



***“They attacked us for the simple reason of being Amhara”***

**Update on the July 4, 2022, Amhara Massacre in Lemlem Kebele, Hawa Gelana Woreda, Qelem Wollega Zone of Ethiopia’s Oromia Region by Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) militants**

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) has verified from several eyewitnesses, that on July 4, 2022, **at least 308 Amhara civilians were indiscriminately killed**, an additional 36 civilians injured and several others missing in Menders (villages) 20 and 21 of Lemlem Kebele (ward), Hawa Gelana Woreda (district), Qelem Wollega Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia. The attack was perpetrated by Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) militants. This attack comes just two weeks after OLA’s latest deadly attack, the [Tole Massacre](#), in West Wollega Zone of the Oromia region. Bodies of victims continue to be discovered in nearby forests.

As a result of the massacre, **14,860 Amhara residents from Menders 20 and 21 and nearby Menders 15, 17, and 18 have been displaced** following the attack. These residents have primarily fled to the nearby town of Mechara. These displaced civilians are yet to be provided any form of humanitarian relief. The assailants had also engaged in widespread looting and destruction of property. Hundreds of cattle were looted, homes were destroyed

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and residents were robbed of their cash and material savings. The attack lasted for five hours from 6:00 am to 11:00 am. The attack happened indiscriminately targeting children, women, elders, persons with disabilities, and non-combatant civilians. The youngest known victim is 4-month-old Hayat Aregawi Hussein and the oldest is 85-year-old Kassaw Aragie from Village 20.

## **Organization of the Attack**

Eyewitnesses recount OLA militants had surrounded Village 20 the night before the attack. At about 6:00 am in the morning the attack began. The attack proceeded in an organized manner and the assailants came in three groups. The first group that attacked came with heavy machine guns. This group stood guard and protected the other two groups of OLA assailants. The first group also mass-executed victims who were forcibly gathered from all around the village. The second group of militants took charge of going door to door and rounding up Amhara residents. They did a thorough job of seeking out possible hiding places for residents. The group executed civilians they found through short-range isolated gunshots. An overwhelming number of women and children had their throats slit open. A few children were killed by being drowned in ponds. Most residents were marched to group execution sites. The third group was mainly engaged in looting and property destruction. The group forced victims to drive the cattle they looted and carry other stolen properties before executing them.

**Amharas selectively targeted:** Eyewitnesses have accounted to AAA that Amhara civilians and Amhara-owned properties were selectively targeted and attacked. Residents who provided sufficient proof of their ethnic Oromo identity were spared.

## **Details of the Attack**

Eyewitnesses told AAA at least 223 Amhara residents have been killed in Village 20 alone. Remains of deceased residents continue to be found in nearby forests. At least 40

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Amhara residents were forcibly gathered in a field in Village 20 and bombed by OLA militants. There were no survivors from the field. Eyewitnesses recount that victims' remains at the bombing site were hard to identify and in some cases were completely charred. Several other residents throughout the village were killed in smaller groups or through isolated gunshots. About 140 of the bodies of deceased Amhara residents were buried in a mass grave inside a Muslim Cemetery in Village 20. Other eyewitnesses say the number of bodies buried at this site is as high as 200. Several other bodies of deceased Amhara residents were taken over to the neighboring town of Mechara and handed over to the families of the deceased.

Village 21 is predominantly inhabited by resettled ethnic Oromo communities from the Hararge Province. Here over 85 Amhara residents were selected and executed just outside the village. The militants forced several victims to look after and drive the hundreds of cattle they looted. Survivors recount they killed at least 33 of these victims along the way. Finally, the militants mass-executed at least 41 of the victims in a forest near the Tuloma Kebele/town of the Hawa Gelana Woreda.

