

# 'How 16 people perished on Badagry waterways'

**MR.** Moruf Kelani, a survivor of the July 29 boat mishap in which 16 people were drowned on Badagry waterways, blamed the tragic incident on greed by boat operators and regulatory officials.

The Lagos State Waterways Authority (LASWA) said an open boat carrying 19 passengers capsized at about 6pm while en route to Badagry July 29.

But Kelani said 22 passengers were on board of the ill-fated boat, including two operators (the boatman and his assistant)

"Normally, we don't pay fares until we get to our destination, but that day, the boatman insisted on collecting the money.

"The boatman thought that it would be difficult to collect N1,500 from passengers when they arrive Badagry instead of the normal N1200, so he started collecting the fares at the point of

departure."

Kelani said instead of the assistant boatman to start the boat engine, he was supervising the boatman that was collecting fare until they reached the high sea without starting the engine.

"We realized that the high current was pushing the boat near the parked barge around Kirikiri, we shouted at him to start the engine.

"Alas! All efforts made by him to start the engine was in vain, the strong current pushed the boat under the parked barge at Kirikiri.

"At this critical time, two small boats were sailing along, so the passengers shouted for help and they came to rescue us.

"Unfortunately, only three passengers were able to jump into the small boats before our boat capsized," he said.

On how he survived the mishap, Kelani said only God saved his life.