

Clergy, 5 others killed in Bayelsa boat collision

Bassey Willie, Yenagoa

A 39-year-old clergy and five travellers drowned when two boats collided on the Ogbeinbiri community River in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Six other travellers involved in the boat mishap are still missing.

Some of the locals said one of the ill-fated boats was transporting a sick woman to a hospital in Yenagoa, the state capital on New Year eve when it collided with another boat, killing the pastor and five others.

The deceased pastor was identified as the general overseer of the Supernatural Church of God in Ogbeinbiri community, while three other victims of the accident were his relatives.

The travellers were travelling at 1:30am despite the restriction placed by the government on night movements in waterways.

Daily Trust Saturday gathered that the local divers searching for survivors have been able to rescue only one person.

They identified those still missing as Augustine Kieribo, Felix Azazi, Stephen Moses, Adibo Kekere's mother, Tou Kekere's wife and Pastor Salvation Degema.

It was learnt that the boat conveying the deceased was suspected to have been involved in a head-on collision with another while conveying a sick middle-aged lady to Yenagoa for emergency treatment.

The sick woman, according to a community source, was admitted to the Cottage Hospital in Ogbienbiri but that hospital lacked oxygen, which was needed to bring her out of coma.

The senator representing Bayelsa Central in the National Assembly, Cleopas Moses, has commiserated with the people of Ogboinbiri community and the families that lost loved ones to the boat accident.

The lawmaker said it was terrible to hear about the death of such a number of persons in a yuletide season.