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Human Rights Abuses in Ethiopia

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Abbreviations

DRS	Department of Refugee Services (Kenya)
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defence Force
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	UN International Organisation for Migration
NDRA	National Displacement and Refugee Agency (Somaliland)
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFC	Oromo Federalist Congress
OLA	Oromo Liberation Army
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OMN	Oromia Media Network
ONARS	Office Nationale d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés (Djibouti)
ONM	Oromo National Media
OSG	Oromia Support Group
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Introduction

Dialogue or disintegration?

Promises by Ethiopian Prime Minster Abiy Ahmed of a genuine commitment to national dialogue and a programme of transitional justice are no more realistic than his forecast last year that Ethiopia would be exporting surplus grain to more needy countries by now.[1]

His grandiose plans for an upsurge in Ethiopia's economy by foreign-backed investment in property development,[2] his new Shaggar city,[3] and special economic zones for trade and industry (p.32) are built on wishful thinking, except for vanity projects such as his new $10-15 billion palace, bankrolled by the United Arab Emirates.

Ethiopia's dependency on the Emirates, as the UAE jockeys for regional dominance with Saudi Arabia, risks increasing confrontation between Somaliland, UAE, Rapid Support Forces in Sudan and Ethiopia on one side and Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudanese Armed Forces, on the other – the makings of a regional proxy war.[4]

Beset by grumbling, unsettled hostility in Tigray, insurgencies in Oromia and Amhara regions, sporadic violence elsewhere,[5] rampant inflation, over 3 million destitute displaced people,[6] delayed bail-out by the IMF,[7] and almost 25% of his population needing food aid,[8] PM Abiy Ahmed is not in a position to dictate terms for the much-needed national dialogue.

In April, the UN Human Rights Council stated that it remained 'concerned about on-going violence and human rights violations in the Amhara and Oromia regions.'[9] ENDF reprisal attacks on civilians in Amara Region now rival those in Oromia Region in their barbarity and scale, although they gain more media attention.[10]

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office advice to travellers on 30 March (right) shows that most of Ethiopia is not safe.

Despite ostentatious plans and wishful thinking, Abiy Ahmed is leading Ethiopia to disintegration.

Tigray genocide

Ethiopia now stands accused of genocide. All belligerents in the Tigray war have been found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the New Lines Institute. The Ethiopian

[1] https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-09-08/ethiopia-producing-surplus-wheat-for-export-after-drive-to-boost-output?embedded-checkout=true
[2] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/apr/04/dismay-in-addis-ababa-as-the-soul-of-the-city-is-razed-for-development-ethiopia#
[3] https://www.semafor.com/article/04/04/2024/ethiopia-property-ownership-foreign-investors
[4] https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ethiopia/ethiopia-back-brink
[5] https://addisstandard.com/deadly-armed-attack-on-bus-in-gambella-region-leaves-three-dead-several-injured/; https://www.eepa.be//wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-539-29-April-2024.pdf
[6] https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ethiopia-national-displacement-report-18-november-december-2023
[7] https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2024/05/16/tr051624-transcript-of-com-regular-presser
[8] https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ethiopia/ethiopia-back-brink
[9] https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc55-joint-statement-importance-transitional-justice-and-accountability-ethiopia_en?s=62
[10] https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/04/ethiopia-military-executes-dozens-amhara-region

National Defence Force, Amhara region forces and Eritrean Defence Force were also found to have committed genocide against the Tigrayan people.[11]

In her Foreword to the New Lines Institute report, June 2024, Baroness Helena Kennedy KC, Director of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, wrote:
The report convincingly identifies at least a reasonable basis to believe that genocide was committed against Tigrayans as an ethnic group, including through mass killings, the use of starvation, and the destruction of critical infrastructure, as well as countless instances of rape and other acts of sexual violence.
Tragically, consistent with other credible accounts, this report finds reason to believe that members of the Ethiopian National Defence Force – and associated forces including the Eritrean Defence Forces, the Amhara Special Forces, and related militia groups – weaponized rape and sexual violence not only to drive out and displace Tigrayans from Western Tigray, but also to destroy the Tigrayan group as such. Tigrayan women who were subjected to these horrendous acts are now often destitute and cast out of society. Even if the conflict ended in November 2022, credible allegations persist that rape and sexual violence continued to be committed by the same perpetrator groups in the aftermath.

In the Executive Summary, the report also stated:
There is a reasonable basis to believe that at least some statements reportedly made on social media by certain individuals also met the requirements for direct and public incitement to genocide, and were again made with the requisite intent.

The report called for appropriate action to be taken against Ethiopia at the International Court of Justice and against individuals at the International Criminal Court.

The Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation independent assessment of the collective humanitarian response to the crisis in Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions, from November 2020 to 1 April 2023,[12] published on 15 May, was critical of the international humanitarian response as well as the Ethiopian government. The assessment stated:
For much of the armed conflict, the Government imposed a siege and prevented the unhindered delivery of services and materials. Humanitarian aid was blocked, resulting in a situation when, at times, only 10 per cent of aid needed for the Tigrayan population reached the region.
. . . The blockade of aid imposed by the Government of Ethiopia was among the top defining characteristics of this crisis . . .
OCHA overviews of humanitarian capacity '*were disallowed by the Federal Government.'*

The leader for the investigation and report, Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop, wrote on 5 June:[13]
We detailed the government's obstruction of aid, a lack of unity among UN agencies, and the international community's failure to respond to large-scale sexual violence.
In hundreds of interviews with humanitarians, government officials, and war-affected communities, we detailed the government's obstruction of aid, a lack of unity among UN agencies, and the international community's failure to respond to large-scale sexual violence and the harassment of humanitarian staff.
Granted, the Ethiopian federal government was highly effective at blocking aid. In the two-year war, civilians were starved to death, their basic healthcare structures destroyed, telecommunications cut, and the banking system prevented from operating.

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[11] https://newlinesinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/20240604-Report-Genocide-in-Tigray-NLISAP_y.pdf; https://www.youtube.com/live/un8b9PG0qU0
[12] https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Northern%20Ethiopia%20IAHE%20Executive%20Summary%20May%202024.pdf
[13] https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2024/06/05/un-response-ethiopia-failure-accountability

. . . Last year, the primary focus of enhancing Ethiopia's humanitarian response was the distribution of food aid following reports of a substantial diversion of supplies. ***In reality, food aid has been instrumentalised in Ethiopia for years, if not decades.*** *The issue that captured international donors' attention was a convenient distraction from holding perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity accountable.*

The problem with Fano

On 14 June, Fano militants locked wedding guests in a hall in West Showa. At least 24 of the wedding party were then bombed, burnt and shot to death (see p.24). During the preparation of this report, OSG was sent another gruesome picture of headless corpses of Oromo civilians, murdered and desecrated by Fano militia.

The brutality of Fano fighters in killing and dismembering unarmed Oromo and Gumuz men, women and children has been repeatedly detailed in OSG reports over the last five years.

Fano militia are guilty of ethnic cleansing and stand in the dock alongside Amhara region militia, the ENDF and Eritrean Defence Force, accused of genocide in Tigray (see above).

OSG has reported ethnic cleansing by Fano of Oromo, Agew and Qemant people from Amhara Region, of Gumuz and Oromo from Metekel zone in Benishangul-Gumuz Region and of Oromo from East, North and West Showa, Horo Guduru and East Wallega zones of Oromia Region. Details of this ethnic intolerance were submitted by OSG in April to the Universal Periodic Review of Ethiopia by the UN Human Rights Council and are available on the OSG website.[14]

Also, Fano has recently been accused of attacking Sudanese refugees and forcing 6000, including over 2000 children, to leave Kumer and Awlala camps in Gondar,[15] where the *Sudan Tribune* reported 1700 incidents of 'killings, looting, theft, kidnapping and assaults' by Amhara militia. The 6000 are now living in the forest without aid or facilities.[16]

Yet, Fano forces are popular and receive support from the Amhara public at home and abroad. Amhara academics in the USA wrote on 22 May in support of Fano and called for the unification of its nine or more factions.[17] Drs Badege Bishaw and Aklog Birara claimed that Fano were protecting '50-60 million' Amhara, the 'largest group in Ethiopia' from genocide being perpetrated by a government dominated by 'Oromo elites'. Fano are fighting for the 'sheer survival' of Amhara people and for equality and democracy, they wrote.

They claimed Fano were farmers, ex-soldiers and professionals who defended the 'peace-loving and spiritual' Amhara people. They refuted the notion of Amhara hegemony over the Ethiopian Empire, writing that over the last 150 years, Amhara settled in other parts of Ethiopia 'driven by business opportunities, government jobs and the spread of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church' having 'an integrating role' outside of Amhara Region.

Others claim that Amhara living in other regions of Ethiopia, use the resources of Oromo etc. to fund Fano and that Fano aims to resume Amhara hegemony over the whole of Ethiopia, as

[14] See pp.12-21 of collated UPR submissions on the OSG website at https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Combined-UPR-Submissions-2024.pdf
[15] https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240604-calls-to-rescue-6000-sudanese-refugees-in-the-ethiopian-forests/
[16] https://sudantribune.com/article286392/
[17] https://borkena.com/2024/05/22/amhara-political-agenda-save-amhara-and-promote-a-democratic-and-prosperous-ethiopia/

well as expand the territory of Amhara Region, so that once more Amhara language, script and culture are seen as the only face of Ethiopia.[18]

Fano vehemently oppose the federal arrangement in the 1995 Ethiopian Constitution. Drs Bishaw and Birara describe it as being designed to 'isolate, attack and harm' Amharas. Disputed territory such as 'Walkait, Tsegade and Raya' 'belong to the Amhara people' and their sovereignty should not be decided by referendum, stated the authors.

They claimed 'Fano's primary objective is to stop the killings, persecutions, displacements, and ethnic cleansing of Amhara in any part of Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa.'

But this is exactly what Fano are doing to other peoples in Ethiopia.

Oromo human rights activists claim that Fano was armed and supported by Eritrea and the Ethiopian government to help in their genocidal war against Tigray.[19] Fano was used by Ethiopia to do its dirty work, to commit acts in Tigray, Metekel, and Oromia which would bring censure from the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice.

No longer cooperating with Ethiopia, Eritrea is encouraging Fano to bring down the government of Abiy Ahmed, in this window of opportunity to re-establish Amhara hegemony.

The destruction of infrastructure and the collapse of agriculture due to Fano's insurgency in Amhara Region, second only to Oromia in terms of agricultural production, has national repercussions.

The Oromo are the only obstacle to Fano's intentions, hence the group conflating the Oromo people with the Prosperity Party government as a common 'Oromo' enemy. Fano and Eritrea are desperate to keep Oromo hidden from the international scene and to deny them their rightful place as a significant force for sustainable peace in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Fano want access to Oromo resources, even if that means removing Oromo from Ethiopia.[20]

A lawyer and human rights activist interviewed by *Kush Media* in June 2023, stated that ordinary Amhara people suffer because of the conflict perpetuated by their elites who organise Fano. He said they were in conflict to the north in West Tigray, to the south in Oromia, to the west in Metekel, Benishangul-Gumuz Region, and in their own region against Agew, as well as Oromo in Wollo.[21]

Violence and hatred beget more violence and hatred. The belligerence and cruelty of Fano must be contained by more moderate Amhara. As U.S. Ambassador, Ervin Massinga, stated,[22] Fano should make its arguments 'through dialogue, not violence.' Whereas a principled, just resistance to oppressive government forces may be reasonable, killings and ethnic cleansing of civilians is not.

There is broad agreement with academics Drs Badege Bishaw and Aklog Birara, supporters of Fano, that there is a need for a conversation that 'brings all Ethiopians together and form a government in which all Ethiopians are represented and can live in an environment of equality, respect for human rights, dignity, justice and democratic governance.'

Observing democratic governance includes respecting the fact that the majority of Ethiopians support a federal arrangement.

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[18] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3PEOsE6Ciw
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] https://www.youtube.com/live/IkpukTa3Vv8
[22] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2oG0_Vkbpk

A credible national dialogue

Abiy Ahmed has lost credibility as an honest broker for sustainable peace in Ethiopia. He has instigated violence and killing on an industrial scale in Tigray, Oromia and Amhara regions. His security forces have committed gross human rights abuses, so far with complete impunity.

He has kept OLF leaders and other legal political opponents in detention against the instruction of court orders but released those guilty of severe abuses, such as former Somali Region President Abdi Mohamoud Omar, 'guilty of heinous crimes.'[23]

Security forces have assassinated Oromia's leading proponent of a peaceful resolution of Ethiopia's ills, Bate Urgessa (see p.8). OSG has now recorded 5,775 killings of Oromo civilians by government and Fano forces since Abiy Ahmed rose to power.

It is therefore impossible to believe Abiy Ahmed capable of leading a way out of Ethiopia's current crises by presiding over a dialogue and transitional process involving individuals selected and controlled by him.

As one seasoned politician wrote privately, 'the so-called National Dialogue or the transitional justice [*programme*] is a political gimmick to cheat the international community to ensure the flow of the dollars.'

The scales are falling from the eyes of foreign erstwhile supporters of Abiy Ahmed. As pointed out by U.S. Ambassador Ervin Massinga in Finfinnee on 15 May,[24] violence and 'a security-focussed approach will not resolve complex political issues.' 'Detaining and harassing those who criticise the government will not resolve those issues which must be addressed.'

He continued to encourage all to take part in a dialogue process, including armed actors, emphasising that the 'time for dialogue is now'. 'This is why a real inclusive national dialogue without preconditions is essential for Ethiopia.' 'The political dialogue that Ethiopians need could be helped by releasing key political figures.'

Ambassador Massinga's telling closing remark was to call for everyone 'to respect in both word and deed the human rights of all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, language, or alignment.'

Abiy can have a voice in this process, but it cannot be louder than others'.

Abiy Ahmed's security forces must stop killing civilians. There must be a total ceasefire throughout Ethiopia.

Professor Alex de Waal and Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe wrote in *Foreign Affairs*, 8 April:[25] *Getting the country back on course will require the political elite to set aside their differences and recognize that their country may soon collapse. But here, too, the United States and its partners could help by encouraging the different political groups to take part in an inclusive and candid national dialogue based on the federal constitution. Once today's spiralling crisis is arrested, Ethiopians can begin to talk their way toward a new political settlement. Abiy can have a voice in this process, but it cannot be louder than others'.*

[23] https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/03/15/ethiopia-releases-ex-politician-implicated-heinous-crimes
[24] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2oG0_Vkbpk
[25] https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ethiopia/ethiopia-back-brink

The killing of Bate Urgessa

The cold-blooded killing by Ethiopian security forces of internationally respected OLF spokesman Bate Urgessa on the night of Tuesday 9April 2024 shocked and saddened Oromo and all those throughout the world who want respect for human rights in Ethiopia. His measured, softly spoken and respectful articulation of Oromo rights and their role on the Ethiopian and world stage will be sorely missed.

The 41 year-old father of four had gone to his home town of Maqii (Meki), 127 km south of Finfinnee in the southern part of East Showa, to attend his family farm. He told friends he had been closely watched by government security men for several days and chose to stay at the Abebe Girazmach Pension in the Nooke area of Maqii instead of at the family home, for security reasons, on Tuesday 9 April. There was police and security agent activity early that evening at the Pension, which prevented the public from moving around, according to Addis Standard and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.

At about twenty minutes after midnight, Bate was taken by security men from the hotel, being severely beaten as he protested at his unlawful treatment, according to witness accounts relayed by the OLF. Witnesses from the 'Beeldaa' rural area, two km from Maqii, reported that a two-cabined security force vehicle carrying Bate and four members of the security forces pulled up, with headlights still on.

Two of the men got out with Bate and, under orders given in afaan Oromo by the two who remained in the vehicle, they tied Bate's elbows behind his back with his belt and shot him at least six times in his head, face and body. His body was left to be eaten by wild animals but local people stood guard and kept hyenas away.

Police arrived in the morning, took photographs and removed six bullets from the area but left Bate's body to be collected by his family. They did not even pretend to mount an investigation.

Witnesses, including the hotel watchman and guests and those who witnessed the killing and guarded Bate's body were all detained next day and made to disappear in detention. Between seven and 13 were taken and either were killed or disappeared. A telecommunications blackout ensued.

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission was forced to abandon its investigation because of harassment of its team and disappearance of witnesses by security forces.

Bate's brother, who had spoken to media, and his sister were detained.

