



War updates from Amhara Region, Ethiopia - April 30th to May 12th, 2024

Updated May 12, 2024

Overview

In recent weeks, fighting between Amhara Fano freedom fighters (Fano) and Prosperity Party regime joint forces (regime forces) has continued in various parts of Amhara Region, Ethiopia. Joint regime forces include the *Ethiopian National Defense Force* (ENDF), state militias and riot dispersal forces. The situation in the Central Gonder and South Gonder Zones has been particularly volatile, with intense fighting on multiple fronts and reports of large-scale atrocities against unarmed civilians. Throughout the region, the regime is using increasingly brutal tactics to suppress the Fano movement, and civilians are bearing the brunt of the violence with reports of extrajudicial killings, physical assault, arrests and harassment. Mobilization by the *Tigray People's Liberation Front* (TPLF) in areas bordering northern Amhara Region has also raised tensions in the area particularly following forced mass displacement of Amhara residents in North Wollo and Wag Hemra

Zones in April 2024.¹²³⁴ In recent, weeks regime forces have also continued profiling and arrests of ethnic Amhara residents and Orthodox Christians in Addis Ababa city.⁵

North Shewa Zone

On May 6th, unknown gunmen shot and injured Land Authority Administrator Teshale Wendmagegn in Kewet Woreda. Following this incident, there was tension in Shewa-Robit and surrounding areas. On May 7th, fierce fighting broke out between ENDF and Fano forces in Shewa-Robit and surrounding areas. In Armeniya, Fano forces carried out a sudden attack on an ENDF camp, which resulted in regime casualties and destruction of military equipment. In response to the sudden attack, fighting broke out. Following the fighting, the road from Dessie city (South Wollo Zone) to Addis Ababa city was closed.

On May 8th, joint regime forces planned to encircle and attack Fano forces in Merhabete Woreda. However, the Fano forces learned of the plans in advance and carried out counter offensives on three regime vehicles when the joint regime forces were moving to pursue their plan of attacking and encircling the Fano forces. The attack was carried out in a place called Arada located near Alem-Ketema, administrative center of Merhabete Woreda. Following the attack on May 9th, tensions erupted in areas surrounding Alem-Ketema as joint forces prepared to start fighting. Consequently, regime forces detained bajaj owners and motorcyclists and later released them. Restrictions were imposed on public transportation services and bajaj services.

¹AI-Ain Amharic April 28, 2024 [news article](#)

²UNOCHA April 22, 2024 [situation report](#)

³DW Amharic April 16, 2024 [news article](#)

⁴AAA April 16, 2024 [update](#)

⁵AAA May 11, 2024 [report](#)

North Wollo Zone

In previous weeks of fighting, ENDF soldiers targeted civilians which resulted in killings and injury in areas surrounding Kobo. Among the victims was a woman named Tsehaynesh who was killed alongside her 5-year-old son, and another child was also killed. In addition, a security guard at the local branch of Dashen Bank was injured and two residential houses in Mendefera were burned down. On May 7th, the ENDF severely beat a civilian named Fisseha (last name unknown) which resulted in his right hand and leg being broken in Kebele 8 alleging he is a member of Fano.

South Wollo Zone

In the two days before May 9th, tensions became high in a place called Teleyayen in Ambassel Woreda as ENDF soldiers repeatedly fired heavy weapons in the nearby mountains. On the morning of May 9th, fierce fighting broke out in Teleyayen as a result of surprise attacks carried out by Fano forces and ENDF vehicle carrying 6-8 soldiers. The ENDF extrajudicially killed a civilian named Molla Birhanu who they alleged was supplying information to Fano forces. In the afternoon, the ENDF retreated from Teleyayen resulting in an easing of tensions.

