

70 Churches Forced to Close Amid Terror Attacks

No matter where in the world a Christian may find themselves, we can expect to encounter attacks from our spiritual enemy who has come to steal, kill and destroy.

This is what believers in the Plateau State of Nigeria are encountering, as some 70 churches from the Church of Christ in Nations denomination, which sports some eight million-plus members across 2,000 churches, have been experiencing for years.

Recently, radical Islamist Fulani herdsman have been attacking churches and villages in the African nation, and some congregations have had to shut down in the wake of the religious violence.

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President of COCIN, the Rev. Amos Mohzo, said a large number of the closures are coming from the counties of Mangu and Bokkos.

“Our members were killed, people were killed, people lost their houses, many traumatized, and we couldn’t do anything,” Pastor Mohzo said in the wake of the Christmas Day attacks in 2023. “We were stranded, but we had to face the challenge, and Christmas was celebrated by displaced Christians in Internally Displaced People’s (IDPs) camps in spite of the tragedy.”

- Mangu County saw 40 COCIN churches close. “Most of these members of our church were displaced, and many of them are living in camps outside their communities,” Pastor Mohzo said. “Most of these Christians have been moving here and there trying to survive or find succor.”

- Bokkos has lost approximately 30 churches to the constant attacks. "All our worship church buildings in these communities were burned down by the terrorists," Pastor Mohzo said. "Internally Displaced Christians from these communities are still living in camps outside their communities. And even now, most of them who are farmers are unable to go to their farms."

This is not the only part of the nation of millions that is experiencing persecution either, as Christians in the northeast portion of the country have suffered through attacks from Islamic groups such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province.

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"We live together as a community," Pastor Mohzo said. "However, with the coming of insurgency, the emergence of Boko Haram in Borno state, many of our people have been killed, and others have been driven out and displaced to other areas of Nigeria. Those who have no places to go to had to stay back and make up their minds to die when attacked by the terrorists."

According to Morning Star News, "Nigeria remained the deadliest place in the world to follow Christ, with 4,118 people killed for their faith from Oct. 1, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2023, according to Open Doors' 2024 World Watch List report. More kidnappings of Christians than in any other country also took place in Nigeria, with 3,300."

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