



An attack on Amhara villagers by Oromia Special Forces, the Oromo Liberation Army and Qeerro in Tenkara Kebele, Mizhga Woreda, Kemashi Zone in Ethiopian's Benishangul-Gumuz Region

Executive summary

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) has verified from survivors that a coalition of *Oromia Special Forces* (OSF) and *Oromo Liberation Army* (OLA) militants have attacked Amhara villagers after invading into Mender (village) 42 in Tenkara Kebele (ward), Mizhga Woreda (district), Kemashi Zone (Benishangul-Gumuz Region, Ethiopia) on December 10th, 2022. An extremist ethnic-based youth group, *Qeerro* also joined the militants primarily by destroying and looting their property in the village. **The joint OSF-OLA forces killed at least thirteen Amhara civilians, injured five more so far, and forced over 800 households (an estimated 2,000 people) of the village to flee out of it.** The joint OSF-OLA forces also engaged in widespread looting and destruction of property. Most of the houses (over 500) in the village were deliberately burned and over 3,000 farm animals (mostly cattle) were looted.

The Perpetrators

On the day of the attack (December 10th, 2022) beginning from 11:00 a.m. the joint OSF-OLA forces attacked the village using various types of firearms including heavy machineguns which overwhelmed the local farmers who tried to protect the village. The joint OSF-OLA forces were also joined by Qeerro particularly for the property loss. A survivor (withheld their name out fear of reprisal) now in refuge told AAA's investigators:

“Yes I saw them (the assailants) - some had their hair plaited and some of the rest are not but wore special police (OSF) uniforms. There were both Special Forces and Shene (OLA) united to eliminate Amharas. There were also countless Qeerro flooding to the villages and holding machetes, axes, knives, and spears.”

A 31-year-old injured survivor by the name Getachew (name changed) also spoke to AAA and said the following about the identity of the perpetrators:

“They were the Oromia Special Forces (OSF) and Shene (OLA). I tried to look at a few of them who died in fighting. I myself confirmed that two of them had OSF identity cards and wore the OSF uniform.”

Killings and Injuries

After a few hours of exchange of fire between the joint OSF-OLA perpetrators and under-armed ethnic Amhara farmers, the perpetrators took control of the village at around 4:00 p.m. and began committing ethnic-based attacks which left at least thirteen Amhara civilians killed and an additional five injured.

Two of the killed victims namely Hassan Yesuf and Abdu Muhie passed away after sustaining injuries and being unable to access emergency health services partly because

the village was blockaded by the joint OSF-OLA militants. Some of the dead victims' bodies were buried in a mass grave at a checkpoint located in the same village whereas the rest died instantly after the attack. Four of the dead bodies including that of the late Sheikh Muhammad Muktar were buried in a mass grave beside the burned mosque. Most of the victims were killed by gunshots while two of the victims were killed by burning. The first was a 42-year-old religious man by the name of Muhammad Muktar who was found burned inside the Mender 42 mosque. Finally, his remains were collected and buried together with three other victims. The other person charred to death was 38-year-old Abdu Yimam whose dead body was found burned inside a Mango farm located in the village.

A 31-year-old injured victim by the name of Getachew described the attack as follows:

“I am in a clinic. There are also other three others who were shot beside me and could not come here. They are Hassan Yesuf, Abdu Muhie, and Omer Indris. After they reached where we were, they opened fire on us. They shot me in the leg. Then I tied my wound with my apron. Then I rolled on the ground and disappeared from their (perpetrators’) view. I do not know how the other three who were shot beside me survived but I heard they were alive but could not reach a hospital because the roads were all blocked.”

Destructions and Looting of Property

The joint OSF-OLA forces and the Qeerro engaged in extensive property destruction and looting during the attack. Almost the entire village was devastated. One of the survivors namely Haile (name changed) now taking refuge in a nearby bush told AAA, *“I can see the smoke of the burned houses from here. It has not stopped for twenty-four hours. No one’s house is left unburned. The entire village is burned. There are at least 800 houses in the village.”* An injured survivor by the name of Getachew also told AAA that almost all 800 houses including the Mender 42 mosque were deliberately burned by

the invading forces. In addition, moveable properties including more than 3,000 farm animals (mostly cattle) were looted or when impossible vandalized and destructed. An eyewitness told AAA that the militants have shot and killed over 120 cattle and goats.

Internal Displacement and Siege

Following the attack, almost all 800 households (an estimated 2,000 residents) in the village have been displaced to the nearby bushes and wilderness where there is nothing to eat and no shelter. One of the survivors by the name of Abdu Hassan told AAA, *“we are inside a jungle, we have nothing to eat. Let alone us, it has been a day since our little children had seen bread.”* The survivors are facing severe issues after the perpetrators left the village as they left nothing for survivors at home. Everything necessary for residents’ livelihood including food items and houses were completely damaged by the assailants. Most of the survivors were also unable to flee to safer areas where they could have access to aid. In addition, the roads to Asosa town (Benishangul-Gumuz Region), Addis Ababa and the Amhara Region where survivors want to go to escape have been blocked by the OLA militants. Survivors recounted incidents in which Amhara passengers were singled out and attacked by the OLA militants when they tried to go to the Amhara Region. A survivor pleaded to be rescued *“We do not want to and cannot live here. Please let’s go out of here, let’s survive so we can explain what happened to us. We do not know when they will come back and finish us all.”*

Below is the list of dead and wounded victims by the joint OSF-OLA forces on December 10th, 2022 in Mishga Woreda, Kemashi Zone in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region.

No.	Victim Name	Sex	Age	Outcome of attack
1	Nuray Isayas	M	18	Death
2	Muhammed Abrie	M	28	Death

3	Abie Yimam	M	35	Death
4	Muhammed Sayed	M	32	Death
5	Muhammed Abrie	M	38	Death
6	Eshetu Aychew	M	27	Death
7	Muhammed Adem	M	22	Death
8	Jemal Sayed	M	18	Death
9	Hassan Yesuf	M	32	Death
10	Abdu Muhie	M	41	Death
11	Hassan Yesuf	M	44	Death
12	Sheikh Mohammed Muktar	M	42	Death
13	Abdu Yimam	M	38	Death
14	Omer Indris	M	35	Injury
15	Ali Omer	M	18	Injury
16	Mohammed Yesuf	M	35	Injury
17	Ahmed Sayed	M	23	Injury
18	Mengesha Reta	M	31	Injury

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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