

Six drown in Bayelsa boat accident

By Simon Utebor, Yenagoa On Jun 20, 2022



A female member of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and an expectant mother were among six boat passengers who drowned in Bayelsa as their vessel capsized.

The boat sank yesterday between Otuan and Ayama communities in Southern Ijaw council.

Other casualties were a mother, her two kids and a 70-year-old man, Chief Lucky Daniels.

The boat and the bodies of the victims are still missing as of the time of this report with search and rescue efforts ongoing in Ayama community.

It was learnt that the ill-fated boat, with a capacity of 15 passengers, rammed into a barrier while trying to berth close to Ayama.

It was also learnt that the afternoon rainstorm, which made all the passengers to cover themselves with tarpaulins, leading to reduced visibility, might have contributed to the disaster.

A journalist in Bayelsa, Mr. Domo Timi, whose father was one of the victims of the accident, confirmed it.

“My father was involved in the accident. Rescue teams have been dispatched to check the scene for possible rescue,” he said.

Chairman, Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), Comrade Ipigansi Ogoniba, confirmed the incident, blaming it on bad weather.

Ogoniba said the six casualties included four adults including a female Youth Corps member and two children out of the initial 13 people that boarded the boat.

He said the 75 Horse Power engine boat was en route Ayama Ijaw from Otuan community, some ten minutes' journey, when the tragic incident occurred around 4pm on Saturday.

Ogoniba, however, blamed the deaths resulting from the accident on the non-usage of the recommended safety life.

Police spokesman Asinim Butswat also confirmed the incident.