



War updates from Amhara Region, Ethiopia – January 13th to 19th, 2025

Updated January 19th, 2025

Overview

For the week of January 13th to 19th, 2025, fighting between *Amhara Fano freedom fighters* (Fano) and *Prosperity Party regime joint forces* (regime forces) has continued in various parts of Amhara Region in Ethiopia.¹

- This week battle events and rights violations were recorded in more than 38 woreda/city administrations across 11 zonal administrations in Amhara Region. These zones included the North Wollo, South Wollo, North Shewa, East Gojjam, West Gojjam, Awi, North Gojjam, South Gonder, Central Gonder, West Gonder and North Gonder Zones. Developments were also recorded in Addis-Ababa city.
- Developments were recorded in over 3 urban administrations across 3 zonal administrations in Amhara Region. These urban administrations included Kobo,

¹Regime forces are primarily comprised of the *Ethiopian National Defense Force* (ENDF) often with backing from regional riot dispersal, militia and police.

Bahir-Dar and Gonder cities in the North Wollo, Bahir-Dar and Central Gonder Zones.

- Civilian casualties were recorded in 6 woreda/city administrations across 3 zonal administrations in Amhara Region. These included North Mecha, Menz-Mam-Midir, Yilmana-Densa, Minjar-Shenkora, Enarj-Enawga and Fagita-Lekoma Woredas in the North Shewa, East Gojjam and Awi Zones. Widespread arrests were reported in Raya-Kobo Woreda of North Wollo Zone and in Addis-Ababa city.
- Drone strikes were recorded in 4 woreda administrations across 4 zonal administrations in Amhara Region. These included Quarit, Ibnat, Gonder-Zuriya and Debark Woredas in the West Gojjam, South Gonder, Central Gonder and North Gonder Zones.
- Followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian faith observed the Timket (Epiphany) religious holiday in various parts of Amhara Region and Addis-Ababa city. The observation of this holiday was associated with heightened tensions and reports of political repression by regime authorities and security forces.
- Opposition political parties have continued to criticize the ongoing national dialogue process citing lack of independence from the ruling *Oromo Prosperity Party* regime among other reasons.

North Wollo Zone

- The Orthodox Christian Epiphany celebration on January 19th, was characterized by significantly reduced festivities, a stark contrast to previous years.
 - In various areas of the zone, including in the Woldia city administration, there was a marked decline in cultural activities such as traditional music and

dancing.

- This reduction can be attributed to widespread fear of potential mass detentions and the prevailing political pressures that inhibited public expression and participation.

Kobo City

- On January 19th, the Orthodox Christian Epiphany celebration included traditional music, and dancing, but the overall atmosphere was subdued.
 - Some participants attempted to conduct their traditional music and dancing and deliver messages regarding the continuation of war, the need for liberation, and expressions of appreciation for the Fano struggle. However, these messages were minimal compared to previous years.
 - This decline in participation and expression was largely due to the recent mass detentions of civilians and fear of further mass arrests and potential conflict on the day of the celebration.
 - Regime forces actively disrupted and prevented gatherings involving traditional music that seemed to support or praise the Fano struggle.

Raya-Kobo Woreda

- Following the Fano forces' victory, which included the death of regional commander, Lt. Colonel Teka Mekebo, on January 1st, the regime arrested several officials.
 - Among those arrested was Tesfaye Ali, the former kebele administrator of Kebele 35 in Zobel, who had been a key ally of the regime.

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- He played a significant role in supporting regime forces by providing intelligence and guiding their operations, after aligning with the regime once the conflict erupted.
 - Tesfaye, along with his associate Abate, was arrested by the regime on suspicion of being involved in the death of Lt. Colonel Teka Mekebo.
 - Between January 12th and 16th, the regime has imposed a telecommunications and internet blackout in Zobel. This area has military and strategic importance and has been the site of numerous casualties among high-ranking regime military commanders.
 - Regime forces stationed in Zobel town are reportedly facing a severe water shortage.
 - The regime forces’ fear of going to rivers to fetch water, due to concerns about Fano attacks, has worsened the situation.
 - As a result, regime forces are forced to purchase water at a cost of 30 ETB by units of 20 liters.
 - In addition, local residents have stopped selling water to them, intensifying the water scarcity and hardship for the stationed forces.

Raya-Alamata Woreda

- On the night of January 12th, Fano forces carried out an attack on regime forces in Waja town.
 - The operation was led by the Amhara Fano in Wollo East Amhara Corps 1’s Hawjano Division, led by Fano Kassa Abebe.
 - The target was a group of regime forces, specifically the republican guard, who were stationed at a school in Waja town.

