

Two die, 22 missing as boat capsizes in Lagos

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A capzised boat

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The lifeless bodies of a woman, Oluwaseunfunmi Aniyikaye, and a yet-to-be identified person have been recovered by rescue workers following a boat accident in Egbin, near Ijede, in the Ikorodu area of Lagos State.

Our correspondent learnt that the combined rescue operation involving the Marine Police, the Lagos State Waterways Authority, the Lagos State Emergency Management Authority and local divers succeeded in rescuing three victims, who were taken to hospital for medical treatment.

PUNCH Metro gathered that 26 passengers had boarded the boat at Badore, Ajah, and were on their way to the Ipakan Boat Jetty in the Egbin area of Ikorodu, when the boat capsized around 10pm on Saturday.

It was learnt that none of the passengers put on life jacket while travelling on the water.

An eyewitness, Hogan Bassey Jnr, who said the accident occurred due to overloading and night movement, added that two corpses had been recovered, while the search for other missing victims including the helmsmen was ongoing.

Bassey said, “An accident occurred on Saturday around Egbin. According to officials conducting the rescue operation, 18 passengers were on board but what I gathered from a reliable source was that 27 people were on board and only two bodies have been recovered.

“The passengers, who boarded the boat, were going to Egbin in Ijede. They were very close to Egbin when the accident occurred. The boat capsized because of overloading and late night movement. Normally, for a night trip, boat operators are not supposed to convey more than 15 passengers, but because some helmsmen are desperate and greedy, they usually load more than the normal capacity in order to make extra money for themselves.

“I had to call someone at the jetty, where they took off from, who confirmed that there were 26 passengers and the helmsman in the boat.”

The Chief Executive Officer, LASEMA, Dr Olufemi Oke-Osanyintolu, said the boat capsized due to overloading, adding that three persons were rescued and taken to hospital.

Oke-Osanyintolu said, “A boat accident occurred at the Ipakan Boat Jetty, Egbin, Ikorodu, on Saturday, June 29, 2019. Investigations revealed that the boat was travelling from Badore, Ajah to Egbin in Ikorodu with between 17 and 21 passengers on board.

“The boat allegedly capsized due to overloading. It was gathered that the boat was overturned by heavy currents. Three persons were rescued and were taken to hospital. Unfortunately, the lifeless bodies of an adult female, identified as Oluwaseunfunmi Aniyikaye, 40, and an unnamed person were found and bagged by the agency’s response team. Rescue and recovery efforts are ongoing for other missing passengers by officials of LASEMA, the LASWA and the Marine Police.”

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Bala Elkana, said three persons were rescued, two dead bodies were recovered, while the search for other victims was ongoing.

“A joint rescue operation, which involves our marine police, has rescued three persons and two dead bodies have been recovered. We are still searching for 15 to 16 persons,” Elkana said.