

One killed, 3,000-hectare Shonga rice farm submerged in Kwara

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The Emir of Shonga, Haliru Yahya

By Tunde Oyekola

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One person was killed, while 3,000 hectares of rice farmland were submerged, affecting about 5,000 farmers in an unusual flood that hit the Shonga community in the Edu Local Government Area of Kwara State last Saturday.

The Kwara Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes, a government agency that visited the affected community for an on-the-spot assessment, confirmed the extent of the devastation.

According to a statement issued on Thursday by the Kwara ACREsAL Communication Officer, Taiwo Okanlawon, the unusual flooding dealt a significant blow to the community.

The Emir of Shonga, Dr. Haliru Yahya, expressed shock over the flooding when a state government delegation visited the area last Sunday.

He noted that the flood occurred at an unusual time of the year when there had been no rainfall and urged the government to conduct a thorough investigation into its causes.

The Emir said, “From here up to Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, Niger Republic, and Mali, there has been no rain. The Sahel is dry. How can there be a flood here? The source of this flood must be local.

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“We inquired from Kainji Dam, and they said it wasn’t from them. But Jebba Dam could not deny it. In fact, they said they would soon close it. We spent several years attracting people to this place. We hope this does not happen again next year to avert food insecurity.”

The Kwara ACREsAL team, which visited the area between Monday and Wednesday, gathered from the community that one person had died as a result of the flood, while 3,000 hectares of rice farmland were submerged.

Representing the Emir of Shonga, the Nakodi of Shonga, Alhaji Sulaiman Baiwa Yahya, commended Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for his swift response to the disaster and thanked the Kwara ACREsAL team for assessing the impact of the flood.

Yahya stated that over 5,000 farmers were affected, many of whom had taken loans to invest in their rice farms.

“The ACREsAL team was informed that the flood had claimed a life due to shock. Additionally, over 3,000 hectares of rice plantations, involving 5,000 farmers, were submerged, and several households were displaced,” the agency’s report stated.