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- More than 20 regime forces were killed and 11 were injured during the attack.
The remaining regime forces were forced to retreat to Timuga town.

Lasta Woreda

- On the night of January 15th, at approximately 9:30 pm, the Amhara Fano in Wollo's Lasta Asaminew Corps, Mairegu Temare Division, conducted operations in two areas of Lalibela town. The Fano successfully captured one regime cadre and seized additional military equipment.

Habru Woreda

- On January 17th, the Amhara Fano in Wollo successfully defended against an offensive attack by regime forces in Feji-Meneyo.
 - The attack aimed to encircle and eliminate Fano forces in the region.
 - The Fano forces, were comprised of the Baleshiritu, Rambo, and Special Campaign Divisions.
 - Over 10 regime soldiers were killed in the attack and others were injured.
 - The Fano also successfully repelled attempts by regime forces to capture Merto town, defending the area from three fronts.
 - The regime's use of heavy artillery caused civilian casualties and damage to homes, particularly in Sirinqa-Endayimetr and Feji-Meneyo.

Gidan Woreda

- On January 16th, fighting between Fano and regime forces occurred in Dilb and Beklomanekiya.
 - The fighting involved the Amhara Fano in Wollo, particularly the East Amhara Corps 2's Kalakorema Division.

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- Regime forces were attempting to control Beklomanekiya, a strategic military area.
 - The Fano inflicted significant casualties on the regime’s forces during a counter-offensive.

Gubalafto Woreda

- On the night of January 17th, intense fighting occurred between Fano forces and regime forces in the Gebaba-Giyorgis area of Wudmen Kebele.
 - The fighting involved the Amhara Fano in Wollo East Amhara Corps 1, Baleshiritu Division led by Fano Indris Gudile and the Commando Division under Fano Yoseph Asmare.
 - The regime forces suffered significant casualties, including deaths and injuries.

South Wollo Zone

Were-Babu Woreda

- On January 15th, the Amhara Fano in Wollo’s East Amhara Corps 1, Yegiranaw Baleshiritu Division’s 4th Battalion, launched a surprise attack on the 017 Kebele in Hadere. The attack resulted in the death and injury of several regime forces who had been intimidating local residents and attempting to disarm them.

North Shewa Zone

Statement from the Amhara Fano in Shewa

- On January 17th, the Amhara Fano in Shewa (formerly the Amhara Fano Shewa Command) sent a congratulatory message to followers of the Orthodox Christian faith in celebration of the 2025 Epiphany (Baptism) Festival.

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- The message highlighted the progress of their struggle, emphasizing unity akin to the Holy Trinity: the struggle as a baptismal judge, enduring hardship as a sacrifice, and demonstrating humility for the people.
 - They affirmed that their ultimate goal is the achievement of freedom.

Statement from the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command

- On January 18th, the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command extended their well wishes for the festival and urged residents in the Shewa sub-region to support and empathize with those in need.
 - They expressed confidence in the celebration but warned the oppressed in areas controlled by the regime that they will soon be liberated from suffering.
 - The Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command assured that unless there is an attack from the regime, the festival will be celebrated peacefully.

Merhabete Woreda

- On January 13th, at 6 pm, the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command launched an attack on regime riot dispersal forces by infiltrating into Alem-Ketema town, the administrative center of Merhabete Woreda.
 - In this attack, the Fano achieved decisive victories, inflicting casualties on regime forces killing 2 regime soldiers, injuring 1, and capturing 4.
 - Additionally, the Fano seized five kalashnikov rifles and over 300 rounds of ammunition.

Menz-Mam-Midir Woreda

- On January 13th, regime forces, supported by militias, committed an extrajudicial killing of a civilian in Astoya Kebele.

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- Regime forces killed 50-year-old Beletew Tamir under the pretext that he was allegedly the father of two Fano members.
 - Accordingly, regime forces killed him under the pretext that his sons were Fano members, and for his failure to persuade them to abandon their allegiance to the Fano.

Efratana-Gidim Woreda

- On January 13th, intense fighting occurred between the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command and regime forces near Ataye. Following a retreat by regime forces, they engaged in indiscriminate killings of livestock, including camels, oxen, and other animals they encountered during their retreat.
- On January 15th, a fierce battle has occurred across several areas of Efratana-Gidim Woreda.
 - A joint military operation was carried out by the Amhara Fano in Shewa's Yekunoamlak Division and the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command's 7/70 Division.
 - The joint forces reportedly defeated the regime forces in an area called Layignaw Ataye.
 - Meanwhile, the 7/70 Division engaged in intense battles with regime forces in Alala Abasiber, Guba-Tele, Birkti, Galoch-Amba, and surrounding areas of Ataye, even advancing into Ataye town.
 - Following the battle, regime forces retaliated by destroying and looting civilian property. For example, in Mentkie Sherefu Kebele, they killed ox belonging to a local resident.

