

Tour firm mourns death of hiker during expedition

Andrew Iro Okungbowwa

An Abuja-based tour operating outfit, The Outdoor Tribe, has expressed sadness over the death of one tourist, Stephen Tikyaa, a hiker, who was drowned during an expedition to Farin Ruwa Waterfall in Nasarawa State, this is even as it detailed efforts to rescue him but which proved futile.

The deceased was one of the 60 hikers from Abuja, who last weekend visited the waterfall and in the course of swimming at the fall got drowned and washed off the waterfall surface by the high and torrential current.

A statement by the firm said: "It is with heavy hearts

that we @thaoutdoortribe convey this update on the unfortunate incident that occurred over the weekend, the passing away of our dear friend and member, Stephen Tikyaa (@stephan_tk).

"Tragically, one of our members, Stephen Tikyaa, who went for a swim in the waterfall with other members drowned and unfortunately passed away at the scene.

"Multiple attempts by other members and the safety team to rescue Stephen from drowning failed in the face of prevailing currents, and the naturally freezing temperatures of the Farin Ruwa Waterfalls.

"Despite our best efforts, we were unable to save him. Sadly his body could not be recovered that day."

While the tour outfit made effort to recover the body, members of the Naija7 Wonders team and the President of the Nigeria Association of Tour Operators (NATOP), Hajia Bilkisu Abdul, got wind of the incident and quickly alerted the state commissioner for Information, Culture and Tourism, Han Dogo Sham-mah, who mobilised a team of professional divers and the locals to scene.

"Through their combined effort with that of the team deployed by the Zonal Coordinator of Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), Jos, Mrs. Nanna Yakubu, through her liaison officer in Lafia, the body of the hiker was recovered.