



Update on Student Protests across Addis Ababa and Amhara Region against Amhara Genocide

In June and July 2022, students, teachers and residents of towns across Addis Ababa and Amhara Region held peaceful anti-government demonstrations against the ongoing Amhara genocide after which security forces began killing, detaining and abusing protestors, primarily students and leaders and members of the Amhara Students Association (ASA)

Brief background on the June 18 massacre of Amharas in Tole Kebele (Gimbi Woreda, West Wollega Zone, Oromia Region)

Large-scale protests have erupted across Amhara Region and Addis Ababa following the massacre of hundreds of Amharas on June 18, 2022 in Tole Kebele (ward), Gimbi Woreda (district) of West Wollega Zone, Oromia Region by the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). The Amhara Association of America (AAA) published an [interim report](#) which shows that at least 554 Amhara civilians were killed in this massacre while 40 were injured and hundreds more are still missing.

Students and faculty outraged by the latest Amhara civilians massacre in Oromia Region of Ethiopia have held largescale protests in University of Gondar, Bahir Dar Uni-

versity, Debre Markos University, Debre Birhan University, Woldia University and Addis Ababa University. The university students protested between June 23 to June 29, 2022 and in most universities protests lasted for days. The protests also spilled over to high school students in Shewa Robit city on June 27, 2022 whereby the flag was flown down at half-staff to commemorate the mass killings of Amhara civilians in Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Such peaceful demonstration turned to tragedy when the government security forces fired on the large crowd of peaceful protesters and killed several youngsters on June 30, 2022.

Crackdown on Students: Mass Arrests, Killings, Torture and Other Abuses

True to its character, the Prosperity Party regime responded to the protest with arrests and killing of student leaders as well as peaceful residents of Shewa Robit city. University students in Addis Ababa and Amhara Region have been arrested in large numbers, tortured in jails, and refused appearance in front of a court. Two weeks has been already passed without student protesters appearing in court nor have they been allowed to be visited by their families. The tragedy continued on June 30, 2022 when government security forces fired on peaceful protestors in Shewa Robit city, killing several civilians.

Protests in University of Gonder between June 24th and 28th, 2022

At least twelve students at University of Gonder were imprisoned for allegedly “inciting violence and disobedience” on June 24, 2022. AAA investigated that the incarceration of the university students did not have to do with inciting violence but rather was an attempt to crackdown the efforts of the Amhara Students Association (ASA) to ensure the safety of Amhara students who have been targeted and killed in other regions of Ethiopia over the last four years. This is why several members of the ASA are being chased out from the University of Gonder and Debre Birhan University under the pretext of inciting protests. One AAA source revealed that students are being incarcerated because of their membership

to the ASA, not actually being captured while inciting violence.

According to testimony from AAA's sources, the students were taken to prison just after the protest at the University of Gonder on June 24, 2022 despite not triggering the protests. The students also reported facing torture while they were being taken to the 6th Police Station in Gonder city, were denied medical care and visits by any and all relatives.

The next day, on June 25th and 26th, more students of University of Gonder were imprisoned presumably for their presumed membership to the ASA. Among these was Semreab Ayele (Chief Financial Officer of ASA), a student with visual impairment, Dires Derib, Mulualem, Amare Fisseha and Asresahegn Tsegaye, all of whom were members of the ASA. In protest to the arrests, the students of the University of Gonder boycotted class for several days until June 28, 2022. As protests resumed on June 29, 2022 especially in Maraki Campus of the university, security forces arrested an additional five Engineering students, namely Elyas Siraye, Solomon Warkaw, Ambelu Kiber, Abenezer Tsegaye and Elyas Mekuriyaw.

The students are appeared in front of court on July 4, 2022, the first time since their incarceration accused of "*terrorism and transgressing the constitution and constitutional system*" except Mulualem who refused to appear in court on that date. As of July 7th, 2022 all students except Mulualem have been released from prison with warrants of 1,500 ETB each.



(a)



(b)

Figure 1: Photographs taken of students protesting at the University of Gonder on June 24, 2022.

Protests in Tibebe Ghion Hospital and Bahir Dar University on June 23rd and 26th, 2022

Protests by health professionals and students at Tibebe Ghion Hospital (Bahir Dar University teaching hospital) was undertaken on June 23, 2022. This protest was the first of many protests in Amhara Region calling on the government to discharge its constitutional responsibility to safeguard citizens against such recurrent atrocious crimes. Protestors chanted various anti-government slogans including: “*stop killing Amharas in Oromo Region*”, “*blood legacy*”, “*stop Amhara genocide in Ethiopia*”, and “*respect human dig-*

nity”.

