

Thank you for carrying us through your prayers...

This has been a very difficult week in Tanzania. On Tuesday morning, I received a message from Yusuph, informing me that one of our students, Evangelist Zacharia Misango Paul and his wife who serve among Muslims in the Kigoma region, faced great difficulty after the temporary church they planted among three mosques in the area was burned down during the night of October 26th. This caused great fear among the 8 new believers and 20 children who attend this little church. We are deeply thankful to God that only the church was burned down and that Zacharia and his wife are unharmed. Little did I know that this was just the beginning of what was to follow...

On Wednesday, October 29th, Tanzania held its general elections. Protests erupted during Wednesday's vote for president and parliament, with some demonstrators tearing down banners of Samia Hassan and setting fire to government buildings and police firing tear gas and gunshots, according to witnesses. Demonstrators are angry about the electoral commission's exclusion of Hassan's two biggest challengers from the race and what human rights groups have said are widespread arrests and abductions of opponents. Tanzania's main opposition party CHADEMA - which was barred from the election for refusing to sign a code of conduct and had its leader arrested for treason in April - said on Friday that hundreds of people had been killed in the protests.

The authorities have imposed a nationwide curfew since Wednesday and restricted access to the internet. Many international flights have been cancelled, and operations at Dar Es Salaam's port, a hub for fuel imports and exports of metals mined across the region, have been disrupted.

A version of the governing CCM party, which maintains ties with the Communist Party of China, has ruled Tanzania since its independence from Britain in 1961. In June, a United Nations panel of human rights experts cited more than 200 cases of enforced disappearances since 2019, saying they were "alarmed by reports of a pattern of repression" ahead of elections. Rights groups including Amnesty International warned of a pattern of enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings in Tanzania ahead of the polls.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan has been declared the winner of Tanzania's presidential election, securing another term amid days of unrest across the country. Samia won 98% of the votes in Wednesday's poll, the electoral commission said. In her Saturday victory speech she said the election was "free and democratic", accusing protesters of being "unpatriotic".

Opposition parties rejected the results, calling the vote a mockery of the democratic process as Samia's main challengers had been either imprisoned or barred from running. International observers have expressed concern over the lack of transparency and widespread turmoil that has reportedly left hundreds of people dead and injured.

The nationwide internet shutdown is making it difficult to verify the death toll. A spokesperson from the opposition Chadema party claimed that "around 700" people had been killed in clashes with security forces, but this number has not been confirmed yet.

Due to a continued internet shutdown, we have not been able to make contact with any of our people in Tanzania. I was able to connect indirectly with one of my South African friends who live in Mwanza, who

mentioned that electricity has also been cut and people are too afraid to go to the gas stations to get gas for generators.

During my recent visit, many of our students shared little by little about their concerns regarding the upcoming election. It was very noticeable that only the CCM Party was allowed to campaign and only CCM posters and advertisements were displayed across the country.

Kindly please pray for peace to be restored, and for all our Co-workers and friends to be safe during this time of turmoil.

I would like to thank all of you for your prayers and encouragement during my recent trip to Tanzania and South Africa, especially during the challenging time after my sister's heart attack. She is at home, going through the long recovery process, but we are deeply thankful to God for sparing her life.

Thank you for walking this journey with us, you are always deeply appreciated and prayed for. "Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears." Philippians 1:3