On May 11th, ENDF killed at least two civilians and detained an additional three civilians during fighting with Fano in Wegdi Woreda. Intense fighting between the ENDF and Fano forces took place between 11 am to 5 pm in Gorenj, Shemene, Yage, Borebor, and Yegurba Kebeles. The fighting was initiated by the ENDF in an attempt to encircle Fano on the night of May 10th, 2024 in Gorenji Kebele and continued in the Shemene, Yage, Borebor, and Yegurba Kebeles after Fano made a strategic retreat. The ENDF pursued its offensive operation with a sizeable force and managed to kill one Fano combatant whereas at least 10 ENDF combatants were killed. Reports confirmed that ENDF killed two civilians and detained another three civilians. The killed civilians were identified as: (1)

Getachew Shifferaw and (2) 30-year-old Nigussie Abate. The late Getachew Shifferaw was shot and killed by ENDF soldiers in his residence after they searched his house and found nothing. The detained civilians were identified as: (1) Awoke Getahun, (2) Abeje Getahun and (3) Cheru Abate. The victims were detained as they were traveling from Gorenj Kebele to their homes in Yage Kebele. As of now, reports indicate fighting has resumed in Gorenji Kebele as Fano forces have managed to encircle the ENDF as they were traveling to the town of Wegdi.

North Gojjam Zone

In recent weeks in North Mecha Woreda, regime forces had been using aggressive tactics, including physical abuse, to coerce residents into paying taxes and health insurance fees. In response, on May 3rd, Fano fighters entered and launched a sudden attack on targeting government officials and regime troops in Merwi. The gunfire exchange began at 9 am in the morning and lasted for two hours before the Fano fighters withdrew at 11 am. Casualties were reported on both sides, with significant losses among regime soldiers. The Fano fighters were able to kill, injure and capture several regime soldiers, as well as confiscate numerous weapons.

On May 8th, Fano killed a state militiaman named Enkuanu Wonde in Merawi town (North Mecha Woreda). Enkuanu was wanted under charges of killing countless unarmed civilians but when Fano attempted to apprehend him, he refused and a shootout ensued.

West Gojjam Zone

On May 10th, Quarit Woreda saw significant gunfire exchange initiated by Fano forces in the Gebeze Mariam, Buhadenga, and Zindib areas. Reports indicated that the Fano inflicted significant losses on the regime soldiers and also launched a surprise attack on reinforcement regime forces from Jiga.

Awı Zone

On May 7th, there was a brief exchange of fire in Tilili and Addis Kidam towns, where Fano fighters launched a sudden attack against regime soldiers, resulting in the death of a few regime soldiers. In response, regime soldiers reportedly indiscriminately shot and killed civilians.

East Gojjam Zone

On May 1st, a light gunfire exchange occurred in Gindewoyn town of Goncha Siso Enese Woreda where two local government officials were shot with one being killed.

On May 3rd, fighting occurred in Enemay Woreda, following a surprise attack by Fano fighters on regime soldiers traveling from Bichena to Debre Work. The fighting took place in the morning in an area called Yegulit, resulting in significant losses among regime soldiers. Eventually, reinforcements from the regime arrived from two directions, forcing the Fano fighters to withdraw from the area.

On May 7th, a high school in Yedoha town (Shebel Berenta Woreda) was set on fire. Sources indicated that the school had been used as a military camp by the regime, and for unknown reasons, a heavy explosion was heard the previous evening, resulting in partial demolition of the school.

On May 11th, regime forces initiated a sudden attack early in the morning in the area known as Jama, located in the area bordering Basoliben and Aneded Woredas. According to sources, both sides suffered casualties and several Fano were captured in the incident. Subsequently, Fano fighters from neighboring areas arrived to assist in repelling regime forces however regime forces seized the captured Fano and detained ten other civilians. At present the area is under the control of regime forces and detained civilians and Fano are

being subjected to severe physical abuse and torture.

Bahir Dar City

On May 7th, fighting took place between Fano fighters and regime soldiers in Andasa, located in the Bahir Dar Zuriya area. Regime soldiers had attempted to encircle the Fano fighters by advancing towards their stronghold, but reports indicated that the Fano fighters inflicted significant losses on the military, including the destruction of heavy weapons such as ZU23's. On May 8th, unknown gunmen killed a regime tax officer in Bahir-Dar city. On May 11th, there were reports of bomb explosions in Bahir Dar city. These explosions appear to have occurred in anticipation of a scheduled visit to the city by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Bomb explosions also continued on May 12th in some parts of the city. Additionally, reports indicate Fano fighters killed five police forces on May 12th.

Central Gonder Zone

Between May 4-5, in various kebeles of West Belesa Woreda particularly in Addisalem, Wareb, Gulena and Debozge Kebeles, and Ashker Terara, regime forces committed war crimes against civilians.

