

## Dozens Die in Ethnic Massacre in Ethiopian Region soaked with Amharas blood

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Amhara Association of America (AAA) regrets to confirm that at least twenty three Amharas, including nine women and six children, were killed and many others abducted in the latest massacre along ethnic lines in the village of Baleegziabher, Debbis Kebele, Abe Dongoro district, Horo Guduru Welega Zone, Oromia, on March 6-7, 2021. Survivors and witnesses interviewed by AAA focal person in Ethiopia identified the perpetrators as militias of “OLF.” The militias raided the village of Bealeegzabher at approximately 2 pm on Saturday, 6 March 2021, killing one priest, named Tenaw Zeleke, and fleeing with more than 30 Amharas, of which the bodies of 22 victims were found in a nearby dense bush, known as Chatto, one day after their abduction, then buried at Bealeegzabher Church on 8 March 2021, according to the account of witnesses and survivors. Of the remaining abductees, one was eventually released (Shega Belachew—Women), while six of them managed to escape on their own: these were Kokebe mekonin (Women), Sete Temesgen (Women), Belete Setealem (Man), Wide Adane (Man), Temesgen Ambaw (Man) and Werk Mandefro (women). But the fate of many others has remained unknown.

Below are the names, and where available photos of the victims:

### 1) Priest Tenaw Zeleke



According to AAA sources, including Kebede and Ayele (names changed), Tenaw Zeleke, who was a priest at Bealeegzabher church, was found dead with throat slit at his house. His body was laid to rest on Edoxa Mariam church on 7 March 2021, after the mourners realized that they could not conduct his funeral at the Bealeegzabher Church as it was cornered by the OLF militias, said AAA sources.

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2) FKadie Alebachew



3) Guzguz Masresha



**Fkadie Alebachew (Man) was killed with his daughter, Werksew Fkadie (Girl).**

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- 4) Priest Mandefro Dessie (Man) was killed along with his three children, these were Etagegne Mandefro (Women); **Aweke Mandefro (Man)** and **Meseret Mandefro (Girl)**.
- 5) Shumet Mersha (Man) was killed along with 10 members of his family— **Werku Shumet (Man)**, **Dinke Shumet (women)**, **Abeba Shumet (women)**, **Abezash Shumet with her one year-old son, Birhanu Addissu (Man)**, **Birtukan Addisu (Women)**, **Aynaddis Addissu** and **Zemedet Belachew (Women)**. The body of Dinqe Shumet was found with her two babies, named **Mekasha Wendmnew (seven-month old baby)** and **Fasika Wendmnew (three year old)**. Witnesses who went to the bush to recover the bodies said the two babies found alive next to mother's body. "Luckily, the militias left the babies unharmed," said the eye witnesses.

Pictures showing Fasika Wendmnew, a three-year-old child (pictured left) and Mekasha wendmnew, a seven-month old baby (pictured right) who were found next to their mother's body in a bush



6) Maru Habtamu (Boy) was killed with his younger sister Birtukan Habtamu (Girl).

7) Bahru Belay (Man) was killed with his mother, named Beyen Desalegne (Women).

8) Asres Nigus (Girl).

Table : Names of the Amharas who were died in the Horu Gudru Massacre

No.	Names of decedents	No.	Names of decedents
1	Priest Tenaw Zeleke	13	Maru Habtamu
2	Priest Mandefro dessie	14	Birtukan Addisu
3	Etagagne Mandefro	15	Birhanu Addissu
4	Meseret Mandefro	16	Aynaddis Addissu
5	Aweke Mandefro	17	Zemed Belachew
6	Guzguz Masresha	18	Birtukan Habtamu
7	Shumet Mersha	19	Bahru Belay
8	Werku Shumet	20	Beyen Desalegne
9	Dinke Shumet	21	Asres Nigus
10	Abeba Shumet	22	Werksew Fkadie
11	Abezash Shumet	23	Fkadie Alebachew
12	Abezash Shumet's one year old boy		

Temesgen, who wants to go by his first name only, said the victims were dragged from their homes and taken to a nearby bush, known as Chatto, where they were killed. “They were kidnapped and killed because they were Amharas,” said Temesgen. He added in a broken voice “the situation is getting worse day-by-day. We are not safe anymore here. There is no one to protect us. We are being left to die.’

