

Just in: Twenty fishermen drown in Taraba, Gov mourns



File

By Femi Bolaji

No fewer than twenty fishermen have reportedly drowned after a boat conveying them on the stretch of the Benue River capsized.

The incident which happened Monday comprised fishermen from the Ibi and Wukari local government areas of the state.

The Taraba State Water Transportation Chairman, Alhaji Jidda Suleiman, confirmed the incident to newsmen and said the boat mishap happened between the Anyeci area of Wukari local government area of Taraba State and the Chinkai axis of Benue State.

According to him, "I was informed that the fishermen converged and boarded the boat to Kwara state in search for greener pasture, and along the way, they had an accident and over twenty people have died.

"Twelve people out of the dead bodies are from Ibi while, some are from Gareji, in Gindin Doruwa, Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State.

"It has been the tradition of our fishermen in Taraba State that once it is close to December, some will travel to Cameroon, some to Chad and other places to fish till August of the following year.

"It's unfortunate that the usual tradition turned to be sorrowful this time."

He further appealed to both state and federal governments to provide life jackets for jetties to avert future occurrences.

Taraba state governor, Dr. Agbu Kefas, also expressed sadness over the tragic accident.

A statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Digital Communications, Emmanuel Bello, bemoaned the recurrent boat mishaps and assured that his government is already working on measures to stop the waterways tragedies.

He said, "Today's boat incident is even more unfortunate since it is coming on the heels of a similar one in Karim Lamido that threw the state into mourning.

"It is heartbroken, however, I wish to appeal that the government is already on top of the situation as various investigations are underway to unravel the remote causes of boat mishaps in the state.