Kano rape explosion

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•Society must protect young women from sexual predator  
  
Nigerians must be alarmed that 100 rape cases were recorded in Kano State alone between November and December, 2013. This no doubt is huge. The state commissioner for justice, Maliki Kuliya Umar, who disclosed this said more than 40 offenders have so far been convicted and are currently serving jail terms.  
  
We agree with the commissioner that rape cases are becoming more problematic, not only in Nigeria but globally, and there is a need for concerted efforts to stem the tide. It is even possible that the figure could be higher in Kano State due to the secrecy with which rape cases are treated in this part of the world. Again, if as many as 100 cases were reported within the period in question, it is an indication that more rape victims are coming out of their shells to report the assault on their person. This is unlike in the past when victims suffered in silence because of the stigma attached to rape victims. They need more encouragement if we are to get out of the rape scourge.  
  
Parents do not have to leave the matter in the hands of teachers and Islamic scholars alone. It should be a joint effort to rid the society of people who cannot check their libido. As the commissioner noted, “The most disturbing thing is that the suspects are people that are known to the victims”. This aspect of the matter is very important because it is difficult for complete strangers to rape people. Most children in particular fall victims after being lured by people they expect to protect them, only for the perverted minds to betray such expectation by pouncing on the unsuspecting victims.  
  
The pathetic case of a nine-year-old girl who died last year as a result of persistent forced sexual intercourse by the son of the proprietor of the school where the girl attended in Ikorodu area of Lagos comes in handy. If the girl had not known the teenager for who he was, it is unlikely she would have been raped by him. As usual, after forcibly having carnal knowledge of the girl, he did what rapists do: warned her to keep the secret, otherwise, he would kill her. So, parents need to watch where their children go, or who they relate with. Not only that, they must be there for the children to also see the kind of movies they are exposed to. The boy who raped the little girl in question, for instance, reportedly said he got the idea from the pornographic films he watched.  
  
Governments must take up the challenge by sensitising members of the public to the increasing incidence of rape. The media campaign should be multifaceted; it should be directed at the rapists; teach victims what they could do in self-defence where this is possible or safe, encourage them to come forward to report their ordeals to the police, as well as let members of the public know that just anyone could be a rape victim; so, they should not stigmatise people who fall into the rape trap.  
  
Hospitals and the courts also have roles to play to reduce the incidence of rape. Whilst the hospitals should give the necessary treatment to the victims while it still matters , the courts must ensure that rape cases do not suffer unnecessary delay, to ensure quick dispensation of justice. If there is need to strengthen the laws to deter people from committing the crime, so be it.