

Boko Haram Bombs 11 Churches in Nigeria

A radical Islamic group, Boko Haram, killed more than 150 people and bombed 11 churches in the northern Nigerian city of Damaturu on Nov. 4, according to International Christian Concern. While the press painted this as an attack targeting the police, Christian sources on the ground are reporting to ICC that the majority of the victims were Christians who were deliberately targeted because of their faith.

The radicals initially targeted police stations and business centers, carrying out suicide bombings that killed more than 50 people, but went on to attack the Christian dominated neighborhood known as Jerusalem, where they burned down 11 churches and killed anyone who identified themselves as Christians.

"It was a direct attack against Christians. They asked: 'Are you a Christian or a Muslim?' If you said you were a Christian, they killed you. They were selective. They attacked 11 churches, they didn't attack any mosques. After the incident, I saw someone who was slaughtered like a lamb in front of a church," said Idris Garba, the Yobe State chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria. Damaturu is the capital of Yobe State.

Garba also told ICC that Christians are now leaving Damaturu because of inadequate security, adding that "the government has not shown any concern to the Christian community. The government doesn't consider Christians human beings. It's terrible. We have not received any help from anywhere."

Boko Haram is a radical Muslim group that is fighting to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria, where a strict form of Sharia law would be applied. This year alone, the group has

killed hundreds of people, mainly targeting Christians, moderate Muslims and security officers. In his message to Christians around the world, Garba said, "The Bible says that the world hates us because we do not belong to the world. We should stand firm in God when persecution comes our way. We want the Christians around the world to pray for us that the Lord will continue to strengthen us and to help us stand firm in him. Also pray that the eyes of these people (who persecute us) will open and see the gospel light of Jesus Christ."

"The Nigerian government has utterly failed to protect its citizens from attacks by Islamists," says ICC's regional manager for Africa, Jonathan Racho. "The deliberate targeting and killing of Christians will continue unless drastic measures are taken to ensure the protection of the defenseless Christians. We urge Nigeria to take its responsibility of protecting its citizens seriously."

ICC is asking Christians to call the Nigerian embassy in your country and politely ask Nigerian officials to protect the defenseless Christians from further attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice.

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