



The Oromo Liberation Army massacres 23 Amhara civilians in Huruta Dore Kebele, Jeju Woreda, Arsi Zone in Ethiopia’s Oromia Region

Overview

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) has verified from families of victims and eyewitnesses that the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) [also sometimes referred to as Oromo Liberation Front Shene, OLF or Shene] has killed at least 23 Amhara civilians in five rounds of invasion between August 11th to November 2nd, 2022, in two villages of Huruta Dore Kebele (ward) in Jeju Woreda (district) of Arsi Zone (Oromia Region). The intention behind these attacks according to AAA’s sources was to spread terror amongst residents to pressure them to flee the villages. They explain the OLA and its collaborators collectively believe that the Oromia Region belongs exclusively to ethnic Oromo people alone. The intent of the attackers being to instill a feeling of terror in the victims is supported by the profile of each round of invasion. All five rounds of invasion were perpetrated at night and residents were singled out by ethnicity (targeting ethnic Amharas) and abducted and/or killed. The methods used in the killings were described as cruel and bodies of the dead were commonly put out for display, in prominent locations throughout

the villages so that residents could see them when they awoke in the morning. Following the attacks, hundreds of Amharas have continued fleeing out of the town abandoning their property and harvests as intended by the militants.

Details of rounds of massacres targeting Amhara civilians

First Incident: OLA kills 4 Amhara civilians on August 11th, 2022

The first attack which claimed the lives of four Amhara civilians occurred on August 11th, 2022, at night. According to eyewitnesses, around seven OLA militants rounded up three victims in the Eriye area of Addis Hiwot village as the victims were patrolling the town. The names of the victims were Adu, Degu and Berihun (last names unknown). After that, they ordered them to identify any gun owners in the town to which they replied they could not as they had no knowledge of it. Then, at around midnight, after being tied up and ordered to lie down on the ground, the OLA militants proceed to shoot them with automatic gunfire which resulted in their immediate deaths. At the time of the abduction and the mass execution, the victims were all unarmed. All victims were daily workers who travelled to the village from Amhara Region so their names were unknown to locals. Following the shooting, a fourth man (name unknown) left his home when he heard the gunshots and he was shot dead by the OLA militants. All the victims were buried in the graveyard of Addis Hiwot St. Baale Egziabher Church.

Second Incident: OLA kill 4 Amhara civilians outside of Addis Hiwot village on October 17th, 2022

The second attack occurred on October 17th, 2022, when at around 8 p.m. the OLA took five daily laborers prisoner as they were working on an onion farm for their employer located outside of Addis Hiwot village. After abducting them, the OLA transported the victims to the Bik Enik part of the village. While one of the prisoners managed to escape,

the remaining four prisoners were executed by the OLA with automatic gunfire in the same part of the village. After the gunfire, they dismembered the victims' bodies with machetes. Residents told AAA that the entire profile of the killing including killing the victims at night, dismemberment of their bodies (with machetes) and leaving them in the village was a means of instilling terror into residents in an effort to persuade them to leave. AAA's sources could not name the victims as many were permanent residents of Amhara Region who would come to the villages for seasonal work and were therefore unknown to locals. They were buried in the graveyard of Addis Hiwot village's St. Baale Egziabher Church.

Third Incident: OLA abducts and murders an Amhara farmer on October 30th, 2022

The third incident took place on the night of October 30th, 2022, when the OLA militias took prisoner a 36-year-old Amhara farmer by the name of Ashebir Alemayehu. They abducted him while he was working on his onion farm, they brought him to Addis Hiwot village and proceeded to execute him with gunfire at the Bik Enik part of town. After killing him they dismembered his body, separated various limbs and scattered the parts on the streets to terrorize and force other residents to flee from the village as they did in incidents that happened before and after. He was buried in the same church graveyard as the victims from the aforementioned incidents.

