

At least 20 rice farmers feared dead in Kebbi boat mishap

By **NAN**

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A rice plain submerged by flooding in Kebbi State

More than 20 farmers were feared dead as a boat carrying about 100 farmers capsized in Koko/Besse Local Government Area of Kebbi on Tuesday.

Police spokesman in Kebbi, DSP Nafiu Abubakar, confirmed the accident and promised to release details later.

Speaking with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Wednesday, Chairman of the Koko/Besse Local Government Council, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, also confirmed the accident.

He said it occurred on Tuesday night when a rickety boat carried more than 100 rice farmers to Samanaji, a riverine community in the area.

He said 80 of the boat passengers had been rescued, while 10 were found dead and others still missing.

He assured that rescue operation was still on-going with a view to saving those still missing.

“Almost all the passengers are youths; small boys and girls. We have found four female and six male corpses.

“We have rescued more than 80 passengers and we are still searching for the missing others,” he said.

“Prior to the incident, we had called on emergency meeting with the district head of Dutsin Mari and other traditional rulers and leaders of boat operators in the area.

“The meeting was to enlighten them and warn them against use of rickety, old boats, over-loading and traveling in the night,” the council chairman added.

Bello recalled that the council distributed 20 new boats in 2022 in an effort to forestall boat mishaps in the area.