

Assalaamu Alaikum The attention of the Anbariya Sunni Community has been drawn to an undated press statement purported to have been issued by "Imam Rashid" and another dated August 25, 2012 and signed by Dr. Al-Hussain Zakaria, General Secretary of the Tijania Community in Tamale aimed at distorting the facts of the shooting incident at the Anbariya Mosque on the evening of August 20, 2012. The Anbariya Sunni Community is a law abiding institution and will not be part of any hidden agenda to distablise the peace of the Northern Region, or of Ghana at large.

The Anbariya Sunni Community is a non partisan religious body that has had good working relationships with all political leaders irrespective of the political party in power. We have since our inception in 1951 collaborated with traditional authorities, the Regional Coordinating Council, and national leadership.

Ministers who have worshipped with us at Eid, dating back to Independence include the late Alhaji Mumuni Bawumia, Col. Amadu Iddisah, Alhaji Mustapha Ali Iddris, Alhaji Boniface Sadique, Mr. Ben Bukari Salifu, and the former Vice President Alhaji Aliu Mahama, among others. Indeed any organized political party will want to commiserate with an organized and disciplined society. This is the reason the current Regional Minister has come to our Mosque, under his watch. We are not his advocates, but it is highly unfair to insinuate that he is biased in favour of Anbariya, simply because he attends functions to which we invite him.

We are no ingrates, and will ALWAYS acknowledge those who show courtesies to us. Hon. Mustapha Ali Idris (a Regional Minister under the NPP administration), admired the discipline and organizational structure of the Anbariya Sunni Community, and committed the GETFUND to provide a two-storey (12 classroom) block for its Junior High School. For this, and other good works, we have always appreciated his efforts, and prayed for him. Why did our brothers not complain about him being sectarian? Or, is it wrong to acknowledge a good deed someone does for one?

Anbariya organized peace rallies in the 2008 election year. We have it in our agenda to repeat this. Enemies of progress, who are bent on unleashing mayhem, are conspiring to disrupt our peace drive.

There have been several attempts through various means to provoke the leadership of the Anbariya Sunni Community, without any success. It has been these provocateurs who decided to attack the congregation on the evening of August 20, 2012 when we were waiting to say the Isha prayer. They fired guns, and threw stones at the Anbariya Mosque. On the said day, at about 1900 hours, when the Anbariya Congregation was in the mosque, and came under attack by a mob that was on a procession. This crowd, we gathered was led by Imam H. H. Hussein Rashid who was on a procession from the city centre. The Anbariya Congregation was restrained by its leadership from engaging in any retaliatory action. The congregation was persuaded to go home, and not do anything to aggravate the already tense situation.

We have reported to the police and are waiting patiently for the police to investigate and take the necessary action. We shall not be drawn into war of any kind, be it a media war, or physical battle. Certain people are trying to use the media to re-invent reality, and to prosecute some

hidden political agenda, with a view to elevating their ego.

Imam Rashid alludes in his press conference that he is giving the "truth of the matter", yet he does not say anything credible. He describes his retinue as one that "was not an organised crowd". Firing of guns was at the mosque, not from the mosque. Without reopening the subject of the radio discussions, we want to assert that we have never maligned any personage. We are discussants of issues, not personalities. Islam has no room for persons who are consistent with inconsistency, as is the case with some people.

The incident was vividly captured by some reporters who were present at the scene. The reporters were accused by the authors of the press statements as "bias." A reporter will only seek clearance when in doubt. But this was an incident which occurred during their presence. They had the first hand information of all that happened. The VIASAT 1 reporter who broke the story is not a Muslim. He was just being professional.

We are a couple of months from an election, which we would want to see come off without incident. We have hitherto had peace in the metropolis. The fomenters of this fracas are enemies of progress who want to stall the peace by rousing trouble. We pray the security forces shall be able to flush them out.

We wish to reiterate that the Anbariya Sunni Community will not be part of the hidden agenda to destabilize the peace in Tamale. The guns have been silent in Tamale for some time until that "un-fateful" day. Why were they going on a religious procession with guns and other offensive weapons if they did not have ill-motives?

Anbariya Sunni Community is an organized community with central leadership and will always use laid down procedures to seek re-dress.

Salaamu Alaikum

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Sheikh Saeed Abubakr Zakaria

Head and Leader