

# Footballer drowns after rescuing five flood victims in Bayelsa

By Soji Ajibola



A 31-year-old footballer, Ernest Peremobowei, has drowned in a flood after he had rescued five people at the flooded Yenebelebiri community in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Peremobowei's corpse was found floating along the creek two days after he disappeared in the waters.

His remains have since been deposited at the morgue of the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Yenagoa.

The footballer was said to be on his way to Yenebelebiri community in the company of five other persons when their boat capsized after running into the Yenagoa jetty barge.

Brother to the deceased, Ernest Komboye, who confirmed the incident, said Peremobowei died of exhaustion after saving the lives of five occupants of the boat.

He said they were going to Yenebelebiri community to check the level of devastation to their houses and farmlands when the incident occurred.

The late footballer was the joint top scorer at this year's Bayelsa Governor's Football Tournament, otherwise known as Prosperity Cup, where he scored nine goals during the competition for Ibebelebiri community.

Meanwhile, organisers of

the Prosperity Cup, through its Director-General, Mr Ono Akpe, has commiserated with the family of the deceased, describing the incident as a sad tale for the football community in the state and Nigeria as a whole.

Mr Akpe, who recounted the skills and passion of the late footballer, who also played for Dreams Academy at the last State FA Cup finals, said the state had lost one of its brightest future stars to the flood.

He commiserated with the family of the deceased, his teammates and officials of Dreams Academy, as well as the entire football community in the state, just as he prayed to God to grant the immediate family the fortitude to bear the loss.

"This is really sad for me. Ernest was a very good player. We saw his exploits at the last Prosperity Cup, where he scored nine goals.

"Even at the finals of the FA Cup against Bayelsa United, he scored a beautiful goal. He was one player we wished realised his dream of playing for bigger teams. His exploits and bravery were exemplary.

"The fact that he saved five persons before succumbing to the raging torrents is indeed quite unfortunate."

Peremobowei is survived by a wife, three children and parents.