Fourth Incident: OLA kills 5 Amhara civilians in Addis Hiwot village on November 2nd, 2022

The fourth incident took place on the night of November 2nd, 2022, when the OLA entered Addis Hiwot village and killed five Amhara civilians of which four were elderly persons who could not run or escape. At around 9:00 a.m. government forces had evacuated from the area 12 hours before the attack. The attack began around 9:00 p.m.

when the OLA opened fire on locals and a few who owned private guns exchanged fire. Many residents who heard the fire exchange, ran away to save their lives. After a short while, the OLA militants were able to control the town, and then proceeded to kill five Amhara civilians including four elderly persons above 75 years of age who were unable to run. The fifth victim was killed while accidentally running in the wrong direction, towards the OLA. Witnesses told AAA that victims were brutally killed by being hacked with machetes then shot multiple times to ensure they were dead. AAA's sources added they believe the brutal manner of killing was done to terrorize and force other residents to flee from the village. Four of the victims died instantly whereas the fifth, Melaku Abate (76) died in a hospital located in Nazreth city. The remaining victims' names were Damtew Azene (78), Gezahegn Belay (79), Tsegaw Balkew (75), and Etatye Lakew (29). Two additional people were kidnapped and released after they paid 40,000 birr and 45,000 birr, respectively, in ransom to the OLA militants. In addition, the property of the victims and others who escaped were also looted in the town.

Fifth Incident: OLA forces kill 9 Amhara civilians and injure an additional victim in Membere Hiwot village on November 5th, 2022

The fifth massacre took place on November 5th, 2022 when invading OLA forces killed 9 Amhara civilians and injured an additional victim in Membere Hiwot village of Huruta Dore Kebele. Four days earlier, the OLA militants had abducted five daily laborers from the village. Then, on the night of November 5th, 2022, they executed them all and put their bodies on display in the village presumably to terrorize residents to abandon the village once and for all. The victims were daily laborers from Amhara Region unknown to the locals so that they could not be named by AAA's sources. The same night, the OLA militants broke into houses of other residents and killed an additional four civilians including an eight-month-old child. The first victims were Selam Yared (26) and her eight-month-old baby. The third was Frehiwot Ewnetu (32), and the fourth was a teacher

by the name of Jibril (last name unknown). In addition, Frehiwot’s husband by the name of Frew (last name unknown) became seriously injured and was hospitalized in Nazreth General Hospital with little hope of survival. The OLA militants slit the eight-month-old infant’s throat whereas the remaining four victims were killed by gunshots. The bodies of Selam Yared and her baby daughter were taken to Nazreth city and were buried there while the bodies of the other seven victims were buried in Menbere Hiwot village. Six of the remaining seven were buried in Menbere Hiwot St. Arsema Church and the seventh, Jibril, was buried in a Muslim Cemetery (burials are customarily done in accordance with religious customs).

Below is list of twelve identified victims (out of 23 in total) killed over the five invasions by OLA militants between August 11 and November 5, 2022. A thirteenth victim (not listed below) was Selam Yared’s 8-month-old baby.

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Date of attack
1	Damtew Azene	M	78	Nov. 2, 2022
2	Gezahegn Belay	M	79	Nov. 2, 2022
3	Tsegaw Balkew	M	75	Nov. 2, 2022
4	Etatye Lakew	F	29	Nov. 2, 2022
5	Melaku Abate	M	76	Nov. 2, 2022
6	Selam Yared	F	26	Nov. 5, 2022
7	Frehiwot Ewnetu	F	32	Nov. 5, 2022
8	Ashebir Alemayehu	M	36	Oct. 30, 2022
9	Jibril [last name unknown]	M	31	Nov. 5, 2022
10	Adu [last name unknown]	M	25	Aug. 11, 2022
11	Berihun [last name unknown]	M	21	Aug. 11, 2022
12	Degu [last name unknown]	M	28	Aug. 11, 2022



(a) Selam Yared (deceased)



(b) Selam Yared's 8-month-old baby (deceased)



(c) Frehiwot Ewnetu (deceased)

Figure 1: Photographs of Amhara civilians killed by OLA forces

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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