Bate, a biology graduate from Bahar Dar University, had been arrested many times, including in 2016, when, as a secondary school teacher he was injured during the Qeerroo democracy demonstrations.

Shortly after his arrest in March 2021, when visiting OLF detainees in Burayu Police Station, he was ordered to be released by the Oromia Special Zone Court, Burayu Chamber but, like the other OLF detainees, he remained in detention. With other OLF prisoners his release was again ordered, this time by Lideta Federal High Court, in May 2021 but they were all re-arrested as they left Kilinto prison next morning.

Bate was transferred with others to Awash Melkana military camp near Adama, where he sustained head and facial injuries during an assault by other detainees. He was held in several official and unofficial places of detention, in foul, unsanitary conditions until he returned to Burayu Police Station where he joined other OLF detainees in a hunger strike in protest at the conditions of their detention in February 2022.

He was one of six OLF detainees who were taken by helicopter two weeks later to be resuscitated in Lideta Federal Police Hospital. He was found to have Hepatitis B but was returned to detention next day with the others, until he was released, being carried on a stretcher, on 12 March.

Once recovered, he continued to visit the other OLF detainees regularly until he was arrested when being interviewed in the Skylight Hotel in Finfinnee by *African Intelligence* journalist Antoine Galindo on 22 February 2024. He was released on bail of 100,000 Birr on 6 March.

His brother told reporters after his death that Bate understood the risks he took in being an outspoken advocate for Oromo rights. He said that Oromo youth faced the same dangers on a daily basis and although he was not sure if he would live or die 'I must keep doing the right thing.'

Bate's assassination has been widely condemned, including by the Chair of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Ben Cardin, who wrote 'Extrajudicial killings, harassment, and political repression have, for far too long, been common place in Oromia.'

Bate's contribution (pictured left) to a discussion which was broadcast on Ethiopian National Television included the following excerpt:

'*The ongoing discourse seems to be centred around reviving the assimilation project, which contradicts the principles set forth in the current Constitution. The enthusiastic support for supremacist ideologies, which fly under the flag of Ethiopianism and deny the existence of Ethiopia's diverse nations and nationalities, not only violates the Constitution but also undermines the social fabric we strive to uphold.*

It is essential to acknowledge that Ethiopia is composed of a multitude of nations and nationalities, each with unique backgrounds and histories. These groups have long fought for recognition and rights, leading to the establishment of the current multinational federal system. It is imperative to honour and uphold this system, as any derogatory remarks or attacks on the Constitution jeopardize our collective rights.

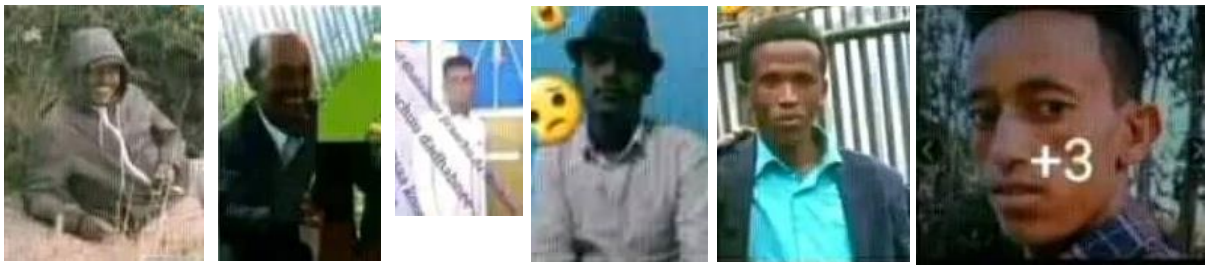
We must recognize the importance of respecting the current multinational federalism as a common ground for all Ethiopians. Dismissing the existence of ethnic diversity and promoting a homogenous identity undermines the progress made towards inclusivity and equality. It is crucial to refrain from divisive language and instead embrace the rich tapestry of cultures that make up our nation.' Translation from Amharic by Dr Ebissa Regassa.

The legacy of Bate Urgessa – like that of Oromo heroes before him, including Hachalu Hundessa and the thousands of young Qeerroo members whose lives were lost in promoting democratic change in Ethiopia – will eventually be the freedom of the Oromo people to voluntarily choose and control their own destiny, free from oppression.

Finfinnee and Central Oromia

Killings in Finfinnee Oromia Special Zone

ENDF killed the following six people (pictured below) in an attack on Kalacha village, Sabbataa district, south of Finfinnee in the Oromia Special Zone on 28 April (W1):
Getaachoo Cakkaa
Suyyuumee Getaachoo
Guddee Getaachoo
Gammaachuu Raajii
Tadduu Amdee
Milkeessa Daadhii



Killings in West Arsi and Arsi

According to social media reports,[26]**nine members of one family**, including nephews and grandchildren of the informant, were **shot dead** in Adaba district, West Arsi, on the orders of the District Governor, Kamal Haji Tola, on 14 April.
Their bodies were thrown in the bush around Washa and Bubisa villages and left for several days. The dead included:
Saudi Haji Wako
Dr. Abdulkarim Abubakar
Ms Rukiya Sade
The other six were not named in the report.

On 15 April, *Curate Oromia* reported the **killing** by government forces of **Folle Gobana**, the son of the Tulama Abbaa Gadaa, the previous day,[27] in Gadab Hasasa, West Arsi. He was accused of being a member of OLA. In December 2022, his brother, Badhane Gobana, was arrested from their father's home in Maqii, East Showa. Their father, Gobana Hola, is Secretary of the Oromo Gadaa Leaders Council.

The following were killed by ENDF on or just before 6 May, in or near Xareetaa village, Sirka district, Arsii zone (W1):
Muhaammad Huseen, Heellaa Xareetaa village
Muhaammad Arabaa, Xareetaa 01 kebele
Ahmadaa Husseen Kadiir, Gallabee Amajaa village
Umar Hadiidoo, Gallabee Amajaa
Sufiyaan Muhaammad, Birboof Collee village

[26] https://www.facebook.com/sen.koo.79/posts/pfbid0xpL8qqwipYAF1VDtiDD1Gz7LG5aQkcNHBujnzid5EwTrivuHVQxSNjLX5jCEp3r6l
[27] https://curateoromia.com/son-of-abbaa-gadaa-of-tulama-oromo-killed/

Abdurahman Abdurro (right), was among **four killed** by ENDF in Adaba town, Arsii zone on 28 May. The other three are named below and include the young boy, below right, who was taken from prison and shot dead because his brother is an OLA fighter (W1):

Abdukarim Bariso
Jamu Yune
Xayitii Sadee

Detention

Barecha Fayisa was detained on 1 July in Gelan, to the east of Finfinnee in the city Oromia Special Zone. From Guder district, West Showa, he is accused of association with OLA and is at grave risk of torture (W1).

Burning and looting

Homes in two villages, Cofira Shaashe and Cofira Hulluqo, in Gadab Hasasa district, Arsi, were burned down by ENDF, reported 2 April (W1). They belonged to:
Muktaar Husseen Kadiir
Jamaal Husseen Kadiir (5 properties)
Muudii Burqaa (6 properties)
Galatoo Huseen
Aashim Galatoo (2 properties)
Abuunaa Badhaasoo (2 properties)
Rahiyyoo Horatoo
Bakar Leenjisoo
Guddataa Leenjisoo
Badhaasoo Faanoo (2 properties)
Abdaa Faanoo (6 properties)
Amaanoo Badhaasoo (2 properties)
Abdulrahmaan Burqaa (2 properties)
Several were related; brothers with the same father's (second) name, and fathers and sons, with fathers' first name being the second name of sons.

Fifty cows were reported stolen from farmers in Suluta by government forces, about 26 km north of Finfinnee on 16 May. They belonged to brothers Gadissa, Abay and Tadesa Tsega.

Properties belonging to the following 43 (named as in the report) were destroyed when ENDF set them on fire in Marti district, Arsi, on 30 May (W1):

Qasim Elemoo Roobaa
Sa'idoo Mi'eesoo Roobaa
Sa'idoo Mi'eesoo Hasanoo
Sa'idoo Mi'eesoo Gutoo
Sa'idoo Mi'eesoo Eeda'oo
Sulxii Eda'ooTamaam
Eda'oo Mi'eesoo Abishuu
Abdalaa Mi'eesoo Jamoo
Abdalla Bilisu Abdalaa
Leencoo Waqoo Mammadoo
Elemoo Roba Dawudoo
Mammad Elemoo
Huseen Dhadachoo Shee Amanoo
Hajii Waqoo Ganaa
Mamad Turee Obee
Qasim Mammad Turee

Ziyaad Mammad Turee
Tamam Adam Hawiyoo
Adam Hawiyoo
Kadiiroo Gandoo Badhoo
Hawaas Kadiiroo Gandoo
Adam Obsee Galatoo
Su'uudii Gana Gubii
Jamaal Amanoo Gubii
Gubii Robaa Mustii
Ganna Gubii
Mammad Gana Gubii
Aliyyii Gana Gubii
Jirbiloo Gabii Qomichaa
Usmee Qomichaa Bore
Ganicho Ambaa Tuluu
Ibroo Ganichoo Amba
Usmaan Tukii Safanoo
Gutoo Galatoo Boru
Kalilo Eda'oo Bore
Gabii Eda'oo Bore
Unjuu Qomicha Booree
Sulxi Unjuu Qomicha
Boree Hustii Qomicha
Boree Qasim Obsee
Jiboo Qasim Obsee
Ibro Husti

Amhara Region

Killings

The Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council and Amhara Regional Islamic Affairs Higher Council, reported to *Addis Standard*, 9 April, several incidents of violence, including killings, targeting Muslims in Amhara Region.[28]

On 7 April, **four members of one family and one of their neighbours were killed** by gunmen when returning from their mosque in Bahar Dar city.

The Supreme Council also reported the **killing** of a Muslim in Mota town, East Gojjam, and frequent shootings and killings in Gondar city.

The Regional Higher Council reported that over **80 Muslims had been killed**, many subject to kidnapping and robbery and tens of thousands displaced in the eight months before April.

One killing in Mota occurred after 300,000 birr had been paid in ransom by the victim's family. A married couple were shot and stabbed in Bichena, East Gojjam.

The head of the Kewot district administration office in North Showa zone of Amhara Region, **Milishu Bekele** (left) was **shot dead** by 'extremist elements' 'while moving within the city' on 6 June, according to *Addis Standard* next day.[29] Informant W1 reported to OSG that she was five months pregnant.

Addis Standard also reported the following killings by Fano extremists of other government employees in Amhara Region:
Alebes Adefrash, head of Efratana Gidem district, was killed at his home late at night on 8 June.
Getachew Mellise, governor of Lasta district, and **Million Afewarqi**, head of the district health office, were shot dead near Lalibela when returning from a meeting in Waldiya, the capital of North Wollo in May.

[28] https://addisstandard.com/ethiopian-islamic-affairs-supreme-council-raises-alarm-over-attacks-on-muslims-in-amhara-region/
[29] https://addisstandard.com/two-local-govt-officials-killed-in-a-series-of-assassinations-in-amhara-region-this-week/

Abdu Hussein, security chief for Showa Robit city, and two senior security officials in Dejen district, East Gojjam zone, **Inspector Zewdu Tadele** and **Deputy Inspector Worku Shimelus** were shot dead in July 2023.
Girma Yeshitila, head of Amhara Region Prosperity Party, was killed with **five others** when travelling between Mehal Meda and Debre Berhan, North Showa, in late April 2023.
Tsion Tegegn, Revenue Department official, Showa Robit, was killed while 'on a bus to visit her family' on 23 November 2022.
Wubshet Ayalew, Mayor of Showa Robit, was shot dead on 1 September 2022.

IDPs, burning and looting

The UN OCHA Ethiopia Situation Report for 26 April stated that in March, another 18,000 were added to approximately 670,000 IDPs in Amhara Region, following attacks 'by armed groups' in Kewot, Efratana Gidim, and Antsokia districts, North Shewa. About 290 houses were burned and over 2,000 livestock looted.

Attacks on Agew

In a joint statement with the Oromo Democratic Revolutionary Party, dated 29 April,[30] the Agew Liberation Front described attacks on Agew by Fano militia in the Agew Awi and Wag Hemira (Khimra) zones in the southwest and northeast of Amhara Region, in February and March 2024.

Agew Awi

According to the Ambela kebele administration, between 21 February and 7 March, **194 civilians**, 'including the elderly, young people, and children' **were killed** and 17 severely injured in attacks by Fano fighters in Ambela town and surrounding kebeles.

'Three of the people killed were already disabled, making them unable to flee or otherwise protect themselves.'

In and near the towns of Ambela and Gori, '6,626 houses were set on fire. In this same area, 7 primary schools, 2 high schools, 2 primary health institutions, 1 veterinary facility, 6 power transformers, 1 telecommunication infrastructure, and a local farmers' association office were looted, vandalized, and set on fire by Fano (including the sole tractor for a farming community). Government facilities such as the kebele administrative office and the Ambela town sub-municipality office' were also put to the torch.

Privately owned facilities which were also destroyed or looted included '2 veterinary clinics, 2 pharmacies, 1 medium standard clinic, 17 hotels, 5 cafés and restaurants, several electronic device shops, and 7 beer distributing centres.'

'As a result of these attacks, 55,034 Agews have been displaced from their homeland.'

[30] https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f71c4d68ed7155b91bbb9cd/t/662ffaaa6aa8d44f478f773a/1714420410636/FINAL+ALF_ODRP+Joint+Statement.docx.pdf

‘In Ambela and surrounding areas, 41 churches were either set on fire or looted . . . Priests were either killed or fled to save their lives.’

‘34 piles of teff, 11 piles of millet, 52 piles of corn, and 32 piles of chilli pepper’ worth in total ‘41 million birr were set on fire in Ambela and the surrounding kebeles.’

‘In 2023, to completely sever the historical ties between the Agew and the Oromo, the Amhara Regional Government annexed the Agew territories of Ambela and surrounding territories into the Amhara zone of Western Gojjam. The map reflecting this annexation was officially published in the region’s curriculum textbook used by students in the third grade. The correlation between the Amhara Regional Government's political annexation of Agew territories in 2023 and the site of Fano's violence in recent months is just one of many indicators that the two units work in collaboration.’

Wag Hemira (Khimra)

Another Agew area is in the south of Wag Hemira, named Khimra by the Agew Liberation Front, who also wrote Wag/Lasta in their report. Lasta is a district just over the border of Khimra, in North Wollo zone, according to Wikipedia.

‘In this region, Fano entered Dehana Wereda [district] Azila village on February 29th. In this remote village, **Fano publicly executed 8 Agew people**, forcibly gathering villagers, including children, the elderly, and women, to watch. Using this public massacre, Fano militants actively intimidated community members to identify as Amhara, and to no longer identify themselves as Agew. Those killed were accused of encouraging people to embrace their Agew identity and of advocating for an independent Agew Regional State.’

Killings and other abuses in Wollo, Oromia Special Zone

Fano and ENDF kill 119 civilians in March

On 26 March, OSG was given the following eye-witness account of an attack on Oromo villagers in the Oromia Special Zone of Amhara Region, ‘Wollo’.

On the first day of Ramadan, 10 March, Fano and Amhara militia attacked two kebeles in the Bate area near Sanbate, a small town in a mountainous area, **killing 94 people**. One village, Wasan Qurqur, was totally destroyed. In each kebele were 200 or more homes, each with 8-14 people living in them. Thus, at least 4000 Oromo were made homeless.

Crops were burnt as well as houses. 1000 cattle and several hundred camels (one house would have 3-4 cows and a camel) were either stolen or shot if they could not be taken away. More than half of all properties were stolen.

The road was closed by the government so aid could not get through.

ENDF came and fought with Fano forces but were repulsed. Their Amhara commander then turned on the Oromo villagers and **killed 25**. ‘As the area is in conflict, no-one will care about them killing Oromo’ said OSG’s informant. When Amhara region militia arrived and started to dig trenches, the Oromo thought they were going to defend them but the regional militia joined in with Fano to attack them.

The IDPs are staying in the Mosque in Sanbate or being hosted by local Oromo, sharing their homes with 20, 30 or even 40 people.

There is no international or other national aid. There are no schools – the Wasan Qurqur school was the first building to be destroyed a few years ago.

