



The May 12-14, 2024 Massacre in Sekela Woreda

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Summary

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) has conducted an investigation following reports of a massacre in Sekela Woreda of West Gojjam Zone in Amhara Region of Ethiopia. AAA was able to verify that between May 12th and 14th, 2024, Abiy regime soldiers conducted extrajudicial killings of at least 19 Amhara civilians in Gule Kebele and Gish-Abay town of Sekela Woreda.

On May 12th, regime soldiers launched an attack on Sekela Woreda from multiple fronts. The attack was aimed at dismantling Fano strongholds within Sekela Woreda. The regime soldiers made advances into several towns and kebeles in Sekela Woreda. On the same day, regime soldiers advanced into Abesken and Gule Kebeles of Sekela Woreda, initiating gunfire. However, Fano fighters successfully defended the kebeles, forcing the regime soldiers to retreat. While retreating the soldiers executed at least 4 civilians. Among the victims were two priests who were fathers to several children. The regime soldiers also looted and caused heavy damage to the health center in Gule Kebele. The

regime soldiers accused the health center of providing medical services for Fano fighters.

Also on May 12th, another group of Fano fighters entered Gish-Abay town, the administrative center of Sekela Woreda. The Fano fighters targeted regime soldiers stationed at a local school, which the regime had converted into a military camp. This attack resulted in significant losses for the military, with Fano fighters seizing weapons and other materials. Following withdrawal of the Fano forces, regime soldiers re-entered the town. Upon their return, the soldiers began executing civilians, accusing them of involvement in the looting of the military camp. These executions continued over the following 2-3 days, resulting in the deaths of several civilians. Reports from various sources indicated a death toll of up to 30 individuals. AAA was able to independently verify the killing of 15 civilians in Gish-Abay and Gule areas. However, witnesses indicated the numbers of killed and injured civilian may be much greater.

Below is a list of killed victims the AAA was able to identify by name. In Gule Kebele: (1) Priest (Merigetta) Dires Mekonnen, a 40-year-old man and father of 3; (2) Priest Kere Abawa, a 55-year-old man and father of 6; and (3) Tegegn Mesha, a 50-year-old man and father of 6 children. The first two individuals were killed in their homes, while the third was shot and killed on the street on his way home from church. The three of them were laid to rest at the cemetery inside St. Kidane-Mihret Church in Gule Kebele. In the Gish-Abay area: (4) Neberu Belete, a 38-year-old man; (5) Ayenew Kinde Nigussie; and (6) Gebeyaw Alimaw Beyene.

About the Amhara Association of America (AAA)

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) is a non-profit civic organization based in Charlotte, North Carolina that investigates and documents human rights violations in the context of conflict, violence and political repression in Ethiopia. AAA seeks to inform U.S. policymakers, international human rights organizations, journalists, researchers, and all Ethiopian stakeholders to pressure Ethiopian leaders to change laws, policies, and practices in Ethiopia so perpetrators are held accountable and victims receive justice. AAA also collaborates with Amhara organizations in the U.S., supports independent Amhara organizations in Ethiopia, and provides humanitarian aid for Amharas impacted due to targeted ethnic attacks. AAA's funding comes directly from members and supporters; the organization is not affiliated with any Ethiopian or American political or governmental entities.

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