

# 15 persons die, others missing in Niger State boat mishap

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**Minna**

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No fewer than 15 persons have been confirmed dead, while many others are still missing in a boat mishap that occurred in Borgu Local Government Area of Niger State.

A source told The Guardian that the victims were returning from Wara Market at a border community in Ngaski Local Government Area of Kebbi State to Sabo Yumu in Borgu late at night when the accident happened.

The source said the accident was caused by poor visibility due to bad weather, which made the boat to run into a tree stump on River Malale midway into the journey.

“As we speak, 15 corpses have been recovered and already buried, while two others were rescued, but many others are still missing,” the source said, pointing out that divers were still searching for other passengers.

He explained that the number of passengers on the boat could be ascertained as at press time, adding: “The boat was big and have capacity for over 50 passengers. Also because it was a market day, there is tendency that the boat might have been overloaded.”

Director General of the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), Alhaji Ibrahim Inga, who confirmed the development in Minna on telephone, said no fewer than 15 lives were lost in the boat mishap.

He confirmed that the boat was carrying 50 passengers, adding that some survivors were rescued, while divers were still searching for the remaining occupants.

He pointed out that the state government was working towards putting in place a regulatory framework to check activities of boat operators and address the hurdles that hamper their activities.

Inga also disclosed that government was considering the possibility of providing life jackets in a bid to reduce the high casualties often recorded during such accidents.

Accidents on the River Malale and other rivers across the state have become a recurring event at this time of the year with the situation worsening when the rainy season reaches its peak.

In 2017, eight people, mostly women and children had died in similar circumstances, while returning to Malale from Wara Market in Kebbi on the same route.

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