

On 4 March 2004, starting from 8:30 A.M. students of Ambo Secondary and Addis Ketema Elementary schools were marching to the center of the town after gathering in their respective schools. Members of the Oromia Police force tried to disperse the protesters by firing in the air. They also clubbed and whisked many students. The protesting students threw stones at the policemen. Stones hit passing vehicles. The police finally managed to put the situation under control.

In the days that followed, police hunted down several students entering residential houses during day and night times and arrested several students. Classes were interrupted as this report is being prepared.

Table 1. Names of Persons Arrested and Abused by Police.

No.	Name	Details
1	Tamiru Chalchissa	A 16-year-old student at Ambo secondary School. He was beaten on the head by police on 27 Feb.2004 and was hospitalized until 1 st March at Ambo Hospital.
2	Megerssa Tuffa	A 16-year-old student at Ambo Secondary School. He was beaten by policemen who entered his house at about 3:00 P.M. on 27 Feb.2004
3	W/ro Birke Taye	Policemen beat her on 25 Feb.2004 while she was at a relative's house where she was staying as a guest.
4	Takelle Deresse	An 18 year old student at Ambo Secondary School. He was beaten by policemen who forced their way into his house on 27 Feb.2004
5	Takelle Teshome	A 16-year-old student at Ambo Secondary School. He was beaten by policemen who forced their way into his house on 25 Feb.2004.
6	Dawit Nigussie	A 19-year-old daily laborer living in Ambo town kebele 03, house No.236. He was beaten by police while he was working.
7	W/ro Sara Lemma	A teacher at Metti Elementary School at the outskirts of Ambo. She was beaten by police for expressing her pity when policemen were beating a schoolboy in the school compound.
8	W/ro Genet Sheleme	A teacher at Metti Elementary School. She was also beaten by policemen for telling them that W/ro Sara (No.7 above) was a teacher and not to beat her.
9	W/ro Taitu Chala	A teacher in Metti Elementary School. A policeman slapped her on the face in the school compound on 4 March 2004.

Detention

The following Persons were in police custody until 10 March 2004 in connection with the student protests.

Table 2. Names of Persons Detained

No.	Name	Details
1	Hailu Delessa	A student at Ambo Secondary school. He was arrested on 25 Feb.2004 and beaten by police all the way to the police station and was detained there.
2	Jagama Bedane	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 25 Feb.2004, was beaten all the way to the police station and was detained there.
3	Teferi Ararsa	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 25 Feb.2004 and was detained at the Ambo town police station.
4	Olani Kumela	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 25 Feb.2004 and was detained at the Ambo town police station.
5	Tamiru Ourgessa	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 24 Feb.2004 and was detained at the Ambo town police station.
6	Shiferaw Workneh	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 25 Feb.2004 and was detained at the Ambo town police station.
7	Abiyot Bedassa	A student at Mercy private College in Ambo town. He was involuntarily taken from his home on 24 Feb.2004 and was detained in Ambo police station.
8	Duguma Tadelle	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was involuntarily taken from his home at about 5:30 P.M. on 25 Feb.2004 and was detained in Ambo police station. His house was illegally searched.
9	Hailu Kifle	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was involuntarily taken from his home at about 5:00 A.M. on 5 March 2004 and was detained in Ambo police station.
10	Biruk Nigussie	A 28-year-old daily laborer. He was arrested at Kissosena Adoliben kebele peasant

		association (where he lives), at about 5:30 A.M.on 5 March 2004 and was detained in Ambo police station.
11	Tesfaye Geremew	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was involuntarily taken from his house at about 1:00 P.M. on 5 March 2004 and was detained in Ambo police station. Policemen had beaten him all the way to the police station.
12	Zelege Alemu	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was involuntarily taken from his home at about 6:00 P.M. on 5 March 2004 and was detained in Ambo police station.
13	Birhanu Merga	A student at Guder Secondary School. He was arrested at Guder town 01 kebele (where he lives) on 2 March 2004, and was taken to Ambo police station and was detained there.
14	Wondu Dabessa	A student at Ambo Technical and Vocational School. He was arrested on 5 March 2004 and was taken to Ambo police station. Policemen had beaten him all the way to the police station.
15	Mengistu Kedida	A student at Ambo Secondary School. He was arrested on 4 March 2004 and was detained at the Ambo police station. Policemen had beaten him all the way to the police station.
16	Ashenafi Metekia	A student of Ambo Secondary school. He was arrested on 27 Feb.2004 was taken to Ambo police station and was detained there.
17	Gashaw Negesse	A student at Metti Elementary School. He was arrested on 4 March 2004, taken to Ambo police station and was detained there. Policemen had beaten him all the way to the police station.
18	Abebe Derbebssa	A student at Metti Elementary School. He was arrested on 4 March 2004, taken to Ambo police station and was detained there. Policemen had beaten him all the way to the police station.
19	Tamiru Iticha	A student at Metti Elementary School. He was arrested on 4 March 2004, taken to Ambo police station and was detained there.

The following persons have been arbitrarily detained for five days

- 1.Zinna Dirro
- 2.Mulugeta Dirro
- 3.Alemu Debele

These three peasants live in Tekerogge wereda near Ambo town. They were in Ambo town on 4 March to attend a court case. Policemen took them from the house where they were staying on 4 March 2004. They were in police custody in Ambo police station until 9 March 2004. The detainees were released after their families produced letters written from the kebele peasant association, which states that they were peasants.

