

Women, children drown in Zamfara

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No fewer than 30 persons, including children, have drowned in Bukkuyum Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

They were said to have been fleeing from bandits when two overloaded canoes conveying them across a river capsized on Wednesday night.

Muhammad Shehu, spokesperson for the state police command could not be reached for comment on the tragedy which some residents said could have been avoided if the fleeing persons had not forced themselves into the canoes.

One of the residents, who gave his name as Babangida Bukkuyum, said the bandits were shooting while pursuing the women.

He said: “The armed men then followed the fleeing residents to the river bank firing shots. In the middle of the river, the canoe riders who probably could not withstand the gunfire by the bandits jumped into the waters leaving the canoes adrift.

“Even though, some residents managed to escape after they plunged into the waters and swam to the shores

“I can tell you that three children of my younger sister are among the victims. There is an intense fear that the bandits are still in the area. This has greatly hampered rescue efforts. It is a tragedy.”