

ISIS child soldier executes Nigerian Christian student, declares 'we will not stop'

By [Samuel Smith](#) ⁽¹⁾, CP Reporter



A child militant affiliated with the Islamic State's West Africa Province kills Ropvil Daciya Dalep in a video released by the Islamic State's media arm in January 2020. | Amaq News Agency

The Nigerian man who was executed by a child militant in a video released by a Boko Haram offshoot group aligned with the Islamic State days ago has been identified as a 22-year-old Christian college student.

Ropvil Daciya Dalep hailed from the Pankshin Local Government Area of the Plateau state and attended the University of Maiduguri in Borno state. His execution video gained [media attention](#) ⁽¹²⁾ this week.

Dalep was a biology major who was returning to school from Christmas break when he was abducted on Jan. 9 allegedly by the Islamic State West Africa Province, according to the United Kingdom-based NGO [Christian Solidarity Worldwide](#) ⁽¹³⁾.

Dalep was taken along with fellow Plateau state native and 20-year-old zoology major Lilian Daniel Gyang and another person who was later released.

According to Solomon Maren, a federal legislator from the Plateau state, Gyang is still in captivity. In a [statement](#) ⁽¹⁴⁾ released by his media team, Maren stated that extremists have made it known that they are targeting “Plateau people” as they also [executed](#) ⁽¹⁵⁾ two carpenters from the state last year.

“The terrorists clearly stated why they are targeting Plateau people when the citizens of Plateau have long resolved their differences and are leaving peacefully together,” Maren said. “I call on the federal government and security agencies to brace up to their obligation to prevent further [loss] of lives which cannot be tolerated.”

According to Christian Solidarity Worldwide, the video of Dalep’s execution shows the kneeling victim being shot in the head by the masked child who speaks in both Arabic and Hausa.

In the video released by the Islamic State-affiliated Amaq News Agency, the child reportedly claims that Dalep’s killing was revenge for the “bloodshed” committed by Christians.

“In particular, this is one among the Christians from Plateau State,” the child is reported to have said in the video. “We are saying to Christians, we have not forgotten what you have done to our parents and ancestors and we are telling all Christians around the world, we have not forgotten and will not stop. We must avenge the bloodshed that has been done like this one...”

According to Director Rita Katz of the SITE Intelligence Group, the child militant in the video is approximately 8 years old.

“There is NO end to [#ISIS](#) ⁽¹⁹⁾ immorality,” Katz [wrote in a tweet](#) ⁽²⁰⁾ about the video.

Katz sees parallels between the Dalep execution video and the execution videos released in previous years during the Islamic State’s reign in Iraq and Syria.

“The video is not just another piece to [#isis](#) ⁽²¹⁾, honed-in targeting of [#Christians](#) ⁽²²⁾ of recent years, but also a throwback to its older propaganda from Iraq & Syria of [brainwashed children carrying grisly executions](#) ⁽²³⁾. This new vid from ISWAP shows a repeat of the same indoctrination.”

Dalep’s execution came days before the Borno-based Islamic terror group Boko Haram [executed pastor Rev. Lawan Andimi](#) ⁽²⁴⁾, the chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria’s chapter in the Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

The Dalep video follows [another video](#) ⁽²⁵⁾ released by Amaq in December showing the execution of 11 Christian aid workers in Nigeria allegedly in response to the killing of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

ISWAP, which declared its allegiance to the Islamic State in 2016, split from Boko Haram after Baghdadi tried to replace Boko Haram’s leader with one of his choosing.

The Islamic State has risen to prominence in Africa as it also has active cells in nearby countries like Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and Mali.

According to a [2018 report](#) ⁽²⁶⁾ from the Combatting Terrorism Center at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, estimates suggest there could be as many as 6,000 Islamic State-aligned militants spread over nine different cells in Africa.

In Nigeria alone, [thousands](#) ⁽²⁷⁾ upon [thousands](#) ⁽²⁸⁾ have reportedly been killed in recent years due to the rise of radical Islamic extremism and the radicalization of Fulani herdsmen.

Activists have criticized the Nigerian government’s inability to thwart attacks by Boko Haram, ISWAP and Fulani militants.

Following the death of Andimi, the Christian Association of Nigeria [released a statement](#) ⁽²⁹⁾ criticizing the lackadaisical response by President Muhammadu Buhari and his administration to the rise in violence.

“It is reprehensible and saddening that each time the government comes out to claim the defeat of the insurgency, more killings of our people are committed,” the CAN statement reads.

“Maintenance of security is the least responsibility of any government that knows its worth. We are once again calling on President Buhari to purge himself of the allegations of nepotism and religious favoritism by reconstituting the leadership of security outfits.”

Nigeria [ranks](#) ⁽³⁰⁾ as the 12th worst country in the world when it comes to Christian persecution, according to Open Doors USA’s 2020 World Watch List. In December, Nigeria was [placed for the first time on the U.S. State Department’s Special Watch List](#) ⁽³¹⁾ for countries in which severe religious freedom violations are tolerated.

“The great tragedy of Nigeria’s ineffectual response to Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen is now parts of Cameroon and those other areas like Burkina Faso are greatly affected,” [said](#) ⁽³²⁾ Open Doors CEO David Curry at a World Watch List launch event last week.