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11 feared dead in boat mishap

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By Johnbosco Agbakwuru

Calabar – ELEVEN persons were feared dead at the <u>Calabar Channel</u>, near <u>Creek Town in Odukpani</u> Local Government Area of <u>Cross River State</u> as their canoe capsized, following a boisterous wind that occurred after a down pour.

The 11 persons, who drowned, according to one of the survivors, include six females and five males

while three persons were said to have been rescued from the sea by youths from Creek Town.

Meanwhile, the state chapter of Action Congress of Nigeria, ACN, has made cash donation to the families of the deceased.

One of the survivors, who narrated his experience to newsmen in Calabar, yesterday, said that they were traveling from the Creek Town to Calabar by Canoe for business late in the evening, when the canoe could no longer withstand the raging tide and consequently capsized.

He said seven of the deceased were from Akai Ibonda, two from Efut, while the remaining two were natives of Ikot Ekong, all in Creek Town. He added that 10 corpses had been recovered while one was yet to be found as at press time.

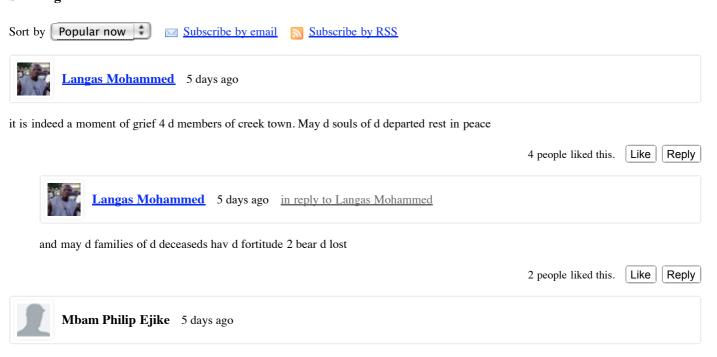
A youth leader and close confidant of one of the deceased, Mr Offiong Honesty, who earlier confirmed the accident, said the mishap had brought sorrow and grief to the entire community of Creek Town.

When contacted, the Cross River State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Etim Dickson, denied knowledge of the mishap but the Chairman of Odukpani Local Government Area, Mr Stephen Asuquo, confirmed that 11 persons lost their lives in the mishap.

But the ACN led by the state governorship candidate, Senator Matthew Mbu and his running mate, Elder David Okon, the senate candidate for the Southern senatorial district, Prof. Eyo Nyong, candidate for the House of Representatives for Calabar Municipality/Odukpani Federal constituency, among others have visited the bereaved families to console them.

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May their gentle souls rest in peace. But, it should be a serious call on the government to wake up from their slumber and device a means of solving the problem of none existence of infrastructures in the rural areas and seek a means of preventing such ugly incident from happening again.

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