

Ethiopian army targets civilians in Moyale killing nine, wounding above a dozen. Martial law command post calls it a mistake, residents dispute

MARCH 11, 2018



SEARCH HERE



Liyat Fekade

Addis Abeba March 11/2018 – At least nine civilians were shot to death on Saturday March 10 by members of the Ethiopian army in Moyale town, 790 km south of Addis Abeba, on the border between Ethiopia and Kenya. More than fifteen were also wounded, four of them critically.

Members of the army responsible for the killing were operating under the supervision of the command post established to oversee the current state of emergency. In a statement published on the state run EBC, the command post secretariat, led by defense minister Siraj Fegessa, said the killing happened when five members of the army acted based on a “mistaken intelligence report.” It also said the army was pursuing members of the banned Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), who “crossed in to the Ethiopian side.” The statement offered no details but said five members of the army were disarmed and are under investigations.

But since yesterday, *Addis Standard* spoke to three residents in the town, including a nurse who said the wounded included those who were “shot from the back and from close range”. None of the interviewees know what exactly triggered the killing. “Moyale was like every Saturday,” said Aliyi Abubakar, a friend of Temam Negeso, one of the victims who was a “school principal” in the city’s state run high school. But Temam is described in the list carrying the names of the victims as “teacher.” “Suddenly we started hearing deafening gun shots from the area called ‘Ashewa Tera.’ The shooting then spread to other areas in the city,” Aliyi said, “all we saw were dead bodies littered in the streets.” Aliyi described Temam as “good man who was closely attached to his students and the community. I came to know him a few months ago during a wedding of a mutual friend and since then we kept good contact. He didn’t deserve this. How are his students going to react to such news?”, Aliyi asked.



Left: A picture of Temam as was sent by Aliyi to *Addis Standard*. **Right:** List of victims released by the hospital. Temam’s name is mentioned under No. 1 (Barsiisa “Teacher” Tamam Negesso). There is also a spelling difference as Temam’s name is spelled in Qubee, the Afaan Oromo Alphabet

According to an assistant nurse at Moyale general hospital who wanted to remain anonymous, nine bodies were brought to the hospital between approximately 12 pm and 3 pm local time yesterday. Twelve others who sustained injuries from gun shots were also brought to the hospital. “Four of them were wounded critically,” Ayallo said. They were sent to Hawassa hospital, 515 km north of Moyale and at least eight hours of drive. “Six of the nine bodies were shot multiple times; and all of them were shot around or above their shoulders,” Ayallo added, “I am shocked as are my colleagues. Most of us are not trained to handle situations like this.”

Ayallo Huluka, another resident of the town gave his account saying the army brought an enforcement from a nearby military camp when residents “started running around in fear after the killing of the first victim.” “There was a lot of confusion and chaos. People were running around in all directions not knowing where to go. I have seen mothers scooping their kids and running away,” he said. “It was a pure carnage and no one knows what brought this to the town.” Ayallo said as most residents in the town, he said he didn’t know how and why the first victim was shot. He also said residents of the town were crossing to the Kenya’s Moyale town across the border. “I have seen several Isuzu cars full of people volunteering to drive people out of the town; others are simply walking by foot.” During a second phone call this morning, Ayallo said the shootings have subsided but “we are terrified. The town is silent and those of us who are left are still in shock.”

Graphic pictures showing wrapped and unwrapped bodies of the victims were circulating on Ethiopian social media.

Aschalew Yohannes, the Mayor of Moyale, told the regional state’s media OBN that he **didn’t know what caused the problem** and that investigations were underway. Without providing further details Addisu Arega, communication bureau head of the Oromia regional state, confirmed the killings in his Facebook post and offered **offered his condolences**.

Uptick in civilian casualties

Ethiopia’s council of ministers have announced the current of state of emergency, the second in a year and half, one day after the unexpected **resignation of** Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn.

However, the announcement came under heavy criticism both from Ethiopia’s key ally, the US, which stated **its strong disagreement**, and by **local opposition party members**, activists, **academicians** and **international rights organizations**. Although to a lesser extent than the US, the state of emergency has also drawn widespread criticism and reservations from many of Ethiopia’s traditional western allies including **the EU, The UK, Germany, Norway** and **Sweden**.

Following protests in various parts of the country, especially in Oromia regional state, against the martial law, on Feb 27 the command post said **its patience against what it called “anti-peace elements”** has run out and it no longer tolerates any form of disruptions to public lives; it also said it instructed security forces “to take all necessary measures to restore peace.” Since then however there has been **an uptick in civilian casualties** and an increase in crackdown by the members of the command post against middle level bureaucrats within the Oromia regional state. Unknown numbers of individuals are detained so far including the chief administrator of east Hararghe zone, deputy administrator of east Wellelega zone, the Mayor of Nekemt and head of the justice bureau of Kelem Wellelega Woreda, as per **this report**.

The **controversial state of emergency** was legislated by the national parliament on Friday March 02 but it faced unprecedented objection from the OPDO members of the parliament. Many consider the move as part of the federal government’s attempt to crackdown on the new leadership of the OPDO, a sign of the deepening fracture among Ethiopia’s ruling coalition, EPRDF.

On March 07, Siraj Fegessa accused the Oromia-wide market boycott protests called by online activists to protest against the martial law as having a form of **“color revolution”** and an **“attempt to seize state power”** by those who are instigating the protests. **AS**

WRITTEN BY ADDIS STANDARD

Posts you may also like

News: Prosperity Party organizational department Head of Haruka Woreda, Afar region, shot dead en route from Adama

08 MAY 2023

News: Oromo Cultural Studies Institute, Tigray Languages Academy ink MoU to work together

08 MAY 2023

News: WHO reports alarming rise of measles outbreak in Ethiopia, 182 deaths since 2021

08 MAY 2023

ETHIOPIA NATURAL
BOSS BREW COFFEE

Business: Premium coffee brand Boss Brew launches light medium roasted Sidama Coffee

08 MAY 2023

ABOUT US

Addis Standard Publications is a tri-lingual independent media in online and print formats, publishing public interest contents in English, Afaan Oromoo and Amharic languages. Based in Ethiopia, Addis Standard Publications is owned by JAKENNI Publishing P.L.C., which is registered with the Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia under license number 1552/2003 and recognized by the Ethiopian Media Authority’s Online Media Certificate in accordance with the Ethiopian Media Law, Media Proclamation No. 1238/2021.



CONTACT DETAIL

Address: Leul Taz Building 3rd Floor Off No. 302 | Opposite CMC Compound | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
Phone: +251 118 951 323 / 116 609 329
Mobile: +251 976 010 631
E-mail: info@addisstandard.com / addisstandard@gmail.com

NAVIGATION

- Contact Us
- Legal & Privacy
- Terms & Conditions
- Privacy Policy
- Cookies