

## Family of A'lbom woman swept by flood tasks govt on corpse recovery

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**By Chioma Onuegbu, Uyo**

THE Family of Madam Ekaette Wilson Okpon of Nnung Udo Uweme, Iboko Offot Village in Uyo local government area of Akwa Ibom State who was swept away two weeks ago has appealed to the state government to recover the corpse.

# Vanguard

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Speaking with newsmen yesterday at the deceased family residence, Nnung Udo Uweme family Secretary, Mr Otobong Okpon said they had also expected the state government to promptly cover the drains to forestall a repeat of such incidence.

Okpon said when the incident happened they had asked not just that her corpse be recovered for proper burial, but that the gutters around the area should be desilted and covered to avoid future occurrences.

He noted that they just observed that the machines positioned in the area to carry out the search for the woman's corpse have been however evacuated without their knowing.

He added: "On Monday we called to find out why that was so they (government) told us the machines were rented from NigerPet, and not from the Ministry of Environment or State government Agency.

"So we called the family head, village head, youth president, we put heads together and decided to send a letter, inviting the state government to come and have a discussion with us. Our demands was that we needed the corpse recovered for proper burial.

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“The state government agency called to acknowledge receipt of the letter but told us the Chairman had travelled to Abuja. So the meeting was postponed to Tuesday”.

It could be recalled that the petty trader during the torrential rain of Wednesday March 9, 2022, mistakenly stepped into an open gutter Along Abak Road by Nkemba junction, Uyo, the state capital on her way from market.

Efforts by people especially the youth of the area to rescue the drowning woman that day however failed.

The sad incident led the youths of her immediate community to block the Road the following day, Thursday March 10 , protesting that state government should ensure the recovery of her corpse blaming government for opening the gutters and leaving them uncovered.

In order to return normalcy to the area, the Ministry of Environment and the Akwa Ibom State Environmental and Waste Management Agency, had mobilized for search with heavy machines and equipment.

Both the Commissioner for Environment, Sir Charles Udoh it could be recalled spent the entire day at the scene of the incident and assured the residents that necessary measures were being taken to recover the corpse.

Speaking with newsmen on Monday other petty traders by Nwaniba Junction appealed to the state government to promptly cover up the gutters and the major carnage opened up during the search for the woman's corpse.

One Mr Iniobong Akpan advised that the state government would be able to recover the woman's corpse if it engages a drone, stressing, “If the victim was a politician's mother, mother in-law, wife or relative, I bet you the corpse would have since been recovered.