A survivor of the mass execution recounts the situation as follows (The witness chose to remain anonymous in fear of retaliation from concerned groups):

*“When they (OLA militants) surrounded the village and we began to hear gunshots, we thought they targeted state militias only. We thus remained in our homes. They ordered us to open the door. Our home is located in Mender 20. We opened the door. They were dressed in Oromo Special forces (OSF) uniforms, the old and current ENDF (Ethiopian National Defense Force) uniforms, and Oromia state militia uniforms. They wore military shoes as well. But this is not true for all of them (OLA militants). Some were not in uniform and did not have military shoes. Their hair was usually in dreadlocks or plaited. They spoke to each other in Oromiffa (the language of the Oromo people). They pointed guns and ordered us to give them anything we have. I*

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*gave them money. They told us we were wanted for a session. In such ways, they took hundreds of people as prisoners. They forced some of us to carry looted items, look after and drive hundreds of looted cattle. On our way from Menders 20 to 21, we walked over multiple dead bodies. We saw burnt homes and warehouses. While we were on the way one of the militants loudly asked in the Oromiffa language 'Are you Oromo?'. One of the prisoners replied in the same language 'Yes'. The militant then said 'You are not Oromo. You are cardboard (trash).' At that moment, we completely lost hope of being spared. When we reached Mender 21 one of the prisoners appealed to the militant's commander that he should be freed because he is an Oromo originally from Kemise (Oromia Special Zone, Amhara Region). They interrogated him to verify his claims. When they were convinced they let him and seven of his family members go free. They killed some of the prisoners on our way to Village 21. They gathered and kept us inside Tuloma School for a while. Then they took us to a forest far away. They put us in several groups of 5 and 6 people. The commander then assigned three militants to each group. Each group then separated. Finally, the commander fired into the sky. That fire was the signal to shoot. Soon each group automatically shot at once. When I heard the signal fire I fell to the ground pretending as though I was shot. Another woman also saved herself this way. A third woman was wounded but survived. All 41 others except 3 people including me died instantly. Among those killed, were children and pregnant women. I saw a pregnant woman that was barely able to walk being dragged along with us. They (the OLA militants) do not have any humanity. They attacked us for the simple reason of being Amhara."*

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## Social Devastation

Several survivors have lost multiple family members. Some survivors have lost all members of their entire extended family. Community elders like 82-year-old Dawid Mohammed, 97-year-old Ibrahim Mussa, and 70-year-old Hussein Seyd who relied completely on the care of their immediate families are left with no survivors. Some other hard-hit families include Mohammed Indris (lost 6 family members), Seyd Mohammed Mitiku (lost 6 family members), Fentaw Hassan (lost 5 family members), Hussein Mohammed (lost 5 family members), Mohammed Ahmed (lost 4 family members), Ibrahim Hassan Yesuf (lost 4 family members), Yimam Indris (lost 4 family members), Ahmed Nurye (lost 4 family members) and 5 members of Aragaw's family.

Eight children have lost paternal and maternal sides of their family entirely and are left orphaned. These children are currently in a temporary shelter for IDPs in Mechara being cared for by the local community. These children are Mehuba Mohammed Molla (aged 13), Mohammed Yimam Nurye (aged 10), Saada Mohammed Seyd (aged 12), Muktar Alemu Feleke (aged 11), Juhar Mussa Seyd (aged 3), Anuar Mussa (aged 8), Rudan Seyd Husein (7-months old) and Sekina Mohammed Seyd (aged 4). **In the case of 7-months-old Rudan Seyd Husein, the infant was found feeding on his dead mother's breast.**

## State Negligence and Complicity

The local and state administration's response falls under the repeated pattern of negligence and compliance AAA has reported for the previous Amhara massacres that plague the Wollega Zones of Ethiopia's Oromia Region. The Hawa Gelana Woreda administration has failed to take preemptive measures to prevent the massacres. According to AAA's sources, Hussein Mohammed and other local ethnic Amhara members of the Oromia regional militia requested help from the local administration three days before the attack. However, the Hawa Gelana Woreda administration ignored their application and failed to protect the residents. The OLA militants were able to carry out their large-scale attack

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without any challenge or hindrance from regional or federal forces.

The Oromia Special Police Force (OSF) was stationed in Mechara Town located 22 Kilometers away from the attack. The estimated travel time to the site of the attack from where the OSF was located is less than 20 minutes. However, no government forces came to assist the residents throughout the 5-hour-long attack. Units of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and OSF arrived later in the day. The OLA militants have long left the area by this time. During the aftermath of the attack, OSF members and the Hawa Gelana Woreda administration officials attempted to prohibit survivors from taking pictures of the dead. They communicated that the incident should not be exposed and documented. Telecommunications in the area (which is state-owned and run through Ethio-Telecom) continues to be shut down.