More Wollo killings in March 2024

Qeerroo activist, former detainee and torture survivor, Ibrahim Sadan Shakal, now a refugee in Cairo, reported on 14 March the killing of eight people in Makkah, Wollo, on 20 February. The names of six were corroborated by W1 on 30 April and are marked by an asterisk *. Locations were provided by both informants and are given after the victims' names:

Ammadanee Muusaa Hasan,* Zigbaa
Aliyyi Adam Aliyyii, Warra Abboo
Hasan Adam Bilaal,* Luugoo
Hasan Adam Siraajuu,* Jaarraa Waataa
Hasan Bilee, Warra Yaatuu
Husseen Muhammad Aliyyee,* Zigbaa
Ilma/Ibrahim Aliyyi Muusee,* Burqaa Bunaa
Kaalid Adam Usumaan,* Jaarraa Waataa, aged 7 years

According to a 29 April statement by the Oromo Revolutionary Democratic Party,[31]
11 were killed and 20 injured in Jillee Dhummuggaa district on the 20 March. Thousands were displaced due to the burning of their homes by Fano forces.
On 17 March, ENDF and Fano **killed four civilians** and injured several others in Wollo.

The OCHA Ethiopia Situation Report 29 April stated that 36,450 individuals affected by hostilities required urgent humanitarian assistance in Oromia Special Zone.

Killings and displacement in early May

On 25 May, more information was given by an eye-witness to further atrocities in early May in Artuma Fursi and Chaffa districts of the Oromia Special Zone. In one day of intense fighting across the area, the whole of one kebele in Artuma Fursi district was completely emptied of its Oromo villagers when 70-80 households (about 700 or more people) fled to Chaffa town, about 15 km from Kemise town.

At least four were killed, many homes were burnt and cattle were stolen. Fano, Amhara region militia and 'government Fano' were responsible.

U.S. Ambassador's statement

The announcement right, by the US Ambassador to Ethiopia, was forwarded to OSG on 26 March.

Drone victims

On 19 March, a drone attack by government forces injured at least six individuals in Wollo, who were later treated in Adama Hospital, East Showa. Two, including a left arm amputee, are shown below. A local informant named them as:
Aliyyi Umar Jaarraa
Aliyyi Muusaa Umar
Muhaammad Aliyyi Muhaammad
Muhaammad Usmaan Jaarraa
Huseen Hasan Baqqalaa
Muhaammad Abdallaa Ahmad

[31] https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f71c4d68ed7155b91bbb9cd/t/662ffaaa6aa8d44f478f773a/1714420410636/FINAL+ALF_ODRP+Joint+Statement.docx.pdf

Extortion

ONM reported on 16 May that Oromo business owners in Kamise district were being harassed by local Prosperity Party members.[32] They were demanding 2000-2800 birr per month for each business and smaller amounts for private households to avoid being labelled as sympathisers of opposition groups and thus being exposed to risk of detention or killing.

Killings in last three years reported on 30 April

Names and location of 115 civilians killed in Wollo in the last three years (including 6 of the 8 killed in March and named above), were gathered from local contacts and reported to OSG by informant W1 on 30 April.
* Corroborated by ISS on 14 March (see below).

From Mataa Horaa:
Abdallaa Najiib,* Hangacaa (named twice by ISS, which may indicate two victims)
Ahmad Arbahim Umar, Hangacaa
Ahmad Garaadoo,* Qabbanaahaa
Ahmad Husseen Abdallaa,* Odaa Diimaa
Ahmad Muhammad Ahmadee, Bijoo Seeloo
Ahmad Tamaam, Tuulii
Ahmad Umar Yasuf,* Molloo Gogessaa
Ammaduu Hasan Umar, Waaccuu Ammadiyyuu
Budunii Aliyyuu, Qabbanaahaa
Hasan Muhammad Arbiyyee, Dudda Nagahaa
Husseen Aliyyi Moommadee, Waaldahaa
Husseen Aliyyi Usumaan
Husseen Sheik Aliyyii, Tuuli
Mootii Muhammad Aliishaa, Haxaayyii town (possibly Mootii Muhammad below)
Muhammad Adamee Arbahim, Waaccuu Ammadiyyuu
Umar Abdallaa Muusee, Akeekaa
Usumaan Aliyyi Gojee, Tuulii

From Arba Waayyuu:
Abdallaa Muhammad Ahmad, Arbaa Fannoo
Abduu Shee Umar Bazzaa,* Gooroo Bordogee
Adam Abduu Shee Umar,* Gooroo Bordogee
Adam Muhammad Ibraahim,* Dawaa (named twice by ISS)
Ahmad Abbabbaa,* Haxaayyii town
Aliyyi Husseen Ahmad, Haxaayyii town
Arabuu Hamzaa, Waddeeyyii
Awwal Ammadee Aliyyii, Haxaayyii town
Awwalee Sa'id Muhee, Jaarraa Waataa
Hasan Shee Muhammad, Gooroo Bordogee
Husseen Abduu Shee Muhee, Haxaayyii town
Jabbaa, Haxaayyii town
Kaalid Ahmad Abduu,* Haxaayyii town
Muhammad Addurroo, Waddeeyyii
Muhammad Aliyyi Hasan,* Gooroo Bordogee
Muhammad Urgoo,* Caffee

[32] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/16/forceful-money-extortion-by-pp-administrators-walloo-north-kamise-district/

Najaat Ahmad Umar, Haxaayyii town
Zaharaa Ibraahim Yaassin, Aannannoo

From Luugoo and Burqaa Bunaa:
Adam Muhammad Adam,* Qunxarbaa
Ahmad Aliyyi Baabur, Haxaayyii town
Ahmad Heeloo, Burqaa Bunaa (possibly named below as Ahmad Hilloo Adam)
Ahmad Ibraahim Umar,* Luugoo
Ahmad Muhammad Alii Muhammad, Bookee
Ahmad Sa'id Saawlih,* Hamiduu
Ahmad Umaree Muusaa, Mudhii Waaccuu
Aliyyi Moommaduu, Sattawwaa
Awwalee Arabiyyii, Haxaayyii town
Gojobee Muhammad Adam, Mul'ataa
Hasan Abdallaa Muhammad,* Kaloo
Kadir Chiichii, Haxaayyii town
Maahmud Alii Hoosaa, Haxaayyii town
Muhammad Adam Qaallichaa, Mul'ataa
Muhammad Adam Sarboo,* Burqaa Bunaa
Muhammad Ali Suttaa,* Murjaa
Muhammad Aliyyi Umar, Luugoo
Muhammad Tabbee, Mul'ataa
Muusaa Alii Hoosaa, Haxaayyii town
Shaanbal Husseen Arbiyyee, Burqaa Bunaa
Umar Jissee Siraajuu, Burqaa Bunaa
Usumaan Aliyyi Muhammad, Xaaxessaa
Usumaan Daammii,* Aadee

From Gaangahaa:
Abdallaa Muhammad Jaarsaa,* Arjaho
Adam Ali Ahmad,* Raasaa
Adamee Ali Adamee,* Jirgoo
Ahmad Aliyyi Hasee, Hadhoo
Ahmad Muhammad Adam Alii,* Arjaho
Ahmad Muhammad Hasan, Dallansiisaa
Aliyyi Ahmad Aliyyii, Hadhoo
Aliyyi Yasufaa,* Bishaan Bahee
Hasan Ahmad Jiloo,* Allaguc
Hasan Gunee, Bishaan Bahe
Hasan Muhammad Haajii,* Arjahoo
Heedar Ahmad Aliyyii, probably Heedar ‘Wommad’ Ali below
Husseen Umar Guddaa,* Handoodee
Muhammad Ahmad Hasan, Dallansiisaa
Muhee Umar Abdallaa, Bishaan Bahee
Shaafii Hasan Dooyyo, Qarsaa Adii
Shee Umar Haaji Hasan, Hadhoo
Umar Muhammad Adamee, Jirgoo
Umarshaa Yasufaa, Bishaan Bahee
Umarshee Shaafii Hasan, Qarsaa Adii

From Warra Leencaa:
Ahmad Adam Ahmad, Saarkamee

Ahmad Muhammad Ibraahim, Ogomdii
Ali Hasan Chakii, Missiidaa
Hasan Abdallaa Adam, Missiidaa
Hasan Bullee*
Hasan Muhammad Hasan*
Muhammad Abdallaa Muhammad, Raaddee
Muhammad Aliyyi Hasan,* Dhadhaboo
Muhammad Hasan Qaallichaa,* Dhadhaboo
Umaree Adam Baqqalaa, Missiidaa

From Yaatuu:
Ahmad Ali Bilaal, Haxaayyi
Ahmaduu Hasan Umar, Xaaxessaa
Ali Muhammad Abbagaar, Badannoo
Awwal Sa'id Muhee, Haxaayyi
Haaji Abbaa Haajii, Haxaayyi
Hasan Ali Hoosaa, Haxaayyi
Hasan Aliyyi Bilaal, Luugoo Gulufa
Hasan Bilee Ahmad, Gariibaa
Hasuu Ahmad Muusikkee, Badannoo
Husseen Muhammad Hasan Alii, Marar
Muhammad Ammee, Haxaayyii
Muhammad Ammee Abdallee, Haxaayyi
Muhammad Hasan Muhammad, Lallabaa
Muhammad Heedar Darasoo, Haxaayyi Zigbaa
Muhammad Sa'id,* Haxaayyi, probably Muhammad Sa'id Qaadi, below
Muhee Ammiyyee Muhammad, Haxaayyi
Muhee Hasanuu Usee, Haxaayyi
Sa'id Ibraahim, Gola Aannanii
Umar Adam Dukkoo, Qunnii
Umar Muhammad Abdallaa Dingoo,* Haxaayyi Gabaa Kamis
Usumaan Aliyyi Saalii, Marar

Another killing, previously unrecorded by OSG, was reported by OLLAA in November 2023.[33] On an unspecified date in October 2023, **Muussaa Yusuuf** was killed in Cirat Walbata, Dawa Cafa.

Other killings in Wollo since 2018

Ibrahim Sadan Shakal (ISS, see above) collected the names of 360 civilians killed in Wollo from 2018-24 and sent these to OSG on 17 March. Those who were killed in the last three years and named by W1 above (indicated by *) are not duplicated in this list. The locations of the following victims in Wollo were not given. They were placed in alphabetic order by OSG. Names duplicated in the list may indicate separate individuals, although they are listed only once with a note in brackets:

Abbaa Haamid
Abbaas Haamid
Abdale Ali Abdale
Abdaallaa Mahaammad Abdaallaa
Abdalla Ahimed Alii
Abdalla Moh'd Ahmed (2 of this name)
Abdalla Umar Abdalla
Abdallaa

[33] https://ollaa.org/report-on-extrajudicial-killings-in-october-2023/

Abdallaa Aliyyi
Abdallaa Jaabir Mohammed
Abdallaa Najiib (2 of this name)
Abdallee Muhee (2 of this name)
Abduu Adamuu
Abduu Ahimed Dawwee
Abduu Alii Mohammed
Abduu Aliyyii
Abduu Aliyyi Yaasin
Abduu Aliyyi Yasufee
Abduu Duurii
Abduu Idiriis
Abduu Mahamad
Abduu Quufaa,
Abduu Shee Umar
Abduu Umaraa Boruu
Abduu Umaruu
Adam Abdu Hussen (2 of this name)
Adam Alii
Adam Aliyyii Baasha
Adam Aliyyuu Arbiyyee
Adam Ammee Sarbadiin
Adam Hanbasaa
Adam Hussen Aliyyi
Adam Jaarraa
Adam Mahamad Adam
Adam Moh'd Ibraahim (2 of this name)
Adam Musa Fattagera
Adam Umar Abbagaar
Adam Umar Yasuf
Adamee Hanbuursaa
Adamee Mohammed Adam
Adamee Mohammed Alikkoo
Agiidu Umaruu
Ahamad Mohammed Adam
Ahamad Usumaan Jaarsa
Ahimad Mohammed Aliite
Ahimad Said Umaree
Ahimada Umarshaa Haaji
Ahmad Adam Hasan
Ahmad Borcoo
Ahmad Mahammad (2 of this name)
Ahmad Mohammed Adee
Ahmad Mohamad Aliyyii
Ahmad Mokenen.
Ahmad Sa'idee
Ahmad Sa'idee Saalih (2 of this name)
Ahmad Umar Yusuuf
Ahmad Umar Hasan
Ahmad Xoyib Abishuu
Ahmed Abbabaa
Ahmed Abdallaa Umar
Ahmed Aliyyii Abbagaar
Ahmed Aliyyii
Ahmed Aliyyii Hasan
Ahmed Hasan Hussen
Ahmed Hilloo Adam
Ahmed Husseen Diimaa
Ahmed Ibraahim Umar
Ahmed Mohammed
Ahmed Mohammed Ahmad
Ahmed Mohammed Hasan Umar
Ahmed Rumee
Ahmed Sayyid Bushuraa
Ahmed Sheik Muusaa
Ahmed Umaree Adamu
Ali Mommad Ali
Alimiraa Umar Hinsee
Aliyi Adam Massito
Aliyoo Mohammed Muusaa
Aliyyii Ahmad Mahammad
Aliyyii Ahmed Adam
Aliyyii Ammee Sheik Umar
Aliyyii Arbiyee Abdalla
Aliyyi Hasan
Aliyyii Hasaan Aliyyii
Aliyyii Hasan Chakii
Aliyyii Hasan Jaadee
Aliyyii Hasan Muhee
Aliyyii Heedaroo
Aliyyii Jamaal Sheik Ibraahim
Aliyyi Masnoo
Aliyyii Mohammed Haajii
Aliyyii Mohammed Umar
Aliyyii Mohammed Umar Joraa
Aliyyii Sayid Ababo
Aliyyii Umar Goonfee
Aliyyii Umar Mahammad Abbayi
Aliyyii Umar Mohammed (2 of this name)
Aliyyii Umar Muusaa
Aliyyii Umarshaa
Aliyyii Usuman Ammee
Aliyyii Yasufaa Umar
Aluwwa Hussen
Amaadu Golee Qumsii
Ammadu Mohammed Alikkoo
Amee Hasaan Hajii
Amee Mohammed Diimaa
Ammadee
Ammadee Adam Hasan

Ammadee Hasan
Ammaduu Mohammed Haajii
Ammee Abbagaar
Ammee Aliyyee Abdallaa
Ammee Hasan
Ammee Hasan Haajii
Ammee Mahammad Alii
Ammee Mohammed
Ammee Mohammed Abbayii
Ammee Mohammed Diimaa
Ammee Mootii
Ammee Sheik Husseen
Amiin Shee Aliyyii
Amiinu Umar Tukka
Amiinuu Ahmed Hasan
Arbiyyee Abbaa Boruu
Arbiyyee Awwaluu
Awal Ibrahim
Awwal Abdallaa Umaree
Awwal Shilishi
Awwaluu Umaruu
Bassaa Hammad Hasanuute
Damissee Ahimad Sheik Ibraahim.
Darasaa Aliyyii Arbiyyee (2 of this name)
Dingoo Umarsha Hajii
Ebraahim Mohammed Bashiir
Faaris Mahamad Kaliil
Faaximaa qaallichaa
Jaafar Ahimad Muusaa
Haadha Hasanee Ammee
Haawa Umar Daa'iama, Aged 5
Hagunee Haajii
Haloo Adee Kuchee
Hasan Abbaa Nuuruu
Hasan Abdallaa
Hasan Abdallaa Mohammed
Hasan Abdallaa Wommad
Hasan Adee (2 of this name)
Hasan Ahmadee
Hasan Amiinu
Hasan Hajii
Hasan Hammee Mohammed Umaritoo
Hasan Mahaammad Hasan
Hasan Moh'd Abba Gulloo (Hasan Diru)
Hasan Mohammed Umar
Hasan Muhammad
Hasan Musa Hasan
Hasan Umar
Hasan Umar Diimaa
Hasan Usee Umaree
Hasan Woommachuu
Hasanee Ammee
Hasanuu Dakullaa
Hasoolii
Hasoolii Anballaap
Hassan Alii Ussoo
Hassan Said Aliyii
Hawwa Da'iid
Hawwaa Dawud
Hedar Wommad Ali
Heedar Muusaa Usee
Husen Mohammed
Husseen Abdallaa Umar
Husseen Ammadii
Husseen Adee Wanbee
Husseen Ahmad mammo
Husseen Ammaarii
Husseen Araab Hasanee
Husseen Sayyid Hasee
Husseen Umaraa Aliyyii
Hussein Hamzaa
Hussein Mohammed Amme
Hussen Hasan
Hussen Mahammado
Ibraahim Aliyyii
Ikraam Abdalla, One year old baby
Ilma Abdussamad
Ismaa'il Mohammed
Jaarraa Adam Muusaa
Jamaal Ahmad Imaam
Jamaal Haashim
Jamal Ahmad
Kaalid Ahmad Abduu
Kaddoo Adam Aged 75
Kalid Hasuu Aliyyii
Koodee Ali Kabbade
Mahammad Hasan (Borroo)
Mahmmad Dilbuu
Marem Umar
Mohamad Aminu
Mohamad Xaahiir
Mohamad Yasuf Adam
Mohamed Tola
Mohammad Yaadalii
Mohammed Abdallaa
Mohammed Abdallaa Qaallichaa
Mohammed Abdalle
Mohammed Adam
Mohammed Adam Hasee
Mohammed Adam Sarboo

