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How three teenage friends died in a pond

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At 14, Buhari Umar is experiencing grief after his three companions drowned and died in a pond. Buhari, a JSS student of Army Day Secondary School, Ibrahim Umar a JSS two student of the same school, Naziru Abubakar, a primary five pupil of Dambuwa Model Primary School and Muhammad Murtala, a student of Attahiru Bafarawa Model Primary School were always together. They had also gone together to swim last Saturday, May 8, 2010 when the cold hands of death snatched the other three away leaving Buhari on his own.

Since the incident happened, Buhari had not gone anywhere. Shock was still written all over his face as he told Weekly Trust how the ugly incident happened. "On that day, we went to help somebody at a construction site. At about 4pm, we left there to go swimming at a nearby pond. Some other children went there to swim with too mainly bigger boys, so we were about 16. When we got there, the older boys told us the younger ones not to enter the water, but after they entered, we too followed. All of us enter the ditch to swim. When it became evident that they were drowning, I was so afraid and confused, I decided to rush to the nearby village to seek for help but by the time, I got people to help, three of them were dead."

The children's parents and relatives said they did not know that they were going to swim that day as they were at a building site assisting the owner. Following the incident, men of the Fire Service have drained the pond to avoid a recurrence of the tragic incident.

Weekly Trust learnt that this is the fourth time such an incident would occur in the area.

The ponds are commonly found on large expanses of land in the area, following excavation of sand. It was gathered that when the holes left behind become filled with water, children sneak there to swim.

Commenting on the latest incident, the traditional head of the area, Dambuwan Dambuwa Alhaji Shehu Abubakar called on parents to discourage their children from going to rivers to swim. He said it had become imperative considering the number of deaths that have been recorded in the area in the name of swimming. The Local Government Chairman, Alhaji Mode Dan Tasallah also said: "We have gone there and seen how the place is. We have not filled up the ponds, as they are still wet." He also warned people who construct open-dug wells indiscriminately to desist forthwith.

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