Rising cases of rape in Nigeria

Date: 2020-06-05

Source: https://thenationonlineng.net/rising-cases-of-rape-in-nigeria/

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The recent cases of rape in Nigeria is just a harsh reminder of the reality that nowhere is safe in the country; not even our religious spaces, and this is quite saddening and terrifying.  
  
Vera Uwaila Omozuwa was raped and murdered in the church. Barakat Bello got raped and murdered in her house. Jennifer also suffered the same unfortunate fate, and there are many more cases.  
  
Most rape incidents go unreported in Nigeria because of stigmatisation and the fact that the wheel of justice turns slowly.  
  
Also, in Nigeria, we don’t like to talk about rape issues, and when we do, it is done in whispers, and in private clusters. Every day, news outlets, churn out contents that chronicle this gruesome act on hapless and vulnerable victims.  
  
It is heart-breaking to know that children and even adults live with such terror. Some others do not even live to tell the sad tales because they were murdered. We need to understand that rape causes a lot of damage to women.  
  
The criminal and penal codes of 1990 are the laws guiding rape justice in Nigeria. The code is deficient in many ways.  
  
There is need to beam the searchlight on some of the grey areas in the provision of the laws, loopholes in implementation and excesses of implementing agencies.  
  
Sadly, good number of perpetrators of rape move about freely on the streets after committing the heinous act due to poor investigation and inherent defects in the criminal justice system.  
  
Ignoring the issue will teach the younger generation that they can get away with such crimes. Victims should learn to speak up, as in so doing, the crime can be tackled.  
  
While the discussions on rape is such a delicate issue, there are so many slippery paths for the accusers, the accused, and including the commentators. It seems like a daunting task to unravel the causes of rape because we have men who are sexually demented.  
  
In Nigeria today, despite the laws, we have low convictions for crimes against women; a criminal who understands that the punishment for a particular offence is harsh will commit the crime only if he finds that there has been a poor rate of convictions for the crime.  
  
It is time for us as a nation to stand up against the crime. We need to do something about it now. Beyond the conversations, we need a highly deterrent law to curtail the act of rape; if not, it would continue and become a culture. Most importantly, we need to educate the male folks and increase the awareness against rape.