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We're dying, widows of drowned seafarers cry out

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...Accuse Twinstomp Energy, NIMASA of abandonment

By Uche Usim

MANY Nigerians may have forgotten about the ship collision incident that happened on October 19, 2015, and led to the death of nine seafarers in Warri, Delta State. The family members of the deceased are still caught in the cold embrace of grief as they mourn spouses whose corpses they would never see and give honourable burial.

On the fateful day, two oil tankers were involved in the accident, MT Elixir a bigger vessel with a Martial Islands registration and foreign crew and MT Tank, a Tanzanian registered barge owned by Twinstomp Energy Limited but had a largely Nigerian crew and a Ghanaian. When both vessels collided in the wee hours of October 19, 2015, the cabin section of MT Tank ripped off from the hull. It sank

with it eight seafarers who have been missing till date.

The hearts of the widows of the crewmembers remain bruised and the death of their breadwinners has brought untold hardship upon them.

The widows of the deceased have accused the management of both the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and Twinstomp Energy Limited of not handling the matter professionally as they have not been paid any form compensation till date. The widows claim their children have been forced out of school due to paucity of funds.

They are calling on the Transportation Minister, Rotimi Amaechi and other influential Nigerians to intervene in the matter.

One of the widows, Mrs Esther Edoloro, the wife of one of the missing crew members onboard MT Tank, Mr Onoriode Emmanuel Edoloro alleged that the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety agency (NIMASA) may have been bribed by the owners of MT. Elixir considering that the regulatory agency had refused to release first hand information about MT Elixir that had since been released.

She speaks more on life without her husband.