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- Between January 15th and 17th, intense fighting between Fano forces and regime forces around Ataye and surrounding areas.
 - The fighting involved the Atse Yekunoamlak and 7/70 Divisions.
 - The Fano launched counter-offensives in multiple areas, including Alala, Fered-Wuha, Bereha, and Guasa-Mewcha.
 - The battles resulted in casualties on both sides. However, the regime forces, including regime cadres, suffered significant losses, with many killed, injured, and captured by the Fano. In addition, some regime cadres have fled to other areas.

Minjar-Shenkora Woreda

- On January 11th, the regime conducted two repeated drone strikes on Amora-Bet Kebele's Game Public School. Although there were no reported casualties, the school was destroyed in the attack, including damage to the facilities and infrastructure.
- On January 17th, the regime carried out repeated artillery shelling in the Dedeho area of Christos-Samra Kebele targeting civilian residences. The attack resulted in 3 civilian injuries, and significant destruction of crops. The number of casualties may increase.

Berehet Woreda

- On January 12th, at approximately 11:55 pm, the regime launched a drone strike on the Kebele 07 School.
 - The strike resulted in significant damage to the school, including the destruction of laboratory materials.

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- No Fano forces were present at the site, suggesting the strike was carried out without the presence of militant groups.

Basona-Werana Woreda

- On January 15th, an intense battle took place between the Amhara Fano in Shewa and regime forces.
 - This battle occurred after regime forces moved from Debre-Birhan to Chiraro-Debir with the aim of attacking the Amhara Fano in Shewa's Negodguad Divisions.
 - In response, the Fano launched an attack, encircling regime troops.
 - Specifically, the Amhara Fano Shewa Province Command's Aschalew Dessie Division ambushed regime forces in Keyit, who had been attempting to support the regime's assault against the Amhara Fano in Shewa.

East Gojjam Zone

Baso-Liben Woreda

- Fighting occurred on January 12th in the Yelamgej area, initiated by Fano fighters against recently deployed regime soldiers.
 - The Fano fighters infiltrated Yelamgej and launched a surprise attack, resulting in substantial casualties among regime forces.
 - Reports indicate that at least 50 regime soldiers and regime affiliates were killed during this confrontation.

Bibugn Woreda

- On January 12th, heavy fighting took place in Waber, initiated by regime forces mobilizing from Digo-Tsiyon town as part of their expansion into the Choke mountainous regions.
 - Gunfire exchanges persisted throughout the day, involving heavy artillery shelling.
 - The fighting subsided when regime forces ultimately retreated, though the casualties from both sides remain unconfirmed.

Sinan Woreda

- Between January 12th and 13th, heavy confrontations occurred in various kebeles towns within Sinan Woreda.
 - The fighting began as regime forces mobilized large contingents to rural areas with the intent to expand into the Choke mountain region.
 - The Sinan Abajime Brigade of Fano fighters mounted a fierce resistance, particularly in the Teter and Maksegnit areas, inflicting significant casualties on regime forces.
 - Despite sustaining losses, regime soldiers reportedly positioned themselves closer to Choke mountain. During this period, Fano fighters launched offensives on three regime encampments in Rebu-Gebeya town, capturing substantial logistics and freeing a considerable number of detainees from the local prison.

Debay-Telatgin Woreda

- On January 13th, heavy fighting erupted in the Jerems area, initiated by regime forces attempting to suppress Fano fighters.

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- Reports indicate casualties on both sides, although the exact numbers remain unidentified.
 - Additionally, regime soldiers mobilized towards the Nabra area as part of their ongoing expansion efforts into the Choke mountain region.

Enarj-Enawga Woreda

- On January 13th, intense fighting took place in two locations within Enarj-Enawga Woreda.
 - The first confrontation occurred in Felege-Birhan town, where regime forces attempted to suppress Fano fighters entrenched in the area.
 - The Soma Brigade of Fano fighters, part of the Amhara Fano in Gojjam's Belay Zeleke Division, mounted a fierce resistance against the regime's advance.
 - Reports indicate that both sides suffered casualties, with significant losses among regime forces. The Fano fighters claimed to have inflicted at least 9 fatalities and 6 injuries on regime troops.
 - The second battle took place at Wefit-Mariam Kebele, where Fano fighters ambushed regime reinforcements mobilized from Ginde-Weyn to support their comrades engaged in the battle at Felege-Birhan.
- On January 17th, regime forces mobilized from Debre-Work town and unexpectedly entered the rural kebele of Debre-Lula to suppress Fano fighters.
 - Upon reaching the checkpoint, regime soldiers launched an attack on the Fano fighters, who numbered no more than six. The Fano quickly responded with gunfire, resulting in casualties among the soldiers. After a brief exchange, the

gunfire subsided when the Fano maneuvered to a safer location. The Fano claimed to have killed 2 and injured others during this encounter.

