

# Again, boat accident claims over 20 in Taraba

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| By Justin Tyopuusu

...*Gov Kefas mourn*

Taraba State Governor, Dr. Agbu Kefas, on Monday, condoled with families of victims of a boat accident in the Ibi Local Government Area of the state that claimed over 20 lives.

The Special Adviser on to the Governor on Media and Digital Communication, Mr. Emmanuel Bello, quoted the governor as describing the incident as most worrisome since it came barely a week after a similar incident that claimed several lives in Karim-Lamido Local Government Area of the state.

According to the statement, Kefas, while praying to God to grant the souls of the departed eternal rest, he disclosed that the state government was already working out modalities to end future occurrences of boat mishaps in Taraba.

“Today’s boat incident is even more unfortunate since it is coming on the heels of a similar one in Karim Lamido that threw the state into mourning.

FILE PHOTO: A capsized boat

“It is indeed heartbreaking. However, I wish to appeal that the government is already on top of the situation as various investigations are underway to unravel the remote causes of boat mishaps in the state.

“I would soon personally tour the affected areas to meet with local stakeholders in the waterways transport sectors to ensure that the water transport system is safe for passengers.

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“Measures are in place to face out old boats and introduce the compulsory use of life jackets among other life-saving measures,” the statement quoted Governor Kefas as saying.

Our correspondent gathered that over 20 people, said to be mostly fishermen on Monday, lost their lives after a boat capsized around Anyiin in River Benue.

Alhaji Jidda Suleiman, Taraba State Water Transportation chairman, told journalists that the incident happened between Chinkai of Benue and the Anyeci area of Wukari local government area of Taraba State.

“The boat was conveying fishermen, comprising people from Ibi and Wukari local government areas of Taraba. I was informed that the fishermen converged and boarded the boat for a fish expedition, and along the way, they had an accident, and over 20 people died.

At least 12 people out of the dead bodies are from Ibi, while some are from Gareji, in Gindin Doruwa town in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State.

“It has been a tradition that some fishermen from Taraba around this period every year to travel to Cameroon, Chad, and other places like that to fish till August of the following year.

“It is unfortunate that the usual tradition turned to be sorrowful this time. I wish to appeal to both the state and Federal Government to assist us with life jackets, which is the only solution to averting similar incidents,” he appealed.

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