

# 17 feared dead as flood ravages ex-naval boss' farm

**Doyin Adebuseyi, Ilorin**

SEVENTEEN people were feared dead as flood ravaged the farm of a former Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Samuel Afolayan (rtd), in Osi-Ekiti, Kwara State.

The victims were said to be workers of the former naval boss.

Our correspondent gathered that the Governor, Dr. Bukola Saraki, sent a delegation, led by his Special Adviser on Political Matters, Mr. Yemi Afolayan, to the area. The team will also assess the extent of damage and to commiserate with the local government, the tradi-

tional rulers and families of the victims.

As at press time, it was gathered that rescue team was still battling to recover the missing bodies said to have been swept into a nearby river in the area.

Five of the victims according to findings, had been recovered dead, while 12 were still missing.

The only survivor of the disaster, which had thrown the entire community into mourning, was said to be recuperating at a private hospital.

A member of staff of the farm said the tragedy occurred as the nearby River Ihaji overflowed its banks

following persistent down-pour in the area in recent times.

He added, "The victims on sighting the river over running its banks made frantic efforts to escape from where they were working, but they were caught by the flood before they could cross to the other side of the river."

He also described the farm as the only single employer of labour in the community apart from the council.

"The tragedy touched virtually every home, including that of a health attendant with the local government (name withheld) who lost two of her daughters in the

flood," the source added.

When contacted on the telephone on Wednesday, the Police Public Relations Officer, Ekiti State Police Command, Mr. Markus Gideon, a deputy superintendent of police, said he was on leave and denied knowledge of the incident. Several calls put across to Afolayan's mobile line was also not responded to.

But a senior police officer in the command, who did not want to be quoted, confirmed the incident.

He also confirmed that five bodies had been recovered, while efforts were being made to recover the remaining.