**Figure 1:** Survivors burying deceased victims in Village 20 Muslim Cemetery, Lemlem Kebele, Hawa Gelana Woreda, Qelem Wollega Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia.





(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

**Figure 2:** Photographs of some of the collected remains of deceased Amhara residents from Village 20 and Village 21 of Lemlem Kebele, Hawa Gelana Woreda, Qelem Wollega Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia.

Below is a list of names of 178 of the identified victims in the July 4 massacre of Amhara residents by OLA militants in Mender 20 of Lemlem Kebele (Hawa Gelana Woreda, Qelem Wollega Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia).

| No. | Name of Deceased      | Sex | Age |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Indris Dawid Mohammed | M   | 17  |

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|    |                         |   |          |
|----|-------------------------|---|----------|
| 2  | Roza Yimam Ahmed        | F | 6        |
| 3  | Kedir Mohammed Indris   | M | 17       |
| 4  | Abdu Mohammed Indris    | M | 15       |
| 5  | Neima Hassan Yesuf      | F | 15       |
| 6  | Tenima Mohammed Yesuf   | F | 17       |
| 7  | Seyd Hussein            | M | 17       |
| 8  | Nureidin Mohammed Ahmed | M | 10       |
| 9  | Aziza Mohammed Ahmed    | F | 5        |
| 10 | Toyba Mohammed Ali      | F | 17       |
| 11 | Hussein Yimam Omer      | M | 17       |
| 12 | Sekina Mohammed Seyd    | F | 8        |
| 13 | Abirar Mohammed Seyd    | M | 4        |
| 14 | Tahir Abdu Seyd         | M | 2        |
| 15 | Osman Mohammed Seyd     | M | 15       |
| 16 | Saladin Yesuf Abegaz    | M | 12       |
| 17 | Suhali Ahmed            | M | 17       |
| 18 | Rabia Yimam Nurye       | F | 17       |
| 19 | Mosisa Mohammed Seyd    | M | 14       |
| 20 | Saada Mohammed Seyd     | F | 16       |
| 21 | Abdu Seyd Adem          | M | 13       |
| 22 | Miftaya Mohammed Seyd   | F | 12       |
| 23 | Omar Kedir Ahmed        | F | 7        |
| 24 | Abrar Ahmed Nurye       | M | 1        |
| 25 | Yikrem Aragaw Hussein   | M | 6        |
| 26 | Hayat Aragaw Hussein    | F | 4 months |
| 27 | Nurye Aragie Yimer      | M | 16       |
| 28 | Abdu Hussein Seyd       | M | 15       |



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|----|-------------------------|---|----|
| 29 | Muaz Yimer Abrie        | M | 14 |
| 30 | Meseret Berihun         | F | 15 |
| 31 | Selman Seyd             | M | 8  |
| 32 | Saada Awol              | F | 13 |
| 33 | Juhar Indris Kassaw     | M | 2  |
| 34 | Habib Hassan Shumie     | M | 17 |
| 35 | Abubeker Dawid          | M | 9  |
| 36 | Worknesh Hassan Yime    | M | 35 |
| 37 | Fato Hassan Ali         | M | 25 |
| 38 | Hawa Seyd Gizaw         | F | 50 |
| 39 | Aminat Muhie            | F | 40 |
| 40 | Aregu Muhie Yesuf       | F | 30 |
| 41 | Workye Abegaz           | F | 51 |
| 42 | Birie Abebe Tegegne     | F | 35 |
| 43 | Aminat Yimam Sheikh Ali | F | 30 |
| 44 | Zeritu Yimer Adem       | F | 50 |
| 45 | Zewdie Ali Abteu        | F | 45 |
| 46 | Zebiba Ahmed Mohammed   | F | 46 |
| 47 | Zewdie Muhie Agulash    | F | 40 |
| 48 | Lubaba Yimam Mohammed   | F | 42 |
| 49 | Belay Fentaw            | F | 41 |
| 50 | Adefu Engidaw           | F | 55 |
| 51 | Astatika Yimer          | F | 25 |
| 52 | Fato Seyd Yimam         | F | 26 |
| 53 | Fato Indris Abdu        | F | 28 |
| 54 | Fato Ahmed Indris       | F | 50 |
| 55 | Yeshawa Kassaw Mekonnen | F | 37 |

