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**Kwara boat mishap: More casualties recorded**

*From YUSUF ABU, Ilorin*

No fewer than 40 corpses have so far been recovered while 15 others are still missing in the boat mishap that occurred along Nano River , boundary between Bukuro in Baruten Local Government Area of Kwara state and Yariwondo village in the Republic of Benin.

Speaking on the incident, the chairman of Baruten Local Government Area of Kwara state, Alhaji Aliyu Muhammad said that though the incident was sympathetic and sad, both the local and state governments would do everything possible to assist those who might have been affected by the incident.

He said: "As the chairman and the chief security officer of my local government area, I wish to state without any iota of contradiction that all reports made available to us so far have not indicated that a single citizen from my local government or Nigeria was involved in the sad incident"

Already, the state governor, Dr. Bukola Saraki has sent a delegation led by the Special Adviser on Emergency and Relief Services, Alhaji Suleyman Yusuf to ascertain the level of the situation at the scene of the incident.

"The incident occurred due to the fault developed by one of the boats carrying the school pupils and the market women on the river, but while the other boat passengers coming behind wanted to rescue the people inside the faulty one, they also at the end, got capsized in the boat".

He said that, it was at that point the villagers especially the fishermen rushed to the scene of the incident on a rescue mission and at the end of the day, 40 corpses were recovered from the river while 15 people are reportedly still missing as the time of filing this report.

"Want to let you know that the President of Benin Republic was also at the scene of the incident as intelligence reports confirmed that those involved were not Nigerians and promised to give four new engine boats to the people of the area. This has further confirmed that the people of Benin Republic were the ones involved in the incident", the chairman stressed.

He stated that, the school in question was not in Baruten local government rather, "it is a border village of Yariwondo in the Benin Republic and therefore I cannot take the responsibility of what does not belong to me as all schools in my local government are well equipped and furnished with educational and infrastructural materials".

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