# 20 bodies recovered, 11 rescued in Benue boat mishap

From **Scholastica Hir,** Makurdi

**No less than 20 persons have   died in River Benue  when a boat conveying them capsized around Agatu Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State.**

Daily gathered that the incident happened on Saturday, December 14, 2024.

Community sources said it was a market day in Ocholonya in Agatu LGA and the victims had gone there to trade  and were returning to Doma in Nasarawa State, when the wooden boat they were traveling in capsized and drowned all of them.

A native of Ocholonya, Adanyi said that over 20 people, mostly women and children were in the wooden boat when the incident happened.

According to him,"Yesterday (Saturday) was Ocholonya market, and this market is within Agatu LGA, but the people who were mostly women and children were returning to their base in Odenyi in Nasarawa State when the boat they were traveling in capsized and they all died.

Chairman of Agatu LGA, Melvin Oche confirmed the incident to newsmen on the phone on Sunday.

He said the victims were from Nasarawa State.

"It it true that there was boat mishap yesterday, and the people came to Ocholonya market, Ocholonya is in Agatu Local Government.

"What I learnt was that when they were returning to their base in Apochi and Odenyi communities in Doma in Nasarawa State, the boat they were traveling in capsized.

"I am trying to get my colleague from Nasarawa State to see how we can go there to visit the families and console them.

"The conflicting reports is that sources said that 20 people have died, but no recovery of the corpses to my knowledge.

"Though, locals confirmed that local divers have recovered corpses, but as chairman I must be able to speak authoritatively, I want to establish contact with divers to know the actual number of bodies recovered but their lines were not connecting.

"But somebody giving me the information said that 20 corpses have been recovered and the person said that he saw those corpses and that some people are still missing.

Oche said that he had informed the commander of Nigeria Navy in the LG to help in the rescue mission.

The Benue Command of the Nigerian Police Force said it has rescued 11 persons and recovered 20 bodies.

The state's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Sewuese Anene, who confirmed that the incident took place late in the evening on Saturday, said rescue operation was ongoing.