

Two kids die while exploring with carnival boat

By Abubakar Yakubu

Tragedy struck the company of six children who attempted to explore a boat used in the just concluded Abuja Carnival, as two of them got drowned at the Jabi Dam.

The deceased kids recently packed to Jabi after their parents' home was demolished at Ngwa Cement and had not being enrolled in schools before the incident happened last Tuesday.

"After watching the Abuja Carnival regatta, we became excited and decided to pay another visit to the place on Tuesday afternoon since we have not been enrolled in school," Anthony, one of the survivors, said.

Paul Nosiĳe, a brother to the deceased, said five of the kids in their compound were led to the dam by a girl in their compound.

"When we got to the dam, we saw an abandoned boat used in the carnival and the six of us jumped inside. The next thing we noticed was that the boat began to move in-

side the river and five of us, except Chinansa Linus, jumped out.

"The boat continued to move deeper into the waters and Chinansa then jumped out and was struggling to stay afloat when Emma jumped in to rescue her."

Paul said when Emma got to Chinansa, she gripped him as a support and this led to both of them drowning.

Paul disclosed that he ran for assistance and people dived into the river to bring out the two bodies, which he said were placed at the bank of the river.

When *City News* reporter called at the home of the deceased, the mother was seen weeping profusely for her son and her friend's daughter.

The mother, Mrs Cordelia Nosiĳe, said on the fateful day the incident happened, she went to Karmo market to buy things for their church harvest and later proceeded to the church premises at

Gwarimpa to drop the goods. "While in the church, I was called to return home that my house was on fire. Our mother in the Lord then asked me to wait when I relayed the message to her and both of us knelt down to pray before we left for my house," she said.

Mrs Nosiĳe said when she got home, she met Paul, her 10 year old son and she asked for Emma, his younger brother, as well as Chinansa, who were both eight years old.

According to her, the boy said they were both in the hospital and it was there that we learnt they were both dead. "God knows that I have served him fatefully in life. The load is too much for me to carry as my house was demolished and my property stolen. Now my son and my friend's daughter are both dead," she cried.

The mother said they packed to Jabi two months ago when their apartment at Ngwa Cement was demol-

ished by the FCTA.

She said: "Our four room apartment at Kado was demolished before we moved to Karmo and Ngwa Cement, which were also demolished."

She said the family was making plans to enroll the children in schools as they passed through a lot of hardship when their apartment was demolished. "After the demolition of our house at Ngwa Cement, I packed our property at my store in the fish market, while we squatted all night in a shed while my husband slept in the open. Even when it rained, he covered himself with short zinc or a nylon paper," she said.

Mrs Nosiĳe said she scolded Chinansa last Sunday to stop following the girl who led them to the river and also warned the girl to leave her children alone.

The father of the deceased said on the fateful day, he returned from work at around 8pm and was accosted by a

man who asked him if he was not the Nosiĳe, whose children drowned in a river.

He said he rushed home and discovered that the first and second rooms of his apartment were empty.

He said: "I then phoned my wife, but her line was not reachable. It was a friend that told me that my wife and children were in the hospital."

The father said he had buried Emma while Chinansa is still in the mortuary until her family is informed about the tragedy.

A policeman at Life Camp confirmed the incident. He said the father of the deceased was asked to come with the girl who led the kids to the dam. "When the girl comes, then we can take her statement and begin our investigations," he said.

The traditional ruler of Jabi said he would pay the bereaved family a condolence visit after seven days. "Our custom here is to pay such a visit after seven days," he said.