Illegal Search

W/ro Simegn Kidane Mariam is a resident of Ambo town, kebele 03,house number 246.On 5 March 2004,policemen illegally entered her house and broken into the room of Gobena Tilahun, a student tenant of the room, searched and took photographs belonging to him.

According to information EHRCO received from the Ambo town Police, seven policemen had sustained light and serious injuries during clashes with protesting students. Moreover, glasses of seven vehicles were shattered by stones thrown from the protesters. Roofs and windows of classrooms in Ambo Secondary School were also damaged.

Clashes in West Shewa Zone Tikur Inchini Wereda

On 1st March 2004 students of Tikur Inchini Secondary School gathered for protest in the school compound starting from 8:00A.M.Then, they asked the unit leader to call the school's director for them as they had matters to discuss with him. The unit leader told them that the director could not talk to them. After this, the students began marching out of the school compound. Policemen in the area fired bullets at the protesters. As a result one student was killed. Having watched the death of the student, the protesters threw stones at the policemen. Stones thrown also shattered the window glasses of the telecommunication

office in the town. The police put the riot under control at about 11:00 A.M. Details of the major casualties occurred are presented below.

Killing

Alemu Tesfaye, 20, was a 9th grade student at Tikur Inchini Secondary School. He was shot dead by policemen on 1 March 2004 while he was out for protest with other students. His body was sent to Menilik II Hospital in Addis Ababa for examination and was laid to rest on 5 March 2004 in Tikur Inchini town.

Beatings

Gadissa Ijjo is a resident of Tikur Inchini wereda Bolarogi kebele peasant association. Policemen beat him on 1 March 2004 while trying to take the body of Alemu Tesfaye (his nephew), who was killed by police on the same day.

Detention

The following students of Tikur Inchini Secondary School were arrested on 4 March 2004 and were in Police custody until 10 March 2004.

1. Wubshet Bekele, a 10th grade student
2. Asefa Kuma, a 10th grade student
3. Gelana Kebede Gelgela, an 8th grade student

The Clashes in Jimma Town

Oromo students of the Jimma University had notified the Jimma zone administration on 5 March 2004 that they would stage a peaceful demonstration on 9 March to protest against the dismissal and suspension of Oromo students from Addis Ababa University. On 9 March 2004, they gathered at the University football field chanting slogans. Police in the area told the crowd to disperse, as they were not allowed to stage the demonstration. The protestors ignored the warning and continued chanting slogans. The policemen started firing in the air and rounded up the protestors. Then, they whisked off several protestors to the Jimma zone police station by a bus and four other police pick-ups. Many of the protestors were released later on the day. 14 protestors remained in detention and released on bail on 26 March 2004.

Table 3. Names and other details of students detained at the Jimma Zone Police Station from 9-26 March 2004 and released on Bail.

No.	Name	Date Arrested	Details
1	Hailu Lelissa	09/03/2004	A 4 th year student at Jimma University
2	Abebe Wolde Mariam	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma University
3	Alemayehu Tuffa	09/03/2004	A 3 rd year student at Jimma University
4	Bedassa Tuffa	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma University
5	Birhanie Gonfa	09/03/2004	A 3 rd year student at Jimma University
6	Addis Alem Negassa	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma University
7	Bizuayehu Yigezu	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma University
8	Gurmessa Banie*	—	A freshman at Jimma University
9	Alemayehu Banie	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma University
10	Abiti Hirppo	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma Teachers Training College
11	Moressa Tilahun	09/03/2004	A freshman at Jimma Teachers Training College
12	Federa Kebede	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma Teachers Training College
13	Kelbessa Kenea	09/03/2004	A freshman at Jimma Teachers Training College
14	Girma Milki	09/03/2004	A 2 nd year student at Jimma Teachers Training College

*Arrested on 11 March 2004.

Conclusion

As stated above, the clashes between students and security forces had resulted in gross human rights violations, loss of life and damage to property. The situation has been getting serious by the day and is spreading to different parts of the Oromia Region.

Thus, EHRCO urges the government to give due attention to the requests of the students and give appropriate answers and to facilitate ways that would bring about the smooth continuation of the educational process. EHRCO also appeals to the government to bring to justice those arrested in connection with the clashes and those members of the security forces who committed violations of human rights.

EHRCO also calls on citizens, national and international human rights organizations and government envoys to put pressure on the Ethiopian government to give legal and reasonable solutions to the problems and to bring an end to the actions of the security forces that violate human rights by writing to the government bodies and officials listed below.

Council of People's Representatives
P.O.Box 80001, Fax (251-1) 550900 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Council of Federation
P.O.Box 80001, Fax (251-1) 550722 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
H.E. Ato Girma Wolde Giorgis, President, FDRE
P.O.Box 1031, Fax (251-1) 552020, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
H.E. Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister, FDRE
P.O.Box 1031, Fax (251-1) 552020 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
H.E. Ato Harka Haroye, Minister of Justice, FDRE
P.O.Box 1370 Fax (251-1) 520874 Addis Ababa
Oromia Regional State Council
P.O.Box 1917769 Fax (251-1) 513642 Addis Ababa, Eth
W/ro Genet Zewde, Minister of Education
P.O.Box 1367, Fax (251-1) 550299 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia