

News: Thousands displaced by fresh violence in central and western Gonder in need of urgent help

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Hayalnesh Gezahegn

Addis Ababa, February 13/2019 – Thousands of civilians who were left internally displaced following a spate of fresh violence in central and western Gonder zone of Amhara Regional State say they are in need of urgent help, according to report by Amhara Mass Media Agency (AMMA).

Around 45, 900 people are currently displaced. Some 2, 700 of them have not received any help as of yesterday, **AMMA reported**. Majority of them are displaced from Chilga No. 1 and No.2 as well as western Dembiya and Armachiho localities. Of whom, many are currently sheltered near Dingay town and western Dembiya, Aymba kebeles.

A **spate of fresh violence in central and western Gonder zone** in the last two weeks have also left more than 30 people dead and more than 300 houses torched, according to Brigadier General Asaminew Tsigie, Security Chief of Amhara regional state. BG Asaminew told **state media EPA** that two organized groups containing hundreds of armed men have launched the attack in several localities resulting in the loss of civilians' lives and severe destruction of properties. He added that the attacks were deliberately premeditated to plunge the region into chaos.

On February 07 Asemahegn Asres, Amhara regional state communication bureau head, told AMMA that the clashes occurred when the federal army's 24th brigade was leaving the area, being substituted by the 33rd brigade, which created a security vacuum for "organized armed groups" who have launched an on the security forces which then led to renewed clashes in the area.

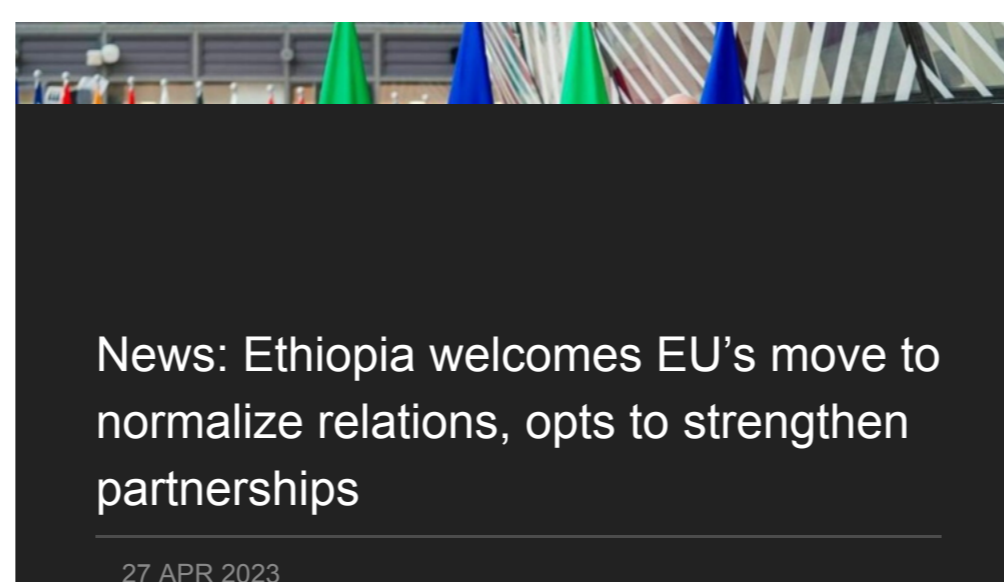
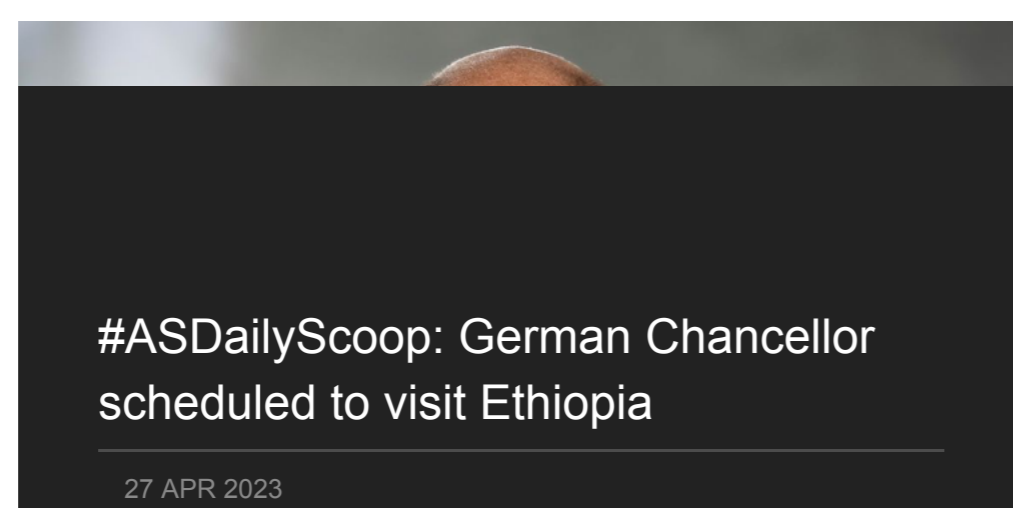
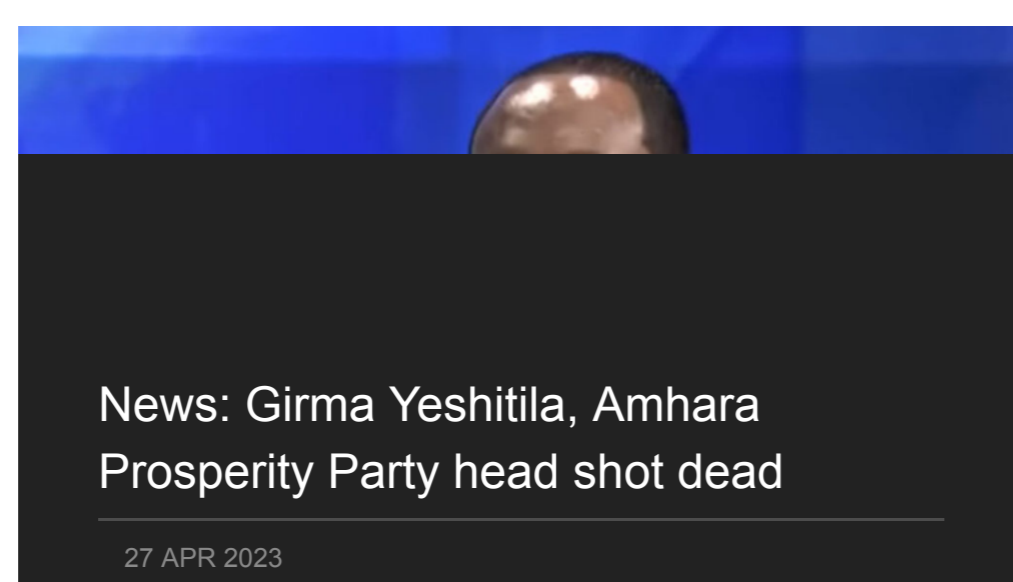
The clashes have relatively subsided but the fresh wave of internally displaced civilians left the region's emergency prevention and food security bureau scrambling to provide assistance. Menberu Awudew, the bureau's head, said the bureau is trying to provide 15 kg food per person per month but they are challenged to meet the demand owing to the rising number of the displaced. So far the bureau has distributed 2, 500 quintal wheat 300, 000 quintal nutritional food.

The bureau's deputy head Amare Kinde also said 200 quintal additional food was being transported from warehouses in central Gonder while a further 600 quintal from the federal government was being transported. The bureau has also requested both the regional and the federal government for more aid.

Ethiopia's **recorded number** of internally displaced people as of December 2018 stands at 2,332,936. **AS**

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