheric condition as the weather became excessively hot.

According to him, «People were shouting and calling on me to leave the place, but when I lifted my eye up I saw something like a rainbow, changing the colour of the water as well as all the plants around. I was not inside the water and that was why it couldn't harm me as it returned to the water.»

Dahiru also recalled the day that a Good Samaritan attempted to save a lady who drowned at the pond but he couldn't. He also cheated death by the whiskers.

Chief Fire officer, Nasarawa State, Alhaji Dalhatu Dogara, while speaking with Arewa Live on the recent rescue effort in Agyaragu said that his men were invited to the area and they did their possible best.

“There was a call and my men were there on a rescue mission and they have succeeded in removing the corpses of the two victims and handed them to the family for burial.

“If there is any other thing done aside this, we are not aware of such report. We are professionals in our service delivery to the people and we strictly ensure that our men work according to rule of engagement and safety of their lives first,» he said.

In order to seek a scientific explanation for the mystery surrounding the Agyaragu pond, Arewa Live spoke with a lecturer in the Department of Geology and Mining, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Ubugadu Allu Augustine, who said there was the need to analyse the water content of the pond.

“There is a need to go there and see the pond and if need be to also analyse the water inside to know whether there is a chemical substance coming out from the ground which is harmful to the people that entered, but nobody is in the know of it.

“And of course, if we discover that there is a chemical in the pond, it then means that certain recommendations would be made to solve the issue or else as a precaution, people should be restricted from going there.

“There is what we call total dissolve solvent in water which tends to dissolve anything that comes around there. Apart from that, we need to also analyse the deepness of the pond in that place, because as a scientist I don't believe in all these myths,» Augustine explained.

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