- Following the cessation of the fighting, regime soldiers committed violations against civilian residents. Reports indicate extensive physical assaults, shootings, and significant looting of civilian property. Sources reported that regime soldiers gathered civilians encountered on the streets in the aftermath of the fighting. They forcibly confiscated over 60,000 ETB in cash, along with significant amounts of jewelry and other belongings, in addition to inflicting severe beatings.
- Moreover, 2 civilians were critically wounded due to regime actions on the same day. In one incident, a barber was shot while working, with soldiers reportedly questioning why he was working while they were “*dying*.” He is currently receiving medical treatment in the hospital, but his chances of survival are minimal. Another case involved arbitrary shelling that injured a teenager.

Enbese-Sar-Midir Woreda

- On January 16th, intense confrontation took place in the small town of Segno-Gebeya.
 - The skirmish was reportedly initiated when fighters from the Abay Sheleqo Fano Brigade made a sudden entry into the town.
 - The Fano reportedly launched a strong offensive on regime forces stationed in the town, leading to a fierce exchange of gunfire.
 - According to reports, the fighting resulted in significant casualties on both sides.

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- Sources from the Fano side confirmed the death of 3 fighters. However, the exact number of casualties among regime forces remains unclear, with sources describing it as a significant number of deaths and injuries inflicted among the soldiers.

Machakel Woreda

- On January 16th, Fano fighters carried out a surprise attack in the Yenech area, located in area of Amanuel town.
 - The attack occurred in the afternoon, in an attempt to expel regime soldiers who recently deployed at strategic checkpoint at the Yenech area.
 - This ambush led to a brief but intense exchange of gunfire.
 - The Fano fighters were unable to push the regime soldiers out from this position.
 - Reports from the Belay Zeleke Fano Brigade indicate that they inflicted several casualties, including the capture of two soldiers during the gunfire exchange.

Dejen Woreda

- On the night of January 17th, the Zambera Fano Brigade conducted an operation in an area known as Tsidim.
 - The Fano infiltrated the area and initiated gunfire against regime militias and riot dispersal police.
 - Reports indicate that Fano fighters inflicted casualties on state militias during the exchange of fire, with claims from Fano sources that 2 militia members were killed and 2 more were injured during this operation.

West Gojjam Zone

Sekela Woreda

- On January 14th, significant fighting occurred in various locations within the woreda.
 - The conflict began when regime forces mobilized overnight from Gishabay town to Abesken Kebele to suppress Fano fighters in their stronghold.
 - * The Fano fighters mounted a fierce defense against the regime soldiers, claiming numerous casualties among them.
 - * Additionally, Fano fighters ambushed regime reinforcements coming from Biradama-Quarit to support their comrades in the Abesken battle.
 - As regime soldiers advanced into Abesken, the Giyon Brigade of Fano fighters infiltrated Gishabay town and launched an offensive against the regime’s encampment.
 - * Reports indicate that several regime cadres and militias retreated to the nearby mountainous areas as the Fano entered Gishabay.
 - * The Fano reportedly controlled the town until midday, conducting operations during their stay.
 - * The Fano claimed to have captured firearms, logistics, and regime-affiliated individuals during this operation.

Quarit Woreda

- On January 16th, regime forces conducted a drone strike in Enangiya-Shime Kebele.
 - According to reports from sources, the aerial assault occurred at around 6 pm.
 - Initial reports revealed that the drone exploded in a farming field, and resulted in no reported human casualties or destruction of property.

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- However, statements from Fano sources indicate that the attack targeted a nearby school, leading to significant damage.

Awii Zone

Fagita-Lekoma Woreda

- Between January 14th and January 16th, clashes were reported in various areas of Fagita Kebele.
 - These clashes reportedly occurred in the villages of Emabanju, Afesa, and Waz.
 - The fighting appears to have been initiated by regime forces, who attempted to advance into Fagita Kebele. In response, local Fano fighters are said to have fiercely resisted, reportedly inflicting heavy losses on regime soldiers. While the full extent of casualties remains unclear, the resistance by Fano forces seems to have ultimately repelled the regime’s advance into the area.
- On January 16th, regime forces killed 3 civilians in Ashewa-Medhanialem Kebele.
 - Reports indicate that these victims were detained from Fagita Kebele during regime deployments in the area ten days prior to January 16th.
 - After several days, Fano fighters operating in the area discovered their bodies on January 17th in Ashewa-Medhanialem Kebele. The deceased have been identified by sources as:
 1. Ato Lake Alamirew
 2. Ato Abebe Tilahun
 3. Ato Tadele Mullaw
 - According to sources, the regime soldiers killed them for their alleged involvement in the looting of military properties in Fagita Kebele.