Other witnesses who had helped bury the dead reiterated that OLF militias carried out house to house searches and abducted as many as 30 ethnic Amharas, mainly women, children and the elderly, and killed them. According to them, the bodies of the decedents showed signs of severe mutilation, including disfigured faces, slitted throats and broken limbs. Another local resident who saw the dead bodies, speaking on condition of anonymity said “they [militias] slaughtered them [the decedents] like animals. Many of them were hacked to death by machetes, knives or hoes. Some others were shot and their bodies parts had been cut.”

In addition, AAA confirms that the attacks have forced thousands of Amharas to leave their homes, fearing that the OLF militias could launch new attacks. For instance, Kebede and Ayele said they have a list of 1203 Amharas who are displaced from Debbis and Guleti Kebeles to Tulu Wayu, where they have come across a shortage of food, beds and shelter.

Picture showing ethnic Amharas who fled their homes to Tulu Wayu town following the Horo Guduru massacre





Relying on the accounts of survivors, victims' families and other sources from the ground, AAA considers that local officials and members of the Oromia Special Police Force did almost nothing to confront the militias and immediately save lives, as if they didn't have obligation to protect the Amharas. For instance, one local resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said 'the attacks went on for about five hours, but no body came to our rescue.' Another witness, who also asked not to be named, said: "members of Oromia Special Police Force do not want to confront the OLF militias even if we tell them where they are hiding." AAA is even suspicious of that there are government officials, even at the federal level, who are acting in favor of the OLF militias. In this regard, Yimam Mohammed (name changed), a resident of Tulu Wayu, said there is a wide spread beliefs among the Amhara residents that district officials such as Mekonnin Negele, Head of the District Prosperity Party branch office, and Amenti Dherasa, former Chief of Abe Dongoro District, work hand in hand with OLF militias to wipe out the Amharas from the region. He also indicated that he think officials with in the Oromia prosperity party have been sabotaging the Ethiopian Defence force's operations by leaking vital information to OLF militias.

## Recommendations

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### **To the Government of Ethiopia:**

- Take all necessary measures to uproot OLF militias and restore law and order in Oromia region including by increasing patrolling and establishing additional security posts in vulnerable areas such as West Welega Zone, East Wollega Zone, Horo Guduru Welega Zone and Kelam Welega Zone;
- Advance human intelligence gathering of the Ethiopian Defense Force, police and intelligence services, particularly in relation to counter insurgency operations against OLF;
- Ensure that Oromia Regional officials at various levels are investigated by a competent, independent and impartial body to verify whether or not they are implicated in the massacres



of Amharas, and where sufficient evidence is found, those responsible should be held to account to justice;

- Suspend those officials who are suspected of implicating in atrocities from government positions pending investigations and prosecutions;
- Make clear public statements reflecting the government commitment to the protection of Amharas in Oromia Regional State and condemning all ethnically motivated attacks against the Amharas;
- Promptly and impartially investigate, prosecute and punish all serious incidents of violence against ethnic Amharas in Oromia Region and, whenever requested, permit full, unhampered access to those who wish to investigate the grave human rights violations documented in this report;
- Provide victims of human rights violations and their families with remedies and reparations;
- Ensure members of the Oromia Special Police Force protect all civilians impartially, regardless of their ethnicity;
- Try all possible ways to ensure the safe returns of the remaining OLF captives;
- Organize community meetings in areas where Amharas have been repeatedly targeted to explain the steps taken to investigate alleged crimes and the government's intention to prosecute anyone implicated in retaliatory violence;

**To the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and the United States**

- Encourage the Ethiopian authorities to implement the above recommendations;



- Assist in all possible ways to ensure effective investigation and punishment of all human rights violations against Amharas in Ethiopia, particularly massacres committed in Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz Regions.

**To Human rights organizations and Medias, both national and international:**

- Consistently and publicly press the Ethiopian government to promptly investigate and appropriately prosecute all those implicated in the massacres;
- Do more to ensure that the plights of millions of Amharas in Oromia Region are exposed to the international community and preserve evidence of possible genocide.

**Below are Pictures showing some of the pictures of victims' bodies**













