

GENOCIDE 2008

The PFDJ regime and the Issue of Human Right are two diametrically opposite realities.

1. **Introduction:-** If the historical back ground of the Eritrean people is unfolded, it can be realized that tremendous sacrifices were made to secure the liberty of citizens so that to materialize an independent state. Finally the Eritrean statehood was actualized through referendum. In a general speaking, the people of Eritrea, apart from their physical participation in the course of the struggle, have paid a lot in money and labor including the precious lives of its citizens.

In line with the contemporary situation, citizens of the state are made to bow down and obey if want to live under the yoke uplifted and endorsed by no other than those who have led the liberation war to its final page. Those dedicated and determined leaders became and turned their back and antagonize the natives of the newly forged state to whom they have liberated. Today, the citizens of this new state are suffering and made to question the meaning of the hard-won freedom. They all are under reign of terror. Every national with Eritrean back ground, knows and accepts the sufferings as a daily bread.

What has pressed me to disclose in such an exclusive way is nothing but the realities and the evil deeds of the regime for which I am fortunate to know. As a citizen of this badly led nation, therefore, I am not lured to choose silence while pure and innocent subjects are being purged unlawfully. Prior to dealing with the real subject on topic, I prefer to give a brief account of my self. Hoping this brief account will shed a light for the reader to grasp the item sequentially

2. I am Mengesteab and born to my father Girmay Asres Giorgish and mother Meaza Weldetensae Kaysay. I was born in 1972 and brought up in the Sudan as my parents were refugees. My place of origin is Serejeqa in sub zone of Embaderho. Separated from my parents and came to the Central zone and completed my junior secondary school (1-8) under the guardianship of my grand mother in the suburbs of Senbel, Asmara. I further continued and concluded my senior secondary school (9-12) at Barka Secondary School, previously Qeih Bahri(Quehaz).

I joined EPLF in 1990 and was assign to the logistics department and worked there till 1993, and then I was demobilized. While leading my ordinary life and working for a construction company, as the border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia broke

out in 1998, I was ordered to join the 16th military intelligent unit of regiment 161. I, then, served as an expert of Information and Cartography in various military sections up to 2004.

Further, I joined the intelligence unit of third operational zone, as investigator in the counter intelligence section till 9th month of 2007. Counting, sensing and having observed the crimes made up on me and other nationals on daily base, as a matter of luck and with the help of the Almighty God, I was given the opportunity to slip off and rescue my self like those youths who are lucky enough to get relieved from the criminal government of Eritrea. I finally want to praise and thank the Almighty God for the golden opportunity rendered to me to save my soul.

3. The Party that disrespect rule of law:- having observed the party's inability to implement the ratified constitution and leading the country with jungle laws of DO OR DO NOT rules, and applying all the appalling and the ugly-facet crimes against its subjects, I am here to expose those compiled and organized crimes as an investigator in the intelligence unit I was assigned. I will especially delve in the specific crimes I came across as an investigator and intelligence worker.

The objectives of the counter-intelligence section where I was assigned as an investigator and served for three years, were, to follow up, control and foil any conspiracy by external or internal dissidents against the military and governmental institutions. On top of that, surveying the over all counter offensive movements be it public or military and curbing such activities is also another duty of this section. These are those authenticated principles of any counter-intelligence institution.

Contrary to the reality, on the base of the self-created problems and instead of solving them in a comprehensive way, as a lack of confidence and skill, the government is always at throats with those innocent and down-to-earth oppressed nationals of the state. It has developed an extreme mistrust with its subjects. Time and again, it creates unnecessary excuses and exploits them to the maximum level. Those helpless and genuine nationals, now and again are becoming targets of such pretexts.

In Eritrea, there are several sites selected for such hidden and criminal activities. Ala 17 is among the several cells owned by the intelligence branch of the Third Operational Zone situated at Sasah Ala near the logistics section of the ministry of defense. It is a prison place built by the construction units of the 3rd OPERATIONAL ZONE in 2003. It's a site carefully selected for its strategic and out of public sight, silence and "pacifism" and constructed amidst two hills that stands as a border line between Weqerti and Sesah villages. There are nine *cameras* or classes. An isolated room with 4x4 meters totally cemented so as not

to transmit a sound serving for investigation or interrogation section. There is a wide room for guards, one room for the head of the section, a room for investigators and roofed cells for the prisoners and a kitchen.

4. Cases investigated in such sites and areas: The issue of the illegal flight (sigredob).

- Those nationals caught while crossing border to Ethiopia that is considered as “illegal immigration”,
- Suspects of escorting escapes or showing the way through the border "human traffickers,
- Suspects of planning to cross the border after they were eavesdropped by informants or their mobile phones were tapped,

- People arrested without rhyme or reason even if they had no intention to escape and
- dubbed as smugglers between those who want to buy their way out across the border and the human traffickers.

