

Rivers Boat Explosion: Traders, Others Feared Dead, Properties Destroyed

By Shojobi Abisola On Jan 30, 2024

METRO



Scores of traders and other boat passengers are feared killed in Rivers state after three passenger boats conveying goods and passengers exploded after catching fire.

The incident it was gathered happened on Monday evening at the popular Bonny/Nembe/Bille jetty in Port Harcourt, the State capital.

Our Correspondent who visited the scene observed that the fire did not only destroy the passenger boats but also spread nearby properties to the jetty worth millions.

Daily Independent gathered that the inferno was ignited by the engines of one of the wooden boats which was under maintenance.

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An Eyewitness told our correspondent that the fire started from the boat's faulty engines, while an engineer was fixing it.

She explained that while the mechanic was still working on the engine, a spark landed on some jerry cans loaded with fuel used in running the boat, adding that the fire quickly became uncontrollable and spread to two other nearby boats, trapping occupants inside.

She said, "The mechanic was working on the engine, but as he was trying to start it fire started. They tried to quench it but because it was fuel, it was hard to quench.

"So everyone started running out of the boat, and before we knew it, we heard an explosion while so many people were still inside the boat."

Another trader whose goods were destroyed in the inferno, said the boat was preparing to travel to a fishing settlement in Bayelsa state where some of the traders would buy fish to bring back to Port Harcourt to sell.

She explained that she narrowly escaped being a victim, adding that another woman who left the boat to buy something returned to discover that her three children who were on board the boat could not be found.

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"We are traveling to Ibidi fishing settlement in Bayelsa State. I was almost a victim of the fire, the grace of God saved me. I went inside the boat to load my goods, after loading, I realized that I hadn't bought garri so as I was going down, immediately I stepped out of the boat, the boat exploded. I struggled to run out, people were in the boat, and people died.

"One woman who came down from one of the boats, to buy something before traveling, was crying uncontrollably, she said her three children are in the boat for now we have not seen them," he said.