

Suspected Boko Haram Militants Brutally Murder 106 Christians in Northern Nigeria

Suspected Boko Haram militants brutally murdered 106 Christians in an attack on a Christian village in northern Nigeria over the weekend.

According to reports, the vast majority of the Christians killed were men rounded up by the militants and executed by either having their throats slit or being shot in the village square. This marks the deadliest single attack on Christians in Nigeria in months.

According to BosNewsLife, the attack on the Christian village of Izghe, located in Nigeria's northern state of Borno, began late Saturday night. Around 100 militants, suspected by Nigerian government officials to be connected to the Boko Haram terrorist network, wearing military uniforms surrounded the village with armed vehicles and began to round up Christian men living there.

After rounding up a large group of Christian men, the militants began to execute them in the village square. Survivors of the attack reported to the BBC that many of the Christian victims were shot, but several had their throats slit by the militants.

Next, the militants went door to door in the village, searching for Christian men they failed to kill in the village square. In total, it is believed that 106 Christians were murdered in the attack on Izghe, which lasted five hours. Of those 106, 105 were men and one was an elderly woman trying to protect her grandson, the senator of Borno state told the BBC.

"All the dead bodies of the victims are still lying in the streets," resident Abubakar Usman told Reuters. "We fled without burying them, fearing the terrorists were still lurking in the bushes."

Boko Haram is an Islamic terrorist network group currently fighting the Nigerian government for control of northern Nigeria. The Boko Haram group desires to establish a separate Islamic state in Nigeria's northern states, where it can enact an ultra-conservative interpretation of Shariah law.

Since beginning its armed insurgency in 2009, Boko Haram has killed thousands of people in Nigeria, often targeting Christians for some of the most brutal acts of violence. In early 2012, Boko Haram leaders demanded all Christians leave northern Nigeria so the group could create a purely Islamic society. Since then, Boko Haram has perpetrated church bombings, drive-by shootings and Christian pogroms across northern Nigeria.

"The attack on Izghe marks the single deadliest attack on Christian in months," says William Stark, International Christian Concern's regional manager for Africa. "One hundred and six Christians were murdered in Izghe for no other reason than their religious identity. Attacks like the attack on Izghe are meant to terrorize the Christian community that continues to live in northern Nigeria.

"The United States designated Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization in 2013, which would allow the U.S. to take more direct action against the terrorist network. Unfortunately, the U.S. has yet to do this. The Nigerian government continues to fail to protect Christian villages and has allowed hundreds of Christians to be killed in 2014 already. More decisive action must be taken to end the bloodshed. If action is not taken, the slaughter of Christians in northern Nigeria could reach genocidal levels in the near future."

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