



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 14, 2021

## Pastor murdered in Nigeria in Latest Display of Anti-Christian Violence

A Christian pastor in the Nigerian state of Kaduna was found brutally murdered by members of his congregation on Sunday. The Reverend Silas Yakubi Ali was found hacked to death with machetes sometime on Saturday in the Zangon Kataf Local Government Area in Central Nigeria.

Ali had last been seen leaving his church on Saturday night by motorbike. When the pastor didn't show up for Sunday service, parishioners formed a search party and eventually found their pastor dead, roughly one thousand yards from his home.



Tinnakorn Jorruang/iStock/Getty Images Plus

The pastor's body showed both bullet and machete wounds.

Also on Sunday, at least 11 more Christians — including two pregnant women — were killed in an attack on the nearby Apyizhime Jim village. Ten of those victims reportedly attended another church overseen by Ali, while the 11th was from a local Catholic church.

And that might not be the last of the fatalities from Sunday.

"Many people are missing as a result of the attack. It is impossible to ascertain the number of those injured and those killed, but so far, I have counted 11 dead bodies in different locations," a source told Nigeria's *Daily Post*.

The *Daily Post* further reported that during a period of heavy rain, militiamen divided themselves into groups and went on to target individual dwellings, killing all of the victims within the space of 10 minutes. Several residents are still unaccounted for and are feared dead or kidnapped.

Although official sources do not specify which militiamen might be responsible, local sources suspect the murderers were Fulani herdsmen — members of a semi-nomadic group whose primary occupation is raising livestock. The Fulani herdsmen have been carrying out an undeclared war on Nigerian farmers who object to the herdsmen encroaching upon their land.

The Fulani herdsmen have begun working with the Islamic terrorist group [Boko Haram](#).

The governor of Kaduna State, Nasir el Rufai, condemned the killings and [called for calm](#) in the region.

"The Governor expressed deep sadness over the killing. The Governor offered prayers for the repose of the soul of the cleric," read a statement from Samuel Aruwan, Commissioner, for Internal Security and Home Affairs in Kaduna.

"[The governor] prayed for God to grant them fortitude and comfort over this sudden and painful loss," Aruwan said, before confirming, "Security agencies are conducting investigations in the general area."

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) has condemned the recent killings, and firmly believes that there is a religious element involved in the violence. It also condemned Nigeria and Kaduna state for their



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seeming indifference toward the ongoing violence against Christians in the region.

“While we welcome Kaduna state governor Nasir el Rufai’s call for action to address this appalling violence, we maintain that he and other Nigerian officials have done woefully little thus far, and that this has allowed impunity to thrive and enabled this violence to metastasize,” said CSW founder Mervyn Thomas.

Thomas continued: “We urge the authorities to significantly increase their efforts to protect vulnerable communities, and to mount a sustained campaign against armed non-state actors across the country until Nigeria is secure.”

There may be some substance to Thomas’ claim that the Nigerian government is, more or less, allowing the slaughter of the Christian minority through indifference. A tweet from Nigerian human rights activist Chidi Odinkalu explains.

“Kaduna is the most garrisoned state in #Nigeria bar none. The [number] of military & security installations in the state is fulsome. Yet, under their watch, entire communities are being liquidated, displaced, destroyed. & ppl say there is no state complicity?”

These latest murders are an example of what some sources are calling an “uptick” in attacks against Christians in the African nation. But Christians have been an endangered species in Nigeria since at least 2011 when Fulani herdsmen begin encroaching on their property. The situation only worsened in 2015 when el Rufai became governor. in Kaduna state. In the first 200 days of this year, it’s been [reported](#) that at least 3,462 Christians were murdered in Nigeria for their faith.

According to Open Doors, a group that tracks Christian persecution across the globe, Nigeria is currently the [ninth most dangerous](#) place in the world to be a Christian, ranking behind only such serial human rights abusers as North Korea, Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Pakistan, Eritrea, Yemen, and Iran.

“More Christians are murdered for their faith in Nigeria than in any other country,” Open Doors reports. “Violent attacks by Boko Haram, Hausa-Fulani Muslim militant herdsmen, ISWAP (an affiliate of the Islamic State group) and other Islamic extremist groups are common in the north and middle belt of the country, and are becoming more common farther south.”

While Christians are certainly persecuted in the Western world, it’s nothing like the Christians of Nigeria are facing. Remember these courageous people in your prayers.



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