

# Capsized boat: 54 bodies recovered, others remain missing

1st December 2024



Map of Kogi State

By Lara Adejoro

**No** fewer than 54 bodies have been recovered from the boat accident involving about 200 traders in Kogi State.

The figure was disclosed to our correspondent on Saturday by the Head of Operations covering Kogi State at the National Emergency Management Agency, Justin Uwazuruonye.

Uwazuruonye said, “The figure of the recovered bodies as of today (Saturday), according to the Kogi State Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross, and NEMA is 54. They were recovered dead.

“We tried to know if they could make the manifest available, but they said there was no manifest, and if there is no manifest, we can’t say the exact number of passengers on the boat. Besides, it was a night journey, and none of them had life jackets on.”

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The National Inland Waterways Authority confirmed the boat accident on Friday.

The Head of NIWA’s Media Department, Suleman Makama, stated that the traders were traveling to a market in Niger State on the boat when it capsized along the Dambo-Ebuchi section of the River Niger.

Meanwhile, Kogi State Governor, Usman Ododo, has called for inter-agency collaboration to prevent waterways accidents.

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Ododo, in a statement by his Special Adviser on Media, Ismail Isah, expressed sadness over the accident, saying he was concerned that most of the victims were women, petty traders, and artisans involved in legitimate business activities.

He expressed concern about the dangers on the waterway linking Kogi with Niger State.

“The waterway linking Kogi and Niger State is becoming increasingly dangerous as a result of frequent boat accidents,” he said.

The governor called on relevant authorities to ensure that safety measures were put in place to minimize risks associated with water transportation in the country.

“Efforts should be made through inter-agency collaboration to prevent further accidents and coordinate emergency response,” he noted.

Ododo commiserated with the families of those involved in the accident, promising that the government would support those injured in their recuperation.