

Kogi boat mishap leaves 20 dead, scores still missing



By Boluwaji Obahopo, Lokoja

A boat mishap in Kogi State has claimed twenty lives.

The mishap occurred on River Niger, Tuesday at about 4:30pm in Ibaji Local Government area of Kogi State with many others still declared missing.

An eye witness, Mr. James Otoga who said that the sad incident occurred in the evening of Tuesday.

According to him, the boat fully loaded with people departed from Onugwa community in Ibaji heading to Ilushi market, capsized leaving many people dead.

“The boat was fully loaded with our people going to market for the first of October celebration. Only five survival have surfaced yet and 20 bodies have been recovered so far and more of our people are lying lifeless beneath the river Niger.

“Even those who came for a burial in Onugwa and were returning back to Ilushi were also missing. We are yet to confirm the number of people onboard and those who survived” he stated.

Confirming the incident the Chairman, Ibaji local government area, Hon. Ugeh Emmanuel through a telephone conversation with journalists described the incident as the most disastrous in the history of the local government, saying many people have lost their lives in the accident.

“As I am speaking with you now, no body can authoritatively say this is the actual number of casualties. And again we can not even ascertain the number of people onboard right from their departure time.

“This is a very serious accident, the boat have not even reached Ilushi when the mishap occurred around 4:30pm. Most of the victims were moving to Ilushi for the cerebration of first October which has been a tradition in the community before they met their untimely death,” he said.

Recalled that in the last one year there was numerous boat mishaps in Kogi, Niger and other riverine states where many people lost their lives.