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|    |                       |   |    |
|----|-----------------------|---|----|
| 56 | Aregu Fentaw          | F | 40 |
| 57 | Zemzem Alemu Feleke   | F | 28 |
| 58 | Anshaye Hussein Seyd  | F | 35 |
| 59 | Hadira Mohammed       | F | 40 |
| 60 | Temir Ali Bushra      | F | 50 |
| 61 | Fato Ahmed Siraj      | F | 65 |
| 62 | Belay Fentaw Asfaw    | F | 43 |
| 63 | Zehara Mohammed Yimam | F | 30 |
| 64 | Zemzem Indris         | F | 20 |
| 65 | Buzye Ali             | F | 71 |
| 66 | Lubaba Kassaw Hassan  | F | 35 |
| 67 | Lubaba Seyd Adem      | F | 40 |
| 68 | Kedir Mohammed Ali    | M | 25 |
| 69 | Seyd Mohammed Ali     | M | 23 |
| 70 | Ahmed Mohammed Ali    | M | 20 |
| 71 | Fentaw Hassan Beyene  | M | 50 |
| 72 | Alemu Feleke Liben    | M | 52 |
| 73 | Seyd Hussein Ali      | M | 51 |
| 74 | Yesuf Abegaz          | M | 52 |
| 75 | Ahmed Nurye           | M | 40 |
| 76 | Jemal Ahmed Nurye     | M | 25 |
| 77 | Yimam Nurye           | M | 50 |
| 78 | Mohammed Seyd Adem    | M | 51 |
| 79 | Hassan Seyd Adem      | M | 20 |
| 80 | Kedir Ahmed Ibrahim   | M | 27 |
| 81 | Ahmed Nurye Siraj     | M | 22 |
| 82 | Jemal Ali Abegaz      | M | 25 |

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|-----|-------------------------|---|----|
| 83  | Seyd Mohammed Kadi      | M | 45 |
| 84  | Shifferaw Ejigu Damtew  | M | 40 |
| 85  | Indris Muhie Yasin      | M | 39 |
| 86  | Mohammed Yasin Shikuri  | M | 60 |
| 87  | Seyd Ali Ahmed          | M | 40 |
| 88  | Mohammed Seyd Yesuf     | M | 42 |
| 89  | Getachew Kassaw Aragie  | M | 40 |
| 90  | Abdu Kassaw Aragie      | M | 48 |
| 91  | Kassaw Aragie           | M | 85 |
| 92  | Kebede Aragie           | M | 70 |
| 93  | Hassan Yimer Shumie     | M | 55 |
| 94  | Seyd Hussein Ali        | M | 40 |
| 95  | Yimam Omer Ahmed        | M | 45 |
| 96  | Ibrahim Hassan Yesuf    | M | 22 |
| 97  | Abdu Ali Shikuri        | M | 30 |
| 98  | Ali Yimer Abegaz        | M | 30 |
| 99  | Hidaw Mohammed Ahmed    | M | 25 |
| 100 | Mohammed Awol Ejigu     | M | 26 |
| 101 | Nurye Hussein Seyd      | M | 45 |
| 102 | Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed | M | 25 |
| 103 | Hussein Mohamed Ahmed   | M | 40 |
| 104 | Mohammed Seyd Adem      | M | 47 |
| 105 | Abdu Seyd Adem          | M | 28 |
| 106 | Seyd Ahmed Mohammed     | M | 30 |
| 107 | Kedir Mohammed          | M | 20 |
| 108 | Mohamed Seyd            | M | 40 |
| 109 | Saada Mohammed          | F | 21 |

