

News: Sixteen people, including children, killed in Ethiopia's Afar region after armed attacks, several wounded

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The attacks occurred in Afambo wereda, Obno Kebele, near the border with Djibouti in the east and Somali regional state in the south.

Addis Abeba, October 14/2019 – Sixteen people were killed and more than 30 wounded in Ethiopia's Afar regional state after attacks by armed men in attack last week on Friday and Saturday, Kontie Moussa, (PhD), Afar People's Party Chairman, told Addis Standard.

The attacks occurred in Afambo wereda, Obno Kebele, near the border with Djibouti in the east and Somali regional state in the south.

According to Dr Kontie, "16 civilians were killed and 35 were wounded, including children and women" by militants during the attack. He blamed Somali Region State's Special Force as well as plain clothes armed men from Djibouti.

Dr. Konties's statement about the armed men from Djibouti was corroborated by Hussein Ali, administrator of the Wereda, in an interview with BBC Amharic. Hussein also said that several domestic animals were also killed and properties vandalized.

In addition to Hussein Ali, Afar regional state communication bureau head Ahmed Kaloita also tsaid that the attackers were armed men from Djibouti who were equipped with machine guns.

Colonel Tesfaye Ayalew, Head of the Office of Deputy Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Defense, denied reports of armed men who crossed from Djibouti. "The news circulated over the social media that said to be Djiboutian armed forces have crossed Ethiopian border and inflicted detrimental acts on citizens through Afar is a sham," he told the Ethiopian News Agency.

Twitter post by Adal Times (@AafarAkku) from Oct 14, 2019. Text: Really sad what facing our voiceless Afar people, just after one day after pm Abiy won Nobel Peace Prize this happens by foreign gangsters. The Ethiopian defense minster makes us sad again by choosing Djibouti's diplomacy than #Ethio\_Afar\_people. @PMEthiopia @Jawar\_Mohammed. Includes a grid of 6 images showing injured people in a hospital and a damaged vehicle.

However, Dr Kontie said Afar People's Party said the party "condemns the aggression supported by these forces. We appeal to the federal government to intervene and bring peace to both communities," he said.

Twitter post by ONLF (@ONLFOfficial) from Oct 13, 2019. Text: The #Somali #Afar border is a thorn in the establishment of peace in #Ethiopia. #ONLF calls for an urgent comprehensive peace process where all stakeholders are represented to reach a workable and sustainable peace.ONLF will give priority to this issue @AbiyAhmedAli @PMEthiopia

In a twitter post published yesterday, The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) said that the Somali-Afar boarder was a "thorn in the establishment of peace in Ethiopia," and added that "blaming each other and fanning the war will not serve both communities."

Three of the victims were children while four of them were women, Ahmed Umed, Afar regional state Crime prevention department deputy commissioner told the state broadcaster. Civilians who are injured are receiving medical treatment in Dubti general hospital.

The reason for the attack was not immediately established and the perpetrators are at large as of this reporting. However, Hussein said documents and material material evidences recovered from the attack scenes reveal the identities of the attackers. AS

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