Mohammed Ahamad Qacaace
Mohammed Ahimad
Mohammed Ahmad Hajii Arusoo
Mohammed Ahmad Muusaa
Mohammed Ahmad Sa'id
Mohammed Ahmed
Mohammed Alii (2 of this name)
Mohammed Aliyyii Ahmed
Mohammed Aliyyii Anbursaa
Mohammed Aliyyi Arbiyyee
Mohammed Aliyyi Hasan (4 of this name)
Mohammed Aliyii Wommad
Mohammed Ammishaa
Mohammed Golee Qumsii
Mohammed Goonfee
Moh'd Hasan Qaallichaa (2 of this name)
Mohammed Hase Umar
Mohammed Husseen
Mohammed Husseen Bakkalaa
Mohammed Hussen Abbaa Birraa
Mohammed Sa'id Qadii (2 of this name)
Mohammed Sayid
Mootii Buushii
Mootii Mohammed
Muhali Maqasid
Muhamad Hasan (Hadada)
Muhamad Hussen Usmaan.
Muhamad Saallee (2 of this name)
Muhamad Usmaan Jaarsee
Muhammad Adam Said
Muhammad Aliyii Musaa
Muhammad Said Qaadii
Muhammad Shek Aliyii
Muhe Umar Ammadee
Muhee Hassan Usee
Muhee Hasuu
Muhee She Ali
Muhee Umar Ammadee
Muhee Umar Jaafar
Muusa Shehuu
Muusaa Mohammed Xinnaa
Muusaa Umar Gurraachaa
Najjiyya Ahmad Umar Abduu
Nuree Hussen
Nuur Husseen
Nuuraa Umar Muussee
Nuure Umar
Qaanadaluu Sheek Moh'd Abbagaar
Qaasim Aliyyi Agizow
Qunnii Adam Tuuttoo
Qunnii Ahmed Tuuttoo
Sa'adaa Umar Muusa
Saadaam Damissee Ahimad Sheik Ibraahim
Saalihat Muhee
Saayyid Saalih
Said Abbaayye
Said Hasuu Aliyyii
Said Mohammed Abbagaar
Sa'iduu Muhee Wanbee
Sani Sheik Ahmad
Sarboo Aliyo Daga
Sarboo Huwwidee
Sayid Mohammed Huseen
Sayidaa Mahaammad, Elderly
Sayyid Abubakri
Sayyid Alii
Sayyid Husseen Hasanuu
Sayyid Mohammed
Sayyid Muhee Gurraachaa
Shaabbal Umar Indirroo Sh. Umar Hasan
Sharif Ahmed
Sharif Sulxaan Aammii
Shee Hasan Adee
Shee Muusaa Ibraahim
Sheik Aliyyii Hasan
Sheik Umar Mohammed Ahimad Jaarraa
Sindee Nuuree
Siraj Adam
Sulxaan Husseen
Umar Abbagaaroo (2 of this name)
Umar Abdallaa Jiloo
Umar Adam
Umar Adamshaa Umar
Umar Ahmad Dukkoo
Umar Alii Adamshaa
Umar Ammee Muhiyyee (2 of this name)
Umar Hasoli Umar
Umar Hinsee
Umar Hussen Aliyyii
Umar Jamaalee
Umar Mahammad Umaree
Umar Mohammed Abdallaa
Umar Mohammed Adee
Umar Mohammed Gurraachaa
Umar Muhammad
Umar Muhee Addallee
Umar Muhee Hasan
Umar She Alii Hasan
Umar Sheik Aliyyii

Umaree Ahmed Shee Abduu
Umarittii
Umaroo Musaa Waalili
Umarshaa Umar Yuusuf
Umaruu Hussen Ahmade
Urbaahim Aliyyi Mohammed
Usumaan Awwal Adam
Usmaan Buraankaa
Usumaan Daammii
Wassa'id Shee husseen
Wommade Hussen
Woomadoo Biyyaa
Xoohaa Umar Mohammed
Yaasuf Ahmade
Zakariyas Yirgaa
Zeenu Adam Aliyyii
Zeenu Ahamad Jaade

North, West and Southwest Showa

Killings and burning by ENDF and Fano

ENDF soldiers **killed nine people** in Bacho district, Southwest Showa on 5 April (W1).

OSG received an unverified report of **at least 20 civilians being shot dead** on 5 April by ENDF in Tole district, Southwest Showa. Among those killed are the 20 listed below:

Nugusee Leellisaa
Addunyaa Gaaddisaa
Dajanee Iddoosaa
Sayidoo Katamaa
Shawulaa Taaddasaa
Xiluu Tasammaa
Muhaammed Bashiir
Asaffaa Jaamboo
Hundee Guutaa
Sabboonaa Kumaa
Nagoo Dabalee
Lammaa Guddataa
Baacaa Guddataa
Dhugumaa Adaraa
Qaallasaa Adaraa
Dhaabaa Wasanuu
Rattaa Qaallasaa
Daraaraa Damee
Mul'ataa Dambalii
Taaddalaa Kaasayee

ENDF destroyed two homes by fire in Tole district, Southwest Showa, reported 8 April (W1). They are pictured together and individually below

ONM reported that ENDF **killed Biranu Dame**, a father of three, as he entered his home in Jima village, Garba Guracha town, Kuyu district, North Showa, on 24 April. He was a respected leader in his community but was said to be non-political.[34]

[34] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/05/the-ethiopian-regime-armed-forces-killed-a-father-of-three-in-kuyyuu-district-of-north-shaggar-region-and-carried-out-a-drone-strike-in-wulincoo-village/

On 25 April, two drone attacks on Dhahee Wullincoo village, Kuyu district, were in reprisal for battlefield losses against OLA. Houses and grain crops were burnt, and cattle killed.[35]

Teacher, **Tamiru Bati**, and a young man (Qeerroo), **Tesfa Wayesa**, were **killed** by ENDF in Ongobo village, Bakko Tibe district, West Showa, on 25 April (W1).

Abdissa Tesfaye (left) was **killed in a government drome strike** in Warra Jarso district, North Showa, reported 26 April (W1).

Two young men, **Lamecha Hordofa** and **Biranu Tadele**, were **killed** by ENDF in Kuyu district North Showa, reported 29 April (W1).

Around the end of the first week of May, **the two women pictured right were shot dead** execution style by the Fano militia shown behind them. Their names and the location within North Showa were not known by the correspondent, W1, when he reported the incident on 8 June, as having occurred 'one month previously.'

Kebeda Guta Gonfa (left), a young man from Gabar, Mulo district, North Showa, was **killed** by government forces, on or just before 8 June (W1).

Huruma Hailu (below left), a young civilian from Tole district, Southwest Showa, was **killed** by government forces on 30 June (W1).

Killings in North Showa in October 2023, which were reported by OLLAA but previously unreported by OSG:[36]
Badhoo Hundee and **Yaazoo Hundee**, in Dara, Dara district
Bashir Yaasin, **Jamaal Abbaabbuu**, **Ahimed Mohammed**, **Bashir Abduu** and **Umar Ahimed** in Abado, Dara district
Gabayyoo Gammachuu, **Ushuree Habtaamuu** and **Irranaa Iyyaayyaa** in Gutu, Warra Jarso district, on 14 October.
OLLAA also reported the **killing** of **Bushuraa Guutaa**, in Kilbe, Jaldu district, West Showa on 16 October.

Torture

The two images shown right are of a detainee who was lashed and mistreated by government forces, as illustrated, in Ameya district, Southwest Showa, on or immediately prior to 13 June. His back shows scarring from whipping. A soldier has his right foot on the detainee's neck in the image to the right.

[35] *Ibid.*
[36] https://ollaa.org/report-on-extrajudicial-killings-in-october-2023/

Mass killing in Nono district, 14 June

At least **24 were killed** at a wedding celebration in Qondala village, Nono district, West Showa, on 14 June. *BBC Afaan Oromoo News* confirmed reports by local informants,[37] who reported to OSG correspondent W1. *BBC* interviewed a local man and the ENDF commander of the Nono Command Post, who led a unit to the village after the killings.

Wedding guests (right) were locked in a building and at least one 'bomb' (grenade) was thrown in. The building was set on fire. Most of the deceased were burnt to death. At least four were shot dead as they attempted to leave the building.

Some who were seriously injured were taken to Waliso hospital according to OSG's correspondent. The resident interviewed by *BBC* believed 37 were killed. The dead included a pregnant woman, a three year-old child and a 70 year-old woman.

The burnt bodies were unrecognisable when retrieved from the ashes of the building (see below). All of those interviewed said the attackers were 'Amhara extremists', i.e. Fano militia. Several other buildings were burnt down.

The village, named Biiftuu Jaalalaa by *BBC*, has Amhara and Oromo residents. Amhara residents were evacuated from the village before the attack according to the *BBC* report. The attackers were organised outside the area but had some local support according to the interviewed ENDF commander.

The Command Post leader said **16 died in a similar attack** on another village two years ago.

More killings by Fano and ENDF

Addis Standard reported on 18 June that two villages in Darra district of North Showa were attacked by Fano militia on 15 June.[38] The group targeted civilians in the villages of Jirruu Dadaa and Warree Gabroo in retaliation for OLA taking control of Cheka town after fighting with Fano. The mayor of Cheka told *Addis Standard* that OLA had killed three and injured others in the market area of Cheka. Fano killed the villagers in retaliation, namely:
Tadesse Jobir, 45
Tesfaye Damise, 48
Tame Abera, 32

[37] https://youtu.be/-cJuCYPH-Os?si=5bqy0EYCZMqnSWr4
[38] https://addisstandard.com/four-civilians-killed-in-deadly-attack-in-darra-district-of-west-shawa-zone-residents-and-officials-blame-fano-militants/

Tashome Kibret, 60
Schools and clinics were closed due to the fighting.
Addis Standard reported that **18 community members were killed by Fano** in a two-day attack in Darra district beginning 24 December 2023.

Qeerroo activist **Ayana Milkessa** (right) was killed by ENDF in his home in Tibe village, Bakko district, West Showa, during the night of 20 June. A graduate from Adama University, he had decided to flee from discrimination and harassment as a Qeerroo activist since 2018 and had intended to go to Kenya shortly before he was targeted and killed (W1).

'Drying out the ocean to kill the fish' in North Showa:
Civilians injured, houses burnt, animals killed and property looted by ENDF

Salale, Warra Jarso, North Shewa.
'By such metal our people are victims' W1.

Oromo National Media, a pro-OLA outlet, stated on 2 May,[39] that an 'indiscriminate mortar attack' on Ejersaa village, Warra Jarso district, injured two married women, Kuruuzee Baalchaa and Fayyee Adabuu, causing their admission to Kuyyuu Hospital.

On April 19, two cows belonging to Hirphaa Dirribaa were killed by artillery fire in Faalloo village, Jaldu district. ENDF mortars destroyed homes in Warqee Waleensuu village, Matta Robii district. The house and belongings of Baqqalaa Begii and two houses belonging to Gaddisaa Baqqalaa (his son) 'and all their contents' were destroyed.

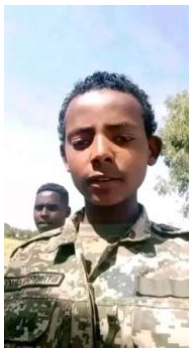
Ten livestock were killed by mortars in Qoree Ginnoo village. In Siree Baabbuu village, Metta Walqixxee district, the home of Baay'isaa Tulluu was razed and five 'ardaba' of grain looted. Abdataa Dirribaa lost his home and two 'ardaba' of grain.

W1 reported on 15 June that farmers from four districts – Warra Jarso, Dera, Dagam and Yaya Gulale – gathered in Dera football stadium the previous day to complain that government forces were robbing their cows (over 1000) and sheep (over 200), claiming that the farmers were supporting OLA. They were becoming destitute as a result.

[39] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/03/in-the-north-shaggar-district-the-ethiopian-ruling-prosperity-party-pp-deployed-heavy-weapons-against-civilians-resulting-in-physical-harm-to-the-community-destruction-of-livestock-and-property/

Collective punishment for OLA families

An informant from West Showa wrote on 29 April:
West of Ambo town (about 120 kms from Addis) the government cadres have announced the most primitive collective punishments unthinkable in the 21st century, which include forbidding anyone visiting the family of the rebels if they are sick, take them to hospitals, greet them on the streets, attend their burial ceremonies, bury them at churches, buy from them or sell to them etc. Those who broke the law of the cadres would be charged from Birr 10,000 to Birr 50,000. Such things never happened in the country's long recorded history. Some sort of ostracism may be there. but denying the dead decent burial or asking money for a body of the dead is not normal in this country.



ENDF child soldiers

ENDF is recruiting young teenagers. W1 wrote on 30 May that the boy shown far right, photographed in Teji village, Southwest Showa, was only 14 years old.

Another boy from the same village (near right), who ran away to join OLA, was interviewed and reported on 16 June. He claimed to be 17 years old.

East Showa

Killings

80 year-old **Siidaa Taliilaa** (right), in Liban Cuqula, East Showa, was **killed** by ENDF on 28 March.

OLLAA reported the **killing**, previously not reported by OSG, of **Tufaa Ida'oo**, **Boruu Baqqalaa** and **Kuulanii Gannoo** in Garri, on 30 October 2023.

Other killings are described below.

Karrayyu Update

The report below was written by the Oromo Advocacy Alliance,[40] in Washington D.C. It is based on telephone calls with eye-witnesses on January 23 and March 24, 2024, and is dated April 9.

Burning of a minibus by unknown actors

On January 5, 2024, an incident occurred that brought great consequence to the people of Karrayyu. An ordinary minibus carrying passengers between Matahara town and Adama was burned out, and left abandoned on the roadside. No deaths were reported; all passengers appear to have fled or waited for another passing bus. This occurred less than a kilometer from the entrance to the Ilala Military Camp. This camp is 9 km from Matahara town on the road to Djibouti.

[40] https://www.facebook.com/oromoadvocacy/

402 Community members held at Ilala Military Camp for three days without provisions

The next day, January 6, a massive raid was launched against four Karrayyu villages located a short distance from the highway. The entire security force, the whole Ethiopian military (ENDF) stationed in that area, participated, rounding up passersby from the market, residents from these four villages and persons tending livestock in the vicinity.

In total, 402 people were apprehended by force, gathered and compelled, to move by foot without preparation, to the grounds of the Ilala Military Camp. These hastily collected people were forced to remain on the grounds of that vast military camp in the open air, not only without shelter but without provisions of any kind.

This large crowd was held for three days under tight restriction without water or food. It was an assembly of all sectors of the society, including elderly people, children, breast-feeding mothers, community leaders, youth. 'No one could come out; no one could go in to ask about them, or to take them any water, meals, medications, clothing, blankets or other supplies.'

The people suffered and later recounted the depth of the trauma and feeling of desperation and vulnerability they experienced. On January 9, the ENDF released most of the people but retained 34 from the group, keeping them in detention. From among those 34, **three people were killed**, persons in their 30s or 40s who were regular community members. Their bodies were found three days later, around January 12, discarded at a distance from the camp.

The reason given for collecting and detaining this large group of diverse people was a disputed allegation that the community was harboring OLA members whom the military claimed were responsible for burning that bus in front of the military camp. The community members were accused of knowing where these presumed OLA perpetrators could be located; the security agents deprived over 400 people of food and water on the assumption that they could reveal OLA's whereabouts.

Note: A case of collective punishment

This raid and detention constitute a case of collective punishment of a large community in response to an incident to which there were no witnesses. The unproven allegation against OLA led to the indiscriminate forcible collection of any and all members of the population who could be apprehended. There was no rationale provided or discernible reason offered for the military to round up, without discrimination, people engaged in all forms of daily activity and remove them to an open prison at the military camp.

