

Five feared dead in Ilorin, as bridge collapses in downpour

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No fewer than five persons are feared dead as a result of a downpour in Oko-Erin metropolis, Sawmail area, and other areas of Ilorin, Kwara State capital, Saturday night.

Vanguard reliably gathered that a Toyota vehicle containing five passengers was trapped nearby the Oke-Erin bridge when the downpour became tougher.

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 by the bridge which collapsed as a result of the force of the downpour.

Vanguard further gathered that two other passengers from the vehicle, curious that one of them who went to check the bridge did not return, also alighted from the vehicle to cross-check at the bridge, and were also sunk by the submerged bridge.

The Toyota car conveying the passengers was also ultimately submerged by the raging flood as it caved into the collapsed bridge.

Meanwhile, the remains of one of the submerged passengers of the car was later found in a stream on Sunday morning at the Coca-cola area of Ilorin.

Vanguard reliably gathered that since the collapse of the bridge at about 11pm on Saturday, the rescue and search unit of the Kwara state command of fire brigade has been working round the clock to recover the remaining missing bodies.

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

Speaking in an interview with journalists in Ilorin, on Sunday, the Comptroller, 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 on Sunday morning, said the head of media and publicity, 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 extra careful while driving during rainfalls.

Vanguard 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 on Sunday.

The GSM numbers of the two friends who reportedly went out on a motorcycle were switched off when relations and friends repeatedly called their telephone lines.

The state Commissioner for Works also paid a visit to the disaster area for on the spot assessment of the incident.