

# Five Persons Feared Dead in Ilorin Heavy Downpour

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By Hammed Shittu

About five persons have been feared dead following the heavy downpour in Oko-Erin metropolis, Sawmail area of Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, at the weekend.

It was gathered that a Toyota vehicle containing five passengers was trapped at the nearby Oke-Erin bridge, when the downpour became more threatening.

Eye witness told THISDAY yesterday that: "On arriving at the tip of the bridge, one of the passengers reportedly alighted from the vehicle to check if the car could drive through, but was suddenly submerged under the bridge which collapsed as a result of the force of the downpour.

"The rain was preceded by a heavy storm, and many vehicles on the road couldn't move again, so they have to be parked.

"But this particular Toyota car also parked when it arrived at the bridge. I saw one of the passengers coming down to check if the car could be driven through, but suddenly the bridge submerged in the water and he went down."

THISDAY checks further revealed that two other passengers from the vehicle, who were curious that one of them who went out did not return, also alighted from the vehicle to check the bridge, and were also sunk by the submerged bridge.

Meanwhile, the remains of one of the submerged passengers of the car were later found in a stream yesterday morning at the Coca-Cola area of Ilorin.

It was gathered that since the collapse of the bridge at about 11p.m. last Saturday, the rescue and search unit of the state command of fire brigade has been working round the clock to recover the remaining missing bodies.

Residents of the area also applauded the timely response from the fire service personnel.

Speaking in an interview with journalists in Ilorin yesterday, the Comptroller of Kwara State Fire Service, Abdul Waheed Iyanda Yakubu, confirmed that two of the passengers in the submerged vehicle survived, but three others, including the driver, were still missing.

However, one dead body identified as Okechukwu Orwabo, was found at Coca-Cola road of Ilorin yesterday morning, according to the Head of Media and Publicity of the Fire Service Brigade, Hassan Hakeem, in a statement in Ilorin.

It said two others identified as Chuben Orwabo and Chibike Orwabo were still missing, just as it warned members of the public to be careful while driving during rainfalls.

It also gathered from another location in Upper Taiwo area of Ilorin where the downpour was heavy that two of the residents in the area who went out before the downpour have not been seen as at the time of filing this report yesterday.