

# 20 Feared Dead In Kogi Boat Mishap



File Photo: Boat mishap

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**Twenty people have reportedly been killed in a boat accident on the River Niger, involving passengers from Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State on Tuesday.**

Daily Trust gathered that they were on their way to a market in Edo State.

It was further gathered that the incident happened between Okpu and Odumomo settlements at the bank of the River Niger when the boat heading to Ilushi from Onugwa capsized midway to its destination.

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According to the report from the area, the number of passengers on board is yet to be established.

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Local divers were said to have picked 20 bodies from the river, while many more bodies were said to be still missing.

Six people have so far been identified as having survived the incident.

“The boat departed from Onugwa in Ibaji Local Government Area this morning to Ilushi market, but capsized shortly after taking off at Okpu and Odumomo area of the river.

“Most of them are children and women going shopping in preparation for the Independence Day celebration on Wednesday.

“So far, six people have been identified as survivors. And a family has been confirmed to have lost eight people in the incident,” said Joseph Umonu from Onyedega, the capital of Ibaji Local Government Area.

Also, a report from the community said those who came for a burial ceremony in Onugwa and boarded the ill-fated boat are all missing.

“The family members of those who came for the burial ceremony from Ilushi to Onugwa have been crying since the sad news broke.

“They are among the passengers who boarded the boat to Ilushi after the burial ceremony. We have not seen any of them among the survivors or dead yet. Divers are still in the water, searching for more survivors or the dead.

“We are yet to confirm the number of people onboard, dead or survivors, as the rescue mission is still being intensified at the scene of the incident,” said Micheal Unwuchola, from the community.

When contacted, the Acting Manager, Corporate Affairs of National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Suleiman Usman, did not pick up his call or respond to a text message over the incident.

However, the Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the Kogi State Police Command, SP William Aya, confirmed the incident.

“The victims were said to be going to a market at Ilushi in Edo State when the incident happened. Our operatives at that flank are trying to confirm whether it happened at the Kogi side of the water or in the Edo State area.”