Bahir-Dar City and Surrounding Area

- On January 12th, heavy fighting erupted in the Chenta area, initiated by regime forces mobilizing from Bahir-Dar city and the Meshenti area.
 - Their objective was to suppress Fano fighters entrenched in the region.
 - However, Fano fighters mounted a fierce resistance, reportedly inflicting significant losses on the regime and forcing them to retreat.
 - In retaliation for their defeat, regime soldiers allegedly caused civilian casualties during the confrontation with the Fano fighters.
- On January 18th, intense fighting erupted on the outskirts of Bahir-Dar city, particularly in the Abune-Hara and Meshenti areas.
 - The battle in Abune-Hara reportedly began when regime soldiers mobilized to the area to suppress Fano fighters operating there. This mobilization coincided with the annual Abune-Hara celebration, disrupting religious travelers who had started their journeys.
 - Despite the regime's efforts, Fano fighters launched a heavy counteroffensive, resulting in significant casualties among regime soldiers, including many killed, injured, and captured.
 - Reports indicate that Fano fighters managed to infiltrate into the Zenzelima area, successfully breaching regime fortifications in the area, capturing a heavy machine gun, four light machine guns, over 56 kalashnikov firearms, and a substantial amount of ammunition.
 - In another front, Fano fighters also attacked regime soldiers in the Meshenti area. Although they briefly gained control, maintaining that control proved challenging.

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- Reports suggest that the regime has reinforced its presence to reclaim both Meshenti and Zenzelima.

North Gojjam Zone

North Mecha Woreda

- Between January 12th and 13th, regime soldiers committed violations against civilians in the Rem area.
 - Sources indicate that soldiers mobilized from Merawi town entered Rem and perpetrated abuses over two consecutive days.
 - Three civilians were killed—one on January 12th and two on January 13th.
 - In addition to the killings, regime soldiers engaged in property looting from local residents.
 - Further details regarding these incidents are currently under investigation.
- In the afternoon of January 18th, gunfire was exchanged in Merawi town, likely due to Fano fighters launching an attack on regime soldiers.
 - The exchange was brief, and casualties remain unknown.
 - However, in the aftermath, regime forces killed a civilian named Yeqoye, a bajaj driver, accusing him of being affiliated with Fano fighters. This incident occurred near Chefe Hotel.

South Mecha Woreda

- On January 14th, heavy gunfire exchanges were conducted in Abro-Menor Kebele.

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- The clashes reportedly began when regime forces moved from Mehal-Genet (Gerchech) town to Abro-Menor to encircle and suppress Fano fighters entrenched there.
 - The outcome and resulting casualties remain unknown due to a network shutdown in the area.
 - On January 17th, fighting took place in a locality known as Aguga.
 - The gunfire exchange reportedly commenced when regime forces mobilized from the towns of Mehal-Genet (also known as Gerchech) and Dagi, advancing towards Aguga village with the intent to encircle Fano fighters based in the area.
 - The Colonel Tadesse Muluneh Brigade, from the Amhara Fano in Gojjam’s 1st Division mounted a fierce defense, successfully repelling the regime’s assault.
 - A spokesperson from the Amhara Fano in Gojjam’s 1st Division claimed their forces inflicted 3 confirmed deaths and 7 injuries among regime soldiers during the confrontation.
 - Additionally, the spokesperson noted a significant trend of defections in the ongoing conflict, stating that over 30 regime soldiers have deserted their ranks in the past week, opting to join various battalions of the Amhara Fano in Gojjam’s 1st Division.
 - On January 18th, intense gunfire erupted in Mehal-Genet (Gerchech) town, initiated by Fano fighters attacking regime forces stationed there.
 - The regime responded with indiscriminate shelling using heavy weaponry, forcing residents to stay indoors for safety.
 - Casualties from this confrontation are also currently unknown.

Yilmana-Densa Woreda

- On January 16th, regime soldiers executed two civilians (brothers) in Adet town.
 - The victims were traveling when they were stopped at a checkpoint, forcibly dismounted from their vehicle, and killed after the soldiers checked their ID cards and identified them as being from Dega-Damot Woreda (West Gojjam Zone).
 - The names and further details of the victims have yet to be identified.

