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Evil storm kills 3, destroys property as residents lament

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For some residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, the recent rainstorm that claimed three lives, blew off several roofs and destroyed homes and business centres can be described as “evil wind.”

It was hardly seen coming. The weather was friendly in the morning and even afternoon of April 6 in FCT. The whiff of the rainstorm that prevailed on the evening of the day is still dominating discourse in the seat of power.

The rain was preceded by wind. By the time the atmosphere normalised, at least three people were reported killed. A raft of properties, electric poles and buildings of and artisans living in Galadimawa, Abuja, were massively destroyed. Apart from Galadimawa residents, people in Lugbe, Garki, Bwari and other surrounding communities also felt the impact of the storm.

The ugly tales have dampened the spirits of people residing in those areas, leaving them with a huge task to fill the void left by the unfortunate circumstance. As it is with most cases of natural disasters, power supply has been halted for the last two months as citizens try to salvage what is left of places affected by the damning incident.

Obinna Okafor, 32, a good Samaritan in Galadimawa, who tried to save the life of one of the victims narrated his ordeal to *Daily Sun*:

“After the storm, myself and three other able bodied men approached a collapsed building after the market, looking out for injured victims in the mid of the debris. We heard the sound of a person breathing heavily and rushed into the rubble and started to remove stones and bricks lying on top of the poor boy. I recognised him. He was our fellow area boy.

“While trying to pull him out, we noticed that his upper body and his head was bloated because blood could not flow in other parts of his body as a result of the pressure from the building materials that was upon him.

“We managed to get him out but there was no car to take him to the hospital. So we called a bike man and one of us held him and hopped on the bike with him. On getting to the roundabout, the boy had already given up the ghost.”

Two others were confirmed dead soon after. There were other cases such as the removal of car windshields, ceilings and roofing sheets of buildings engulfed by the massive wind.

A lady, aka “Mama G”, who runs a beer parlour and “Nkwobi” (bush meat) joint was also caught in the crossfire of the deadly storm. She lamented the loss of her roofing sheets and other valuables destroyed by the wind while fighting so hard to keep her emotions in check:

“I was washing some dishes outside when the wind began slowly. I thought it was just normal breeze but it got worse soon after.

“Customers started to leave my shop. Some didn’t even pay but I didn’t bother because I knew most of them as they live in the area and most importantly I had to go home and make sure my kids were alright.

“As I was arranging my kitchen utensils the wind became so much that I couldn’t continue. My roof started shaking, I left most of my things outside and before I could reach for my padlock to lock up, my roof just came off with a bang.

“I was so confused, I didn’t know what to do. I couldn’t even see properly because of the dust raised by the wind. I started to run home without looking back because I had to check on my kids.”

Some residents of Bwari raised concerns over the bad roads and also said the storm created a serious power outage that lasted for some weeks. The wind also uprooted trees and detached tree branches:

“We hardly have light in Bwari. Sometimes we go three weeks without electricity. Although of recent it has been better but no so frequent as expected. The storm affected a tree by the roadside that destroyed one electric wire. I think that was what caused the power outage for a long time.

“Generally, most of the interior roads in Bwari are rough and terrible. Starting from the front of JAMB office in Bwari is also bad right down to the law school in Bwari. There are certain times where you need to go out to buy foods but when you bet to see the dusts in the area the food doesn’t get exciting anymore.

“The place gets really dusty and messes the whole place up. It’s not a place government really put so much attention on. If the roads can be, I think it would reduce pollution rate and people would be healthy.”



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