- Over 47 civilians, including children as young as 11 and elderly individuals, were extrajudicially killed.
- In addition to the extrajudicial killings, the military burned down 20 civilian homes which they alleged belonged to Fano groups. Civilians were searched for weapons, and those found with any type of armament, whether registered or not, were killed outside their homes in front of their children and wives.
- Names of 12 killed civilians in Debozege and Gulena Kebeles were identified as well as 2 farmers whose homes were burned down. The killed victims from

Debozege Kebele were identified as: (1) Beyene Gashaw, (2) 40-year-old Dessie Tegegne, (3) Kassaw Fenta, (4) Getaw Asmare, (5) student Adeno Mersha, (6) Geramache Yirsaw, (7) Gebre (last name unknown), and (8) Wube Biyazen. The killed victims from Gulena Kebele were: (9) 50-year-old farmer Nigussie Amare, (10) 45-year-old Fentahun Gizate, (11) 40-year-old Dessie Mersha, and (12) Girmachew Yirese. The names of farmers whose houses were burned down were identified as: (1) Dagnaw Alebachew, and (2) Zewdu Alebachew. The farmers whose houses were burned down were all from Gulena Kebele.

- Women were subjected to looting of their jewelry and insulted with ethnic slurs. Over 100 women were robbed of their valuables.
- This reprisal operation was launched after Fano attacked government forces on May 2nd. The attack was devastating for the government forces, with only 4 out of 70 riot dispersal forces and 10 out of 200 military members managing to escape. The remaining soldiers were either killed, injured, or captured by Fano. The reprisal operation was a desperate attempt by the government to regain control of the area after suffering a humiliating defeat. The reprisal operation was carried out by reinforcement forces from Gonder-Azezo Camp and Addis Zemen after Fano members had attacked government forces on May 2nd and withdrew from the area. The victims of the massacre had no connection to the Fano and were innocent civilians.
- The people living in these areas have evacuated due to fear and anger over the atrocities committed by government forces.

The Webla-Maryam Church was looted, holy books were stolen, and priests were beaten. Over 3,500 residents have been forcibly displaced, and over 100 farmers have been disarmed of their legally registered weapons.

-
- Farmers in the area owned legally registered weapons. However, when the soldiers found the kalashnikov rifles, they confiscated them. However, they intentionally destroyed outdated weapons such as *Abrarew* and *Yetija Bret*.
 - This indicates that the soldiers were not simply disarming the civilians but were also targeting them for possession of any type of weapon, regardless of whether it was registered or not. The massacre has forced the people living in the affected areas to flee their homes in terror. They are filled with unimaginable fury, as they never expected such heinous acts to be perpetrated by their own government forces. This situation conveys the severity of the massacre and its impact on the local population. It highlights the betrayal of trust and the deep sense of outrage felt by the people towards their government.
 - The disarmament campaign is being deliberately carried out in Gonder, as evidenced by the recent disarmament of 38 legally equipped individuals in Dembiya. Additionally, the burning of civilian homes under the false pretense of belonging to Fano is a common tactic employed by military soldiers in the region.

On the night of May 6th, in Denqez, a fierce battle erupted between Fano forces and government troops. The clash resulted in the deaths of at least eight soldiers. The conflict escalated in Belessa-Abeya Terara, where a heavy exchange of fire, supported by artillery shells, raged between the opposing forces.

In Kebele 18 of Gonder city, a young man who had traveled to the city to celebrate the Easter holiday with his family was extrajudicially killed by riot dispersal forces. The soldiers shot him in the head under the false pretext that he was a member of the Fano groups.

On May 7th, in Ayimba (Dembiya Woreda), a fierce battle erupted as ten military convoys

descended upon the area. In the ensuing chaos, 24 members of the state militia were killed, while casualties from regime soldiers remains unknown. Furthermore, a night-time skirmish in Koladiba town (Dembiya Woreda) claimed the lives of an additional two state militia members.

In Maksegnit, Belessa, and Koladiba (Dembiya Woreda) numerous civilians have been killed under pretext of having family members who are affiliated with Fano. In Koladiba alone, six members of a single family were massacred. The home of Fano Dereje Belay, a prominent Fano leader in the area, was burned down by government forces last week, following the destruction of his hotel four months earlier. Today, four members from a single family were killed in their homes for allegedly being related to Fano members.

