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Principal, three others die in boat accident

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Calabar

The principal of Eniong Comprehensive Secondary School in Atan, Odukpani Local Government Area of Cross River State, Mr. Anoyom Owen, and three others whose identities could not be immediately ascertained, have died after a boat in which they were travelling collided with another one at the Eniong River.

An eyewitness and a passenger in one of the boats, Mr. Bob Ekpo, said the incident, which occurred late Thursday, happened when the principal was returning from Calabar to the village after an official trip to the state Ministry of Education.

"Owen was coming from Calabar where he went to attend to issues concerning his school. Unfortunately, he came back a little late and boarded the boat at Okopedi heading for Eniong at about 8pm when the accident took place," he said.

The eyewitness said the principal boarded the boat along with 10 others who were also going to Eniong, but another boat with about 20 passengers collided with the oncoming boat.

He said, "The boats had no light but the moon was shining. We did not know that the operators of the boats could not see each other from opposite directions and suddenly there was a head-on collision."

According to him, most of the passengers were rescued by an emergency rescue team but the 50-year-old principal and three others could not be located that night until the next day.

"The next morning, the search party from the community located the bodies some three kilometres away where they had been washed ashore," he said.

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