Burning of Michillee (Baso) Gadaa village

The most egregious act was to follow. The bus was burned on January 5, on 6 January the 402 people were collected into the military camp and kept until January 9 when most of the people were released, 34 detained and three killed.

On January 9, 2024 military forces arrived at the large specially-designated circular 'Gadaa village' of the Baso Michillee and burned down every house on the massive picturesque and venerated premises. The destruction was systematic and complete, with no house left habitable. This mirrors the 2021 abandonment of the Abba Gadaa village of the Dullacha Michillee group.[41]

This time, in January 2024, residents fled ahead of the military operation before the troops set off a massive conflagration which turned all to ash. Three other Karrayyu villages that were

[41] See https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Karrayyu-Massacre-Report-14-January-22.pdf

located close to the Gadaa village were also burned completely, which further displaced and terrorized the community.

Because people had been aware of the massive detention and heard of impending action, they ran away from the sites before the military arrived. No one was killed because no one was present. Residents ran into the lands surrounding the villages to hide themselves.

This unwarranted surprise attack on such a large sector of the community revived the deep fear and trauma instilled among the people at the time of the shocking and still unresolved, unreconciled massacre of the most respected community leaders, the sitting Abba Gadaa cabinet, on December 1, 2021 and the subsequent hunting down by ENDF of individuals designated to take their places.[42]

Death in detention

On Sunday, January 21, a well-known and well-liked man in his early 40s named **Boru Roba**, who was considered to be a brilliant person and a respected leader in the community, was allowed to die in prison after torture and illness. He had been featured in the role of iconic leader in a popular and widely disseminated music video by Gutu Abarra Kikiyaa Badhadha about the Karrayyu (see left).[43]

He had been called on to represent Karrayyu in such types of events and had gained visibility. He had been kept in prison for a year and a half, since shortly after the December 2021 Abba Gadaa massacre, had been tortured and had become terribly sick. He was subject to nosebleed and a kind of virus that was considered treatable if the symptoms were attended to. But his ENDF captors denied him access to medicine and treatment. On Sunday he died in prison. The funeral was on Monday, January 22.

Displacement

The community is horrified and traumatized at the brutality and continued destruction, displacement, dying and killing. Most of the people have moved to distant areas, such as the border regions between Karrayyu and Afar. The number of displaced could be as high as 70-80,000 in that area. The military is still heavily present around the town. Nobody goes to the market in Matahara for shopping without fear of being abducted by the security forces.

In the community, the general feeling is that the authorities have reverted to the type of aggression exhibited by the killing of the Abba Gadaas in December 2021. People cannot mourn together, they cannot go to the town without dread fear, though they need supplies and food. There is no protection.

[42] *Ibid.*

[43] Boru Roba appears, celebrating Karrayyu Oromo culture in a YouTube video of the song 'Bunee', written and performed by Keekiyyaa Badhaadhaa. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGmSxyAzfYY

Withholding of essential provisions

Now people are deprived of the little help they got from a local NGO. LaFO had provided the relief of delivering water rations to people who had no access to clean water. Now that has been prohibited by ENDF. The delivery of all water to the Karrayyu is prevented. The community needs for water and other basic goods have not abated. The need is greatest at the time of year when deliveries were stopped — January. This local non-governmental organization has been given funds and support from donors, but it is not allowed to make deliveries. The Karrayyu are prevented by the ENDF from receiving basic food and supplies from the local NGOs who know of their plight.

The dilemma of LaFO is that they are told to stay away from the population and to remain in the town. They ask what shall they do with the money already received? What shall they do with the supplies already purchased? All avenues for assistance are blocked by officials acting on orders. How can they help the people? What are they supposed to do sitting in town?

These restrictions come in the form of verbal orders and threats, that they are not to travel to the regions where people need water. The message is, essentially, 'If you go, we will destroy you.' And they have destroyed people. That message is taken to heart. It is clear how the military is perfectly capable of destroying whole communities, so LaFO has to take them seriously. They say, 'If you take water to the population, you are part of the OLA; you are part of the resistance; you are fair game for us to attack and destroy.' They say, 'You may not go anywhere until we give you explicit permission.' That permission is withheld.

The Director of LaFO has asked the government to provide a paper to show to the donors that they are not allowed to make these deliveries for which funds have been received.

The mechanism by which LaFO has delivered water was to place several large containers — containers that hold water up to 20,000 liters and 15,000 liters — near the different villages so that people can walk to get their drinking water for the households. A few of these containers were at the two Gadaa villages. The community would finish that amount of water in about 10 days. Then LaFO would go with a truck that has a tank to fill up the containers positioned near the population centers. The water was purchased from Matahara town, and delivered to those Karrayyu who have been deprived of access.

But now the ENDF has issued the order, 'Do not go to fill those water containers.'

Status of western pasture land

Regarding the land that had been occupied by settlers following takeover by militia from the neighboring Amhara Region to the north of Karrayyu, there has been a change, but not one that benefits Karrayyu. Members of this armed settler group attacked, burned houses, chased away Karrayyu residents from the area, then followed up by bringing a diverse group of settlers to the location, offering them land and access to the resources available there. These resources had been critical to sustaining the Karrayyu pastoralist livelihood. A church was built, and a mosque.

Settlers quickly erected ramshackle houses and cut treasured acacia trees of the Karrayyu to sell for charcoal. A signpost was placed on the highway announcing a new border for Amhara region that incorporated this vast area of invaded land. The Karrayyu removed the sign eight times until finally the federal government posted a ENDF sentry in a truck to be present round the clock to protect the sign and prevent any reversal of the claim.

This indicated to the Karrayyu that the federal government was in league with the Amhara militia to remove Karrayyu from lands that were critical to the grazing of camels and other

livestock at specific points in the annual herding cycle. Leaving the land for part of the year to regenerate is a critical component of Karrayyu lifeway. With settlers present that land could not regenerate.

Update on contested pastureland

In late August and throughout September 2023, open battle broke out between the government's ENDF and Amhara regional militia further north in Amhara region. Those two forces also began to fight pitched battles in the Karrayyu region. On October 3, 2023, ENDF removed the Amhara signpost and replaced it with a sign that reassigned the contested territory to Oromia. This act officially removed the section of land from the control of Amhara regional authorities. The ENDF also removed the settlers who had been brought through arrangements with the Amhara militia. The church and mosque now stand empty.

But ENDF has not allowed the Karrayyu access to the land. It is still not available to them to sustain their livelihood. The contested land is not currently an avenue of threat to the Karrayyu from the side of Amhara regional state. But neither is the wide swath of land accessible to Karrayyu for livestock. Therefore, the change in 'jurisdiction' of the land brings no change in the economic status of Karrayyu.

Reflection on the rationale provided for the incident of collective punishment for bus burning

One Karrayyu man's thoughts regarding the bus burning incident: 'It is nonsensical. Even if the Karrayyu were to do such a thing – which they would not – they would never carry it out in front of the military camp! The bus was completely burned, and the skeleton of the vehicle still remains there by the side of the road. No-one has taken it. It is less than 1 km away from the entry to the military camp. I ask you, 'Who on earth must be so brazen to burn a bus at the door of the military camp?'

'Why didn't the military go to rescue this vehicle if they presumed that the Karrayyu did it? There were people on the minibus. The riders were on a normal mini-bus transport that takes people between Matahara and Adama, so they were townspeople, city people, not local Karrayyu. What happened to them? These people either came back to Matahara after everybody was gone or they waited until another bus passed to get on with their journey.

If the riders could be located and asked for testimony about what happened in the bus incident, there could be some clarity. Was it OLA guerrillas? Was it military? Was it an explosion or accident? This information would have provided a clear picture of what occurred, but there is no confirmation at this point. The military has declared, with no evidence, that this was an act carried out by OLA, saying to the community members, "You support OLA; you will pay the price."'

The killing, the dying, the torture, the abuse and displacement of the Karrayyu continues

The leaders of the community continue to be under attack. The community continues to live under the unrelenting control of the Command Post. Over half of the Karrayyu, between 70,000 and 80,000 persons are displaced from their homes living in makeshift shelters in a formerly uninhabited place on the border between Karrayyu and Afar territories. The Afar supply water.

The strong Karrayyu leaders continue to be held, tortured, beaten, weakened, denied treatment until they succumb to predictable illnesses. The latter, Boru Roba, was denied treatment until he died. He was an outspoken person who knew tradition, very articulate and highly respected.

Note on status of the only private school in Karrayyu

The Gudina Tumsa Foundation School has been largely looted and destroyed now and cannot be used as a school. It is now occupied as a military camp.

Breaking development – detention of unmarried Karrayyu girls

There is a new development in Karrayyu that is of great concern to the community. Starting April 8, following a visit by a powerful Prosperity Party leader to a big recently renovated lodge on Lake Basaka, 20 young girls were taken into detention in Metahara. Some were beaten. No word about rape so far. They are accused of 'passing information and food to OLA.' It is not true.

Some of them have small jobs at the lodge, which may have brought attention to them, but some are simply taken from the road or the market. It is young girls and women who do most of the shopping because men are afraid of being abducted. This is an unheard-of development, is culturally abhorrent and its timing related to the government official's visit is alarming to the community, who feel helpless to secure their release.

Note: the case of the Karrayyu mirrors unseen human rights violations across Ethiopia

The incidents that take place in Karrayyu reveal mechanisms of government operations and human rights violations that are carried out throughout the rest of Oromia and elsewhere in Ethiopia – leading to

- widespread uncounted displacement,
- denial of essentials for life, i.e., shelter, food, clean water, medical services, etc,
- the destruction of indigenous peoples,
- revelations of the operations of a secret committee (Kore Nageenyaa) that directs a powerful killing squad, overriding of local police work and justice mechanisms. The incident of the massacre of 14 Abba Gadaa leaders of the Karrayyu exposed the way in which members of Kore Nageenyaa retain full authorization to issue orders from their headquarters in Adama to direct activities that supersede normal operations of government. The chain of command that directed the killing of the supreme leaders of the Karrayyu was overheard by several witnesses as the order to kill the Abba Gadaas was issued over speaker phone by the direct command of a member of the Kore Nageenyaa who was identified by name to the reluctant armed men designated to carry out the executions.

OSG comment

The excellent, well-researched and detailed account by OAA, above, shows how the Karrayyu and their rich, ancient and venerated culture, are regarded as mere disposable assets by Prosperity Party leaders and, like all of Ethiopia's peoples, their individual and group rights which are guaranteed in the Ethiopian Constitution are completely and utterly ignored. The attacks described above were reported inaccurately and in much less detail by OSG in March (p.12, Report 65), relying on a report by *OMN* in February. (The report of the killing of Boru Roba in October 2022 (OSG Report 62, p.20) concerned a venerated Gadaa leader; a different Karrayyu man to the Boru Roba named above.)

The two Gadaa villages destroyed in December 2021 and January 2024 resembled the sacred former Gadaa village shown right, in Fantalle district with Mount Fantalle in the backgound.

As one expert wrote 'News of more ugly events in Karrayyu keep coming in. They are losing their collective will with the leadership gone, the persons who were to replace them hunted down and killed, their sacred implements destroyed, the villages burned, young men snatched and killed and now unmarried girls held and threatened, not to mention the land confiscated that the camels need to access at a key period in the annual herding cycle. It is a great loss for a once-great people.'

More than half of Karrayyu pastoral land was lost to the Matahara Sugar plantation and processing factory and to Awash National Park during the imperial era of Haile Selassie. More pasture was lost due to pollution by the sugar factory. After 2018, Amhara Region militia began encroaching further and claimed land 45 km into Karrayyu territory, including part of the lucrative trade route East from Finfinnee/Addis Ababa to Djibouti and Somaliland. This is where the sign welcoming travellers to 'Amhara Region' was erected and taken down eight times by Karrayyu pastoralists.

The hardship faced by the scores of thousands of displaced Karrayyu continues. One correspondent reported that a young woman died in the early months of this year because of the lack of access to health facilities from the area on the Afar border where the displaced are encamped. She bled to death after childbirth, succumbing just before reaching Matahara hospital, to where she was being carried overnight by four men.

Why the Karrayyu land is important to the Ethiopian government: the Gada Special Economic Zone

Shimelis Abdisa, Oromia Region President and Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister, announced on 10 May the launching of a project which explains why the Karrayyu land is wanted by the Prosperity Party government.[44] He reported from a meeting at which PM Abiy Ahmed launched the Gada Special Economic Zone.

He wrote 'The Gada SEZ is poised to become a cornerstone of Ethiopia's industrial strategy, designed to attract international and domestic investment, expand exports and ensure import substitution and nurture high-tech industries. With a strategic focus on advanced manufacturing, technology, and sustainable practices, the zone is expected to set a benchmark for economic zones across Africa.'

The government *Fana Broadcasting Corporate* wrote that the PM was 'overseeing the signing of a memorandum of understanding between China Civil Engineering Construction

[44] https://www.facebook.com/shimelisAbdisaOfficial/posts/pfbid02hCfQpxDbc9RJbPvxYxpBY4sWmrAURHkDxrUvUiNgYXcCWNgAkbPiVFAE2BjNUrjHl

Corporation and the Oromia Regional State for the development of the Lume free trade zone within the Geda Special Economic Zone.'[45]

'Situated 65km east of Addis Ababa, this initiative aims to boost exports, establish a trade logistics center, and allure foreign investments, fostering industrial, trade, investment, and urban development.'

The Gada SEZ will occupy 240 km^2 between Mojo and Adama, the city from which the main road runs to the port in Djibouti, and potentially a port in Somaliland. The Karrayyu land lies along this vital trunk linking Ethiopia to the sea.

Horo Guduru and East Wallega

In an interview with *Kush Media*, a lawyer and human rights activist spoke in June 2023 of atrocities committed by Fano militants and Amhara Region militia, Liyu Haile, in Horo Guduru and East Wallega zones of western Oromia.[46]

He stated that Fano forces were being assisted 'directly and indirectly' by the federal government to occupy and remove Oromo from the zones, as part of their 'ambition for territorial expansion' and claimed that over a thousand had been killed. Fano claim that Wallega is Amhara land and the group intends to reclaim it. They are moving large numbers of Amhara into the region to accomplish this.

The killings are 'directed at the elderly, children and women to instil fear and to traumatise and terrorise them' he said. They rape old men and old women. They offend Oromo culture by denying burial, leaving bodies to be defiled by wild animals. Culturally abhorrent practices such as these are designed to crush the spirit of the Oromo people, the interviewee stated.

Operating from bases inside western Oromia as well as Amhara Region, Fano are not hindered by federal forces from attacking Oromo towns and villages. Indeed, ENDF camps are placed so that they prevent Oromo from other towns coming to the aid of those under attack.

Nonetheless, the majority of killings and other abuses in Horo Guduru and East Wallega reported to OSG in the last three months were perpetrated by ENDF rather than Fano.

Killings

ENDF killed four civilians in Amuru village, Horo Guduru, on 4 April, accusing them of providing food to OLA fighters. W1, who reported the killings, wrote that they had no connection with OLA:
Ms Chaltu Ashenafi
Tolasa Jigsa
Mohammed Aliyi
Mabrate Galata

Government forces **killed 15 people** attending prayers at a church in Moto kebele, Sibu Sire district, East Wallega on 14 April. The names of 12 were obtained by informant W1:

[45] https://www.fanabc.com/english/premier-launches-construction-of-geda-sez/
[46] https://www.youtube.com/live/IkpukTa3Vv8

Girmaa Waaqoo (right)
Garoomsaa Raggaasaa
Garramuu Amantee
Galaanaa Garramuu (son of the above, below right)
Tamasgeen Baacaa
Birrisa Wadaajoo
Gaaddisaa Baay'isaa
Asaffaa Waaqjira
Fiqiruu Raggaasaa
Chuuchuu Fiixee and his two brothers:
Raggaasaa Fiixee and
Gamulaa Fiixee

There was fighting between ENDF and OLA nearby, when these civilians were killed. Five of the other victims are pictured below.

Nine people attending a wedding in Tinfa village, East Wallega, were **killed** 'by bomb' by ENDF on 21 April, but their names were not reported (W1).

Two men were killed in Adare village, Nunu Kumba district, East Wallega, on 3 May (W1):
Guluma Mulatu, a teacher
Itana Negeri

Gemeda Lemessa (right), a young man in Gobu village, Gida district, East Wallega was **killed** by ENDF on 30 May (W1).

