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Clashes spread in Nigerian city, curfew extended

By Shuaibu Mohammed, Reuters January 19, 2010 7:07 AM

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A local journalist who uses the pen name Makama said he counted 36 bodies at the city's central mosque since Sunday.

The Red Cross has sent 10 workers from their Nigerian headquarters in Abuja to help reinforce their office in Jos, an agency spokesman said.

This week's violence started after an argument between Muslim and Christian neighbours over the rebuilding of homes destroyed in the 2008 clashes.

Nigeria has roughly equal numbers of Christians and Muslims, although traditional animist beliefs underpin many people's faiths.

More than 200 ethnic groups generally live peacefully side-by-side in the West African country, although 1 million people were killed in a civil war between 1967 and 1970 and there have been outbreaks of religious unrest since then.

At least 40 people were killed last month in clashes between Nigerian security forces and members of an Islamic sect in the northern city of Bauchi.

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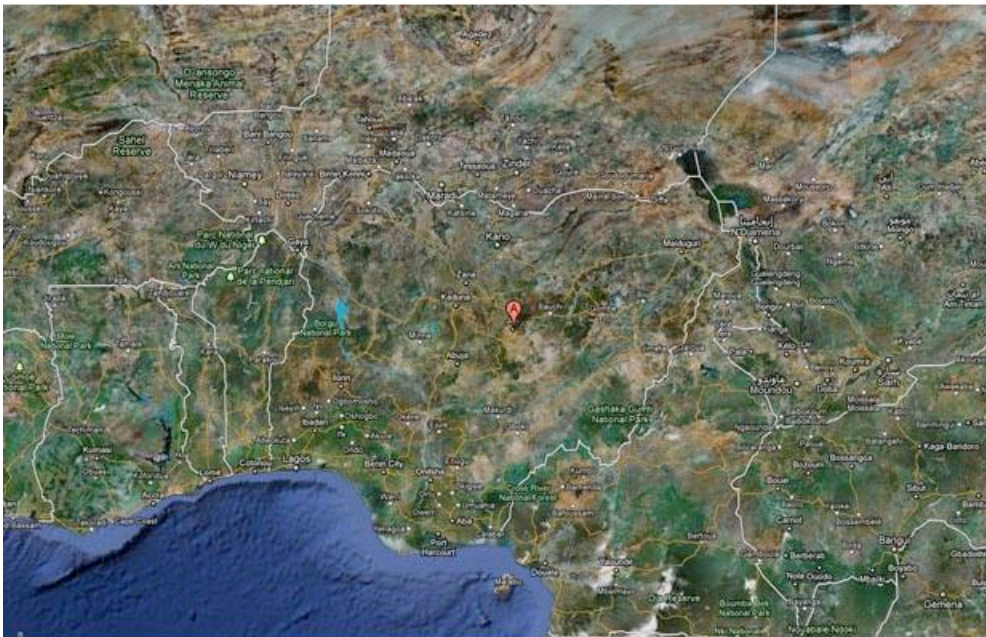
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A map showing the location of Jos, Nigeria, where religious violence between Christian and Muslim gangs has killed at least 60 since the weekend.

Photograph by: Google, Screen Grab

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