

March 1995

PRESS RELEASE

The following information is taken from Memorandum 3. of, Addis Ababa based, Human Rights Group B, sent to Amnesty International, February 1995.

E. Showa

Dandana Gurma, aged 70, was taken from his home in Finfinnee (Addis Ababa) by EPRDF soldiers on 9.2.95, at 17.30 local time. He was a close friend of the late Derara Kefana of Ambo (see Press Release, November 1994). At his arrest, members of his family were severely beaten. It is believed he has been taken to Maikelawi Central Investigation Office. He has not been charged with any offence.

Hararge and Bale

Killings

In November 1994, the following persons were killed by EPRDF soldiers :-

Hirpa, a driver from Bale.

Awal Tahir and his father, Tahil, from Darolabu, Harar.

Omer H. Ali, from Darolabu, Harar. 13,000 Birr confiscated at the time.

Sheik Ibrahim Umer, from Darolabu, Harar.

Jamal Abdo, from Darolabu, Harar. 23,000 Birr and a light truck confiscated at the time.

Said Mumed and Usman, of Adle, Hararge, were killed at Ugaz, on 10th and 15th November, respectively. 30 trucks confiscated at same time.

Abdella, from Malk Ida village, Hararge, killed 10.11.94.

On October 12th, 1994, Mohamed and Nagaye, of Garamulata, Hararge, were found hanged.

On the same date, in addition to the two persons named in the January Press Release, a third man from Garamulata, named Mamad, had both legs amputated by EPRDF soldiers and died later.

Imprisonments and Disappearances etc.

The following persons from Darolabu, Harar, were imprisoned in November 1994 :-

Saani Kali

Amin Jamal

Mohamed Amin Sheik Adem

Bekele Arado

Habtowald Retta

Nasir Abdi

Abdi Nur Kalid

Mako Shafi Badri

Mohamed Mussa, released after paying 7,000 Birr

Abdella Fakadu, " " " 6,000 "

Nassir Ahmed, " " " 7,000 "

Abdella Ali, " " " 3,000 "

Mohamed Alisho, " " " 3,000 "

Mahdi Haji Mamera " " " 2,000 "

Misbah Haji Nura, paid 20,000 Birr but remained in detention while further 60,000 Birr demanded.

Sahid Taha Abdulwahab, a teacher from Bale, was imprisoned in November 1994.

The detention of Mohamed Ahmed of Awadai, Harar, was recorded in the January Press Release. It was not known then, that the two children shot while watching over their farm plots, were his children.

Omar Wako and Abdi, of Harar, disappeared on November 4th.

Borana

Killings

Molu Doyo, killed at his home, 22.9.94

Molu Arero, " "

Gubo Soranya, " "

Boru Dida, " "

Badhane Gasu, a merchant of Moyale Iddi Lolaa, was first detained in Finfinnee (Addis Ababa). He was taken from the capital on January 15th, 1995, was killed and thrown into the bush around Lake Langano.

Imprisonments and Disappearances etc.

In September 1994, in addition to those named in previous press releases, the following farmers were detained :-

Nura Dadata

Ayana Wariyo

Guyo Fayo

Wariyo Halake

Karma Gedo

Meles Gemachu

Kana Dabaso

Waritu Liben

Guyu Sara

Previously unrecorded detentions of persons from Yebelo in October 1994 :-

Mulat Gebre Yesus

Wagene Diribsa

Boru Bule

Shiro Jilo

These were employees of the Southern Rangeland Development Office. Detention of their office manager, Huka Garse, was mentioned in the January Press Release.

The following were detained on 15.12.94 :-

Mieessa Alake
Dafara Baddesa, farmer
Gutu Baddesa, farmer
Lakko Baddesa, farmer
Mrs Guyaya, mother of five, jailed with one year old infant
Mrs Hagaye Alake, jailed with one year old infant
Durattu Warsa
Kuttola Dikole, farmer
Yasin Guraro
Saifu Tasama, employee of Culture and Sport Department

The following were detained on 28.12.94 :-

Baasha Hussien Yaayaa, over 80 yrs old
Tadele Banti, teacher
Waaqo Duboo, teacher
Dhinsa Tamasgen, employee of Ministry of Agriculture
Damise Guyee, employee of Southern Rangeland Development Office
Mrs Asho Bana, merchant
Mrs Daamu Biqqo, jailed with 6 mth old child
Abbigudo Mille, employee of Southern Rangeland Development Office
Obbo Iyya, employee of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

The memorandum also claims that girls of under 15 yrs have been raped by EPRDF soldiers.

