

Islamist Group Boko Haram Accused of Slitting 10 Christians' Throats

At least 10 Christians, including one pastor, were allegedly killed by suspected Islamist fighters connected to the extremist group Boko Haram in an overnight attack on the village of Chibok located in Nigeria's northeastern state of Borno, International Christian Concern reports. In a separate attack, three churches were burned as a group of Islamic radicals attacked the border town of Gamboru Ngala.

Around 9 p.m. on Saturday, a group of men armed with guns and machetes entered the village of Chibok chanting, "Allahu Akbar," meaning, "God is Greatest."

"They moved into selected homes in the predominantly Christian part of the town and slaughtered 10 people like sheep," a local government official told the *Botswana Gazette*.

The 10 victims who were killed in the attack had their throats slit by the attackers. "They came armed with guns but decided to butcher their victims," a witness told the press.

No group has come forward to claim responsibility for the attack, but police suspect the radical Islamic group Boko Haram is behind the attack.

"The men came in large numbers and went into homes which ... were carefully selected, and slaughtered 10 people while shouting, 'Allahu Akbar'," a local resident told the *Botswana Gazette*.

"Who else apart from Boko Haram members would go into homes and slit the throats of 10 people?" another local official asked the press.

Boko Haram is also suspected to be behind a series of attacks perpetrated on Sunday on Nigeria's northeastern border with Cameroon. Residents of Gamboru Ngala said around 50 gunmen carried out attacks on churches and other government posts in the border village. Gunmen chanting "Allahu Akbar" descended upon the town and burned down at least three churches and two government buildings, including a police station and an immigration and customs office.

Boko Haram is known to target Christians, their places of worship and government institutions. The extremist group is fighting to establish a separate Islamic state in Nigeria's northern regions. Most of the violence perpetrated by Boko Haram has taken place along Nigeria's "Middle Belt" region, where the predominantly Christian South borders the Muslim majority North. The group is believed to be responsible for killing an estimated 3,000 people since it began its armed insurgency in 2009.

"Almost every Sunday, Christians are attacked as Boko Haram attempts to establish a purely Islamic state in Nigeria's North," said William Stark, ICC's regional manager for Africa. "Last Sunday, Nov. 25, a twin suicide bombing at a church in Nigeria's northern state of Kaduna killed 11 people who were gathered for worship.

"Earlier this year, Boko Haram demanded all Christians leave Nigeria's North. Since then, the group has waged a campaign of terror against those Christians who decided to stay. The international community can no longer ignore the violence dominating Nigeria's North.

He continued: "The United States is still deciding whether to designate Boko Haram a Foreign Terrorist Organization, which if given, would allow the U.S. to seize Boko Haram's assets under U.S. jurisdiction. This would help stem the flow of arms and funds the group receives from sources outside Nigeria's borders.

“The consistency of these attacks shows Nigeria’s government is struggling to deal with the violence that has dominated its northern states since international community must take decisive action. Until then, Christians will continue to be murdered in Nigeria’s North,” Stark concluded.