

JOS CRISIS: SPECIAL NEWS ALERT FROM THE ORKARS IN NIGERIA

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Dear Friends, Family, Colleagues, Supporters,

Below is a report for you regarding the violence in Jos, Nigeria in recent days. Esther and I are thanking God that He did not allow the crisis to escalate any further than it did. We are thankful that all our staff are safe. Our house shares a fence with an Anglican Church that was burnt. The rioters attempted to burn down our house as well, but several people defended it until the security forces arrived. One of our staff, David Tyokighir, told me this morning that soldiers are stationed outside our house. Our house and the rest of the community is now safe.

Jos Crisis

Last year elections took place in Nigeria on the Federal and State levels. There was no election to elect people for the third tier government. For Plateau State, the election took place on Thursday, November 27, 2008.



Phil Beck, our Mission Leader in Nigeria writes: "The city of Jos has experienced unrest following a local election held Thursday, November 27. As the election results became known, localized groups took to the streets to cause trouble and/or protect their families and homes. The result has been the destruction of many churches, mosques, homes and businesses. The fighting has been localized to specific areas of Jos, but much damage has been done. We as a CRC mission community have not been harmed and feel safe."

Hillcrest School, where many of the missionary and Nigerian kids attend, was closed Friday and most likely will stay closed Monday while the situation is evaluated.

There are also more than 16 International Protestant Missions Agencies working in Plateau State. On Saturday, all expatriate staff of these agencies were contacted through short-wave radio and cell phones, and are safe.

The crisis affects these organizations as well as Nigerians. They are involved in several different kinds of voluntary compassionate

and capacity-building ministries, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education. These agencies provide and support theological, technical, medical and general forms of education in both the private and public sectors. They are also involved in medical work, rural development, economic empowerment, and other ministries to the needy: widows, orphans, street children, the physically handicapped, and HIV and AIDS sufferers. They support various kinds of church work, including evangelism and church planting, leadership training, Bible translation, literature production and distribution, and music-related ministries.

The Nigeria Red Cross reported on Sunday that at least 400 persons are confirmed dead, 300 people have been injured, and more than 10,000 people were forced to flee their homes, seeking refuge in churches, mosques and army and police barracks. Nigeria Red Cross Society is involved in humanitarian services to victims of the crisis.

Jos was calm but tense on Sunday. Soldiers patrolled on foot and in Jeeps to enforce a 24-hour curfew on the worst-hit neighborhoods. All indications are that the situation is well contained. The commissioner for information declared that "The situation is gradually returning to normal. There have not been any [new] cases this morning of any destruction or violence, [and] we believe it is almost over. It is unlikely it will spill to other states."

Pray that each side would refrain from retaliations. Pray that the government will find a way to address future issues before they degenerate into killings.

We join Phil Beck in his call for prayers: "Please pray for peace and calm in Jos. Please pray for the safety of the many innocent people who now find themselves in harm's way. Please pray that the Christian church will demonstrate Christ's love to their neighbours – both Christian and Muslim – as people try to make sense of the horror that has occurred over the past few days."

Our prayers are with the people and leaders in Jos that peace will remain and the issues be resolved.

Please join us in prayer.

Brother John and Sister Esther

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