

## Boat mishap: Family of eight, 14 others perish in A-Ibom

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**UYO**—A family of eight, husband and wife with six children returning to Akwa Ibom to resume schools were among 22 persons that died in a boat mishap in the Atlantic Ocean, Wednesday evening.

It was gathered that the tragedy struck as the boat ran into a storm occasioned by tropical wind killing 22 passengers, while two persons including the driver of the boat were the only survivors .

The victims were mainly Oron people returning home when the incident occurred.

“A speed boat was carrying 22 passengers, two drivers and they left Adek Shell and were heading to Oron beach when it capsized after the boat ran into a severe storm just after Ataobong,” a woman, who identified herself as Eno, living in Bakassi Peninsula, confirmed.

She described the incident as unfortunate, saying: “This period is always like that. We experience tempest and storm regularly but it takes God’s grace and protection for us to always sail through successfully. Many people have lost their lives and fortune in that strait.”



Traders at the popular crayfish and fish market, Oron beach, abandoned their wares to sympathize with the relatives of the victims who were mainly Nigerians living in Bakassi Peninsula.

They cried uncontrollably, while some were making frantic calls to ascertain whether their relatives living in the disputed peninsula were safe and not in that “doomed” boat.

A relative of one of the victims lamented: “I just want to see the corpse of my relation. How could they die just like that? I don’t know whether we will ever see their corpses. We want their corpses so that they can be buried properly.

“It is very sad and I am short of words. This is indeed pathetic. Many children returning to school were in that ill-fated boat. I pray God to give the families of the victims the strength to bear these losses.”