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Flood sweeps off 6 roadside traders in Onitsha

on September 07, 2015 / in [News](#) 1:54 am / [Comments](#)

By Nwabueze Okonkwo

ONITSHA—Six roadside jeans and T-shirts sellers were, Saturday evening, feared dead as they fell into a drain and were swept away by flood during a downpour.

The incident, according to an eyewitness, occurred at about 7p.m. at the foot of Upper Iweka flyover bridge by Ezeiweka Road Junction, along Onitsha-Owerri Road, Onitsha, Anambra State.

The eyewitness said the traders were doing their businesses on planks laid across the Sakamori gutter, when the planks suddenly broke and they fell in.

Passers-by, who witnessed the incident, cried helplessly as no one dared jump into the rampaging flood. At press time, the bodies of the traders had not been recovered and no one could establish their identities.

The source hinted that traders had for a long time converted the Sakamori area into a roadside clothes market, probably due to their inability to pay for a shop in any of the markets in the commercial city.

We're not aware—POLICE

However, Police Area Commander for Onitsha, Mr. Philip Ezekiel, told newsmen, yesterday, that he was not aware of the incident, adding that the scene was within Awada Police Division.

Also, the Divisional police Officer at Awada, Mr. Joseph Dimale, told newsmen on phone that he was not also aware of the incident.

Dimale added that he would send his men to the scene to ascertain the true position of things.

The Publicity Secretary of Anambra Markets Amalgamated Traders Association, AMATAS, Uzor A. Uzor, described the incident as very unfortunate and regretted that most of the traders in Onitsha do not like to move into the market, where there were vacant shops, but preferred to do business on the roadsides.