During a battle held on May 8th, government forces had killed three civilians in Lideta Kidane Mihret Church, Sere-Warka, in Ayimba (Dembiya Woreda). The civilians were dragged out of their homes and shot dead. On May 9th, two more civilians were extrajudicially killed in the same way.

On the night of May 9th, Fano forces launched an attack on state militia forces in Maksegnit town, resulting in an undisclosed number of casualties.

On May 9th, state militia and riot dispersal forces were dispersed from their military camp in Koladiba town after suffering a devastating defeat at the hands of Fano forces in Ayimba between May 8th and 9th. At least 51 state militias were killed in the battle, and the remaining forces fled. The regular army blocked the main road from Koladiba in various directions in order to take hold of the dispersed militias and riot dispersal forces.

On May 9th, a large number of regime commando forces were flown into Gonder city on

an Ethiopian Airlines flight at night, in violation of the civil aviation law that prohibits the use of civilian aircraft to transport military personnel and equipment. The commando forces have been deployed to quell the fierce fighting that is taking place in the villages and towns around Gonder city. Sporadic gunfire has also been reported in the city itself. Last night, there was heavy gunfire in Hdase Genfo Quch and Shewa Dabo in Kebele 18, from 1:30 am to 4:30 pm. The extent of the damage is not yet known.

On May 10th, at approximately 5:30 am, a significant armed engagement occurred between Fano forces and regime allied forces in Chan Diba, Chuahit Woreda. The nature and extent of casualties are currently unknown. During the engagement, civilian houses were burned down, resulting in the displacement of residents. Eyewitness accounts suggest that a number of civilians were killed or injured in the crossfire. Due to the ongoing security situation and the evacuation of the town by its inhabitants, a comprehensive assessment of civilian casualties has not yet been possible.

On May 10th, in Merdo Kebele, where more than 84 civilians had been mercilessly massacred, regime forces enforced arbitrary disarmament of legally registered arms following a deadly confrontation with local farmers, resulting in the deaths of at least 8 regime forces. On the same day, the wife of a priest was extrajudicially killed by regime soldiers in Blb Wuha Kebele, without any reason.

- Regime forces, assisted by state militias, burned down farmers' houses, leaving many civilians homeless and desperate in Washa, Tiliq Amba, Blb Wuha, and Chamaq villages, located along the border of South Gonder and Central Gonder Zones (Belessa). In response to these inhumane and degrading actions of their comrades, a significant number of regular army personnel stationed at Degoma military camp defected and joined Fano forces, bringing their weapons and equipment with them.

-
- In the heart of Central Gonder Zone, bodies of fallen militia combatants have been returned to their families. Within a ten-day period of confrontation with Fano, over 114 state militias have been killed. The deceased originated from various locations including towns surrounding Gonder city, Belessa, Libo Kemkem, and both eastern and western Dembiya. Wounded militia members initially admitted to Ayra Hospital (Gonder city) were subsequently transferred to the Azezo Military Camp in Gonder city.

On May 9th, the day of reckoning arrived for the military force that had descended upon Belessa like a plague.

- Earlier that morning on the holiday of the nativity of Virgin Mary, the army had unleashed its fury upon the mountains of Belessa, raining down heavy weapons that shattered the land and claimed the lives of countless shepherds and innocent civilians. The local communities were devastated, their hearts filled with grief and anger. Suddenly, the military force found itself surrounded in Belessa and Libo, neighboring kebeles of Gulana, Blb Wuha, Zengo, and Dara. The local communities had had enough. They emerged from their homes, armed with whatever they could find, and descended upon the soldiers with a vengeance. The soldiers, trapped and outnumbered, fought back desperately. But the fury of the local communities was too much to bear. One by one, the soldiers fell, their bodies riddled with wounds. The air was thick with the smell of gunpowder and the cries of the dying soldiers. The Baja forces, who had also entered the area, met the same fate. They were unable to break out of the encirclement of the furious farmers, who had lost their families in the massacre held on May 5th, on the eastern holiday. The Baja forces remained there dead, unable to escape the wrath of the local communities. By nightfall, the battle was over. The military force that had once terrorized Belessa was no more. The local communities had reclaimed their land and their dignity, and the memory of those who had been lost would forever serve as a reminder of the price of tyranny.

