

Islamic Terrorist Bases Raided in Nigerian Cities of Jos, Kano

The Nigerian military's discovery here of a Muslim terrorist base full of ammunition and explosives on May 19 refutes Islamist claims that Christians have been bombing their own churches, a local pastor said.

Following an intensive three-day search by Nigeria's Special Military Task Force that found four Improvised Explosive Devices—along with one that detonated without casualties—the pastor of a church less than two kilometers away said God has vindicated area Christians.

“It's a vindication, as in the past Muslims, after attacking Christian churches, have claimed that Christians have been responsible for these bombings,” said the pastor, whose name is withheld for security reasons. “But now, everyone knows that **Boko Haram** has carried out the attacks and bombings on Christians and our churches in collaboration with other local Muslims in Jos.”

One person was killed and nine others were injured on April 24 after suspected **Islamic extremists** attacked a TV viewing center in a Christian area of Jos where a crowd had gathered to watch soccer. On March 11, Islamic extremists reportedly from the Boko Haram Islamist sect bombed a Catholic church in Jos, killing 10 Christians, including two boys ages 8 and 16.

A military spokesman said the Jos enclave, uncovered after an intensive three-day search, belonged to Boko Haram. Spokesman Markus Mdahyelya said in a press statement that soldiers also found 19 explosive devices, eight bags of Urea Nitrate Fertilizer, wire, four containers of sodium oxide, one of potassium chloride, three of lead nitrate, two of Aluminium

Metal Powder, a remote control and white sulphur, besides two generators and sniper ammunition.

“During the search, one Improvised Explosive Device detonated, but nobody was injured,” he said.

Six women, including Hauwa Muhammed, widow of the suicide bomber of *This Day* newspaper in Abuja, were arrested in the house in the Rikkos area of Jos. The April 26 attack on *This Day* newspaper killed three persons, including the suicide bomber, and injured 13 others, including a 12-year-old child.

Before the raid in Jos, a Boko Haram leader had left the previous day, leaving behind his wife and five children, along with five other women and six other children, all taken into custody. Muhammed reportedly said she and her husband had moved to Jos from Damaturu, Yobe state, to live with the Boko Haram leader.

She said her husband had traveled with the Boko Haram leader, identified only as Malam, in late April to an unknown destination, and that a few days later only Malam returned, telling her that her husband had died in an accident.

Nigeria's population of more than 158.2 million is divided between Christians, who make up 51.3 percent of the population and live mainly in the south, and Muslims, who account for 45 percent and live mainly in the north. The percentages may be less, however, as those practicing indigenous religions may be as high as 10 percent of the total population, according to *Operation World*.

Kano Carnage

In northern Nigeria's Kano state, Nigerian forces killed a suspected Islamist militant in a raid on May 1 following Boko Haram's April 29 attack on worship at Bayero University, where 19 people reportedly died from bomb blast and gunfire.

The **Islamic extremists** attacked two university halls, one for

St. Stephen's Catholic students and one for evangelicals. Two of those killed in the attacks were professors.

A Catholic church held a memorial service on May 11 for the 10 Catholics slain at the university, declaring them "martyrs of the Christian faith."

The Rt. Rev. John Namaza Niyiring, bishop of Kano Diocese of the Catholic Church, conducted the memorial service at Our Lady of Fatima Cathedral, encouraging those in attendance to maintain a strong faith.

"The activities of those persecuting the church of God should not weaken our resolve to remain faithful to Christ, but should make us strong in spite of the present challenges," he said. "Do not allow persecution to rob you of your faith as Christians in these times of trouble. You must be more prayerful and seek the protection of God, instead of living in fear."

The Rev. Emefiena Ezeani, who had just finished conducting mass at his parish when he heard about the attack at the university, told Compass that too many people are refusing to acknowledge that churches are as much primary targets of Boko Haram as police, government and media facilities.

"Do Christians in Nigeria not think that the Muslim north, or at least a group of northern Muslims, have declared jihad against Christianity in Nigeria?" he said. "Has Boko Haram, thanks to their being truthful, not made it unequivocally clear that their ultimate intention is to Islamize the whole of Nigeria? I am worried by the disturbing and deafening silence."

Maiduguri Assault

Boko Haram (literally, "Forbidden Book," translated as "Western education is forbidden"), has targeted state offices, law enforcement sites and some moderate mosques in its effort to destabilize the government and impose a strict version of

sharia (Islamic law) on all of Nigeria.

In an attack in Maiduguri, in the northeastern state of Borno, that authorities said was related to the Kano assault as it took place on the same day (April 29), suspected Boko Haram militants reportedly charged into a Church of Christ in Nigeria service and began firing as the congregation was about to take communion.

Witnesses reportedly said that when congregation members who escaped later returned, they found the pastor dead along with four other slain worshippers.