

6 die, 3 missing in fresh Sokoto boat mishap



File image for illustration

By Musa Ubandawaki

SOKOTO—Tragedy struck Garin-Faji Village in Sabon-Birni Local Government Area of Sokoto State over the weekend as a boat mishap claimed at least six lives, leaving three others missing.

The accident, which occurred around 5:30 a.m., involved dozens of passengers attempting to cross a local water channel. Eyewitnesses said the boat capsized midway, plunging its occupants into the river.

In a statement yesterday, the Sokoto State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, confirmed that six persons died while 19 others were rescued by local divers and first responders.

However, three individuals remain unaccounted for, raising fears that the death toll could increase.

In response, SEMA mobilised a joint rescue and assessment team comprising officials from the National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, Sokoto Operations Office, the National Inland Waterways Authority, NIWA, and the Red Cross.

The delegation, led by Aliyu Kafin-Dangi, Head of the NEMA Sokoto Operations Office, included Hon. Aminu Liman Bodinga, Special Adviser to Sokoto SEMA (represented by Mustapha Umar, Director of Relief and Rehabilitation), and Engr. Muhammad Bello Bala of NIWA.

During their visit to Garin-Faji, the officials met with traditional rulers, community leaders, and families of the victims. They expressed condolences and pledged that search efforts would continue until the three missing passengers are found.

Meanwhile, search and rescue operations are ongoing, with emergency workers and local divers continuing to comb the river. Community members have also joined the effort, providing boats, ropes, and manpower to support rescuers.

The Garin-Faji tragedy has once again highlighted the dangers of unsafe water transport in rural areas and the urgent need for stricter regulation to safeguard the lives of residents who depend on boats for their daily activities.