

News: Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council condemns two separate attacks on Mosques in South Gonder

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"This is a tragic incident; it's also a grave crime. We strongly caution for those responsible to face the law" Sheik Mohammed Amin

Hayalneshe Gezahegn

Addis Abeba, February 12/2019 – Sheik Mohammed Amin, President of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, said the Council "strongly condemns" the torching three Mosques in two separate Woredas in South Gonder Zone of the Amhara regional state.

Twitter post from Addis Standard (@addisstandard) dated Feb 5, 2019. The tweet includes an update about Ethiopian tweeps organizing to help rebuild two mosques and a video player showing a news report from ETV.

The Sheik Mohammed's statement came after a third Mosque was torched last Sunday in Andebet Woreda, Jera Gedu Kebele in South Gonder zone. This was the second attack after two mosques were torched in Esete Mekane Selam town in south Gonder zone on February 10. The incident happened after false claims that a picture of St. Mary was found circulating at a wedding of a Muslim couple among other decorations, according to The Amhara Mass Media Agency. Although it was denounced by reps of both religions & elders at the event, later on two Mosques were burned & one damaged. Another report by the BBC Amharic quoted a local police officer as saying that claims by group of youngsters who said they have seen St. Mary's picture being crushed at the wedding led to the violent attack on the Mosques and looting and damaging properties.

Twitter post from Addis Standard (@addisstandard) dated Feb 4, 2019. The tweet denounces the burning of two mosques in North Gonder zone Esete town yesterday and includes a photograph of the destroyed mosque structure.

Sheik Mohammed added that such acts don't represent any religion but are orchestrated by those bent on destroying the values of Ethiopia's inter-religious tolerance. "This is a tragic incident; it's also a grave crime. We strongly caution for those responsible to face the law," he told local media.

The attack on the third Mosque came while online community efforts were underway to help build the first two mosques. Using #GonderMosque, Ethiopian twitter community have come together and organized a go-fund me page to help raise money to help the local community rebuild the Mosques.

Here it is...our Go Fund Me page where you can make donations that will go to the Gonder Mosques project. All those of you who pledged...share the link! @ItsGouldon @ednaalemayehu @tizita_ @thatethiopian @globetrotter1_ @FBedaso @falsafathabesh @Rroberahttps://t.co/DnygbncI9h — Zecharias Zelalem (@ZekuZelalem) February 6, 2019

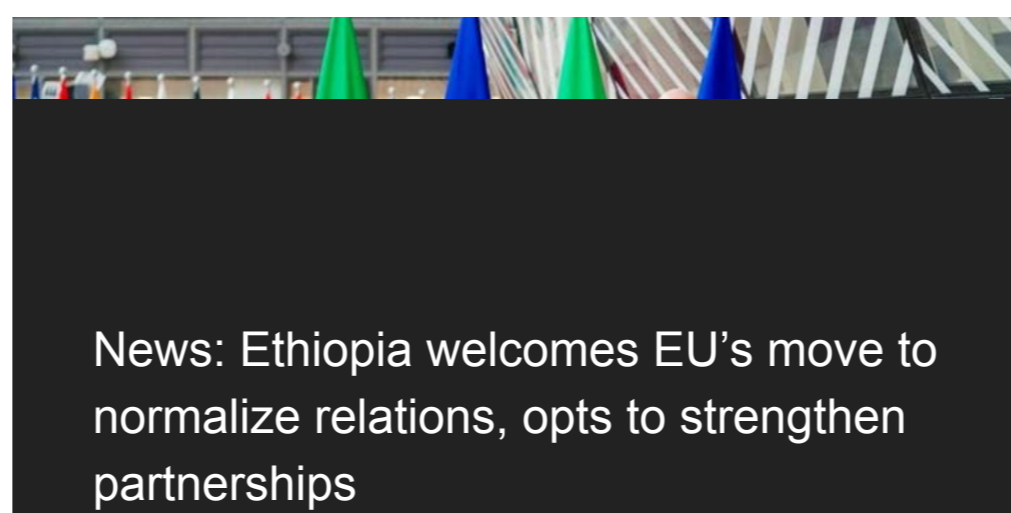
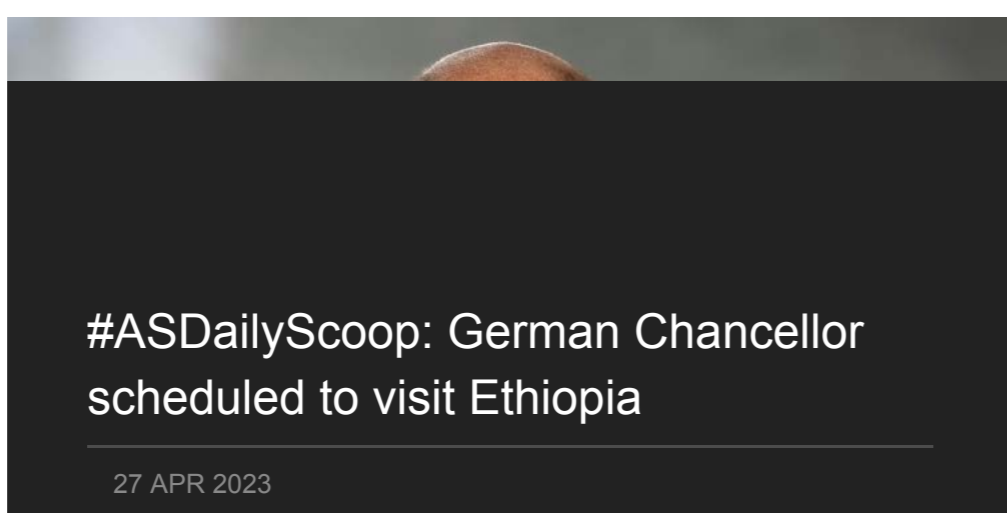
On the ground, a community fundraising event is taking place in Esete Mekane Selam town in South Gonder zone where the previous two Mosques were torched. Like the online campaign, the community event is also aimed at raising funds to help rebuild the Mosques.

https://twitter.com/EthiopiaLiveupd/status/1094524021213929472

In a separate news, seven churches belonging to Ethiopian Protestant Church were destroyed and torched in Halaba Kullito town in Southern Ethiopia on Saturday February 09. According to the Alaba zone communication office head Mohammed Nur, the churches were destroyed after a fake news circulated on social media claiming that Mosques were attacked in Durame area, according to Ethiopia Live Update. Sheik Mohammed Amin also condemned the attack during his presser. He further cautioned that burning worshiping places will pave ways to instigate a grave religious violence in the country and needs to stop as soon as possible. He called on all religious institutions to step up security around worshiping places. He also a careful use of social media in order to avoid further violence. AS

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