South Gonder Zone

Lay-Gayint Woreda

- On the evening of January 12th, a protracted battle took place between Fano fighters and regime forces in Sali town.
 - The fighting, which was marked by intense exchanges of fire, resulted in significant losses for the regime's militia. At least seven members of the militia were killed by Fano forces during the clash.
 - In addition to these casualties, two other members of the militia were captured by the Fano, along with their full military equipment, further undermining the regime's operational capacity in the area.
 - Moreover, the Fano managed to seize five kalashnikov rifles from the regime forces during the battle, further diminishing the regime's military resources and adding to their own arsenal.
- On January 14th, the Ambesaw Gayint Fano Division, a recognized unit of the Fano fighters, launched a strategically coordinated and successful ambush against regime forces in two distinct locations within the Lay-Gayint Woreda.

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- The first of these ambushes was executed at Checheho-Megentiya, while the second was carried out at Aybar.
 - These well-planned attacks resulted in significant losses for the regime’s forces, with a high number of casualties.
 - It has been confirmed that at least 9 soldiers were killed during these engagements. Furthermore, over 6 other soldiers sustained critical injuries, indicating the severity of the fighting and the effectiveness of the Fano fighters’ tactics.

Ibnat Woreda

- On January 12th, 46 members of the regime’s militia forces were confirmed missing from their assigned military post.
 - These militiamen, who were recently recruited and trained within the woreda, vanished from their post during the night, a sudden and inexplicable disappearance that sent shockwaves among local officials.
 - The fact that an entire unit disappeared without any apparent warning has created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, deeply impacting the morale of regime forces and causing significant alarm among Ibnat Woreda officials.
- On January 13th, a drone strike took place near the town of Selamaya.
 - The full impact of this second attack, including the number of casualties, is still under investigation.
 - These incidents form part of a larger pattern of intensified aerial activity, as a total of four drone strikes were recorded within a single day period.
 - Strikes were reported at Defecha-Kidanemihret and Rufael in Gonder-Zuriya Woreda (Central Gonder Zone).

Simada Woreda

- On January 15th, six bodyguards assigned to a General of the regime's military forces defected to Fano fighters in Wegeda town.
 - These soldiers did not simply abandon their posts; they also brought with them their military equipment, effectively transferring valuable resources and expertise to the Fano's ranks.
 - This defection, involving a General's entire security detail, is particularly notable as it reflects a loss of confidence even within the highest levels of the regime's military structure and underscores the growing strength and appeal of the Fano fighters.
 - Prolonged conflict and extreme exhaustion experienced by soldiers within the regime's regular military forces are contributing to continued desertions, with increasing numbers of soldiers choosing to abandon their posts and join the ranks of the Fano across multiple locations. This trend underscores the growing disillusionment and demoralization within the regime's ranks, as soldiers struggle to reconcile fighting against their own people.

Central Gonder Zone

- Early in the morning of January 13th, the regime conducted extensive aerial drone reconnaissance missions across multiple woredas in the south-central part of the Gonder sub-region.
 - Drone sightings were reported in East Dembiya, West Dembiya, East Belessa and West Belessa Woredas of Central Gonder Zone and in Libo-Kemkem Woreda of South Gonder Zone.

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- These reconnaissance missions, involving the use of drones, suggest a heightened level of surveillance and preparation for further military actions across a wide area.
 - The extensive nature of these surveillance missions indicates a strategic decision by the regime to collect intelligence and monitor activity across multiple locations in the region.

Gonder-Zuriya Woreda

- On January 13th, the regime conducted two separate drone strikes in Gonder-Zuriya Woreda.
 - The first of these targeted attacks occurred in Defecha-Kidanemihret Kebele.
 - Shortly thereafter, a second drone strike was carried out in Rufael village, a location situated in close proximity to the Gonder Azezo Atse Tewodros Airport.
 - The full extent of casualties resulting from these targeted drone strikes is currently under investigation.
- On the dawn of January 18th, intense fighting erupted in multiple locations as Fano fighters and regime forces engaged in a series of fierce clashes.
 - In the northeastern sector of Gonder city, heavy combat stretched from Weleqa to the Angereb River, indicating a significant area of conflict. Simultaneously, in the southern part of the city, particularly around the Megech Reservoir River, another fierce battle raged until approximately 11 am local time in the early morning.
 - Further skirmishes were also reported in Bezawit-Maryam, a locality within Genfo-Quch, which is part of Kebele 18 of Gonder city, as well as in the

nearby Fenter village. The fighting in Fenter and Bezawit-Maryam was notably supported by heavy weaponry, including ZU-23 anti-aircraft guns and mortars, suggesting a more intense and coordinated level of engagement. The ZU-23 fire was reportedly directed from positions in Arada-Abbo and Debre-Birhan Selassie towards Fenter and Bezawit, demonstrating the strategic use of heavy weapons by one or both sides.