-
- A massacre was carried out on May 5th, a horrific massacre took place in various kebeles of West Belessa, claiming the lives of over 84 innocent individuals. The victims were rounded up by government forces and local militias and they were brutally killed. In Demozge Kebele alone, at least 39 victims were buried including 16 buried in Abune Aregawi Church, 7 in Kidist Selassie Church, 6 in Kidus Kirkos Church, and more than 10 in Kidus Giyorgis Church. Many of the victims' bodies were taken to far away places to be buried, out of fear of reprisal action from regime forces. In addition to the massacre, government forces also burned down many houses in Tsion Maryam and Ashker Terara.
 - As of May 10th, a fierce battle is raging in Merdo Kebele, the site of the massacre.
 - The state militias implicated in the massacre were residents of the area and were believed to have helped regime forces identify and target victims. The following state militias are believed to have played a significant role in the massacre: (1) Negestat Biset (Wareb Kebele), (2) Sendequ Mekuriya (Wareb Kebele), (3) Mulu Yirga (Abay Tera village), (4) Arega Abebe (Amstya village), (5) Abebe Beyene (Amstya village), (6) Gizaw Beyene (Amstya village), and (7) Adamu Chane (Demozge Kebele).

On May 10th, in Ayimba (Dembiya Woreda), Fano forces carried out a guerrilla attack on a regime convoy, killing most of the soldiers and injuring the rest. At least 22 soldiers were killed in the attack, and more than 18 kalashnikov rifles and two light machine guns were captured by Fano members. On May 10th, eight military vehicles full of soldiers have been dispatched to Ayimba, and fighting has already erupted.

Between May 9-10, following intense fighting between joint regime forces and Fano in Lideta-Kidanemihret and Sere-Warka, regime forces carried out deadly reprisal attacks against at least four civilians near the local high school. The names of the victims were:

(1) 32-year-old Ato Weretaw Mengiste, (2) 24-year-old Getachew (last name unknown), (3) 20-year-old Woizerit Tena Gebru, and (4) 27-year-old Ato Kindachew (last name unknown). Ato Weretaw Mengiste, a famous shop owner in Ayimba town, was dragged out from his shop and struck on his head under allegation of being a Fano member and possession of a weapon. The young Getachew was killed in front of his father, mother and siblings after being dragged out of his house. Woizerit Tena Gebru was killed after being dragged out of her house under allegations of providing food and shelter to Fano members. Lastly, Ato Kindachew was killed on May 10th despite sitting inside his residence with his family members to avoid being struck by a stray bullet.

On the afternoon of May 11th at around 2:30 pm, a bomb was detonated in Gonder city targeting civilians in the Infinity Bar and Restaurant located in Kebele 18 of Maraki sub-city near Gonder University. The restaurant is a popular new establishment frequented by university students. The attack resulted in multiple deaths and injuries. Over 17 victims were admitted to various hospitals, including Ivex General Hospital, Nur General Hospital, and Gonder Referral Hospital. Three medical doctors from Gonder Hospital were also among the victims including Dr. Segenet and Dr. Andinet. The motive for the bombing remains unknown, but some speculation suggests it was carried out by regime forces to accuse Fano of committing terrorist acts. The terrorism designation would allow the government to justify further violence in the war in Amhara Region.

On the night of May 11th, the Tseda Police Station in Tseda sub-city of Gonder city was bombed. Regime forces also fired mortar shells from Megech Mountain to Tseda sub-city and fighting was carried out overnight. The extent of civilian casualties is currently not known.

On May 11th in Qoladiba town (Dembiya Woreda), regime forces extrajudicially killed a

70-year-old man by dragging him out of his house in front of his family members under allegations that his son is a member of Fano. His son was reportedly an injured veteran of the self-defense war when TPLF invaded the Amhara Region and had to move out of the country (possibly for medical treatment). However, following fighting near Ayimba between May 9-11, local joint regime forces had been dispersed in the area.

South Gonder Zone

On April 30th, the village of Kesel-Ber at Jan Meri Kebele in the newly established woreda of Sede-Muja, separated from Simada Woreda, became the site of a fierce battle between Fano forces led by Fano Kefyalew Dessie and joint regime forces.