On 3 June, the **wife of Mango Gonfaa** and **two of their children,** were **shot dead** at about 9.00 pm in Ayisho Kushaye village, Kiramu district, East Wallega. According to Mango, they were killed by OLA. In the report of the incident in *Addis Standard*,[47] four children were named – Abdi, Bacho, Jitu and Bili. Bili was injured and admitted to Nekemte hospital but it was not clear which two of the other three were killed.

In the same report, Habtamu Ayana gave details the **killing of three men** by Fano militants in nearby Arro village in Kiramu district on 5 June at around 9.00 am. His brother **Bersissa Ayana**, a 35 year-old teacher of art and design at Kiramu Preparatory School (named Ayana Assefa by OSG informant W1), **Gizachew Feyisa**, a 45 year-old government employee (Getachew Abdisa, another teacher according to W1) and **Jaldu Galata**, a 26 year-old motorcycle driver were stopped and **shot dead** by Fano militants when travelling through the village. Bersissa was forced to transfer 31,400 Birr to one assailant's account before he and the other two were killed. They were travelling to Amuru according to W1.

[47] https://addisstandard.com/four-civilians-killed-in-deadly-attack-in-darra-district-of-west-shawa-zone-residents-and-officials-blame-fano-militants/

Another **young man** was **killed** by ENDF in Arjo Gudata, Diga district, East Wallega on or just before 8 June (W1).

On 26 June, **Fikadu Gudina** (left) was **killed** by ENDF in Nekemte, the capital city of East Wallega (W1). He was from Gudatu Haro village, Nole district, West Wallega.

OLLAA reported the following killings in Tulu Moti, Abe Dongoro district, Horo Guduru, on an unspecified date in October 2023:[48]

Araarsoo Qannoo
Jiree Baqqaanaa
Ayyaanaa Baqqaanaa
Nagarii Dhugumaa
Geetutt Faqqadaa

Drone crash

A Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 drone crashed in Abe Dongoro district, Horo Guduru, on 21 May (right). One source claimed it crashed in Caancoo village; another in Arusi kebele. It appears to have crashed due to a technical failure. There were no signs that it had been shot down.

ENDF burn homes and properties

Oromo National Media reported on 27 April the burning down of homes in Haro Limu district, East Wallega, by ENDF units.[49] On 22 April, the following had their homes destroyed:
Dhinsaa Nugusee
Desalegne Tigree
Akkuma Itichaa
Gebeyehu Ganatii (two properties)
Abarraa Gebeyehu, son of the above, 'also suffered losses'
Many others, whose names were not known, suffered from the 'widespread destruction, leaving many without basic necessities.'
ONM continued 'on April 23, 2024, the forces intensified their campaign, engaging in the harassment of residents, detaining students, and the extrajudicial killing of peaceful civilians. The destruction of property further predisposes the population to poverty and hunger.'

[48] https://ollaa.org/report-on-extrajudicial-killings-in-october-2023/
[49] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/04/27/the-ethiopian-defense-forces-commit-a-series-of-human-rights-violations-in-haroo-limmuu-county-east-wallaga/

Qellem, West Wallega and Illubabor

Killings

Bijiga Imiru (right), a biology teacher at Chiisaa Bori High School, Yubdo district, West Wallega, was **shot dead** by ENDF on 10 April.

Three men were **killed** in an unnamed location in West Wallega on 11 April, including a young man **Abiti Zarihun** and '**Zarookoo'**, both of whom are pictured below right (W1).

ONM reported on 1 May that following military action between OLA and ENDF at Qeelaa Daabbus, Mana Sibu district, West Wallega, on 19 April, government forces attacked civilians in Mana Sibu, **killing two men**, named '**Jireenya**' and '**Bultii**' and detaining 25 others in an undisclosed location.[50]

Twelve civilians living in Bengua village, Mandi district, West Wallega, were **killed** by ENDF on 20 April (W1).

On 13 May, teacher **Ayano Taye** (left), Halu district, Illubabor, was **killed** by government forces. (W1).

Two young men, **Fayisa Degefa** and **Habtamu** (father's name unknown) were **killed** by ENDF in Birbirsa village, Yubdo district, West Wallega, on 18 May (W1).

Gutu Abaya, a young man in Kashimando, West Wallega, was **killed** by ENDF on 24 May (W1).

On 12 June, **Waktola Etana Jaleta** (left), Coli, West Wallega, was **killed** by government forces (W1).

Three men were reported to have been **killed** in Cawaka district, West Wallega, on 30 June (W1). They were among Oromo resettled from East Hararge about 20 years ago. Two were named by W1 as **Ahmed Tahir** and **Mohammed Jemal**.

OLLAA reported the following killings in October 2023, which had not been reported by OSG.[51]
Yuuyyaa Muummichaa, Caffe Liki, Anfillo district, Qellem Wallega, on 16 October
Gammachiis Taammana, Kallayo, Guliso district, West Wallega, on 19 October
Eefirem Fufaa, Caffe Liki, Anfillo district, Qellem Wallega, on 31 October

In November 2023, OLLAA reported another killing in West Wallega.[52] **Markos Kebede**, father of one from Biyee Dimtu vllage, Mana Sibu district, was forced to abandon his university studies because of local conflict and was reaping crops in his family farm when

[50] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/01/ethiopian-government-forces-suffer-heavy-losses-in-confrontation-with-ola-and-assaults-civilians-in-retaliation-in-mana-sibuu-west-wallaga/
[51] https://ollaa.org/report-on-extrajudicial-killings-in-october-2023/
[52] https://ollaa.org/markos-kebede-killed-by-benishangul-gumuz-forces/

shot dead by Benishangul-Gumuz regional forces, who were fighting with Oromia regional forces over a contested border.

Burning

The women pictured right were made homeless when their homes in Dale Wabeera district, Qellem Wallega, were burned down on 30 April by ENDF because their sons were believed to have joined OLA.[53]

IDPs in West Wallega

An eye-witness, W2, interviewed on 25 May, reported that 35,000 Oromo IDPs from Asosa zone of Benishangul-Gumuz Region, were encamped near Mendi, Mana Sibu district, West Wallega.

They had fled from their homesteads in Badeesa, Godare, Daabus, Abare, Gunfi and Dalate after being attacked by Gumuz people, armed by the Ethiopian federal government, and had crossed the Daabus river into West Wallega.

The IDPs were destitute and living without shelter.

Jimma

Extortion

ONM reported on May 19 that Prosperity Party officials in Jimma were extorting money from owners of large and small businesses and from school children in the city,[54] 'under threat of severe penalties, including hefty fines and imprisonment, should they fail to comply.'

ONM wrote that 'residents have confirmed party cadres are mandating owners of small transport vehicles, such as Tuk Tuks, to deposit a substantial amount of fifty thousand Birr (Birr 50,000) into accounts [in] Sinqee Bank.'

'Furthermore, this group of business people is being coerced into purchasing bonds worth five hundred Birr (Birr 500) to fund the construction of the Renaissance Grand Dam on the Blue Nile River. Additionally, school children in grades eleven and above are being ordered to contribute one hundred Birr (Birr 100).' This extortion is 'significantly exacerbating the precarious living conditions for low-income families with multiple children in high schools' they stated.

[53] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/01/ethiopian-government-forces-suffer-heavy-losses-in-confrontation-with-ola-and-assaults-civilians-in-retaliation-in-mana-sibuu-west-wallaga/

[54] https://qbo-abo-wbo.org/2024/05/19/in-jimma-town-there-are-alarming-reports-of-highway-like-robbery-being-perpetrated-by-officials-from-the-prosperity-party-these-officials-are-accused-of-extorting-money-from-the-affluent-business-c/

Benishangul Gumuz Region

Ethnic cleansing and disinformation

Regional Colour Key
Benishangul-Gumuz: Lime Green
Amhara: Yellow
Oromia: Pale Blue
Gambella: Lilac

Oromo villages in Benishangul-Gumuz Region have been subjected to ethnic cleansing in Asosa zone, by Gumuz forces, armed, like Fano, by the federal government, and in Metekel zone by Fano militia, mobilised in Amhara Region.

Gumuz militia have displaced 35,000 Oromo from Asosa zone and forced them across the Dabus river to IDP camps in West Wallega zone, according to an eye-witness who visited the zone in May (Informant W2, 25 May, see p.37).

In Metekel zone, which borders Amhara Region, Fano forces 'and the Benishangul-Gumuz regime' were reported to have burnt down another 18 homes of Oromo in Dibate town on 30 April (Informant W1, 30 April).

Gumuz people have also been attacked and displaced from Metekel zone and Kamashi zone by Fano forces.

In September 2023, OSG reported that six of about 28 kebeles in Dibate district of Metekel zone had been completely cleared of Oromo and at least 24 kebeles in that zone, bordering Amhara Region, had been cleared of Gumuz people, with remnant populations surviving without shelter in the forest, after many being burnt alive in their huts by Fano. OSG's informant estimated 3000 or more Gumuz had been killed (OSG Report 63, pp.33-34).

There are earlier media reports in 2018 of killings and detention of four Oromo human rights defenders in Metekel, of local government instigation of lethal violence between Gumuz and Oromo civilians, indiscriminate and arbitrary detention, and details of the many Gumuz people killed in clearances by Fano from Kamashi zone. Government forces did not protect the civilians from being shot and killed by machetes, 'shuka' used for slaughtering animals. All the police did was to collect bodies, mistreat survivors and confiscate their phones.[55]

In 2022, *OMN* reported that government forces and Fano were working together 'hand in glove', especially after being encouraged by the Prime Minister, to loot and steal from civilians in Metekel zone and elsewhere.[56] Oromo members of ENDF were powerless to stop the looting of Oromo civilians for fear of being accused of supporting OLA.

The summary execution/extrajudicial killing by ENDF soldiers of two young Oromo men from Chalcho village in the Dibate district of Metekel zone, was reported by OSG in 2023.[57] A relative of one of the young men was interviewed in June 2023.[58] In January 2022, the two, **Takele Mengesha** and **Habtamu Ayana**, were taken from Galesa prison, where they had been held for several days, and were being taken with other detainees to another place of

[55] https://www.facebook.com/VOAAfaanOromoo/videos/1726199980748643; https://fb.watch/semPLE4bKt/?mibextid=jmPrMh
[56] https://www.facebook.com/share/v/2CfoeSFf7CGjNmGx/?mibextid=jmPrMh
[57] p.34, OSG Report 63. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-63.pdf
[58] https://www.youtube.com/live/IkpukTa3Vv8

detention (‘Gelegale Marayema’) when they were separated from the others and taken to Gipho forest. They were filmed being made to stand with their hands tied behind their backs and shot in the back of the head. A video of the killing has been filed by OSG.[59] A false report that the recorded killing was of Amhara monks at Debre Elias monastery in Amhara Region was investigated and disproved by *AFP Fact Check*,[60] which confirmed the exact location of the murders and determined that the executioners were Sidama Special Police (under federal command and now incorporated into ENDF).

The interviewee, an experienced human rights activist from the area, expressed no surprise at the deception, the incident being ‘politicised and used as propaganda. From the inception of this Ethiopian Empire, their *modus operandi* has always been to make the Oromo the outsider, the killer . . . They kill innocent Oromo, blame Oromo for the killing and use the dead body for their own propaganda. This group has a monopoly on media.’

He compared the ethnic cleansing in Metekel with that during the conflict in Tigray; the targeting of innocent bystanders and the indiscriminate burning of their homes and farms. In the 24 kebeles largely cleared of their predominant populations of Oromo and Gumuz, the destruction of their towns and villages was purposely done in collaboration with government personnel, using their resources, he said. ‘We have seen people being burned alive only in this area of Metekel zone’.

He bemoaned the deceptive use of videos of burnings ‘to paint the Oromo as killers.’ ‘It is bad enough to kill Oromo without using their death for political purposes.’ To claim the Oromo are in power and killing Amharas ‘is a totally upside-down view’ portraying victims as killers and killers as victims.

Videos reveal ‘who did the recording, the planning and the boasting after the killing’ he said. ‘The government directly or indirectly wanted these incidents and the displacement of the people. . . . The government plays a major role in the displacement and conflict in Metekel zone.’

‘It is obvious if we look at the pattern of events. . . Fano has training camps in the Nile valley and towns and cities in the region . . . it's clear to many what their intent is.’ He reported that Fano received training and amassed weapons during the Tigray war to prepare for these activities. ‘The Oromia Region government, calculating that this group will eliminate OLA from the region, has prepared a budget that has given weapons to these groups so that they could fight on their behalf and weaken OLA.’

‘Even when these people [Fano] travel with their guns from Amhara Region to Gumuz Region, they are not stopped at border checkpoints. However, Oromo are not even allowed weapons for defence. If any Oromo is armed they are criminalised and their weapons confiscated.’

The government’s and Fano’s plans are aligned ‘to get rid of the federal system and go back to the previous system where nations and nationalities were subjugated by one group. The government is using this conflict to basically destroy the federal system to show that it doesn't work.’

He warned ‘Whatever is happening to innocent people around Ethiopia is also happening to the Amhara people but they have been captivated by their own elites and media.’

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[59] https://oromiasupport.org/video/two-young-men-from-chalcho-village-in-dibate-district-metekel-zone-benishangul-gumuz-region-were-executed-by-endf-in-january-2022/

[60] https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.33JC4CA?fbclid=IwAR0QA_tu-I-qhWLog5XjLFwU85TPJp4lru_oX6Qmjq0o-FIiqZ7tGMNfXPk

East Hararge

Killing

Informant W1 reported the **killing of Abdi Shukuri** (right) by ENDF, in Malka Ballo district, Harawe, East Hararge on 26 May.

Guji

Killing, injuries, burning

Gada Boneya, a young man (right) from Orone village, Wadara district, Guji zone, was **killed** by government forces on 29 April (W1).

On 6 June, the following civilians, including several children and siblings (some of whom are illustrated below) were injured by ENDF heavy weapons ('Dishka') and rifle fire in Gara Ciratte, Malka Soda, Guji (W1):

Xumme Duubee
Yuubee Guye Adola
Xonosa Guye Adola
Bontu Gumi Adola
Falmatu Gumi Adola

The homes pictured below are properties burnt by government forces in Saba Boru, West Guji, reported 22 May (W1).

Persecution of Waaqeffannaa followers

Eighty-two leaders and believers of the traditional Oromo religion, Waaqeffannaa, were detained in Babile town, East Hararge, when the zonal mid-year gathering of followers in the Babile Galma (worship hall) was raided by police on Friday 21 June.[61]

Twenty-five committee members, including Taji Mohamed, the leader of the East Hararge Waaqeffannaa congregation, local religious leaders Raji Bedada and Abdeta Bogale, and Dr Zewude Girma, a Waaqeffannaa scholar, were taken to Babile district police station.

Fifty-four believers were initially held in a military camp before being transferred to the police station. Mothers and children were among those held. Three more followers were detained when they went to the police station to enquire about their fellow congregation members.

A spokesman, Lemma Bayi, was quoted by *Addis Standard* saying 'These believers are imprisoned without any stated reason. Two weeks prior to their detention, their ritual was disrupted, and banners carrying religious messages were torn down. The religion has been under pressure in the zone, with worshippers being stoned during worship ceremonies.'

An official of the Waaqeffanaa Religion Followers Organisation informed OSG on 30 June that the congregation members were insulted and beaten by the police. Their ID cards and the documents concerning the legal registration of the Babile Galma since May 2022 with the followers organisation (itself licensed since 2010) were ripped up and destroyed.

Nineteen were taken, during the night after their arrest, in a truck to Harar city, under orders of the security forces. The others were set free in the night and made to fend for themselves, shielded by the community in Babile. They were warned not to return to Babile, forbidding them to practice the religion, which has been practiced since the 16th century. Six of the leaders remain in prison, without charge or court appearance. The Mayor told the *BBC* that the religion was no longer practiced in Babile.

