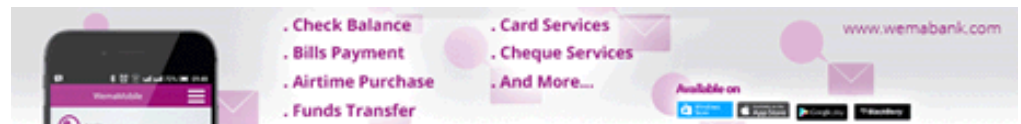


July 14th, 2015



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Five feared dead while collecting zakat

JULY 14, 2015 : GODWIN ISENYO

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No fewer than five persons were feared dead after a stampede during the collection of *zakat* gifts in Kaduna, Kaduna State, on Monday.

Zakat is a charitable contribution by well-to-do Muslims to the underprivileged.

It was learnt that in the Kaduna incident, scores fainted while waiting to receive *zakat* from a businessman in the state.

He was sharing the gifts at the Kabala Constain, in the Kaduna North Local Government Area of the state.

However, the Kaduna Police Command's Public Relations Officer, Abdullahi Zubairu, said nobody died during the stampede.

He said, "The command drafted its personnel to the venue, and they did not report any death at the venue of the *Zakat*."

But an eyewitness, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the venue was jam-packed with able and physically-challenged people in their hundreds, adding that it was when the situation became uncontrollable that the stampede occurred. He insisted that five persons were feared dead.

The eyewitness said, "It was after the stampede that the police were invited to control the crowd to prevent further tragedy."

One of the beneficiaries, Bala Mohammed, said when they arrived at the venue, those living with disabilities were told to queue separately, while the able-bodied women formed another queue.

Mohammed added that when the businessman arrived to give out the *zakat* gifts, the women were first attended to. He said it was in the process that the stampede occurred, which led to the feared death of five persons.

Another eyewitness, Zanaib Mohammed, said, "I was informed by my sister that there would be *zakat* sharing.

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I regret coming because my sister was one of the victims of the stampede."

As of the time of filing this report at 7.59pm, the venue was still besieged by people who wanted to have their own share of the *zakat* gifts, while policemen were everywhere.

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