

8 die in Benue boat mishap

■ 3 elders stoned to death

FROM ROSE EJEMBI, MAKURDI

NO fewer than eight persons lost their lives yesterday in a boat mishap in Guma local government area of Benue State, home council of Governor Samuel Ortom. Three community elders were later stoned to death by youths protesting the boat accident.

Sole Administrator of the council, Mr. Anthony Shawon who disclosed this to newsmen yesterday in Makurdi, said the boat was conveying mourners from a burial ceremony back to their communities when the incident happened near Kaambe crossing point at Gbajimba.

Shawon who stated that the boat capsized due to overloading explained that the boat paddler had earlier warned the mourners that the boat was over-loaded and that they should allow him convey them twice but they refused.

The Sole Administrator explained further that unfortunately for the mourners, the boat could not ferry them across the river successfully due to a sudden heavy wind, which resulted in its capsize.

Following the development, Saturday Sun gathered that angry youths in the area protested the boat mishap attributing it to a superstitious connotation.

Shawon added that three elders were stoned to death and their houses burnt while the district head of Gbajimba Gwatse Akaahena had the windscreen of his car smashed during the violent protest.

Shawon who disclosed that he immediately reported the incident to soldiers and mobile policemen who swiftly intervened and restored security to the area however noted that no arrest had been made at the time of this report.