

# ***NIGERIA: RELIGIOUS CLASHES***

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## ***Information Bulletin N° 01***

### ***The Situation***

The adoption of strict Islamic Sharia law in areas of northern Nigeria has caused an eruption of religious violence and waves of unrest in which hundreds have died. Although Islamic Sharia family law has long been enshrined in Nigeria's Constitution, the Sharia penal code, which allows stoning, amputations and beheading for some crimes, has not. Most recently, rioting flared in ethnic Ibo and Christian Aba on Monday, 21 February in a backlash to the deaths of hundreds of people in clashes between Muslims and Christians in the northern city of Kaduna. The violence continued through the night and the following day when troops were deployed to enforce curfew and support the police. There are now reports of the conflict having spread to the neighbouring towns of Kachia, Kafanchan, Birim-Gwari and Kachia where curfews have also been imposed. The clashes have resulted in over 400 deaths and government authorities and local officials report that the situation is now calm, but people continued to flee northern Nigeria's biggest city of Kano, fearing reprisals for the deaths in Aba and other parts of the southeast. A strong military presence is now reinforcing local police authorities and maintaining a semblance of calm.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) Emergency Officer was despatched by road to Kaduna to deliver medical supplies and to begin an assessment. The NRCS Branches of Kaduna, Abuja, Plateau and Katsina mobilised 59 volunteers with 4 vehicles (2 ambulances) to provide immediate support and to assist in the needs assessments. A preliminary registration of victims or vulnerable people has been undertaken, with the following results:

- Kawlo Police barracks - 219 people registered;
- Dalet Police barracks - 909 people registered;
- Sunusi Police station - 136 people registered;
- Kaduna Polytechnic - 50 people registered;
- 44 Barracks ( large apartment blocks) - 5,651 people registered;
- Islamic Medical Foundation Hospital - 398 people registered;
- Tadunwada Police barracks - 365 people registered;

Total registered people in need of assistance: 7,728

This registration is not representative of the total number of people taking refuge which is still estimated to be in the area of 120,000, based on a more general assessment taken earlier and which is considered accurate as there has been no noticeable change in the numbers of people congregating in refuges.

Visits made to the Military Hospital, General Hospital, the University Teaching Hospital, and the Special Nursing Home found that a total of 490 patients had been admitted. Most people had been treated as

outpatients. All the hospital facilities requested assistance with medical dressings, fluids, pain killing drugs, burn ointment, and antibiotics.

On Monday, 28 February, four trucks transporting food relief supplies (purchased with funding from USAID and the British Government Department For International Development or DFID) as well as non-food relief stocks from the NRCS and ICRC emergency stocks arrived in Kaduna. The distribution of the medical and relief stocks was made to six hospitals in Kaduna and District, 44 Barracks Medical Hospital, Ammodu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Kaduna General, Special Nursing Home, Muslim Islamic Institute and Nigerian Air Force Hospitals. The following medical and relief supplies funded by ICRC were supplied to these hospitals: 16,000 Paracetamol, 80 litres of disinfectant, 450 saline drips, 50 drip sets, 1,000 tablets of Analgin, 500 tablets of Novalgin, 400 syringes, 8 boxes of dressings, and 170 blankets. Sixty volunteers from Kaduna and the neighbouring State Red Cross branches of Katsina, Plateau, and Abuja have worked today to complete offloading and to package relief rations for the distribution planned on Tuesday, 29 February.

Preparations are underway to distribute 60 mt of food, providing at least one meal for 40,000 people each day. Food rations will consist of 2 kgs of rice, ½ kg of beans, 1 kg of oil, and 1 lt of garri. Non-food rations will in addition be provided on the basis of need to family units totalling 2,000 bars of soap, 1,000 jerry cans, 1,920 plastic plates, 1,788 plastic bowls, 1,980 cups, 500 cooking pots, 1,800 spoons, and 20 rolls of plastic sheeting.

## *Needs*

It is expected that the food, water and shelter needs as well as cash support will be covered locally.

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