B Counterfeiters of military and other organizations pass papers, identity cards (of citizenship, schools etc.) and other official documents,

- Movement permits paper,
- Identity cards like students, residence, and membership.

C. Evaders of military service

- Accused of missing for a long period of time.
- Students who discontinued their education for a long period of time.

D. Followers of “illegal” faiths,

E. Corruption (with a special reference to teachers):-

- accused of issuing student identity cards to those above 18 years old learners of elementary and junior high schools
- Accused of issuing student identity cards to non-students.

Reasons why youngsters flee their country

If stayed 18 months avoiding the decreed national service program they are liable to be caught as illegal. On top of the stated,

- a. The extended and prolonged military service program.
- b. Labor exploitation of the military heads for personal consumption,
- c. The influence of social condition,
- d. Unacceptable and dictatorial tendencies of the military leaders. To avoid all the enumerated factors, they are forced to leave their beloved, parents, children,

families and land. While the exodus of the youth is emanated from the above stated realities, the government on the other hand is striving to misinform the masses as if the propaganda of neighboring governments is the cause for the flight.

5. Conditions of the ALA 17 prison cell:-

Handling of prisoners:-None of the human and democratic rights are applicable.

1. confiscation of personal assets like money, jewelry, necessary documents and gifts,
2. forbid change of clothes and underwear's,
3. inflict pain and weaken them through meager food,water,and medicine supplies,
4. haunt them by applying strict sever security and surveillance measures,
5. deny family access,
6. Wear them out through rigorous labor .

Interrogation system

1. Deviates from the traditional police system. Follow with a great menace and torture
2. fail to be accountable or responsible for the damage they brought,
3. emotional rather rational,
4. Generally, there is no clear legal method of interrogation and thus, it is done on a whim and far-off from human rights and dignities.

Decision Making There is no written penal code therefore, the decision maker's construe their verdict and thus the weaknesses are:

1. Irrelevant and inappropriate penalty to the case,
2. give unjust decisions favoring and releasing some prisoners on reasons of friendship, relationship, benefits etc.

Decision Makers:-The decision makers and those who sketch the punishments are the military elites, who believe in experience than academic excellence, and among them,

1. Major general Omer Hassen Tawil-commander of the 3rd operational zone,
2. Major Tekleberhan Hagos (weddi Ayney) - staff spy member of the 3rd operational zone. At times will pass decisions and resolutions through their representatives and secretaries as well. Let me name some nationals who were victims of the above stated decision makers. In the 10th month of 2006, members of ministry of information had made their ways toward the border illegally.
 - a. Journalist Ahmed Bahja- Arabic desk,
 - b. Journalist Daniel Kibrom- Oromo desk
 - c. Simret Sereqe-member of the 28th regiment,

d. and a civilian Selamawit by name were all caught at Tekondaa/ Adiqeih, and sent to us for further interrogation and punishment. As the attached information disclosed, four of them were tagged as “unlawful” deserters while Ahmed Baja was registered as a group leader and coordinator of the plan. At the final touch, the following sentences were passed:

1. Journalist Daniel Kibrom for five years,
2. Simret Sereqe for five years,
3. The civilian Selamawit to stay jailed for a year and thereafter to go to Sawa.

Ahmed Bahja the instigator and organizer, was released after two months of trouble-free detainment, because Ali Abdu, chief of the Ministry of Information and Omar Tawil, chief of the third operational zone intervened. To ease the rumor spread around As operational Asmara about the arrest of Ahmed Bahja, he was made to host John The Baptist’s Day celebration with journalist Tirhas Kiflai on Eri TV.

Yonas Berhe with the intention to flee to Ethiopia was caught at Egela a village between Adi-Keih and Senafe, hit by three bullets. When he was being taken to Asmara, for medical care Kibrom Seyoum chief of the branch of counter intelligence of the third operational zone stopped the vehicle and forced the victim to sign saying that he was wounded trying to cross the border with Ethiopia, in case he is dead on the way to hospital. He was so weak to sign and prints of his four fingers were taken. After staying for eight months in hospital he was made to be handed over to the authorities by his own mother He was sent to Ala-Bazit prison for 7 years because he cant serve in the military due to injuries on his right arm and lung. No one knows who took the 3227 US dollars in his person when he was caught.

Mehari, a teacher who taught for more than 30 years in Elementary and Junior High School of Kudubour in sub-zone Emny Haily was fired, because he admitted a student in breach of the regulation that prohibits any one above 18 years of age to learn in elementary and junior high schools.