The second wave of protests erupted within three days of the first protest on June 26, 2022. It was triggered following the government’s failure to show any commitment to safeguard citizens from foreseen danger including inflammatory remarks from the Prime Minister which trivialized the issue of the killings.

Over time, participation in the protests increased and large numbers of security forces were deployed to quell the protestors. The security forces proceeded to fire tear gas towards the crowd which led to stampeding and injuries to protestors including women and youngsters who tried to evade capture by the security forces.



(a)



(b)

Figure 2: Photographs of protestors including medical staff and students from Tibebe Ghion Hospital on June 23, 2022 holding signs with messages such as “stop Amhara genocide” and “blood legacy”.

The peaceful protests continued in different campuses of Bahir Dar University (Bahir Dar city, Amhara Region) on June 26, 2022. For example, students in the engineering school of Bahir Dar left their meals at their dining table after a prayer for the victims of the massacre of Amharas in Tole Kebele.



Figure 3: Photograph of textile engineering students in Bahir Dar mourning massacres against Amhara civilians in Oromia Region of Ethiopia.

Protests in Debre Markos University on June 25, 2022

Similar protests denouncing Amhara Genocide in Oromia Region and the government’s failure to protect Amharas were held in Debre Markos city (East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region) on June 25, 2022. The protest was first started by health professionals at Debre Markos University hospital but eventually students from other faculties of Debre Markos University students joined the protest. The protesters held signs with awareness and opposition messages such as “*No more Amhara Genocide*” and “*Stop killing Amharas*”.



(a)



(b)

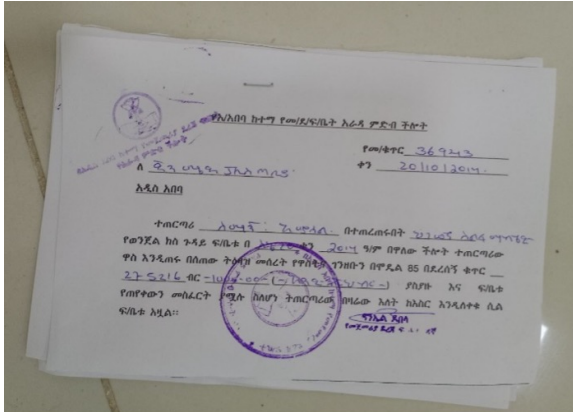
Figure 4: Photographs of health professionals and students demonstrating in Debre Markos University (Debre Markos city, East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region).

Protests in Addis Ababa University on June 25, 2022

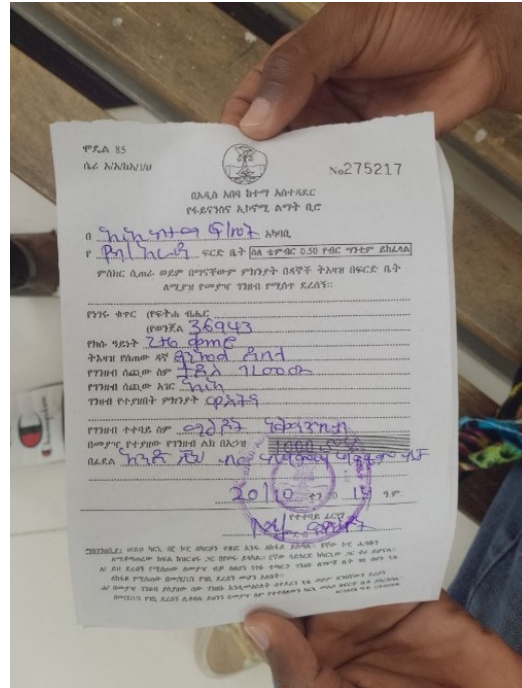
Students at Addis Ababa University who were outraged by the killing of Amhara civilians in Oromia Region flooded the roads of Addis Ababa city to express their outrage against the ongoing Amhara genocide on June 25, 2022. As students were walking demonstrating from Sidist Kilo campus to Arat Kilo campus of Addis Ababa University, police launched an assault on the student demonstrators. Several students were beaten, and injured. One of the student protestors who participated in the demonstration described the attacks as follows:

“As the protest went on, a large numbers of government security forces encircled us when we were on the way to Arat Kilo (campus). They beat us with their boots, sticks and with their gun, we were under siege. We did not even have space to escape as we had been surrounded by large numbers of security forces.”

