

# 12 die in Lagos boat mishap

— 21st August 2017

- Govt blames disaster on overloading

**The** Lagos State Government yesterday confirmed the death of 12 persons in the boat mishap which occurred at the weekend in Ilashe area of the State.

In a statement issued by the Managing Director of Lagos State Waterways Authority (LASWA), Engr Abisola Kamson, the State Government attributed the unfortunate mishap to overloading of passengers on a Banana Boat and operation of illegal jetty.

Kamson said four victims of the mishap, who were rescued were receiving treatment at a nearby hospital, while search and rescue operation was still on-going.

While commiserating with the families of those who lost their loved ones, the State Government said the mishap had, again, brought to the fore the need for the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) to respect the recent verdict of the Court of Appeal, which upheld the powers of the State Government to control its intra-inland waterways.

Going into details of the mishap, Kamson said: “An unfortunate incident occurred at Ilashe today Sunday (yesterday) arising from overloading of passengers on a Banana boat taking off from an illegal Jetty which has become a perennial issue of the Lagos State Government to rid our Waterfront areas of illegal operators.

“We sympathise with the families of the deceased as 12 lives were lost in the mishap and four people receiving treatment in the hospital.

“The LASWA rescue team has been on ground, and search is still on-going. This brings to fore, again, the need for NIWA to allow the judgement of the Appeal Court, granting Lagos control of her waterways, to take effect without hindrance.

“It is a matter for regret that ever since the judgement was pronounced, NIWA has ejected all State Water Guards monitoring standards from all federal owned Jetties. In spite of this, the Government of Lagos State aligns to the safety of citizens on the waterways. All Lagosians are enjoined to wear standard life jackets at all times on our Waterways,” Kamson said.

Besides, the LASWA boss urged boat operators and other stakeholders in the inland waterways sector to adhere strictly to safety standards at all times.