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Dennis Naku

2 March 2011

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Port Harcourt — ONE person was feared dead, when a large passenger boat went up in flames shortly after it finished loading at a jetty in Nembe waterside, Port Harcourt, Rivers state capital.

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The cause of the fire could not be immediately ascertained at the time of filing this report, just as no official of the waterway union was available for comment when our correspondent visited the scene of the incident about 11:30am yesterday.

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Daily Champion learnt that the boat was said to be overloaded with several items, including drums of petroleum products stacked in the boat, just as many people were crowded onto the boats which are bound for one of the coastal communities.

People at the jetty maintained a studied silence when our correspondent inquired into the cause of the inferno, for fear of been apprehended by security men, although some manage to volunteer information in fright.

It was learnt that the victim sustain some burnt before help came her way, as news filtered that she passed on , while being rushed to the hospital.

Men of the state fire service that got to the waterfronts minutes after the inferno started about a kilometer from the jetty could not do much to put out the fire, as the do not have the facilities to go on shore.

Meanwhile police men stationed at the waterfront barred people from getting close to danger area

Contacted, Rivers State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Dr. Rita Inoma Abbey (SP) could not confirm the incident, saying she was on her way out of the office.

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