

23 feared killed in Kebbi boat accident

Ayodele Ajoge | Birnin Kebbi with agency report

TWENTY-THREE people on board a commercial boat have been feared killed after the boat, which was conveying 30 passengers, capsized on Monday night in Yauri Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

A press statement made available to newsmen by the Chief Press Secretary to the Kebbi State Governor, Ahmed Idris, stated that the boat had taken off from Kasabo village in Niger State and was heading for Yauri market in Kebbi when the accident occurred.

According to the statement, 23 people have been feared killed, while local divers and government officials rescued seven persons.

The Kebbi State government has, however, condoled with the Yauri Emirate Council and the local government over accident.

Idris said the governor sent the condolence message to the affected community, just as he appealed to the families of victims to accept the will of God in good faith.

"I want to urge you to see what happened as the will of almighty Allah that nobody can question, therefore, accept it in good faith. We should also continue to

pray to Allah to forgive their shortcomings and grant them Jannatul Firdaus," the governor prayed.

The governor also prayed for the quick recovery of those who sustained injuries in the accident.

It was gathered that seven persons were rescued alive, while rescue operation was still ongoing as of the time of filing in this report.

Also, the director-general of the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), Alhaji Salihu Garba, said the agency received the report of the boat mishap between 11:00a.m. and 12 noon on Monday.

According to the **News**

Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Alhaji Garba added that search and rescue operation was still ongoing by local divers and boat owners under the supervision of the agency's desk officer in Agwara, but claimed no body had been recovered yet.

The NSEMA boss said the accident occurred on Yauri market day, adding that it is only after the market that the families would be able to declare their relatives missing.

He explained that it takes about 24 hours for any drowned person to surface atop water, just as he attributed the cause of the accident to water hyacinth coupled with strong waves.