

Bayelsa boat accident claims eight, two bodies recovered

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No fewer than eight persons have reportedly died in a boat accident in Bayelsa State.

The tragic incident was said to have happened on Thursday evening while they were travelling from Ogboinbiri to Amassoma in the Southern Ijaw Local Government of the state.

Saturday PUNCH gathered that the victims included a pastor and a sick woman, who was being rushed to a health centre.

The State Chairman of the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, Ogoniba Ipigansi, who confirmed the incident, said it occurred at about 9pm on Thursday.

Ipigansi said the accident occurred as a result of the collision of two boats that were travelling in opposite directions around the Ogboinbiri-Amassoma axis of the Southern Ijaw LGA.

According to him, the collision caused the boats to capsize and resulted in the death of eight out of the nine passengers in the boats.

He said that two of the eight corpses were found on Friday morning and search boats had been deployed to recover the remaining casualties.

The MWUN chief said that the accident could have been avoided if the boats involved were carrying functional torchlight for the late-hour navigation.

He stated that henceforth any boat leaving at late hours for emergency reasons must first report to the union's unit heads.

Ipigansi said, "Such boats must be made to dutifully go with the approved torchlight and anything short of that will not be condoned. Any breach will attract serious sanctions from the union."