

# Storm kills two, destroys houses in Nasarawa, Enugu, Bayelsa

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and Pauline Onyibe**

**R**ainstorm which swept across parts of the country has killed at least two, injured several other and damaged property and goods worth hundreds of millions of Naira.

Two people lost their lives while 15 others sustained injuries yesterday when the rainstorm wreaked havoc on Koko community in Nasarawa State.

Staff of the Nigeria Farmers Group and Cooperative Society of Gbate farm center in Kokona Local Government Area of Nasarawa State were affected in the incident.

Those who died were identified as Naomi Audi and Rabiu Yaro Sodengi attached to the rice processing unit of the farm.

In Enugu State, an overnight downpour destroyed a multi-million Naira fuel station under construction at Onu-Asaba by Presidential Road in Enugu metropolis.

The station, which is being constructed on a reclaimed land on the shoulder of Asaba River Bridge opposite Pauly General Hospital, appeared to be an illegal construction blocking the channel of water flow.

Also, the mast of Africa Independent Television (AIT) and Ruypower FM Bayelsa, was yesterday afternoon brought down by a violent rainstorm that swept through Yenagoa.

Although buildings around the premises of the stations situated at Elebele community were affected, no life was lost.

Briefing journalists in Nasarawa, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the multi-million naira farm, Mr. Redson Tedhekhe, said the two affected staff met their untimely death when windstorm pulled down the building they were inside while trying to evacuate farm produce in the building.

Tedhekhe said the 15 injured staff were rushed to Mumbasa Medical Centre, Koffi where doctors were trying to stabilise them.

He, however, said that in recognition of the dedication and commitments demonstrated by the two late staff of the farm, their salaries would run for one year while those injured would be treated by the farm and their salaries would continue to run to until they returned to their duty posts as part of the insurance

scheme.

The MD said they were going to plant fast growing economic trees as well as train and re-train their staff on safety measures to be taken.

He condoled with the families of the victims, saying that they would continue to be remembered and honoured by the farm.

Tedhekhe then prayed for the quick recovery of the injured staff and assured them of their continued prayers and support, noting that the support of their host community even in this moment of grief was quite encouraging.

In Lokoja, Kogi State, the downpour on Tues-

day night destroyed at least 18 electric poles and some houses.

A visit to some affected areas yesterday showed that Lokoja and its suburbs were now in total blackout.

The Public Relations Officer of the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC), Mrs. Ifeoma Arudi, said 18 electric poles were damaged by the storm.

She, however, said that technicians of the company were already working on replacing the damaged poles in different locations.

Arudi said that the storm also damaged power installations when uprooted trees and rooftops fell on them.

According to her, consumers may have to wait until late night or Thursday to have normal electricity supply.

Rooftops of houses and shops were blown away by the storm which also swept away kiosks in Gaduma, Ganaja and Cali Vision areas and houses within 500 and 200 housing estates.

The windstorm also uprooted trees in some areas of the city.

In Enugu, many passers-by and those living around the neighbourhood were seen milling around the scene of the disaster, discussing the development.

It was learnt that the property is owned by a former Chairman of Enugu East Local Government.

Our correspondent, however, saw a "stop work" inscription on the wall of the building under construction by the Enugu State Capital Territory Development Authority (ECTDA) but work was still going on.

Similarly, four underground fuel tanks freshly laid in the ground were extirpated by the flood.

The illegal construction obviously blocked the channel of the water body leading to the havoc.

The collapse of the multi million project was attributed to the torrential rain witnessed in the state the previous night.

Some of the spectators alleged that when officials of the ECTDA came to mark stop work on the building, work temporarily stopped, only to resume about two weeks later thereby fueling suspensions that the officials might have been compromised.

The Chairman of the ECTDA, Mr. Ken Osoh, did not pick his calls to respond to the allegations.



One of the affected buildings

## Delta: Banks, markets, malls, stations, others shut

**Dominic Adewole  
ASABA**

**S**ocial and economic activities were paralysed in Delta State yesterday as banks, markets, malls, supermarkets, petrol stations, amusement parks and government offices shut down in compliance with the stay-at-home order to check the spread of coronavirus.

Only health and security institutions, fire service, water companies and media houses opened.

Vehicular movement in and out of the state was completely restricted as men of the Delta

geria (ALGON) in the state, Mr. Ifeako Ikpokpo, said the extended Joint Allocations and Accounts Committee (JAAC) meeting, which had the Commissioner of Police, the Director of DSS, the Secretary to the State Government, Mr. Chiedu Ebie, and the Commissioner for Information, Mr. Charles Aniagwu, his counterpart in Health, Dr. Mordi Onyia, in attendance, empowered security operatives to enforce compliance.

The RRT Lead of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in the state, Dr. Bio Belu Abaye, and the Incident Manager, a Public Health Consultant, Dr. Ann Ojimba, said it was a safe

the best of times for residents but expressed confidence that if movement is restricted, the virus would not move.

"The virus is not airborne and once we are able to get our people to observe these different behaviours, particularly social distancing and closure of markets, we are sure that we will overcome," he said.

The commissioner stressed the need for council chairmen to go back to their areas and continue the sensitisation on why the directive should be strictly obeyed.

He said as at yesterday, Delta State coronavirus-free.

Aniagwu also denied the report of a suspected coronavirus case in Warri.

The Commissioner of Police, Hafiz Muhammed Inuwa, in Asaba yesterday, said there was no going back on the temporary closure of public places, such as event centres, bars, night clubs and lounges, cinemas, markets, supermarkets, malls, shops, restaurants and canteens across state.

He said: "Consequently, I have directed all Area Commanders, DPOs and Heads of Tactical/Operational Departments of the command to ensure strict enforcement of the orders."

Inuwa also charged all officers to be professional in the discharge of their duties as any contrary act or conduct would attract severe disciplinary measures.