Detention of 253 prisoners in Megga town, 10 in Arero and 4 in Yabelo, whose names are unknown, is also reported.

The names of 211 prisoners transferred from Hurso Detention Centre to Ziway are listed in the memorandum.

Letter from Negele, Borana

The following extracts were taken from a letter sent to an Oromo student in Europe by a friend of his in Borana, on October 18th 1994. The original letter was in Amharic and was translated by T.Ragassa.

"...Many government institutions and services are closed on the pretext that they do not conform to government policy. The employees are dispersed without compensation or pension, and thus many families are left in utter misery....A person in a high position, if not a Tigrean, is either dismissed, demoted or forced into pension, and a Tigrean will take the post. Especially at the central government level, all key and secondary posts are occupied entirely by Tigreans. The whole economic sector, including industries, banks, trade and similar sectors, is monopolised by Tigreans. Even on a private level, no other nationality can engage in foreign trade. This is because hard currency, needed to import goods, can only be obtained from banks which are controlled by Tigreans, who do not give foreign currency permits to non-Tigreans.

...No consideration of skill is given when non-Tigreans are dismissed from employment. Graduates...are jobless. Some have gone back to scratch a living from the countryside, others have become deranged and the rest are beggars or family dependants.

...Development is forgotten in all regions except Tigray...Looted resources and dismantled factories from Oromia and (other) Southern regions are transported to Tigray and Eritrea. 90% of the country's budget is diverted to that region... "until Tigray develops, let the rest bleed" has become a popular scoff all over the country.

For every problem, big or small, the answer is bullets, prison or sticks

...Being an Oromo now is like being a Tigrean under the Dergue. This is because the whole Oromo...are considered supporters of the OLF...As a result many Oromos are slain every day. Many thousands are wasting away in dungeons... (or) are being forced to flee their homes.

...Oromo suspected of supporting the OLF are not brought to justice. They are not even taken to a police station. Any armed Woyyane (TPLF soldier), on seeing an Oromo language speaker with relatively long hair, would gun him down without question and pass by. This is daily routine. Anyone who dares to complain is taken as an accomplice and dealt with in the same way.

...The number of Borana Oromo who have fallen as shooting targets of the EPRDF in Moyale, Dirre, Yabello, Arero, Teltelle and Liben districts, not in rebellion but at home, in towns and at their daily occupation of herding their animals, has reached 963. This includes only those killed by the EPRDF in the streets. Those killed in the forests are countless.

In the one week up to my writing this letter on October 18th (1994) the following numbers of prominent people were pulled out of their homes and killed by the EPRDF militia rampaging through the villages on the pretext that the victims organised people for the OLF - 13 in Moyale, 27 in Dirre, 9 in Yabello, 11 in Teltelle and 3 in Arero, totalling 63. This is the number known at the time.

...every able bodied Borana is fleeing to Kenya, leaving his cattle and family behind. An unknown number of people are rounded up into prisons, and are being tortured and starved. Of your many acquaintances, people like ...(name omitted - Editor) have suffered serious physical injuries as a result of torture.

Because they (EPRDF) could not even trust those they put into administrative posts in the sham elections, all those (administrators) in Moyalle, Dirre, Yabello, Teltelle and Arero have been imprisoned. These offices have been closed for more than 3 months. Hence there is no law and order. For every problem, big or small, the answer is bullets, prison or sticks.

...We do not have a country at all...we are expecting death in some days.

...After being jobless for 2 years, I spent time fleeing from place to place, being a wanted man...I came to Negelle six months ago...I am in great distress...I have no other alternative...If things continue the way they are now, I cannot say what may happen to me. I need your help.