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Nigeria: Tension in Jos As Death Toll Rises to 19

BY TAYE OBATERU AND SAM EYOBOKA, 13 MARCH 2012

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Jos — The death toll from Sunday's suicide bomb attack on St Finbarr's Catholic Church in Jos and the ensuing reprisals rose to 19 yesterday as more corpses were taken to hospitals.

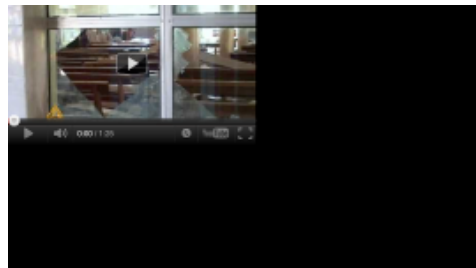
This came as tension enveloped parts of the city following renewed hostilities between Christian and Muslim youths on revenge mission over reprisal killings that started since Sunday. There were unconfirmed reports of more silent killings in various parts of the city..

Victims of the bomb blast at St. Finbarr's Catholic Church in Jos being taken to the Hospital on Sunday.

Many residents in Tinna Junction, Fillin Ball and Duala areas had to run for cover as security men shot into the air to disperse scores of youths from both sides who were advancing towards each other for a showdown.

While a source said the fresh tension followed the disappearance of some people suspected to have been killed by one of the sides, another version said a bus conductor was attacked in a part of the town and when the driver who escaped with injuries reported to his people, they mobilized for a confrontation.

The timely intervention of security men saved what would have been another blood bath as they shot into the air to disperse the rampaging youths. Many who heard the gun shots ran to pick their children from school while businesses hurriedly shut down.



Anger is growing in central Nigeria, as attacks become a weekly occurrence in several states in the region. (Resource: Deaths After Bomb Blast at Nigerian Church

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[Suicide Bombers Hit Another Church in Jos](#)

[Twenty Die in Church Bombing, Reprisals](#)

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[10 Die in Jos Church Blast, Protests](#)

[Bomb Blast Hits Catholic Church in Jos](#)

Chief Medical Director of the Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH), Dr. Ishaya Pam confirmed in an interview that seven additional corpses were taken to the hospital yesterday in addition to those deposited on Sunday.

He also confirmed that one of the injured on admission died yesterday morning while the others were responding to treatment.

Similarly, Chief Medical Director of Plateau Specialist Hospital, Dr. Bitrus Matawwal confirmed that 10 corpses have so far been taken to the hospital.

The Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Oluseyi Petirin was also in the state to access the security situation.

Accompanied by the Commander of the Special Task Force (STF) Major Gen. Ibrahim Mohammed; Deputy Inspector General of Police, John Haruna, he visited the attacked church, some of the victims of the attack and was at the Government House to see Governor Jonah Jang at the time of this report.

In another attack yesterday, suspected Fulani herdsmen killed two and injured three people at Bum village in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State. It was unclear if the attack had anything to do with the suicide bomb attack but those injured are receiving treatment at the Vom Christian Hospital.

Meanwhile, the Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Oluseyi Petirin has assured that the problem of bombings would soon be surmounted, assuring that strategies would be drawn up to counter the activities of the



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terrorists.

Speaking with journalists after an assessment of the security situation in Jos, he commiserated with the people of the state over the attack which he described as an attempt to pitch the people against one another.

"These are people who are bent on getting different communities to be at each other's throats so that it will look as if there is no security. We are now going to devise a strategy to stop it and you will see the effect", he said.

Pam cautions Christian youths against reprisal

In a related development, chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN in charge of North Central zone, Rev. Yakubu Pam who described the latest bomb attack on St. Finbarr's Church in Jos as shocking, however, appealed to Christian youths in Plateau State to sheathe their weapons and refrain from reprisal measures.

Reacting to the suicide bomb in the church Sunday morning, Rev. Pam said the news came to him as a surprise, adding "but it is not exactly shocking because in Nigeria nothing is shocking any more. When you take a look at the things that happen here, you will recognize that anything can happen in this nation."

The cleric, a pastor with the Assemblies of God Church in Jos, Plateau State, maintained that the continued violent attacks on innocent Nigerian citizens has remained essentially because there has not been any concerted effort to tackle the emerging spate of terrorism in the country. He stated that "if the government decides to implement all former recommendations of various panels to study the immediate causes of the protracted ethno-religious crises in Nigeria the problem would have ended."

Pam, who aligned himself with the position of the umbrella body of Christians, CAN, urged the Federal Government not to pamper perpetrators of terrorism.

While urging Christian youths to restrain themselves from reprisal measures, he urged government to address the issue of unrest in the North, saying "when you look at the crises from another angle you will discover that the action of the youths is as a result of bottled anger.

"The authorities must try to understand that the people are only expressing their anger. If you witness happenings in the area, the youths are demonstrating their ability to protect themselves in the absence of governmental protection," he said.

"Two people cannot be mad at the same time. It takes God to protect lives and property. What is happening is an orchestrated evil raging in the land with a mission and only God can deal with such evil," he said, adding that Christians will not be deterred by the raging evil.

According to the cleric, "except the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stands guard in vain. Our God is able to stand in the gap to protect His children against any form of evil".

It will be recalled that 10 persons including a pregnant woman were killed by suicide bombers during a church service at the St. Finbarr's Catholic Church, Jos, the Plateau State capital on Sunday and several others were said to be receiving treatment in different hospitals in the Tin City.

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A spate of reprisal attacks between Christian and Muslim youths have led to the death of several people following a suicide bomb blast at a Catholic Church on Sunday. [Read more »](#)

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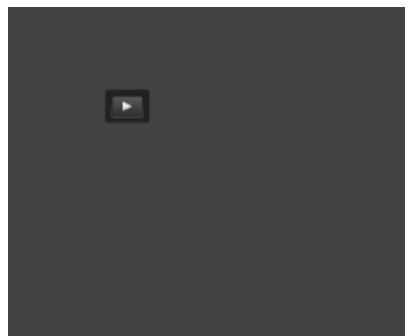
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