

Pollution kills couple, 3 others in Delta

● **Communities finger oil multinationals, demand compensation**

By Emma Amaize,
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WARRI—FIVE villagers, including a couple, have been killed by cholera at Sokoh, Ekremo and other shoreline communities in Burutu Local Government Area, Delta State, following alleged contamination of their river by oil exploration companies.

Among the dead were Ekenrenwei Igenisuode and his wife, Yekikonne, at Ekremo Federated Communities, and Johnson Pabebe, Adoere Epreyofie and Pa Ogbuma Igenisuode from Sokoh community.

The people of Sokoh, Ekremo, Omiegbene, Majorgbene, Sietoru, Fish Town, Pupugbene, Aghoro 1 and 2 communities affected by the ravaging pollution that killed fishes at several riverine communities in Niger Delta, some months ago, are demanding compensation from government (federal, state and local) and oil companies for degradation of their environment.

Head of Committee of Burutu communities affected by River pollution, Chief Augustine Seibi, who confirmed the deaths, said: "The devastating environmental pollution occurred a few months ago in River Forcados, River Ramos and others terminating in the Atlantic Ocean.

"The plight of the affected communities were not addressed since then and it has worsened by the day. This committee, therefore, finds it expedient to call on the three tiers of government and other relevant stakeholders to please pile pressure on the oil companies to accept responsibility in this life-threatening act.

"This is because we have



Dead fish in Delta coastal communities.

sufficient reasons to say the oil companies are responsible. It is indeed their explorative activities like in most oil spill cases that could contaminate the waters of the environment, occasioning the wanton death of fishes and other aquatic organisms, which were further driven by the tidal flow deposited

at the shores of communities and other uninhabited environments.

"We wish to reiterate the fact that all communities are directly and/or indirectly affected and are rendered impotent without any means of restoration. These communities situate at the shorelines of the major rivers,

tributaries, estuaries, distributaries and rivulets, which are open to daily tidal flow of the sea.

"The ugly situation, which has caused acute hunger, sickness, death and several forms of frustrations, is further accentuated by the presence of the deadly coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which enforced lock-down come with embarrassing situations.

"As we speak, fishing, the main occupation of people in these communities, be it deep sea, shallow fishing, creek and pond fishing has been affected; farming at both swamp and upstream lands are impacted, and hunters find it difficult to operate too," the opinion leader said.

Besides compensation, the affected communities demanded "provision of adequate relief materials to cushion our anxiety, fear and pains; fishing gadgets and fertilisers to enhance proper and serious farming work."

They also asked for water, electricity and social amenities, cottage hospital and provision of employment for their jobless youth.

Gunmen kill 2, abduct APC chieftain, 9 others in Katsina ●As suspected herdsmen abduct Delta NLC chairman

By Festus Ahon &
Andy Asemota

Chairman of All Progressives Congress, APC, in Matazu Local Government Area of Katsina State, Alhaji Yusau Dissi, was reportedly abducted alongside nine others by gunmen in different attacks across the state.

This came as suspected herdsmen, Saturday night in Asaba, Delta State capital, kidnapped the Chairman of Nigeria Labour Congress,

NLC, in the state, Goodluck Ofobruku.

In Katsina, the bandits also reportedly killed one Nuru Lawal at Kandawa village and one Aminu Mai Unguwar at Dan Alhaji village in Batsari Local Government Area of the state last Thursday.

At Matazu, the gunmen were said to have targeted the APC chairman in the local government on Saturday but they, however, kidnapped two other residents of the town with him.

At Wurma in Kurfi Local Government Area of the state

Saturday.

Sources revealed that the casualties included a housewife and her baby as well as a teenage girl while the gunmen rustled about nine sheep and snatched a motorcycle.

Spokesman of the state police command, Gambo Isah, could not be reached for comments on the attacks as at press time.

Suspected herdsmen abduct Delta NLC chairman