- * In addition to the direct combat, the widespread fighting significantly impacted civilians. Numerous Orthodox Christians who were traveling to Gonder city to celebrate the Timket holiday were forced to halt their journeys and spend the night in locations such as Tseda, Maksegnit, Megech, and Azezo. Reports indicated over 200 vehicles were stranded in queues, unable to proceed.
- * While many individuals attempted to reach Gonder on foot, they were ultimately forced to turn back due to the fierce fighting with Fano forces, fearing potential infiltration of Fano fighters into the city and subsequent surprise attacks on regime forces stationed there.
- * Furthermore, worshippers coming from Debark (North Gonder Zone) and Metemma Woredas (West Gonder Zone) were also specifically prohibited from entering Gonder city for the holiday, highlighting the regime's attempt to control movement and perceived security risks amid the conflict.

Gonder City

- On January 14th, regime forces reportedly engaged in illicit black market activities involving benzene within Gonder city, exacerbating existing fuel shortages and creating a system of exploitation.

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- Numerous soldiers were observed purchasing large quantities of benzene at four different gasoline stations throughout the city, carrying jerry cans to transport the fuel.
 - These soldiers reportedly bought the benzene at 110 ETB per liter. Subsequently, they are allegedly reselling the same benzene to bajaj drivers, who rely heavily on the fuel for their livelihoods, at an inflated price of 300 ETB per liter.
 - When questioned about their involvement in these transactions, the soldiers reportedly offered no explanation, highlighting a lack of accountability and transparency.
 - The cost of gasoline is already exceptionally high in Gonder, and bajaj drivers often endure extended waits of up to four days in queues at gas stations only to find that supplies are depleted.
 - This situation forces them to resort to purchasing benzene from the soldiers on the black market at exorbitant prices, creating a cycle of exploitation and hardship.
- On January 15th, there has been a significant increase in the movement of both aerial and infantry military forces around Gonder city commencing in the early morning hours.
 - This deployment includes a substantial contingent of forces considered to be the regime's most elite units, including the so-called advance security forces, the republican guard, and special commando forces.
 - These heavily armed forces have reportedly been dispatched to Gonder from both Addis-Ababa and Bahir-Dar cities. All areas on the outskirts of Gonder have been heavily garrisoned with these forces.

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- Furthermore, there has been repeated aerial reconnaissance activity in East Dembiya, West Dembiya and Gonder-Zuriya Woredas, involving both drones and helicopters.
 - The primary reason for this significant build-up of forces in Gonder is believed to be the planned arrival of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, and high-ranking officials, who are expected to come to Gonder to celebrate the upcoming Timket holiday.
 - This event is widely seen as an attempt by the regime to conduct political propaganda, seeking to project an image of control and stability to the world, particularly concerning the ongoing Fano insurgency in the region.
 - The presence of these high-ranking Prosperity Party officials is the apparent reason behind this major military deployment in Gonder city, aimed at securing their visit and controlling the narrative surrounding the situation in the area.

Central Armachiho Woreda

- On January 15th, intense and sustained combat erupted between Fano fighters and regime forces in the areas of Maserodenb, Densuma, and Tele.
 - This fierce fighting involved a high level of engagement from both sides, resulting in a significant escalation of the conflict.
 - While precise details regarding the total number of casualties remain unconfirmed at this time, it is evident that regime forces sustained substantial losses during these engagements.
 - The intensity of the fighting suggests a notable impact on the regime’s military strength, further highlighting the continued resistance posed by the Fano fighters in these contested regions.

Wegera Woreda

- On the evening of January 16th, a brief but intense exchange of gunfire occurred in Amba-Giyorgis town between the regime's military forces and Fano fighters.
 - While the details of any casualties resulting from this confrontation remain unconfirmed at this time, the incident highlights the ongoing tensions and sporadic clashes in the region.
 - Despite Amba-Giyorgis town being heavily fortified and under the constant guard of regime forces, the Fano have demonstrated their ability to breach these defenses, frequently launching surprise attacks and offensives.

West Gonder Zone

Metemma Woreda

- On January 17th, Fano fighters executed a successful and strategically planned ambush against the regime's military forces.
 - This operation was launched in the early hours of the morning, at approximately 12:20 am local time.
 - The regime's forces were moving in a large military convoy from Kokit town toward Wedigemzo Kebele, an operation that was evidently detected and anticipated by the Fano.
 - Receiving intelligence about the regime's troop movement, Fano fighters strategically positioned themselves, occupying key locations along the anticipated route, creating an effective ambush point. When the regime's convoy entered the carefully constructed trap, the Fano launched an immediate and overwhelming surprise attack.

