

Nigerian Blasts Kill at Least 39

MUSLIM EXTREMISTS BOKO HARAM THOUGHT TO BE RESPONSIBLE

By the Associated Press

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STORY

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Onlookers stand by a destroyed car at the site of a bomb blast at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, Nigeria, Sunday, Dec. 25, 2011. (AP Photo/Sunday Aghaeze)

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(AP) – Terror attacks across Nigeria by a radical Muslim sect killed at least 39 people today, with the majority dying on the steps of a Catholic church after celebrating Christmas Mass as blood pooled in dust from a massive explosion. Authorities acknowledged they could not bring enough emergency medical personnel to care for the wounded outside St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla near Nigeria's capital. Elsewhere, a bomb exploded amid gunfire in the central Nigeria city of Jos and a suicide car bomber attacked the military in the nation's northeast as part of an apparently coordinated assault by the sect known as Boko Haram.

The Christmas Day violence, denounced by world leaders and the Vatican, shows the threat of the widening insurrection posed by Boko Haram against Nigeria's weak central government. Despite a recent paramilitary crackdown against the sect in the oil-rich nation, it appears that Africa's most populous nation remains unable to stop the threat. The US and Britain denounced the attacks, and another [AP story](#) reports that the Vatican called the attacks a sign of "cruelty and absurd, blind hatred" that shows no respect for human life.

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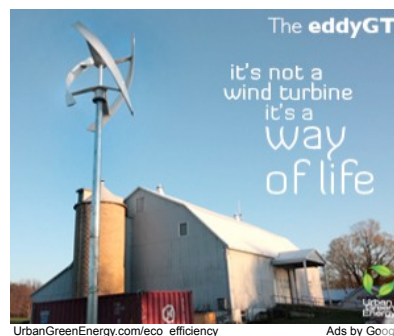


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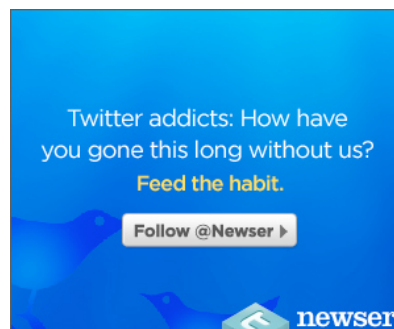
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