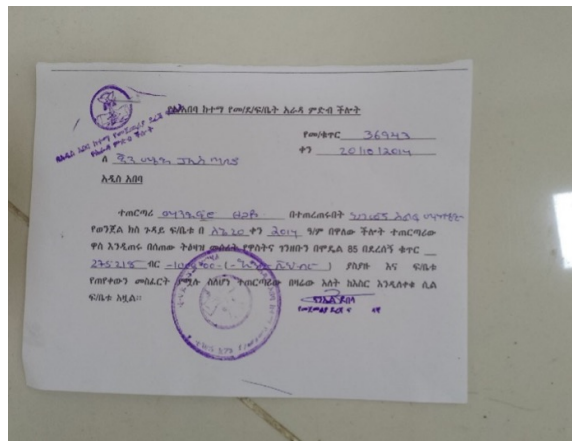
In addition to the physical assaults, police detained about fifty students on the spot. Many were released on June 26th, 2022 with the exception of Semagn Amsal, Tadesse Geremew and Mandefro Tsegaye. The high court ordered the release of these students but police refused the order, effective for a couple of days. Finally, they were released on bail of 1,000 ETB each, as shown in the photographs below.



(a) Court document from the First Instance court Arada sub-city of Addis Ababa city for Semagn Amsal



(b) Document from the Addis Ababa Financial Economic Development Office detailing bail information for Tadesse Geremew.



(c) Court document from the First Instance court Arada sub-city of Addis Ababa city for Mandefro Tsegaye

Figure 5: Photographs of court documents ordering the release of detained students of Addis Ababa University arrested following protests on June 25, 2022.



(a)



(b)

Figure 6: Photographs showing student protestors in Addis Ababa University being attacked by police officers.

Protests in Debre Birhan University on June 27, 2022

Following the escalation of mass students protest in Gonder, Bahir Dar, Debre Markos, Addis Ababa and Woldia Universities, security forces were deployed around Debre Birhan

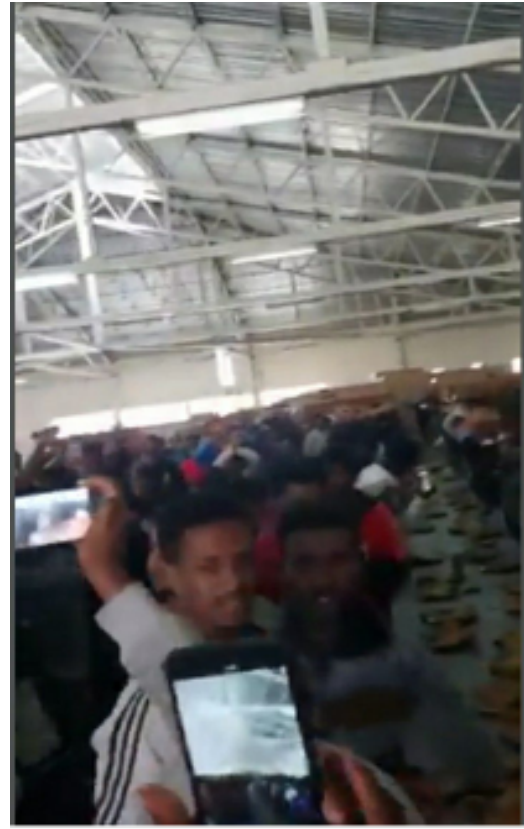
University starting from June 27, 2022. The protest was triggered when the security forces tried to capture members of ASA. One of the members of ASA at Debre Birhan University told AAA:

“The situation escalated when the security forces were about to capture Kirubel Gobie (deputy chairman of the ASA) with a false allegation of inciting violence on June 27, 2022, around 9:00 pm Ethiopian Time. Kirubel was intimidated and chased out by government intelligence members before the protests erupted. He managed to escape but they continued to look for him in the city area where they thought he might be hiding.”

The standoff between regime security forces and students lead to injuries due to the teargas and gunshots fired on the large crowds of students. The security forces obliged students to enter their dormitory as they were searching for Kirubel. In protest to the violence, students boycotted classes beginning on June 27, 2022 which eventually led to the university administration deciding to close classes for the term on July 3rd, 2022 instead of July 8th, 2022 as scheduled.



(a)



(b)

Figure 7: Photographs showing the standoff between students and regime security forces in Debre Birhan University.

Protests in Woldia University on June 26, 2022

Student protests denouncing the ongoing Amhara genocide were held at Woldia University on June 26, 2022. Thousands of students gathered in the stadium together to condemn the ongoing atrocities committed against Amhara civilians in Oromia Region of Ethiopia. The protest lasted for several hours and demonstrators demanded the government to discharge its responsibility of protecting civilians.



Figure 8: Photograph of the demonstration at Woldia University.