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- This coordinated offensive resulted in significant casualties for the regime’s forces, with many soldiers killed or sustaining critical injuries.
 - The regime’s military operation, intended to seize control of both Wedigemzo and Shimelegara Kebeles, involved the deployment of three heavy military convoys packed with soldiers. The ambush proved effective, with only a handful of soldiers managing to escape the Fano’s coordinated attack. The vast majority of regime forces were either killed or incapacitated during the engagement.
 - Notably, different battalions from the Gobie and Atanaw Wassie Divisions units of the Fano fighters were involved in this decisive surprise attack.
- Intense and protracted battles have continued into January 18th across multiple locations as the regime’s military forces clashed fiercely with the Fano fighters.
 - These engagements took place in at least six distinct areas, lasting for the better part of the day, from early morning until evening. The most concentrated fighting occurred specifically in Wedigemzo, Tagur, Mogese, and Agam-Wiha Kebeles, where combat continued well into the afternoon of January 18th.
 - The battles in these locations were characterized by close-quarters combat, indicating a high level of direct engagement between the opposing forces.
 - A particularly intense confrontation also took place in Achera Kebele, where the fighting was further intensified by the use of heavy weapons, suggesting a more conventional style of warfare in that specific location.
 - Regime forces suffered significant losses during these widespread and prolonged engagements. Notably, in Wedigemzo Kebele, Fano fighters successfully neutralized three military trucks, each reportedly carrying a full complement of soldiers. Furthermore, the regime’s attempt to advance into

Lasta town, located within Metemma Woreda, was met with a fierce counter-offensive by Fano fighters, resulting in heavy casualties on the regime's side.

- The Fano forces participated in this intense fighting in West Gonder Zone comprised the Atanaw Wassie, Wawa Gobie, and Tekezze Divisions.
- According to reports, the regime's losses included hundreds of riot dispersal forces, militia forces, and regular soldiers. While the Fano sustained casualties, with 2 fatalities and 4 injuries, ranging from minor to critical, reported during the fighting.

North Gonder Zone

Debark Woreda

- On January 13th, the regime carried out a series of drone strikes, with one particularly devastating attack occurring in Tirahina Kebele.
 - This strike, launched at approximately 4:45 am local time, resulted in the loss of 7 civilian lives.
 - Furthermore, over five individuals sustained critical injuries, including severe physical burns, which are considered life-threatening and carry a high risk of immediate fatalities.

Addis-Ababa City

- On January 16th, witnesses reported that city police carried out large-scale arrests in Megenagna and Lamberet-Menehariya areas.
 - Police forces traveled through the streets in vehicles, detaining individuals, with many of the arrested victims being children under 18-years-old including

young girls.

- The police reportedly used physical intimidation and violence during arrests.
- On January 15th, the *Sidama Federalist Party* announced its withdrawal from the *National Dialogue Commission* (NDC) led national dialogue process.
 - The party cited the lack of independence within the commission, noting that it had failed to address their concerns and had been used by the regime to maintain power.
 - They also criticized the commission for its lack of inclusiveness, independence, and commitment, stating that it operates under the regime's influence.
 - Additionally, the party condemned the regime's harassment and arrest of their members and its efforts to close their party.
 - As a result, the Sidama Federalist Party formally withdrew from the dialogue.
 - These developments highlight the ongoing issues with the NDC from its inception to the present.
- On January 17th, leading up to the Epiphany celebrations, the regime has reportedly been detaining youth volunteers involved in religious activities, particularly in Addis-Ababa city. These youths, known for their participation in religious services, have been targeted for arrest, with incidents reported in areas like Ferensay, Shiro-Meda Abuare, Kazanchis, Megenagna, and Saris.
- The celebrations between January 18th and 19th, marking the eve and holiday itself, were muted due to fear of regime intimidation, potential mass detentions, economic pressures, and other social and political factors. Regime forces specifically targeted and intimidated participants who wore clothing or displayed symbols in the national

colors (green, yellow, and red), aiming to deconstruct national cultural symbols and suppress any expressions of dissent or support for opposition movements.

About the Amhara Association of America (AAA)

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) is a non-profit civic organization based in Charlotte, North Carolina that investigates and documents human rights violations in the context of conflict, violence and political repression in Ethiopia. AAA seeks to inform U.S. policymakers, international human rights organizations, journalists, researchers, 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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