

20 dead in Benue boat mishap

From Uja Emmanuel,
Makurdi

TWENTY persons mostly Fulani cattle herdsman have been confirmed dead in a boat mishap in Benue State.

They were fleeing from the crisis-torn Gbajimba, Guma Local Government Area when the accident occurred.

A statement by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Emmanuel Deebon said the accident was due to overload.

The PPRO said the Fulanis had defied the directive of the boat operator that he could not carry all of them at a go.

He said over 30 of them had boarded the boat which has capacity for a number lesser than that.

According to Deebon the Fulanis were fleeing from Gbajimba following a clash between them and their host community.

The police spokesman said only nine bodies had so far been recovered. But as the police were making arrangement to deposit the bodies at the Makurdi Mortuary, the leader of the Fulanis ordered that they be buried immediately according to Moslem rites.

At press time the search for the remains of the other bodies was still on.