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Flood: Pregnant woman, 7 children drown in Delta

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... Monarch calls for buffer dam

From Paul Osuyi, Asaba

About eight persons including a pregnant woman and seven children are feared dead as they reportedly drowned in the River Niger following the rise in the level of water due to incessant rainfall and opening of the Lagdo Dam in Cameroun.

The victims, who were said to be missing since the current flood ravaging parts of Delta State started, were said to be natives of Utchi, a community along the bank of the Niger in Ndokwa East Local Government Area of the state.

The children were said to be returning from school while the pregnant woman was returning from Anambra State when they were caught by a storm, which threw them into the river where they reportedly drowned.

Chairman of the Ndokwa East council area, Mrs. Nkechi Chukwurah, said corpses of the victims were yet to be found.

Speaking in Asaba yesterday on the sidelines of a stakeholders' meeting on the ravaging flood, Chukwurah lamented the impact of the flood in the locality, adding that two persons have also died.

She told newsmen that despite initial hesitation from residents in flood-prone communities to move to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camp at Ashaka, about 170 persons have reported at the camp as the water level keeps rising.

"As at this morning, we have recorded about 170 persons at the camp. They said the water stood still at the Niger and was now flowing into the communities thereby raising the volume in the communities, and I think that is the reason they are coming out on their own.

"They are calling us to come back and pick them but we do not have the resources to do that because we

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actually wasted money initially to move around urging them to come out without much success,” she said. Earlier, at the stakeholders’ meeting, the Deputy Governor, Kingsley Otuaro, who doubles as the state chairman of the flood management committee, said a lot had been done to cushion the effect of the flood on victims.

One of the monarchs who spoke during the meeting, Emmanuel Delekpe, traditional ruler of Udu Kingdom, lamented failure of the Federal Government to build buffer dams to take the excess water from the Camerounian dam.

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