

Gunmen Murder 19 Worshipers at Deeper Life Church

Gunmen on Monday killed at least 19 worshippers at at Deeper Life Church in the town of Otite, Kogi State in Nigeria, about 155 miles southwest of Nigeria's capital, Abuja. The Christians were conducting Monday night service at the time of the attack.

The perpetrators have not been identified, but in the past similar attacks against Christians have been carried out by members of Boko Haram, an Islamic radical group, seeking to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria.

"Members of Boko Haram are killing Christians. They want to Islamize the North. Their targets are Christians, the security men and the police. Many Christians have already left the north. For those of us remaining in the North, we worship under heavy presence of military. This time the church was attacked because the service was held on Monday," said a Christian leader in an interview with International Christian Concern (ICC).

This latest anti-Christian violence came two days after Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, told Nigeria's president, Goodluck Jonathan, to convert to Islam or resign otherwise the violence will continue.

"We are extremely concerned by the continuous killings of Christians in Nigeria," says ICC's Jonathan Racho. "Nigeria has become a killing zone for Christians. The government of Nigeria has utterly failed to protect its citizens from the murderous Boko Haram sect. We urge actions by the United States and other members of the international community to pressure Nigeria to deal forcefully with Boko Haram."