

Two siblings drown as leaking canoe capsizes in Rivers

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Rivers State

A routine journey home from work ended in tragedy for two siblings after a leaking canoe capsized on a river in Ahoada East Local Council of Rivers State, claiming both lives and raising fresh concerns over the [safety of water transportation](#) in the community.

The victims, identified as 25-year-old Mekalachi Gogochuri and his 23-year-old sister, Rejoice Gogochuri, drowned on Saturday evening when the canoe conveying them and five other passengers overturned at Aliya (Over Bridge) in Ahoada Town.

Their elder brother, Abraham Gogochuri, told journalists that the siblings were returning from work when the accident occurred at about 7:45 p.m.

According to him, the canoe, which serves as a major means of transportation for residents, was already leaking before it set off and had no life [jackets for passengers](#).

“They were coming back from work and boarded a boat to cross the river because that is the route to our house. The boat capsized, and my brother and sister drowned,” he said.

Abraham disclosed that although about seven passengers were on board, only the two siblings lost their lives.

He blamed the tragedy on the poor condition of the canoe and the absence of basic safety measures, accusing the construction company working in the area of failing to provide safe boats and life jackets for residents who are forced to cross the river.



“It was just an ordinary hand-paddled canoe. It had been leaking for a long time, and they even used wrappers to block some of the holes. There were no life jackets. This tragedy could have been avoided,” he lamented.

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He further revealed that a monkey bridge previously used by residents had collapsed and had not been reconstructed, leaving the community with no option but to rely on unsafe boats.

“We are calling on the authorities to investigate this incident and ensure justice for my late brother and sister,” he added.

Abraham said officers from the Ahoada Police Division visited the family on Sunday and had commenced an investigation into the incident.

Meanwhile, the Eze Ekpeye Logbo III, His Imperial Majesty Kelvin Ngozi Anugwo, Akalaka XII, has expressed profound sorrow over the deaths of the two siblings.

In a statement issued yesterday by the palace spokesperson, the monarch described the incident as heartbreaking, noting that the victims died while striving to earn an honest living.

He extended his condolences to the bereaved family and the people of Igbu Ehuda Kingdom, urging the community to remain united in the face of the tragedy and praying for strength and comfort for those affected.

Confirming the incident, the spokesperson for the [Rivers State Police Command](#), Assistant Superintendent of Police Agabe Blessing Karbolo, said the boat operator had been taken into custody for questioning.