

# Eight bodies recovered as boat carrying 200 passengers capsizes

By Boluwaji Obahopo, Lokoja

**T**he National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) has confirmed a boat accident involving no fewer than 200 market women from Kogi State.

The Head of the Media Department of NIWA, Suleman Makama, who confirmed the incident on Friday, stated that the women were on their way to the market in Niger State on Friday morning when the boat capsized along the Dambo-Ebuchi section of the River Niger, resulting in an as-yet-uncertain number of fatalities.

"It's true that there was a boat mishap on Thursday involving quite a number of women going to the market in Niger State. We are still investigating to ascertain the number of people involved as well as what led to the accident," he said.

According to

eyewitnesses, the boat, which belonged to one Musa Dangana, was carrying over 200 passengers, including market women and farm

laborers, en route to the Katcha weekly market in Niger State.

As of the time of this report, eight bodies have been recovered, while

## Court grants N1bn bail to 109 alleged foreign hackers, orders passport seizure

By Ikechukwu Nnochiri

**A**BUJA — The Federal High Court sitting in Abuja has granted bail to 109 alleged foreign hackers accused of attempting to defraud Nigerians, setting the bail at a total of N1 billion.

Trial Justice Ekerete Akpan ordered the defendants, who were previously remanded in prison custody, to produce five sureties, each required to provide a sum of N200 million. The court specified that the sureties must not only submit affidavits of means but also own properties within the Abuja

metropolitan area valued at no less than N200 million. Title deeds of the properties must be submitted to the Deputy Chief Registrar of the high court, who will verify the residential addresses of all sureties.

Additionally, the court ordered all defendants to surrender their international passports and prohibited them from traveling outside the country until the conclusion of their trial. It instructed both the defendants and their sureties to submit two recent passport photographs, emphasizing that the defendants must remain in custody pending the fulfillment of all bail conditions.

While the male defendants are to be held at Kuje prison, the court ruled that the female defendants should be detained at Keffi prison in Nasarawa State. The case has been adjourned until February 27, 2025, for trial.

The defendants, identified as citizens of China, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand, Brazil, Malaysia, and Myanmar, face a six-count charge filed against them by the Cybercrime Unit of the Nigeria Police Force.

search and rescue operations continue to locate the remaining passengers.

Makama indicated that he is still waiting for clearance from management before issuing an official statement that

will provide further details about the incident.

When asked how long that would take, Makama said he couldn't provide a specific timeframe but promised to get back to our correspondent as soon as possible.

Cadastral Zone 807, Katampe District of Abuja, where they were allegedly engaged in cybercrime activities. In addition to cybercrime, the defendants are also charged with money laundering and illegally residing in Nigeria.

In the charge marked FHC/ABJ/CR/599/2024, the police allege that the defendants conspired to commit cybercrime in violation of Section 27(1)(b) of the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc) Act, 2015 (as amended 2024). They are also accused of unlawfully accessing a computer network and manipulating data with the intent that such altered data would be perceived as authentic, an offense punishable under Section 13 of the same Act.

The police further allege that the 109 defendants knowingly and without authority caused losses to individuals both in Nigeria and abroad by deceiving them into believing that the unregistered gambling platforms they marketed were legitimate. This deceptive action purportedly aimed to confer economic benefits on themselves, constituting an offense under Section 14(1) of the Cybercrimes Act.

## TASUED Pro-Chancellor urges increased funding for State-Owned higher institutions ...as Abiodun Tasks TASUED on mechanized farming

By James Ogunnaike, Abeokuta

**T**he Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of Tai Solarin University of

allocated to tertiary institutions is no longer sufficient to meet the university's needs.

He added, "It is necessary for the institution to have the resources it needs for its