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Latest: US House Hearing Finds Nigeria Accounts for 72% of Christian Killings Worldwide

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"One Year Later: Assessing Nigeria's Efforts to Protect Christians and Secure the Middle Belt."

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

The United States House of Representatives heard on Thursday, 12 November 2026, that Nigeria now accounts for 72 percent of all faith-related killings of Christians worldwide - and that a year after Washington designated the country a Country of Particular Concern, the violence has not stopped. The hearing, held by the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, put Nigeria's government on the spot over its record in the Middle Belt, where Christian farming villages have faced wave after wave of attacks. One witness after another told the panel the same thing: the alarm was sounded a year ago, and nothing has changed.

The hearing occured one year after the designation, and it was titled "One Year Later: Assessing Nigeria's Efforts to Protect Christians and Secure the Middle Belt." Its chairman, Congressman Chris Smith, said it was his 14th congressional hearing focused on religious persecution in Nigeria. He opened with a blunt verdict on the year since the warning was issued.

"Today, just over one year later, we confront an even more troubling reality. The violence has not ended," Smith declared.

President Donald Trump designated Nigeria a Country of Particular Concern on 31 October 2025, citing what he described as an existential threat to Christianity and the killing of thousands of Christians by radical Islamist groups. Trump threatened military action against Nigeria last November. The Nigerian government rejected the designation, saying it was based on misinformation and faulty data.

Central to the hearing was the testimony of Nina Shea, a religious freedom advocate, who described Nigeria as the world's deadliest country for Christians targeted because of their faith. Quoting Shea's submission, Smith said Nigeria accounted for 72 percent of faith-related killings of Christians worldwide, according to figures from Open Doors. More than one million survivors of attacks have been forced from their homes, Shea said, and many still live in displacement camps with no livelihood and no clear way home.

The numbers behind that 72 percent are stark. Open Doors' 2026 World Watch List records 4,849 Christians killed worldwide for their faith between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025. Of those, 3,490 were Nigerians - up from 3,100 the year before. Nigeria ranks seventh on the list of the 50 countries where it is hardest to be a Christian.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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