- Regime forces had suffered a devastating defeat at the hands of Fano the previous day, and their morale was already low. The Fano forces, on the other hand, were emboldened by their victory and eager to press their advantage. The battle began at dawn, and it quickly became clear that the government forces were outmatched. The Fano forces were better armed and more experienced, and they had the support of the local population. One by one, regime soldiers fell, their bodies riddled with bullets. The Fano forces also destroyed eight vehicles full of reinforcement soldiers, killing or injuring most of the occupants. The ENDF 92nd regiment, which had participated in the hostilities, were completely destroyed and disbanded. At least 110 soldiers were confirmed dead in the battle.
- In retaliation for the attack, state militias and regime soldiers burned down 51 houses belonging to farmers, falsely accusing them of supporting Fano and providing shelter and food to Fano members.
- When the farmers saw their homes being burned down, they joined forces with Fano against the newly deployed armies. Four civilians were killed in the arson attack, shot dead as they sat in their homes, fearing that they would be hit by stray bullets.

-
- The battle of Kesel-Ber is a major victory for the Fano forces, marking a turning point in the local conflict. Regime forces were forced to retreat, and the Fano forces gained control of more territory.

On May 1st, farmers from the villages of Aguatwiha, Soscham, Qachena, Kosh, Kebeles 13 and 14, and Enguda-Dar were shelled with heavy artillery as they approached the town of Simada to collect fertilizer. The civilians were killed under the pretense that they were members of Fano and were preparing for a peaceful demonstration. This was a deliberate attack on civilians, and there is no reasonable doubt about it. Their bodies were buried on May 2nd. During the attack, houses were also burned down. Additionally, armed hostilities have taken place between Fano and regime forces in Segno-Gebeya, Asfa-Meda, near the town of Simada.

Conflict erupted in Mikael Deber Kebele (Libo Kemkem Woreda) on May 2nd, following the deployment of military forces from two directions to Mikael-Deber: Degoma (West Belessa Woreda) to Mendere-Maryam and Addis-Zemen to Mikael-Deber.

- In the first direction, Fano forces ambushed the advancing military at Tiliq-Amba, killing over 30 soldiers and halting their progress towards Mikael Deber. A similar ambush by Fano forces at Jirat, located between Mikael-Deber and Addis-Zemen, resulted in numerous casualties. A fierce battle ensued at Garge-Selassie once the reinforcement forces have entered into Mikael-Deber town, where over 80 regime soldiers lost their lives and the Garge-Selassie Church sustained severe damage from heavy shelling. Only one Fano member suffered confirmed injuries during the intense fighting.
- Upon entering Mikael-Deber on May 3rd, regime forces subjected the town to heavy shelling, causing widespread destruction. The troops intimidated civilians, threatening to kill them unless the Fano group released 34 POWs (captured regime

soldiers).

- The military engaged in looting and plundering of the Tseday Bank and seized goods from local traders. They deliberately set fire to looted businesses. They also extrajudicially executed Ato Setegn Bimrew, a wealthy ISUZU truck driver who transported goods and travelers from Addis-Zemen to Mikael-Deber and well-known trader in the town, and five other civilians, including a 14-year-old boy.
- The civilians were killed as a deterrent to the general public. Their bodies were displayed on the ground in a visible location for nearly a day, as the military prohibited their families from burying them. The soldiers claimed that the civilians had supported the Fano and provided information that led to the deaths of soldiers.

On May 4th, three ZU-23s with 20 military vehicles and heavy weapons were deployed to Mikael-Deber and Arno-Gari, resulting in heavy shelling of these small towns. Over 3,500 civilians were displaced due to the extrajudicial killings and heavy shelling in Mikael-Deber, Mendere-Maryam, Gurbo-Wuha, Maytid, and Arno, fearing that they would be killed by the military. Their homes were destroyed by heavy weapons, forcing them to spend the Easter holiday in displacement and destitution.

On May 6th, two farmers identified as Nigus Girma and Abebe Wubneh, were extrajudicially killed by regime forces in Asta-Maryam Kebele (Addis Zemen). The soldiers claimed that the farmers' children were members of Fano and were responsible for killing regime forces. This situation clearly conveys the arbitrary and brutal nature of the killings, highlighting the disregard for human life and the targeting of civilians by government forces.