Protests in Shewa Robit town on June 27, 2022

Protest also spread to high school students and teachers at Shewa Robit city on June 27, 2022. During the protests, thousands of students, teachers, and residents of the city demonstrated, condemning the government's failure to protect Amhara civilians in Oromia Region of Ethiopia. The flag inside Shewa Robit Secondary School was flown at half-staff during the protest.



(a)



(b)

Figure 9: Photographs of protests in Shewa Robit town on June 27, 2022.

Although the demonstrations proceeded peacefully for hours, the situation turned deadly when regime security forces detained two members of the National Movement of Amhara (NaMA) political party on June 30, 2022. Local community members confronted security forces who were about to take the detainees to another location. Security forces fired and killed several protestors. One source described the tragedy as follows:

“The students and the residents of Shewa Robit gathered together to urge police officers to release the incarcerated NaMA leaders. As they were protesting against the arrests in front of the police station, the security forces fired straight into the large crowd. Consequently, at least four protesters named

Bekalu Yitaferu, Nigatu Nebyat, Tariku and Abi Eshetu were killed by police while protesting peacefully on June 30, 2022. Getaneh Zenebe, Tadie Zebene, Abebe Shewakenaw and Shewatatek Yigezu were seriously wounded on the spot. Moreover, Nigat Tibeb and Getahun Admassu were found to be killed in the outskirts of the city in the same day. Tesfaye Yigezu died after five days on July 4th, 2022, while he was under medical supervision at Sholameda Hospital, Shewa Robit city.”

On the next day on July 1st, 2022, police killed two more individuals named, Muluye Mekuanint and his nephew Getahun Demissie while they were driving to rescue their compatriot who was injured by police on June 30, 2022. The police warned them to stop while they were driving to rescue their injured friend. Consequently, the police shot them with heavy machine gun fire. AAA interviewed a relative of the deceased individuals who said:

“I didn’t imagine such a horrible experience in my life. My wife is about to go crazy and I don’t know how to handle her. The whole family is in trouble.”

The situation has been tense since July 2nd, 2022, with the reported death toll reaching 12 but AAA identified only nine of the deceased victims by name and an additional four of the critically injured victims.

The following table shows the names of identified victims killed, detained and/or seriously injured at the hands of government security personnel between June 30th to July 1st, 2022 in Shewa Robit town.

No	Victim Name	Sex	Status	Outcome
1	Muluye Mequanint	M	Civil	Killed by police
2	Bekalu Yitaferu	M	Farmer	Killed by police
3	Getahun Demissie	M	Driver	Killed by police
4	Nigatu Nebiyat	M	Student	Killed by police

5	Tesfaye Yigezu	M	Civil	Died while under medical supervision
6	Abi Eshetu	M	Civil	Killed by police
7	Tariku	M		Killed by police
8	Nigatu Tibebe	M		Killed by police
9	Getahun Admassu	M		Killed by police
10	Adonay Abebe	M	NaMA member	Detained
11	Yared Muluneh	M	NaMA candidate	Detained
12	Getaneh Zenebe	M	Civil	Injured with gunshot
13	Tadie Zebene	M	Civil	Injured with gunshot
14	Abebe Shewakenaw	M	Civil	Injured with gunshot
15	Shewatatek Yigezu	M	Civil	Injured with gunshot

Names of students including ASA members who were arrested during protests in Gonder University (June 24 and 28, 2022) and Addis Ababa University (June 25, 2022) are listed below.

No.	Detainee Name	Sex	ASA Role	University	Current Status
1	Ermias Tigabie (4th year)	M	Head of Organizational Affairs	Gonder	Released
2	Semreab Ayele	M	Chief Financial Officer	Gonder	Released
3	Mekuanint Mulat	M	Speaker of the General Assembly	Gonder	Released
4	Amare Fisseha	M	Member	Gonder	Released
5	Ambelu Kiber	M	Member	Gonder	Released
6	Asresahegn Tsegaye	M	Member	Gonder	Released
7	Elias Siray (4th year)	M	Member	Gonder	Released
8	Solomon Warikew (4th year)	M	Member	Gonder	Released
9	Elias Mekuriaw (4th year)	M	Member	Gonder	Released
10	Dires Derib (4th year)	M	Member	Gonder	Released
11	Mulualem (5th year)		Student Union President at Campus	Gonder	In Custody
12	Abenezer Tsegaye (4th year)		Member	Gonder	Released
13	Yohannes Goshu	M	Member	Addis Ababa	Released
14	Tadesse Geremew	M	Member	Addis Ababa	Released

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.

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