

37 die, 16 sustain injuries in Kwara boat accident

ABOUT 37 traders have lost their lives in a boat accident in Kwara State.

The mishap occurred in Gbajibo-Mudi community, Kaiama Local Government Area.

Last October, at the same Gbajibo, a boat ferrying worshippers who went for Maulud celebration in Mokwa Local Government of Niger State capsized, killing over 200 passengers who were returning home.

The latest accident was said to have occurred in the evening of the anniversary of the ill-fated day when the traders were returning to their Niger State homes.

The about 100-passenger capacity boat, a source said, was loaded and exacerbated by the rising waters of River Niger.

Chairman of Kaiama Local Government, Abubakar Abdullahi, and Emir of Kaiama, Alhaji Muazu Shehu Omar, were on ground to sympathise with the community, former chairman of

•Seven dead, 16 injured in Niger truck crash

From Adekunle Jimoh, Ilorin and Justina Asishana, Minna

the local government Mahmoud S Gbajibo, who confirmed the incident, said in WhatsApp message.

He said bodies were recovered from the river by the rescue team of the community.

He added: "The boat accident occurred about 6pm on Thursday after the traders who closed from the market in Gbajibo Mudi and were returning to their various communities in Niger State when the tragic incident occurred.

The state Police Command did not confirm the accident.

However, the spokesperson of the state Fire Service, Hassan Adekunle, confirmed the incident in a telephone conversation.

Mr Adekunle added that the community had buried their

dead before informing the service.

Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has sent his condolences to the families of the victims of the mishap.

In a statement, the governor's media aide, Rafiu Ajakaye, Malam AbdulRazaq, said: "The governor again urges boat operators and passengers to adhere to safety regulations for the good of all, describing as painful and unacceptable a culture of not using safety gadgets repeatedly provided by the government.

"He prays to God to repose the souls of the victims."

No fewer than seven people died and 16 others were injured in an accident yesterday on the Agaie-Badeggi Road in Katcha Local Government Area of Niger State.

The truck, which was carrying Federal Government's

grains and 36 male passengers, was enroute from Lagos to Kano when it crashed at Essa community.

According to the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), the accident was caused by the bad portions of the road at the Lambata-Bida axis.

Of the victims, 11 sustained serious injuries while those of the five others were minor. Some of the injured were taken to health centres in Badeggi and Agaie, while others were transported by their fellow travellers.

NSEMA added that most of the deceased victims were taken away from the scene by their relatives.

The search and rescue were carried out by NSEMA officials with the help of villagers and commuters.