On May 7th, in Este Woreda, government military forces committed heinous acts of violence against innocent civilians. In the town of Gasay, a woman was ruthlessly killed

as she made her way home to visit her family during the Easter holiday. Another woman met a similar fate in Lewaye town, her life extinguished without any provocation or justification. In Hudad Kebele (Este Woreda), a farmer engaged in his daily activities was killed by regime forces. His only crime was carrying a weapon, a common practice in Este.

On May 8th, fighting took place between Fano forces and regime forces in the vicinity of Mikael Deber Kebele. The conflict erupted along four distinct fronts.

- Mikael Deber Kebele had been under Fano control since May 6th, after they inflicted a crushing defeat on a newly deployed government forces. However, the government forces launched a fresh offensive to retake the town.
- Regime forces advancing from Addis Zemen towards Mikael Deber Kebele were ambushed at Jirat, resulting in heavy casualties. Similar ambushes were carried out by Fano forces along the other three fronts: Enfranz-Mikael Deber Kebele, Degoma-Mikael Deber, and Debolgize-Mikael Deber.
- The fighting continued unabated, with reports indicating that government forces were attempting to infiltrate Mikael Deber from the west.

In Simada Woreda, regime forces have been shelling different areas in an attempt to free 21 state militias who were captured by Fano forces on May 9th. Since May 7th, fierce fighting has taken place between Fano and regime forces in the mountains of Armachiho, Masero Demb, and Dawa, and the neighboring valleys. A large number of residential houses have been shelled with heavy artillery and civilian casualties are increasing but the exact number of casualties is not known as the war is ongoing.

On May 10th, at Werqe village (located 2-km from Debre-Tabor city), joint regime forces were ambushed by Fano (Amhara Fano Gonder Guna Division and Major General

Wubante Division) while they were marching to Mahdere-Maryam town to attack Fano.

- Over 24 regime soldiers were confirmed killed in the attack and at least 6 state militias were pronounced dead immediately.
- In Gasay town, state militias under the command of Farta Woreda administrator Mulu Abeje targeted a large number of local residents (civilians) under pretext of having familial relations or supporting Fano.
- Civilian properties were confiscated and transported to clandestine warehouses before being set on fire.
- Following the Werqe village ambush, wounded regime forces were admitted to Debre-Tabor Hospital. Several admitted government forces succumbed to their injuries during hospitalization. Following the deaths of the state militia members, hospital nurses and doctors were unjustly accused of neglect and subjected to beatings and arrests by government forces. The medical personnel were accused of providing inadequate care due to their alleged support for Fano. Among those arrested was Dr. Yoseph Ashagrie, a highly respected physician at Debre-Tabor Hospital. He was taken to an unknown location and arrested in a clandestine manner. His family has been unable to visit him.
- Government forces subsequently deployed heavy artillery on Debre-Tabor Eyesus mountain and commenced indiscriminate shelling targeting residential areas. The bombardment resulted in an unknown number of civilian casualties and destruction of numerous residential structures.

On May 10th, Mikael-Debr town witnessed the cold-blooded execution of two young civilians, accused of supporting Fano, they were dragged out of their houses and taken to Mikael Deber high school and were repeatedly shot in their heads.

Over three weeks ago in Ibnat Woreda, following the death of a Fano member named Shambel Mengistu who was killed in combat along with two of his comrades, regime forces cremated his body against the will of locals. The cremation was a blatant violation of religious norms which necessitate proper burial. The incident occurred despite pleas from religious leaders and the soldiers refused to hand over Shambel's body and burned it in front of them. When some female residents wept for the fallen Fano, regime soldiers began beating them saying they would not have wept if it had been them that died.

On May 11th, in Bazra Meda Kebele of Simada Woreda, regime forces physically assaulted and arrested a private clinic owner named Dr. Alemu Demeke under false accusations that he provided medical treatment to wounded Fano members. Dr. Demeke's whereabouts are currently unknown to his family. The regime forces looted and destroyed property in the clinic including medicine with an estimated value of 5 million birr. The clinic's security guard, who carried a legally registered firearm (to fulfill his duties as a security guard), was physically beaten, arrested, and had his firearm confiscated. Woreda administrative officials assisted regime forces in these actions.

