

24 die, 16,625 houses destroyed in Katsina flood

•Buhari meets NGF leadership, pledges intervention

Stephen Angbulu, Abuja

No fewer than 24 persons lost their lives as floods and windstorms ravaged the 34 local government areas of Katsina State, the state Emergency Management Agency has said. The incident was said to have affected no fewer than 18,245 persons.

The spokesperson for the agency, Mr Umar Muhammad, told the News Agency of Nigeria that apart from those who died, several other persons sustained varying degrees of injuries as a result of the disasters.

Muhammad added that 16,625 houses were damaged by the disasters while 1,620 farmlands were also submerged in Kafur, Danja and Ingawa LGAs.

He said properties and farm produce estimated to cost millions of naira were destroyed as a result of the disasters.

Muhammad said the agency already assessed the affected houses and farmlands in order to assist the victims. He added that the state government would soon start the distribution of relief materials to assist the victims.

Meanwhile, the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), on Friday met with the leadership of the Nigeria Governors' Forum over the incidence of flooding in different parts of the country.

The President, who presided over the meeting at the State House, Abuja, encouraged the governors to meet with the Minister of Water Resources to design solutions to the problem.

The meeting was attended by the outgoing Chairman of NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, the incoming interim chairman, Governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State and the interim deputy chairman, Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State.

Buhari stated that the call had become imperative in view of the fact that the minister had "worked hard" on dams and water resources in the country.

He said the minister could escalate their conclusions to the Federal Government to alleviate the plight of the people currently being ravaged by flood in the country.

The governors told the President that lives had been lost, while homes and farmlands were washed away in states like Kogi, Yobe, Jigawa, and some others.

They sought the Federal Government's intervention in terms of special funding.

Buhari said after the engagement with the relevant minister, a report should be sent in, "and we will see what to do."

Fayemi, whose tenure would terminate on October 16, thanked the President for supporting him as the governor of Ekiti State and the governors collectively.