



News: Number of civilians killed in recent violence in Konso reaches 66; 39 injured and more than 130, 000 displaced

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Villages located in various localities of Konso zone in SNNPRS are often targeted. Picture: provided by eye witnesses

Addis Abeba, December 02/2020 – Number of people killed in recent violence in Konso reaches 66; 39 people are injured and more than 130, 000 people are internally displaced, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS), peace and security bureau said.

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Alemayehu Bawde, head of the regional peace and security bureau, said that 66 people were killed in clashes covering 17 kebeles. He also said that 39 people were injured and more than 130,000 were displaced.

According to Alemayehu at least 137 people who are suspected of instigating the violence have been arrested.

The **attacks in recent weeks** affected Konso Zone, Amaro, Derashe, and Ale districts of the SNNP regional state.

The regional government is providing emergency relief aid to the victims and the displaced. Four teams have also been set up to investigate and enforce the rule of law in the area, Alemayehu said.

The Segen Area People's Zone of the SNNPRS had underwent a restructuring in November 2018, after nearly four years of protest by Konso community, resulting in the split of the Konso zone from Segen Area People's Zone, where Konso wereda, along with Derashe, Amaro, and Burji made up the Segen Area People Zone since 2011.

There has been intermittent violence since then, which are attributed largely to armed groups who opposed the decision of splitting the Konso zone, residents who spoke to *Addis Standard* say. Two years after the restructuring of the zone, violence keeps on ravaging the area.

However Alemayehu said that the residents don't have disputes amongst themselves and instead attributed the violence as a result of forces who are trying to manipulate the people's long standing political demands. He also blamed the attack on "TPLF and OLF(shanee)", the later, a term government officials use to refer to members of the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA).

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