West Gonder, North Gonder and Welkait Tegede Setit Humera Zones

Since April 30th, TPLF forces have been mobilizing soldiers near borders with Welkait and Telemt. On May 2nd, Fano fighters clashed with regime forces in Zerima Kebele of Adi Arkay Woreda. Additionally, there were brief skirmishes between Fano fighters and regime forces in Dabat town (Dabat Woreda).

On May 3rd, intense fighting broke out between Fano fighters and regime forces in Tegede Woreda. The fighting encompassed large areas from Tegede Woreda to Dansha. In this battle, Fano forces successfully repelled regime forces, seizing military vehicles and long-range weapons like ZU-23s. Almost all regime combatants either perished or

surrendered to the Fano forces.

On the same day (May 3rd), intense fighting took place between Fano forces and regime forces in Shenfa Woreda.

On May 9th, regime forces stationed near the Tekeze River (Amhara-Tigray Regional Border) have withdrawn and been replaced by Federal Police. This move has raised concerns that it may facilitate an invasion by the TPLF into Amhara territory. Prior to the army's withdrawal, residents of Telemt Woreda were instructed to prepare for the arrival of internally displaced persons from Shire and Aksum.

Related Legal Provisions

These indiscriminate attacks by government forces are in direct violation of the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians (GC IV) and Additional Protocol I, which Ethiopia has ratified. The government forces were obligated to respect the rules of international humanitarian law (IHL) during non-international armed conflict. However, they were the ones who violated these rules, while the Fano forces attempted to protect unarmed civilians.

- The actions of the government forces in Mikael Deber violated the following provisions of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I, which are ratified by Ethiopia:
 - *Protection of civilians*: The indiscriminate shelling of Mikael Deber and the extrajudicial killings of civilians violated the fundamental principle of protecting civilians from the effects of armed conflict.
 - *Respect for the dead*: The refusal to hand over the body of extrajudicially killed, violated the obligation to treat the dead with respect and allow their

families to bury them according to their religious and cultural practices.

- *Prohibition of collective punishment*: The threat to kill civilians as a reprisal for the actions of the Fano group violated the prohibition against collective punishment.
- *Obligation to investigate and prosecute war crimes*: The failure to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of these violations also constitutes a breach of the Geneva Conventions.
- The arrest of Dr. Yoseph Ashagrie and mistreatment of his colleagues in Debre-Tabor Hospital by regime forces constitutes a grave violation of IHL. Article 12 of the Geneva Conventions explicitly prohibits violence against medical personnel and facilities. The arrest and mistreatment of these medical professionals is a clear breach of this fundamental principle.
- The military's cremation of the body of Fano Shambel Mengistu in Ibnat Woreda violates religious and traditional practices of respecting the dead and burying them with dignity. The incident demonstrates the clear hatred that the regime holds towards the Amhara people in general and constitutes a violation of Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II on non-international armed conflict.
- This act of looting the clinic and molesting the doctors under the allegation of treating the opposing belligerent party is in clear violation of the Geneva Conventions on international humanitarian law. As per Article 12(5) of Geneva Convention I, if a belligerent party is forced to abandon wounded, sick members of its armed force to the enemy, it must, as far as the military consideration permits, leave them part of its medical personnel and material to assist in their care. Furthermore, Articles 19 to 35 of the same convention establish the immunity of medical personnel and installations from attack as a fundamental principle of IHL.

Article 18(3) of Geneva Convention I prohibits the molestation or conviction of individuals for nursing the wounded or sick of any party to a conflict without discrimination. It is in violation of article 10 Additional Protocol I to arrest and mistreat a doctor for treating Fano members. Therefore, the arrest and mistreatment of Dr. Alemu Demeke for treating Fano members is a clear violation of Article 10 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. These actions by government forces are a grave breach of international law and a violation of the fundamental rights of civilians.

About Amhara Association of America (AAA)

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

- Contact us via Email: info@amharaamerica.org
- Visit our website at www.AmharaAmerica.org
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- Subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#) and contact us on Telegram via:
+1-404-458-7046
- To make donations: <https://www.amharaamerica.org/get-involved>

