

Six dead, three missing as naval gunboat capsizes in Delta

By : Monday Osayande, Asaba

Date: 7 Jul 2025

Share :



The Okerenkoko community in Warri South-West Local Council of Delta State has been plunged into mourning following a tragic naval gunboat accident that claimed the lives of six persons: three naval personnel and three civilians.

The Guardian learnt yesterday that the incident occurred on Thursday evening, shortly after the personnel concluded the first day of a two-day humanitarian medical outreach in the riverine community.

The outreach was organised by the Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) Delta in collaboration with the EMT Foundation as part of the Navy's Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) under Operation Delta Sanity II.

Sources revealed that the naval gunboat, EPENAL DE 24, capsized at about 7:45 p.m. at coordinates LAT 05° 36.408'N / Long 005° 11.982'E, directly in front of Chevron Nigeria Ltd (CNL), while conveying 15 passengers from the Forward Operating Base (FOB) in Escravos to their hotel accommodation in Arunton community.

The vessel was carrying nine naval personnel and six civilians, including members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), when the mishap occurred.

Related News

- Trapped by Neglect: Onicha-Ugbo Road in ruins, Delta community pleads for help
- Egbudu-Akah elders reject new monarch, accuse Delta govt of imposition
- Six dead, three missing as Navy boat capsizes in Delta

A prompt response from the Nigerian Navy's search and rescue unit led to the recovery of 12 survivors, who were rushed to the CNL clinic for urgent medical attention, sources said.

The Guardian learnt that six individuals: Commander JO Eidangbe, Petty Officer Abolarinwa, Ordinary Seaman Tena, Miss Chinenye (an NYSC member), Miss Dorcas (NYSC member), and Master Destiny (boat driver) were later confirmed dead by medical personnel at the clinic.

However, three individuals remain unaccounted for: Lieutenant DK Nehemiah, Sub-Lieutenant Kwala, and Miss Uche, another NYSC member. Divers and rescue teams are still combing the area in search of the missing persons.

As of the time of filing this report, the Commander of NNS Delta, Commodore Abdulazeez Zubairu, had not issued an official statement, but a senior naval officer confirmed the incident.