

Bandits kill 23 in Kaduna villages

By Wole Mosadomi & Ibrahim Hassan-Wuyo

TWENTY-THREE persons were reportedly killed Tuesday night by bandits in two communities in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

It was gathered that many others were injured by the bandits, who were reportedly shooting sporadically during the attacks on the communities.

A local said the bandits came in large numbers, wielding dangerous weapons, a development that made people scamper for safety.

The local said: "Villages attacked by the gunmen included Anguwar Maiwa and Anguwar Kanwa. The bandits attacked the villages around 1:00 am on Tuesday.

"The bandits were seen regrouping on motorbikes as early as 5 pm Monday and security agents were duly

● *As 16 perish in River Kaduna escaping from bandits*

informed," the local alleged.

16 perish in River Kaduna escaping from bandits

Meanwhile, about 16 villagers fleeing from terrorists who have been attacking their communities in Munya Local Government Area of Niger State, yesterday drowned in River Kaduna.

It was gathered that the gunmen numbering about 100 had stormed Sayita village in the local government, which prompted the villagers to desperately look for an escape route and they decided to flee through River Kaduna.

The villagers, it was gathered, loaded themselves into three boats and headed towards Zumba town in Shiroro Local

Government Area but could not reach their destination as one of the boats hit a rock at Bodo village in Guni ward of the local government area and capsized.

An eyewitness said no fewer than 30 passengers were said to be in the boat that capsized.

According to an eyewitness, "Bandits invaded our communities this morning, and in an attempt to flee, some people were drowned in the Guni-Zumba river. Due to overloading, the boat capsized in the middle of the water.

"For now, we don't know the number of casualties because we have not been able to rescue anybody but I can tell you that over 30 people, including women and children, were involved."

Efforts by those in the two other boats to rescue all the victims proved abortive as they succeeded in rescuing only 14.

He said while other travellers were

trying to bury the remains of the deceased, they sighted the bandits trailing them and had to abandon the corpses and fled.

What happened to the corpses to be buried could not be immediately ascertained.

The head of the local divers in Zumba popularly called "Sarkin Jirgi," who confirmed the tragedy on phone, said eight corpses have already been recovered and that they include two adults and six children.

Contacted, Director-General of Niger State Emergency Management Agency, NSEMA, Ahmed Inga, confirmed the incident, saying a search and rescue operation has begun.

He said: "For now, we cannot say the number of people that died and we cannot also confirm the exact number of people in the boats until after our investigations."