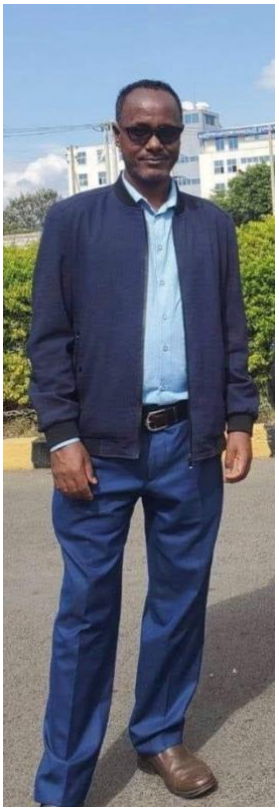
Followers of Waaqeffannaa have been persecuted and discriminated against by government authorities, denied land for burials and for building places of worship. They have been imprisoned and their Galma halls have been burnt down. Two followers were killed by Muslim extremists in March.[62]

Oromo Federalist Congress Press Release: detention and disappearances

In its Press Release on 26 April 2024,[63] the OFC complained about its leaders and members facing arbitrary arrests and killings and having their offices closed. Efforts to strengthen its structure at grass roots level were being closely monitored and obstructed.

[61] https://addisstandard.com/police-in-oromias-east-hararghe-zone-crackdown-on-waaqeffannaa-faithful-detain-more-than80/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR2iXlcuaxK3E9j7ylqoJxFQiskvO9xaRzdl91iB054B4JdJSMnWSI1dbS0_aem_CGwESMV3gSJtvrCKQh5a5A
[62] OSG Report 65, p.15 https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/OSG-Report-65-14-March-2024.pdf
[63] https://minbane.wordpress.com/2024/04/27/https-wp-me-p1xtjg-qcs/

Although the OFC is lawfully registered and is involved in a 'non-violent campaign for democracy' the following leaders and members were reported to have been arrested without warrant and held without charge or court appearance:



Shamani Begna Rabo (right), Central Committee member, Organiser of East Showa zone OFC Committee, close friend of the late Bate Urgessa, was detained in Adama town on 17 April.[64]

Girma Chala, Organiser of Becho district, Southwest Showa, OFC Committee, was released from detention on 13 March and re-arrested on 16 March.

Sorsa Sima, OFC member, was arrested on 29 March in Tulu Bolo town, Southwest Showa.

Dejene Girma Hurrisa, member of North Showa OFC Committee, was abducted from Fiche town on 29 March and reportedly tortured up to the time of the press release.

Kebebe Wakjira Beji, Chairman of the OFC League for Individuals with Disabilities, was arrested in Burayu town, 2 March.

Mahamed Doyyo Kukubo, OFC member, was detained in Mega town, Dirre district, Borana zone, on 19 April.

Melese Chala Gobena, Coordinator of Bako district OFC Committee, West Showa, **disappeared** in detention since 23 October 2022.

Fikadu Ayana Faji, Central Committee member and Coordinator of East Wallega OFC Committee, **disappeared** in detention since 18 October 2022.

Koree Nageenya

The secretive Prosperity Party security committee, known as *Koree Nageenya*, which organises the killings and detention of government opponents, was exposed by Reuters in February.[65] Former Oromia Region minister, Milkessa Gemechu, described its inner workings in a presentation to the 14 April mid-year conference of the Oromo Studies Association.

He revealed that the *Koree Nageenya* was established in June 2019 and is composed of National Intelligence and Security Service personnel and politicians. It replaced the similarly secretive and sinister *Abbaa Torbee* organisation.

Milkessa Gemechu described seven regional committees. The Oromia Region *Koree Nageenya* includes the President and Vice-President of Oromia, the Regional Police Commissioner and the Regional Security Chief.

The regional *Koree Nageenya* oversee 21 zonal, 20 city and at least 200 district committees. Each district *Koree Nageenya* controls the district militia. These committees have absolute power and operate from Prosperity Party offices but are closely networked with military command posts.

[64] See also https://twitter.com/Abbaacabsa/status/1783570592022528088
[65] https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/ethiopia-violence-committee/

The former minister confirmed that supporters of the Qeerroo peaceful youth movement, which brought down the EPRDF government in 2018 and enabled Abiy Ahmed to seize power, were the 'number one target' from the outset. The PM said Qeerroo was more dangerous than any armed enemy. Their systematic killing had begun in September 2018. Mass arrests followed in 2019 and the instruction to 'do whatever you want' to Qeerroo suspects was given later in 2019.

Abiy Ahmed was given the Nobel peace prize in October 2019, four months after he established the *Koree Nageenya* network.

From March 2020 onwards the Prosperity Party used the network to eliminate its political rivals. Hachalu Hundessa was assassinated three months later. 'Anyone who opposes Abiy Ahmed's national plan is a target' said the former minister.

Malaria, measles and cholera

On 14 June, OSG was informed that many children had died in a new outbreak of malaria in West Wallega, in Boji Chokorsa, Guliso, Bila and Inango districts. It began with the onset of the rains.

In Boji Chokorsa, 720 were reported to be infected. Queues are shown at the health centre there (right).

The informant wrote that poor people were unable to afford to buy treatment.

In 2023, it was estimated that at least 5,000 died of the disease in western Oromia, mostly in Qellem and West Wallega zones, due, at least partly, to lack of assistance from the federal and regional governments (see OSG Report 64, pp.23-26).

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported on 25 March that malaria cases had 'surged to 5.2 million,[66] surpassing last year's figures and peaking at 705,000 in February alone.' There were 25% more deaths in February (764) than in January (611).

According to *Addis Standard* on 29 June, there were 57,000 malaria cases in Oromia in a single week and 1.8 million cases countrywide in the first five months of 2024, 35% of which were in Oromia.[67]

As in 2023, the body count will be a gross underestimate, but OCHA did point out that most cases were in Oromia and that in all regions the number of cases was 'far above the emergency threshold.'

Again as in 2023, OCHA wrote 'the current malaria response is challenged with inadequate bed net utilization among communities at risk, suboptimal environmental or vector control activities, [and] lack of insecticide residual spraying at mosquito breeding grounds. Generally, limited partner involvement, poor data quality from affected areas, and weak community-level malaria prevention and control interventions hinder a more effective response.'

[66] https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-situation-report-25-mar-2024
[67] https://addisstandard.com/ethiopia-battles-triple-threat-cholera-measles-and-malaria-outbreaks/

Informant W1 wrote on 22 March of nine children under five years old and three others aged 12, 18 and 45, dying from measles in a single village, Faajjii Ejersaa, in Warra Jarso district of North Showa. *Addis Standard* reported 15 deaths in Amhara's Wagihimra zone in June.

OCHA reported over 42,000 cases of measles countrywide, in 71 districts, as of 26 February, a 12% increase from January, with 285 fatalities in January and 315 in February. Just over half were in children under five, of whom one third were unvaccinated. Again, most cases were reported from Oromia and will have been under-reported because of poor access.

The *Addis Standard* report stated that the cholera outbreak, which started in August 2022, is the longest in Ethiopia's history and that there had been a 'worrying surge' in cases in Afar and Oromia regions in the last three months.

Somaliland, Puntland, Somalia: Destitution, murder, deportations

It is difficult to convey the depth of misery and despair currently experienced by Oromo refugees and asylum-seekers in Somaliland and Puntland.

The history of one asylum-seeker, sent by OSG's correspondent in Somaliland on 23 June, illustrates the despair experienced by many. Solomon Seifemichael Dinki (right) was 30 years old and from West Showa. He was threatened many times, detained and tortured severely in Ethiopia. As a result of torture, he was incontinent of urine and forced to wear diapers. Incontinence is experienced commonly by detainees who were tortured by the suspension of water containers from their genitalia.[68]

Incontinence creates extra difficulties in the refugee situation of Hargeisa, where he arrived in 2022. He was refused registration by NDRA because he was Oromo. He was a fluent Amharic speaker and attempted to claim asylum as a Tigrayan, but was refused as he had no Tigrayan ID.

He attempted to contact UNHCR many times in 2022 and in December the UNHCR office asked community representatives to contact him. After two weeks of searching, in January 2023, they found he had committed suicide by hanging, because he dreaded being returned to Ethiopia as an undocumented migrant.

Financial assistance stopped – destitution and despair

Refugees in Somaliland have been forced into destitution by the withdrawal of subsistence allowances by UNHCR on 14 April. Allowances for refugees in Puntland were stopped two years ago. The cuts in Somaliland came when Oromo were already subjected to hate speech and hostility from government officials, police and at least some of the host community; together with discrimination and unemployment.

In central/south Somalia, there is no registration of asylum-seekers or refugees. There is hostility, as evidenced by the killing of seven refugees in January and February (OSG Report 65 (pp.32-38), but there is no threat of deportation from there.

[68] OSG Report 49, p.28, https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-49-South-Africa-June-2013-Sanctuary-at-a-price.pdf

Many of the problems for Oromo in Somaliland were outlined in OSG Report 65, including round-ups and deportations, refusal of registration as asylum-seekers, refusal of refugee status, extortion by police, parents being separated from each other and from their children because of government and UNHCR decisions, and beatings and displacement by the host community.

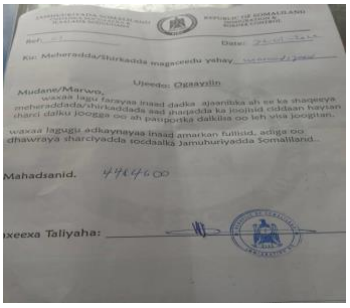
The day following UNHCR's announcement of the abrupt and total stoppage of subsistence payments, on 15 April, refugees demonstrated outside the Hargeisa UNHCR office (above left) but UNHCR were adamant in refusing to reinstate the allowances and police came to break up the demonstration.

Refugee representatives informed UNHCR that their landlords were already owed three months' rent and that their children were only able to eat one meal per day.

Protests continued despite refugees being warned by Somaliland's National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA) against meeting UNHCR to discuss the subsistence allowances. At the end of May, an official from UNHCR met with refugees and affirmed the cuts (above right), saying that in general urban refugees were not entitled to financial support and that the exceptional case for refugees in Somaliland, due to the high level of unemployment, could not be maintained because of lack of funding for UNHCR.

The allowance, from $76 per month for families of four or fewer, up to $114 for families of nine or more, was a vital lifeline for the 571 families receiving it. This year, Somaliland authorities had already cracked down on the employment of unregistered asylum-seekers and those without refugee status. In the photograph left, an immigration police officer is collaring an 'illegal' employee in a barber's shop.

A letter distributed to employers in Hargeisa, (right) states 'Sir/Madam
You are instructed to terminate the employment of foreigners working in businesses/companies who do not have a valid visa. You must fulfill this order, observing the immigration laws of the Republic of Somaliland.'



Even menial and poorly paid jobs like digging and emptying latrines, garbage collection and night-time security guards are no longer available. There is high unemployment for the host community too.

Refugees write that conditions in Hargeisa are worse than they can remember, especially so in the last six months. 'It was never before like this' said one representative.

Discrimination and abuse

Discrimination extends to other vital assistance. The NDRA announced that on 2 April, with the help of the African Relief Committee, it had supplied flour and oil to 200 refugee families in Hargeisa (below) but this did not include any refugees from Ethiopia.

There is further discrimination within the treatment of migrants from Ethiopia. Tigrayans and Amharas are allowed to register as asylum-seekers but not Oromo.

The NDRA Chairman, Abdulkarim Ahmed Mohamed (Xinif – below right), has stated publicly and repeatedly that Oromo have no case for asylum because there is an Oromo government in Ethiopia. He has physically abused and threatened Oromo representatives with detention and deportation. He also stands accused of sexual abuse by one young Oromo woman, now resettled in Canada.

In January 2023, when refugee representatives were stewarding a queue of hundreds of Oromo attending NDRA to renew their asylum registration papers, five of them, who had been sitting quietly, were slapped around the head and face by the NDRA Chairman. He then called security men to beat about 100 still in the queue. Representatives instructed the refugees and asylum-seekers to leave. Refugees have to renew their documents every three years; asylum-seekers every year. They are not always renewed. Some are refused without explanation.

It bodes ill that NDRA is now the body with the responsibility for making decisions on refugee status, although the process is yet to start. Oromo will not have any opportunity to apply for refugee status in any case because NDRA has denied their registration as asylum applicants.

Effects of Memorandum of Understanding, hate speech and deportations

Insecurity in Somaliland has been exacerbated by tensions related to the Memorandum of Understanding between Ethiopia and Somaliland, signed on 1 January, that grants Ethiopia access to the Somaliland coast in turn for recognition of its national status. This has angered Somalia.

The Ethiopian Consular Office in Hargeisa has been upgraded to an Embassy. In early April, the Puntland regional government rejected a constitutional amendment suggested by Somalia's federal president, Hassan Sheikh Mohammed. Ethiopia immediately reached out to Puntland, and Somalia responded by expelling the Ethiopian ambassador to Mogadishu. The political opposition in Somaliland opposes the MoU with Ethiopia and civil unrest is feared around the upcoming election.

Refugees complain of hate speech directed against them. Senior police officers, religious and political leaders have publicly denounced Oromo migrants as 'infidels', 'beggars', 'child molesters' and 'cannibals' on social media and television.

One senior police officer claimed that Ethiopians were waging war on Somaliland by spreading AIDS, especially taxi drivers and coffee shops, adding drugs or even HIV to coffee, and acting as spies for Ethiopia.

Round-ups, deportation, looting and destruction of property and extortion by immigration police continue, as reported in OSG Report 65. Somaliland's economic slump has added to the crisis. Most Oromo can no longer afford to send their children to school. Cholera, a poverty-related disease, struck in April, killing a mother, Sahra Essa Momad, and her daughter, Nuraa Ahmed Salah.

Violence and more demonstrations

There has been no return of the violence on the scale which erupted in Somaliland in January, leaving many beaten and displaced, nor have there been any more killings in south/central Somalia. However, a young man, Abdi Ahmed Ali (also known as Mustafa – left), a father of three, was shot dead outside his home in Qardho town, Puntland, on 5 April, on his way to the toilet block. No motive for the killing has been established.

A vehicle carrying about 12 newly arrived migrants was shot at when it failed to stop at a police checkpoint on 3 or 4 May. Two women passengers were injured and one had to be taken back to Ethiopia to have a bullet removed from her leg. Their fellow passengers and the driver were arrested and detained before being taken back to Ethiopia.

On 2 June, there was another demonstration. About 200 Oromo mothers, all registered refugees, gathered outside the Social Welfare Centre in Hargeisa to protest again about the ending of subsistence allowances (below right). The centre, where destitute Oromo camped in 2011 (see OSG Report 47) is now managed by Diversity Action Network, a partner organisation of UNHCR in Hargeisa.

Police broke up the demonstration, beating ten of the women and knocking one elderly woman to the ground. One was arrested. Some remained at the centre, sleeping on the ground for at least two days.

Another demonstration by almost 200 refugee women outside the NDRA office on 30 June was met with insults and physical abuse. The NDRA Chairman himself came out of the office and struck some of the women, slapping them across the face. Police were called and broke up the demonstration, dispersing the women.

At least 35 families are sleeping on the streets after leaving their rented homes, because they are no longer able to afford to pay rent; rent which has remained unpaid for up to six months now.

NDRA still insists that Oromo are not refugees but economic migrants and scroungers. Landlords want what they are owed and are reluctant to let refugees leave with unpaid bills. The refugees cannot afford to go and have nothing to return to in Ethiopia after 10-20 years in Hargeisa. Hundreds are still arriving from Ethiopia and being returned.

About 200 are deported every week. In two days at the end of April, 370 were returned from the coastal city of Berbera, Somaliland. They included a seven year-old child and her parents. One man fled from the round-up but was caught and stabbed by the host community, and then hospitalised. About 3000 were deported from Somaliland in the first four months of 2024.

'*It was never before like this*.'	Refugee representative, Hargeisa, 8 June 2024.

On 8 June alone, OSG was told that 100 of the newly arrived were rounded up and dumped back over the border. The journey back to Hargeisa is dangerous. On foot, refugees are exposed to extortion and sexual violence. Vehicular journeys are also unsafe. Six or seven died on their way to Hargeisa in car accidents in the last two months, including two or three newcomers ten days before the call to OSG. They carried no ID so they are un-named.

Puntland: threats of deportation and deaths at sea

Hiraan Online reported on 17 June that the mayor of Garowe, the capital city of Puntland, Abdikhadir Mohamed Mohamud Geddi (right), announced the previous day that all undocumented Ethiopians were to leave the city immediately or face deportation.[69] Officials in Galkayo, also in Puntland, had already ordered Ethiopians without permits to leave the city.