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|     |                         |   |    |
|-----|-------------------------|---|----|
| 110 | Abdu Berhie             | M | 30 |
| 111 | Jemal Mekuriaw          | M | 22 |
| 112 | Mohammed Seyd           | M | 38 |
| 113 | Indris Muhie            | M | 27 |
| 114 | Seyd Hussein            | M | 45 |
| 115 | Astatek Ali             | M | 25 |
| 116 | Zewdie Mohammed         | F | 43 |
| 117 | Muhie Yasin             | M | 70 |
| 118 | Aregu Nigatu            | M | 50 |
| 119 | Ibrahim Mohammed        | M | 25 |
| 120 | Amare Kedir Ahmed       | M | 17 |
| 121 | Mubarek Fentaw Hassan   | M | 15 |
| 122 | Ansuar Fentaw Hassan    | M | 17 |
| 123 | Kedir Fentaw Hassan     | M | 12 |
| 124 | Hamid Fentaw Hassan     | M | 8  |
| 125 | Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed | M | 37 |
| 126 | Fentaye Yimam           | F | 35 |
| 127 | Fuad Mohammed Ahmed     | M | 17 |
| 128 | Yasin Mohammed Ahmed    | M | 15 |
| 129 | Hassan Yesuf            | M | 40 |
| 130 | Temima Mohammed         | F | 30 |
| 131 | Osman Mohammed          | M | 27 |
| 132 | Hayat Mohammed          | F | 23 |
| 133 | Birie Ali               | F |    |
| 134 | Fatima Ahmed Nurye      | F |    |
| 135 | Muhie Aragie            | M | 17 |
| 136 | Seyd Moreda             | M |    |

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|     |                             |   |
|-----|-----------------------------|---|
| 137 | Hussein Seyd Moreda         | M |
| 138 | Juhar Muzemil               | M |
| 139 | Seid Mohammed Mitiku        | M |
| 140 | Aminat Fedilu               | F |
| 141 | Kedir Mohammed Mitiku       | M |
| 142 | Ahmed Mohammed Mitiku       | M |
| 143 | Abdu Mohammed Mitiku        | M |
| 144 | Sheikh Mohammed Amin        | M |
| 145 | Nefisa Sheikh Mohammed Amin | F |
| 146 | Saada Sheikh Mohammed Amin  | F |
| 147 | Mohammed Aragaw             | M |
| 148 | Seyd Aragaw                 | M |
| 149 | Ibrahim Aragaw              | M |
| 150 | Suwoya Jemal                | M |
| 151 | Ahmed Kassaw                | M |
| 152 | Fentaye Ahmed               | F |
| 153 | Nurie Mohammed Ahmed        | M |
| 154 | Afiza Mohammed Ahmed        | F |
| 155 | Rehima Berihun              | F |
| 156 | Seyd Omer Ahmed             | M |
| 157 | Mohammed Indris             | M |
| 158 | Mubarek Mohammed Indris     | M |
| 159 | Abdu Mohammed               | M |
| 160 | Kedir Mohammed              | M |
| 161 | Mohammed Seyd               | M |
| 162 | Yimam Indris                | M |
| 163 | Hussein Yimam Indris        | M |

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|     |                      |   |    |
|-----|----------------------|---|----|
| 164 | Roza Yimam Indris    | F |    |
| 165 | Ahmed Nurye          | M |    |
| 166 | Zemzem Mohammed      | F |    |
| 167 | Indris Mohammed      | M |    |
| 168 | Seyd Mohammed        | M |    |
| 169 | Ahmed Mhammed        | M |    |
| 170 | Juhar Mohammed Ahmed | M |    |
| 171 | Hayat Hassan         | F |    |
| 172 | Abrie Hassan         | M |    |
| 173 | Belay Ali            | F |    |
| 174 | Mubark Yimer         | M |    |
| 175 | Abdu Shibesh         | M | 28 |
| 176 | Osman Mohammed       | M |    |
| 177 | Seyd Kedir           | M |    |
| 178 | Fato Hassan          | M |    |



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## About Amhara Association of America (AAA)

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) is a non-profit civic organization located in Charlotte, North Carolina that investigates and documents human rights atrocities and repression against Amharas in Ethiopia. AAA seeks to inform U.S. policymakers, international human rights organizations, media, and all Ethiopian stakeholders to pressure Ethiopian leaders to change laws, policies, and practices in Ethiopia so perpetrators are held accountable and victims receive justice. AAA also collaborates with Amhara organizations in the U.S., supports independent Amhara organizations in Ethiopia, and provides humanitarian aid for Amharas impacted due to targeted ethnic attacks. AAA's funding comes directly from members and supporters; the organization is not affiliated with any Ethiopian or American political or governmental entities.

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