

# 6 Students Drown In Benue Boat Accident



By **LEADERSHIP News** 9 Hours Ago in News



Share on WhatsApp

Share on Facebook



Share on X

Telegram

At least six students returning to school have drowned after the boat they were travelling in capsized at the Buruku crossing point in Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State.

Witnesses said the incident occurred on Sunday night while the students and other passengers were being ferried across the River Benue at the Buruku crossing point.

The witnesses said the mishap happened while the ill-fated boat was en route to the Buruku side of the river from the Logo LGA axis, with passengers mainly from the Sankara axis.

A maritime worker at the crossing point, who preferred anonymity, told our correspondent via telephone that the passengers were many and had travelled at

night after waiting all day for politicians who attended activities in a church in the Logo area to be ferried across the river.

“The people who travelled in the ill-fated boat waited for a long time at the crossing point because they were asked to be patient for all the heavyweight politicians who were returning from a church thanksgiving service to be ferried first to the Buruku side for their journey back to Makurdi.

“Sadly, night caught up with them in the process, and there were many. Midway into the journey, the boat capsized. Most of the passengers were rescued, except for the six students who died.”

**Wike Appoints Sani Daura As SSA On Protocol Matters**

**Again, Ogun Government Suspends Awujale Selection Exercise**

**CBN Moves To Curb e-Fraud, Sets 30-minute Response Time For Banks**

**Upaid N4trn Debts: Contractors Shut Finance Ministry Headquarters In Abuja**

Five bodies have been recovered, while one remains missing, and search parties are currently combing the river for the victim,” the maritime worker explained.

Another witness blamed the incident on overloading, saying, “The wooden boat was carrying passengers and vehicles across the river to Buruku when it suddenly sank.

There were over 45 people on that boat, including vehicles. It was simply overloaded.”

A relative of the victims, Pastor Jethro Moor, said the deceased were returning to school in Gboko.

He said they were all from Gbeji in Ukum LGA and were travelling back to school with food items packed in two vehicles, which were also carried on the ill-fated boat.

“The accident happened because of excessive load. Two vehicles loaded with food items and over 20 passengers were on board the boat when it occurred. You know a bridge construction is ongoing on the river, so the way boat drivers now tailor their sail appears narrow, such that the weight of the boat could not float properly on the water, which led to the accident,” Moor narrated.

Chairman of Buruku LGA, Raymond Aondoakura, said the police were handling the matter and rescue teams were still combing the river.

When asked how many people lost their lives in the incident, the chairman said, "Once the police conclude their investigation, you can call me."

Aondoakura declined to answer further questions and hung up the call.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner for Marine and Blue Economy, Dennis Iyaghigba, said he received the news with "grave concern and deep distress," describing it as a painful reminder of the dangers posed by unsafe and unregulated inland water transportation.

In a statement issued by his media aide, Lubem Gena, the commissioner extended his sympathy to the families of the victims and the Buruku community.

"Preliminary reports indicate that the mishap occurred in the course of routine river transportation," he said.

Iyaghigba disclosed that a full-scale investigation has been launched to determine the immediate and remote causes of the accident, including possible violations of safety regulations, operational negligence, and environmental factors.

Police Public Relations Officer of the Benue State Command, DSP Udeme Edet, told our correspondent that she was yet to receive a report of the incident.