

## NEWS

June 27, 2023

## 10 persons drowned as boat capsizes in Akwa Ibom waterways



File image.

Uyo—No fewer than 10 persons were reportedly killed when an outboard engine boat capsized off the coast of Mbo Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State.

It was gathered that of the 10 victims, five were from the same family from Uduong Uko Local Government Area of the state.

They were returning from a fishing settlement, Ine Ataobong in Bakassi Peninsula, when they sailed into a fierce storm, which capsized their boat with only two persons surviving the tragedy.

A relation of one of the survivors, Mrs Eno Effai, who deals in seafood, described the incident as tragic as according to her, there was no life jacket on the boat.

She said: “It is really so sad. The sea has been so rough this period. Many people have lost their lives in the sea while travelling to Mbo or Oron. And this particular one is really sad in the sense that a family of five, including mother and school children were involved in the mishap. “

Meanwhile, a group, Mbo Concerned Citizens has advocated the establishment of a Coast Guard to assist the government in checkmating the nefarious activities of sea pirates on the waterways.

Besides, the group noted that such an outfit would go a long way in helping the people involved in boat mishap thereby saving lives.

Their position is contained in a statement by its Coordinator, Uloj Amba in Uyo, the state capital.

It said: “It is becoming very necessary for the government either federal or state to establish a Coast Guard with the mandate to check the unholy activities of sea robbers.

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“Our people, especially the fishermen have suffered immensely in the hands of these pirates. No day passes by without an incident on the waterways, which is affecting the livelihood of our people which is fishing.

“Also, the outfit will be of great help to sea travellers as it is being done in the devoped countries. Nothing stops us from starting it here as well which will give opportunity to young and energetic people to be gainfully employed.

So, we are appealing to the government to give this a thought. Many of our people have died during this period because of lack of help when they have boat mishap.”

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