

Terrorists Murder 46 Nigerian Christians in Two-Day Period

A total of 46 Nigerian Christians in four different villages in the southern part of the African country were killed by terrorists during a two-day period earlier this month. And in the wake of the killings, local leaders are accusing Nigerian government of simply overlooking the violence.

Morning Star News reported that in the early hours of June 3 and 4, Fulani Herdsmen attacked a cluster of villages in Benue state—including Michihe, Achamagheh, Mbagene Kpav and Imande Mbakange—where dozens of Nigerian Christians were murdered.

Members of radical Islamic groups Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province are also believed to have been involved in the killings.

Also, on June 7, The Rev. Charles Onomhoale Igechi, vice principal of St. Michael College, Ikhueniro, was slaughtered while driving through Benin, Edo in Nigeria, Morning Star News reported. His murder sent shockwaves through the Christian community in Nigeria.

The Shitile Development Association released a statement criticizing the country's government and begging it to take action against the terrorism, but to no avail.

"Most disturbing is the fact that the identity of the perpetrators is known to security agencies and the Nigerian government, and yet nothing has been done to end this carnage.

There is little doubt that Christian villages in southern Nigeria are being targeted. Many of those who survived the attacks and escaped death have fled the areas and left their homes and farmlands for safety.

Two leaders of the Shitile Development Association, Samuel Door and Ephraim Zuai, said in a joint statement, "As our people are fleeing, herders are occupying these areas and grazing freely on our farms. Though due to the fear of general insecurity it is difficult to move from village to village to gather exact statistics, hordes of lives have been horrendously eliminated in several villages across the land, such that the whole land is thrown into wailing and mourning."

Local council official Alfred Atera confirmed and condemned the attacks and compelled the nation's security agencies to end the carnage.

"These senseless killings by the terrorists are inhuman and barbaric," Atera said. "I call on all security agencies to double their efforts in combating these renewed attacks as a matter of urgency."

A spokesperson for the police in Benue State said they had received reports about the violence and destruction and that police and security agents have been deployed to the area.

Nigeria is sixth on the 2023 Open Doors World Watch List of countries for the persecution of Christians.

"Militants from the Fulani, Boko Haram, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and others conduct raids on Christian communities, killing, maiming, raping and kidnapping for ransom or sexual slavery," a WWL report noted. "This year has also seen this violence spill over into the Christian-majority south of the nation... Nigeria's government continues to deny this is religious persecution, so violations of Christians' rights are carried out with impunity."

Morning News reported that Nigeria led the world in Christians being killed for their faith in 2022, with 5,014. The country also led the world in Christians abducted (4,726), sexually assaulted or harassed, forcibly married or physically or mentally abused. {eoa}

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