

Erosion kills 16, sacks 180 families in Anambra

By Anayo Okoli

AWKA—AT least 16 people from Ifite Dunu community in Dunukofia Local Government Area of Anambra State have lost their lives to a devastating erosion in the community.

Also, over 180 families have been sacked by erosion so far and they had fled the community and became refugees in some neighboring towns.

Meanwhile, three South-East states of Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi as well as some states from North

Central zones may be thrown into prolonged darkness if no urgent measure is taken to save the 330KVA high tension pole at Obieze village of Ifite Dunu which is presently under severe erosion threat. The poles transmits power from the South-South to some states in the South-East and North-Central.

Despite the communal effort of the people to check the various erosion sites in the community, their effort has not been able to control the erosion which is clearly beyond their capacity.

The erosion which has threaten the community for

over 10 years, had however been increasing every year, and it is presently threatening other neighbouring communities of Ukpo, Abba, Umudioka, Umuonachi and Abagana.

According to Mr. Mike Nwafor an indigene of Ifite Dunu, who is also the Managing Director of Anambra Housing Corporation, the community has made tremendous effort to control the erosion ravaging the town, but "our effort could not stop the problem."

"We also stopped excavation of sand in the affected areas as part of the effort to check the menace."

"One of the biggest risk is that the erosion is coming from three channels and if it is not urgently checked, the entire community will be wiped out", and many states from the South-East and North-Central geo-political zones will be thrown into darkness as one of the high tension poles of the 330 KVA line is under serious threat", Nwafor warned.

Another community leader, Ozo Anekwe, described the erosion menace as "frightened and dangerous".

Enugu farmers highly indebted to us —NACRDB

By Tony Edike

ENUGU—FARMERS in Enugu State who benefited from the loans granted them by the Nigerian Agricultural, Co-operative and Rural Development Bank Limited (NACRDB) are the greatest debtors to the bank in the entire South-East Zone, according to the bank's Zonal Manager, Mr. A. O. Yakubu.

Yakubu, who revealed this in Enugu said since inception of the bank, it had disbursed N541,393,571.00 through its four branches in the Coal City State. He pledged that the bank will continue to give out loans so long as those who benefited earlier make it a point of duty to pay back their loans.

He said he regretted that the Enugu branch of NACRDB has the lowest repayment rate in the whole of the South-East geo-political zone. He therefore, made a passionate appeal to the numerous beneficiaries of the loan in Enugu State, particularly those who got their loans through the Ogui

Road branch of the bank, to "come up and pay so that other people can benefit."

The Zonal Manager also said that the long delay in payment has seriously affected the disbursement of more loans to new beneficiaries in the state, stressing that the Animal Tractor and Head Tools Technology Programme (ATHP) was one of the special products of the bank, which he said, was funded by the federal, state and local government in the proportion of 50 percent, 30 percent and 20 percent respectively.

Yakubu said: "The purpose of the loan is to finance asset acquisition and provide working capital needs of farmers. From the funding formula, it is expected that the state and local government will provide their counterpart funds to make more funds available to farmers in Enugu."

NACRDB as a federal government agency whose activities contributed immensely to poverty alleviation and achievement of the Millennium Development Goal.

Anglican honours 22 couples

ENUGU — TWENTY-TWO couples, married for between 25 years and 55 years were on Sunday honoured as "ideal couples" by the Anglican Diocese of Enugu.

The special church service, which marked the end of the 2007 Mothers' Union conference, was conducted by the Anglican Bishop of Enugu, Dr. Emmanuel Chukwuma.

In his sermon, Chukwuma urged the couples to keep to their marriage vows of staying together until death separates them, "irrespective of trials and temptations."