One week earlier, on 10 June, a boat carrying 260 migrants from Bossaso, Puntland, sank off the Yemen coast, according to a report from the UN International Organisation for Migration.[70] The boat set off from Bossaso at 3.00 a.m. on Sunday 9 June and capsized near Alghareef Point in Shabwah governorate of Yemen next day. 49 bodies were recovered, including 31 women and six children. There were some survivors but 140 remained missing, indicating the death toll was likely 189. Passengers consisted of 115 from Somalia and 145 from Ethiopia, who would have been Oromo. They included 90 women.

IOM reported 'This tragedy comes on the back of two separate shipwrecks on the same route along the coast of Djibouti claiming the lives at least 62 migrants. Since 2014, IOM's Missing Migrants Project has recorded 1,860 migrant deaths and disappearances along the Eastern Route from the East and Horn of Africa to the Gulf countries, including 480 due to drowning.'

Hostile policies to migrants in Somaliland, Puntland and Somalia have lethal consequences.

Egypt: Palestinians unwelcome, Sudanese deported

In March, the Oromo Elders Union reported 'numerous cases of harassment, physical abuse, xenophobic attacks, kidnappings, and arbitrary arrests against Oromo refugees and asylum seekers in Cairo.'[71] UNHCR were dismissing claims for refugee status *en masse* because of the erroneous assumption that 'opposition members in Ethiopia are not at risk, contradicting the grim realities on the ground.'

[69] https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Jun/196735/garowe_mayor_demands_departure_of_undocumented_ethiopian_migrants.aspx
[70] https://www.iom.int/news/49-migrants-dead-140-missing-shipwreck-yemen-coast
[71] OSG Report 65, p.39. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/OSG-Report-65-14-March-2024.pdf

Since then, the Egyptian government has reacted to an influx of refugees from Gaza and Sudan with cruel, hostile and illegal practices, funded in part by the European Union.

Refugees from Gaza fall outside the remit of UNHCR and they receive no recognition or help from the UN agency established to help Palestinian refugees, UNWRA, because it does not operate in Egypt.[72]

Nearly 85,000 Palestinians entered Egypt between 7 October 2023 and 31 March 2024. An average of 700 enter at the Rafah crossing each day, paying $5,000 for each adult.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi is refusing to settle Palestinians from Gaza, stating the rejection was 'complete and categorical.' He said that any solution to the 'Palestinian issue . . . under no circumstances will it be at Egypt's expense.'

New Lines Magazine wrote 'Traumatized and often impoverished after spending their savings on the crossing permits, they arrive with nothing: no possessions, no jobs and no prospects.' Civil society and Palestinian grassroots organisations are their only source of support.

Egypt 'is struggling to support its own population of 106 million,' with an economic crisis marked by debt, inflation and lack of foreign currency. Income from Suez has dropped by half due to Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping.

Egypt's response to refugees from the bloody conflict in Sudan has been even more hostile. Over half a million Sudanese have sought refuge in Egypt in the last 12 months.

Findings of a detailed, year-long investigation by *New Humanitarian* were published on 25 April.[73] The investigators wrote of six bases (five military and one police) which were used to house thousands of Sudanese immigrants in crowded and unsanitary conditions before they were taken to the border and returned to Sudan.

Sudanese refugees in Abu Simbel military base, complied from screenshots of a video by a detainee.

They had no access to lawyers or UNHCR and included registered refugees and asylum-seekers. Undocumented migrants were given no opportunity to make their case for asylum.

They included children, elderly people and some who had been seriously injured during their journeys into Egypt.

Those who were captured near the border describe dangerous high-speed car chases and being shot at by border guards. Over 160 injuries and 20 deaths were due to car crashes between May 2023 and February 2024. When caught, the drivers and smugglers were beaten and tortured.

Others are being detained 'while conducting their daily business' in Cairo and other cities in the north, in a systematic nationwide campaign 'to deny Sudanese refugees the right to claim asylum, including multiple components of the Egyptian security apparatus as well as other

[72] https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/grassroots-initiatives-are-helping-gazans-build-lives-in-cairo/
[73] https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/investigations/2024/04/25/exclusive-inside-egypt-secret-scheme-detain-deport-thousands-sudan-refugees

agencies of the government.' Immigrants told of rarely leaving their accommodation in Cairo, making only short trips to get food.

Buses are taking hundreds to border crossings, in mass deportations. Some at least were given food, drink and hygiene supplies issued by the World Food programme and USAID before being taken to towns in Sudan which lack 'accommodation and basic services.'

'The pushbacks uncovered by reporters contravene refugee conventions that Egypt has ratified, and are being carried out as the EU has pledged billions of dollars to Cairo in exchange for the government curtailing migration to Europe, a deal that critics say could make European countries complicit in the abuses taking place' wrote *New Humanitarian*.

An '$8 billion EU funding package . . . includes more than $200 million for migration control. The deal is part of a part of a broader EU approach of partnering with third countries – many with poor human rights records – to reduce migration.'

Statewatch wrote that the round-ups and deportations began in August 2023, when a government decree announced charges of $1000 and fines for migrants to regularise their status.[74]

Statewatch reported racial profiling. 'In Cairo, Giza, and Alexandria, the testimonies of victims of these abuses show a clear pattern of authorities targeting Black people for arbitrary arrests in raids on residential areas of African nationalities and arbitrary arrests in the streets, bus stops, and metro stations.'

More than 25 organisations called for the detentions and deportations to stop.

Kenya: Rations reduced, reform?

The harsh and insecure life of refugees in Kenya was described in two reports following an investigation by OSG in 2010, involving 58 interviews with refugees in refugee camps in Dadaab and Kakuma and in slum areas of Nairobi.[75]

Their situation has deteriorated even further since then. With vanishing chances of eventual resettlement, the majority (86%) of refugees live in camps, in destitution, 'warehoused' in isolated desert areas. The remainder eke out an insecure, illegal existence in Nairobi, where they are prey to corrupt police, for whom they are a source of income.

In 2023, out of 654,147 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Kenya, 284,168 were in Kakuma and Kalobeyei camps in Turkana district, near the border with South Sudan, and 280,466 were in the camps in Dadaab, in Garissa district, near the Somali border. Only 1,937 – a mere third of one percent – were resettled to a third country in that year.[76]

Life in the camps just got a whole lot worse. In May, the meagre food rations provided by the World Food Programme were reduced to 40% of the minimum healthy requirement. An e-voucher system, 'bamba chakula,' by which refugees were able to obtain milk formula, fresh

[74] https://www.statewatch.org/news/2024/march/joint-statement-egyptian-authorities-must-end-arbitrary-detentions-and-forced-deportations-of-sudanese-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/
[75] https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-46-Kenya-Dec-2010.pdf; and https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-46a-Kenya-Dec-2010-Ethiopia-exports-more-than-coffee-Oromo-refugees-fear-and-destitution-in-Kenya.pdf
[76] https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/unhcr-kenya-operational-update-9-september-2023

fruit and vegetables to supplement their monthly ration of cereals, pulses and oil, was also stopped.[77]

Little warning of the stoppages was given and they came at a bad time, one month after a price hike following the displacement of 20,000 in Dadaab due to heavy flooding.

Full rations were last given by WFP in 2018. In July last year, the ration was reduced from 80% to 60%, followed by a further reduction to 50% in February 2024. Already-strained relations were worsened with the reduction from 50 to 40% and the stoppage of e-vouchers in May. *The New Humanitarian* quoted a refugee advocate. 'We're seeing people robbing each other, and that's a result of the food cut happening without any notice. People are robbing, and can even kill.'

For two years, there have been increasing levels of malnutrition and anaemia at Dadaab and these are expected to increase again with the new cuts.

There are few opportunities for employment by NGOs at the camps and rates of pay are much lower than local Kenyans earn. Even so, only one third of families have a member who is earning money.

Social media in May referred to the government's Department of Refugee Services (DRS) as a 'total shambles.' The backlog for refugee status determination is now higher than ever, at over 212,000, causing delays of two years or more. Even highly qualified migrants miss out on employment, education and resettlement opportunities. There is therefore an 'informal' process by which refugee status is bought for $400.

Without refugee status, access to services is limited and migrants are liable for arrest by corrupt police demanding bribes to avoid detention. Undocumented, unregistered new arrivals are clogging up prisons and the judicial system.

The government policy of restricting migrants to camps has forced those who are disabled or needing hospital treatment out of Nairobi where they could be treated.

The promises of reform following the passing of a refugee act in 2021, and the 'Shirika' (partnership) plan are met with cynicism. Migrants will still be restricted to the deprived provinces of Garissa and Turkana, where the camps are located, and the backlog of status determination will remain.

It remains to be seen whether the conditions linked to a loan of $1.2 billion from the World Bank at the end of May, will improve life for migrants in Kenya. The 'stringent' conditions for the loan include plans to allow the employment of registered asylum-seekers and their full integration into Kenya's economy.[78]

A local NGO spokesman told OSG this was like believing in Santa Claus. He did not believe that refugees would be allowed to elect officials in the new 'municipalities' which would replace the camps under the scheme. He believed it was 'an attempt to force refugees into becoming taxpayers' and would enrich only a few non-refugees.

The financial difficulties in Kenya have led to austerity measures which have caused civil unrest for the host population,[79] and claims of unaccountable government – not a good sign for refugees.

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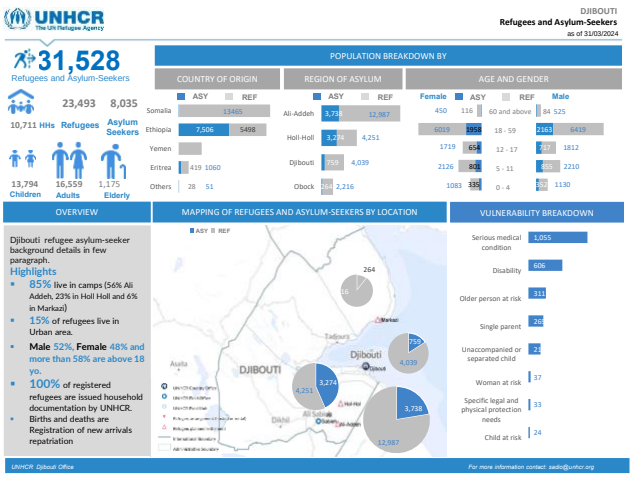
[77] https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2024/06/13/dadaab-voices-despair-refugee-food-rations-kenya-cut-60

[78] https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/101216-kenyas-refugee-policy-reform-among-conditions-tied-ksh156-billion-world-bank-loan

[79] https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/daily-review-kenya-protests/

Djibouti: Deportation risk



According to UNHCR figures at the end of March there are 31,528 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Djibouti, of whom 23,493 are refugees and 8,035 are registered asylum-seekers. Nearly half (13,794 – 44%) are children. Somalis (13,465) and Yemenis (approximately 3,000) are given refugee status automatically. Of the 1,479 Eritreans, two-thirds (1,060) have refugee status.

The majority of the registered 13,004 migrants from Ethiopia are Oromo but UNHCR do not categorise nationalities within the total. Less than half (5,498) have refugee status and only a few hundred of these are Oromo according to community representatives. The other 7,506 are asylum-seekers, of whom 90% are Oromo. However, these figures do not include undocumented migrants, of whom several hundred live in shanties, such as Humbuli, on the margins of Djiboutiville.

The body which registers asylum-seekers (Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés – ONARS) and the National Eligibility Commission, comprised of ONARS and UNHCR officers, which decides on refugee status, have made few determinations so far in 2024, although several hundred were assessed in the last six months of 2023, about half of whom were awarded status.[80]

Even some of those with certificates from ICRC showing that they were visited by them in detention in Ethiopia may be refused refugee status, according to OSG's correspondent. He also states that registration of asylum-seekers necessitates a bribe for Oromo applicants.

Therefore, those who arrived in Djibouti in the last several months, including those named in Report 65 in March, remain undocumented, unprotected and unsupported by UNHCR. Thousands are 'suffering in the town' according to OSG's correspondent on 22 June.

However, there have been no round-ups or deportations reported so far this year. The relationship between the Oromo community and UNHCR remains cordial and was unproblematic until a few days before this report was going to press, when several Oromo registered asylum-seekers were threatened with deportation back to Ethiopia.

On 28 June, OSG was informed that six individuals, including former victim of refoulement Tofik Hassen Ali, were being actively sought by Ethiopian security personnel operating from the Ethiopian embassy, with a view to their being captured and deported. Previous refoulement of Oromo from Djibouti, including that of Tofik Hassen Ali in 2002, was followed by their imprisonment and torture.[81]

There is a long history of deportation and refoulement of Oromo migrants, including registered asylum-seekers and documented refugees, from Djibouti since the 1980s. About 5,000, including 127 registered asylum-seekers, were deported by train under inhumane

[80] OSG Report 65, pp.41-42. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/OSG-Report-65-14-March-2024.pdf
[81] OSG Report 48, pp.59-62. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-48-Djibouti-May-2012-Destitution-and-fear-for-refugees-from-Ethiopia.pdf

conditions in 2000. At least 30 died and 30 were gang-raped during the round-up and transportation. Sporadic returns of hundreds occurred over the next few years until 3-4,000 were returned in June 2004 under UNHCR supervision after a rapid and flawed refugee status determination process at Awr Aousa refugee camp.

One or two dozen were returned between then and 2011, when squads of Ethiopian and Djibouti security agents took another nine or more at the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012. Another six were subjected to refoulement in January 2013 and then small numbers were sporadically returned up to 2016. No refoulement was reported between 2016 and June 2020, when 14-15 were captured in Djibouti and returned.[82]

In late 2021, OSG was informed that young Oromo, without documentation, were being returned to Ethiopia on a daily basis, over 100 per month, to be forcibly conscripted into the army fighting in Tigray.[83] On 31 December alone, over 300 unregistered asylum-seekers and ten with refugee status were sent back.[84]

Undocumented migrants living in crude shelters in Humbuli district of Djiboutiville were evicted and their homes destroyed in April 2023. Up to 3,000 were deported in May, but there were no registered asylum-seekers or refugees among them, although some with documents were detained for a while.[85]

Another problem which has been reported may reflect the discrimination experienced by Oromo refugees and asylum-seekers which was reported in Report 65 in March. In sections 6, 7 and 8 of Ali Addeh refugee camp, which is set in the Djibouti desert in the southeast, near the border with Ethiopia, a severe water shortage was reported in May. These are the sections of the camp which house refugees from Ethiopia and Eritrea. Other parts of the camp, housing mostly refugees from Somalia, have no problem with the water supply.

The problem was particularly acute in May because there was an outbreak of diarrhoea, particularly affecting children.

Saudi Arabia: Forced returns

The detention of Oromo migrants in inhumane and lethally unsanitary conditions in Saudi Arabia was reported by OSG in 2021.[86] Following damning reports by human rights organisations and international media, conditions in detention centres improved and undocumented migrants were returned to Ethiopia in 2022.[87]

The findings of a Human Rights Watch investigation into the killing of migrants attempting to enter Saudi Arabia were published by OSG in September 2023.[88] Nonetheless, thousands of migrants continued to risk the journey through Yemen, among the most dangerous migrant routes in the world,[89] to seek employment in Saudi Arabia.

[82] OSG Report 52, p.30. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-52-July-2020.pdf
[83] OSG Report 58, pp.38-40. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-58.pdf
[84] OSG Report 59, pp.35-36. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-59.pdf
[85] OSG Report 63, pp.39-40. https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-63.pdf
[86] See pp.30-34, OSG Report 58, https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-58.pdf
[87] See p.33, OSG Report 59, https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-59.pdf
[88] See pp.40-42, OSG Report 63, https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-63.pdf
[89] https://pro.drc.ngo/resources/news/just-one-dream-left-a-dangerous-journey-through-yemen/

On 12 April, the *BBC*, in a report since removed from its website, stated in corroboration with *Addis Standard*,[90] that the Saudi authorities had begun the removal of 70,000 undocumented migrants, mostly Oromo, in a process agreed with Ethiopia.

According to the *BBC*, 842 were repatriated on 12 April (see left). Twelve flights per week were planned over a period of four months. Out of 750,000 Ethiopian migrants in the Saudi kingdom, about half were believed to have 'entered the territory illegally.'

Correction

In OSG Report 65, author and regional expert Dr Sarah Vaughan was incorrectly named Dr Susan Vaughan (p.4).

OSG total recorded killings

Including those recorded in this report, OSG has now documented the killing of 5,775 Oromo civilians by Ethiopian government and Fano forces. This represents a small fraction of the real total, certainly under 20% and probably much less.

[90] https://www.facebook.com/100064657363280/posts/822247719940466/?mibextid=rS40aB7S9Ucbxw6v