

9 die in Sokoto boat mishap

From Abubakar Auwal, Sokoto

Nine persons died after a boat in which they were travelling capsized at Birjingo in Goronyo Local Government Area of Sokoto State.

Daily Trust gathered that majority of the victims were women and children, including a bride-to-be and her widowed mother.

It was gathered that the boat had over 30 passengers on board when the accident happened.

The passengers were on their way to a rice farm across the river where they worked as labourers.

According to the Counselor representing Birjingo ward, Isa Muhammad, the accident occurred around 8 am on Wednesday.

He said the passengers worked as labourers in a rice farm across the river.

The village head of Birjingo, Alhaji Shehu Dangaladima, said the boat capsized because it was

overloaded.

The Sole Administrator of Goronyo Local Government Area, Zakari Muhammad Shinaka, said "Immediately we heard about the accident, we engaged over 50 local divers who succeeded in rescuing some of the victims alive".

According to him, seven bodies had so far recovered while a search for the remaining two bodies was still on.

Shinaka, who condoled with the bereaved

families, however, directed Sarakunan Ruwa (kings of rivers) in the area to impound any overloaded boat crossing their rivers.

"Don't allow any boat that is overloaded to cross your river and when there is a wind storm, boats should not be allowed to move," he directed.

The chairman assured the people of the area that more boats and relief materials would be provided to them by the state government.