



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in NIGERIA

Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the Body also.

(Hebrews 13:3)



Total Population: 206,139,589

Self-Proclaimed Christian Population: 51% – **Evangelical Witness: 15%**

Death Rate: 9.09/1000 per year: Just today: 5,134

Nigeria motorbike gang attack: Death toll rises to 200

At least 200 people in Nigeria's north-western Zamfara state have been buried after a wave of vicious attacks by gangs of gunmen over several days.

Survivors told the BBC that motorbike-riding gangsters attacked village after village, shooting indiscriminately.

The attacks are believed to be in response to military air strikes on Monday that forced some of the criminal gangs from their forest hideouts.

The groups have plagued Zamfara and neighbouring states for several years. Known locally as bandits, these gangs are sophisticated networks of criminals who operate across large swathes of territory, often stealing animals,

kidnapping for ransom and killing those who confront them.

This week, the government officially labelled bandits as terrorists, allowing security forces to impose tougher sanctions on the groups and their supporters.

On Friday it was initially reported that more than 100 people had been killed by suspected bandit militants in the region, after some 300 gunmen on motorbikes arrived in as many as nine communities between Tuesday and Thursday night.

Gunmen burnt homes and mutilated the bodies of their victims in the assault. Villager Idi Musa told the AFP news agency that the attackers also stole around 2,000 cattle.

Local media reported that the armed groups behind the attacks appeared to be on the move - heading towards the western part of Zamfara state after abandoning hideouts in forested areas in response to sustained government attacks.

A spokesperson for Humanitarian Affairs Minister Sadiya Umar Farouq told AFP that more than 200 people had been buried.

She also confirmed that more than 10,000 people had been left homeless and many were still missing.

Meanwhile, officials in neighbouring Kebbi state said bandits had released a further 30 schoolchildren and one teacher who had been held for six months. It is not clear if a ransom was paid for their release.

In June, the kidnappers took 102 students and eight teachers from a school in the city of Birnin Kebbi. An unspecified number had already been freed last year, after their parents negotiated with the captors.

Kidnapping for ransom is a huge criminal enterprise in Nigeria.

A story has been trending this weekend about a father from Katsina state, which borders Zamfara to the east, who has been removing the roof of his house to sell the metal sheeting to raise a ransom of about \$250 (£180) for his son.

The Katsina Post shared the photos of Sai'du Faskari on Facebook. He had himself been kidnapped by gunmen, and his children had raised about \$125 for his ransom.

When his son went to pay the bandits off, he was then taken hostage.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has promised that the government will not relent in its battle with the "outlaws".

"The latest attacks on innocent people by the bandits is an act of desperation by mass murderers, now under relentless pressure from our military forces," he said in a statement on Saturday night.

Nigeria's armed forces said this week that they had killed 537 "armed bandits and other criminal elements" in the region and arrested 374 others since May last year.

Thousands of Nigerian troops have been deployed to fight them.

Source: BBC News

Christians Persecuted in Nigeria in 2020

(AciAfrica)

"The number of defenseless Christians hacked to death by Nigeria's Islamic Jihadists and their collaborators in the security forces in the past 200 days or 1st January to 18th July 2021 has risen to no fewer than 3,462 and this is just sixty-eight deaths less than the total deaths of Nigerian Christians in 2020, which the Open Doors' World Watch List of Persecuted Christians put at 3,530," Intersociety says in its 2021 report.

Broken down, the figure translates to 17 Christians being murdered daily in Nigeria, especially in States experiencing extreme militant attacks.

**Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated
- since you yourselves are in the Body also.**

(Hebrews 13:3)