

The Latest: FBI: Investigation ongoing into mosque blast

06/08/2017



BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP) — The Latest on a reported explosion at a Minnesota mosque (all times local):

5:50 p.m.

An FBI official says investigators are looking for suspects after an explosive device detonated at a mosque in suburban Minneapolis.

Witnesses reported seeing something get thrown at the imam's office window from a vehicle just before the blast Saturday morning at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington.

Police say there were no injuries, but the explosion damaged a room in the mosque.

Richard Thornton is the special agent in charge of the FBI's Minneapolis Division. He says investigators have recovered components of the device to figure how it was put together.

The mosque primarily serves people from the area's large Somali community.

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3:30 p.m.

A Muslim civil rights group is offering a \$10,000 reward for information that leads to an arrest and conviction in the bombing of a suburban Minneapolis mosque.

The reward is being offered by the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR. It comes after a different group earlier said it was also offering a \$10,000 reward.

The blast occurred around 5 a.m. Saturday at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington. Police say there were no injuries. The FBI is leading an investigation into the explosion.

CAIR's local chapter says its national office is urging Islamic centers and mosques to step up security.

The organization's civil rights director says the group hopes the reward will help authorities quickly apprehend the perpetrator of the "act of violence."

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1:50 p.m.

Authorities say a preliminary investigation shows that an illegal destructive device caused an explosion at a suburban Minneapolis mosque.

The blast happened at around 5 a.m. Saturday at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington. The police department tweeted that the FBI field office in Minneapolis is now the lead agency investigating the explosion. An FBI spokesman didn't immediately reply to a phone message seeking comment.

Asad Zaman, director of the Muslim American Society of Minnesota, says a witness saw something being thrown at the imam's office window from a "van or truck" before the blast. Mohamed Omar, the center's executive director, says a worshipper saw a pickup truck speeding away afterward.

The mosque primarily serves people from the area's large Somali community.

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12 p.m.

The Muslim American Society of Minnesota says someone threw an explosive device that started a fire in the imam's office at a mosque near Minneapolis.

The society said in a statement that attendees extinguished the fire at Dar Al-

Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington. Police say the explosion was reported at about 5 a.m. Saturday and there were no injuries.

There were 15 to 20 people were gathered for morning prayers when the explosion occurred. Bloomington police Chief Jeff Potts says that investigators are trying to determine the cause of the blast.

Asad Zaman, director of the society, told WCCO-TV that a witness saw someone standing by the imam's office window before the blast and also saw a truck flee the scene. He says the imam's window was broken and a small fire bomb was thrown inside.

11:05 a.m.

An official from a suburban Minneapolis mosque where an early morning explosion occurred says the blast happened in the imam's office during the first prayer of the day.

The Star Tribune reports that Mohamed Omar, executive director of the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington, says the center occasionally receives threatening calls and emails.

Bloomington police Chief Jeff Potts said Saturday that investigators are trying to determine the cause of the blast.

Authorities say the explosion damaged one room but it didn't hurt anyone.

Asad Zaman, director of the Muslim American Society of Minnesota, says the organization is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to an arrest and conviction.

This story has been corrected to show that the group is called the Muslim American Society of Minnesota, not the Muslim-American Association of Minnesota.

10:25 a.m.

Authorities say an explosion at a mosque near Minneapolis damaged one room and caused smoke but it didn't hurt anyone.

Bloomington police Chief Jeff Potts said Saturday that investigators are trying to

determine the cause of the blast at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center.

The mosque didn't immediately reply to a phone message seeking comment.

The FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are involved in the investigation.

9:53 a.m.

Authorities are investigating a reported explosion at mosque in a Minneapolis suburb.

WCCO-TV reports that police say no one was injured in the Saturday blast at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington.

Bloomington police tweeted that the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are assisting in the investigation.
