

24 killed in Burkina Faso church attack

From popular Nigerian newspaper [Associated Press](#)

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP) – Gunmen killed 24 civilians, including a church pastor, and kidnapped three others on Sunday in Burkina Faso, an official said. It was the latest attack against a religious leader in the increasingly unstable West African nation.

A group of “armed terrorists” burst into the village of Pansi, in Yagha province “and attacked the peaceful local population after having identified them and separated them from non-residents”, Colonel Salfo Kabore said in a statement sent to AFP. The assault occurred on Sunday during a weekly service, security officials said.

The roughly 20 attackers separated men from women close to a Protestant church. At least 18 other people were injured.

“It hurt me when I saw the people,” Brigadie said after visiting some of the victims in the hospital in Dori town, 180 kilometers (110 miles) from the attack. The gunmen looted oil and rice from shops and forced the three youth they kidnapped to help transport it on their motorbikes, he said.

Both Christians and Muslims were killed before the church was set on fire, said a government security official in Dori who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren’t authorized to speak to the media.

One of the poorest countries in the world, Burkina Faso is on the front line of a jihadist insurgency advancing in the Sahel.

Since 2015, around 750 people have been killed in Burkina and

around 600,000 people have fled their homes.

Christians and churches have become frequent targets in the north of the country. According to UN figures, jihadist attacks in Burkina and neighbouring Mali and Niger left nearly 4,000 people dead last year.