Tekle Tewelde Yakob graduate of Asmera University in Educational Administration and who was awaiting placement was arrested on visit to his family in Segeneity on the pretext that he escorts people to Ethiopia and Sudan for

money. Though there was no evidence for the charges against him, he was sentenced, any how, to three years in prison.

Daniel Netsereab, a former teacher in sub-zone Golluj in Gash-Barka zone was sentenced, without any evidence, to 4 years in prison for trafficking youngsters to Ethiopia and Sudan. He is now in Adi-Quala prison.

Utban Mohammed, Counter Intelligence the third operational zone was sentenced to 3 years in prison. He was maliciously accused by the chief of counter Intelligence of the zone Kibrom Seyoum of passing secrets from prisoners to prisoners. He died of health problems after serving a year in Ala-Bazit prison.

Letemichael Hebtmariyam was detained for 4 month on the ground that she was illegally sending females to Bahren. Although she insisted that she works legally together with her Eritrean colleague in Bahrain she was maliciously accused by Paulos a staff member of the Asmara National Security and by the help of his friend Teklebrhan Hagos. The diabetic Letemichael suffered for 4 months in custody until Tesfai came from Bahrain and proved their legitimacy.

Mehret Beyene from the village Deqi shahai in the Asmera zone was caught with her husband trying to cross to Ethiopia. She was 3 months pregnant and was held until she was two weeks due to give birth, after her poor parents' few cattle were sold and paid 10 thousand Nakfa plus a bail. Usually when women were detained pregnancy tests were carried out and were outright released on bail if they are positive.

Around 40 followers of un-permitted religion (most of them women) were arrested by security authorities of Mendefera and Dekemhare towns and forced to choose either prison or change their belief. Thos who said religion is personal but we will do what ever our country requires of us were imprisoned for a long time in the prison of the third operational zone Ala-Bazit under Warden Colonel Gebremedhin. One of these, Tesfaldet Abai was arrested for 3 years.

Girmai Gebrezghi, Hannes, Afeworki, Gebremariam from the villages of Hebo and Meala, Segeneity sub-zone are among the old men imprisoned for 3 months on the pretext that their children evaded conscription.

Tecleberhan Berhe a soldier and former university student Melaku Feseha were executed allegedly intending to flee the country. The most painful thing is Melaku was shot in front of his uncle Debesay Tewelde and his other close relation Tsagai Mesfin. The list of the atrocities is so long for it is the daily acts of the dictatorial regime.

Genocide

Let's now see the genocide committed by the 3rd and 5th operational zones after they have changed and exchanged their places on Jan. 2007. The commander of the fifth Operational zone Colonel Wedi Welela came to replace our station from Asmara and we went to Mendefera. The commander of the third operational zone Major General Omer Tewil and his cronies were so eager to resume the unfinished ethnic cleansing plan that has been on function by the previous commander Major General Philipos W/yohanes and zonal administrator Mustafa Nurhussien.

As soon as the shifting of places is finalized, our command leaders brought all the containers (prison cells) from Dekemhare loading them in heavy trucks and put them in a place called Adi Tsetser some 3 kms away from Mendefera. They put the containers in private garage. After the transformation of the prison sites, they resumed hunting members of the Kunama ethnic group. Under the previous plan and order of Mustafa and general Philipos, around 70 Kunama ethnic members were already in custody under horrific conditions in Barentu. Their crime is said to be nothing but their actual and practical resentment and rebellion against the PFDJ regime.

Surprising enough, leaders of the 3rd operational zone had come up with a new mechanism and pretext to proceed with the brutal gunning down and detention of the Kunama labeling them as members and supporters of the Kunama resistance movement-the Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Eritrean Kunama (DMLEK).The labels conjured and tagged against the innocent Kunama were cynical as feeders, fund raiser and contributors be it in kind or finance, providers of hiding places, spying for, ambushing and planting land mines. Under the pretext of the stated accusations, around 300 Kunama ethnic members were already in prison.

This massive and indiscriminate detention has covered overwhelming parts of the rural areas where member of the Kunama ethnic groups used to live for centuries. The age limit of the detention ranges from 9 to the doddering ages. The rural sites included in this appalling ethnic cleansing project were Faulina, Boshoka, Shambako, Bimbilna, Tolegamuja, Aymaba and Koyta biya. Further, to intensify and finalize the projected campaign on time, reinforcement forces were called up to take part in the campaign with the command force of the third operational zone. The prison cells of Shambako, Barentu, Boshoka, May Dima and Mendefera were actually administered under the intelligence unit of the ministry of defense, intelligence units of the 2nd and 3rd operational zones, and the intelligence unit of the 25th regiment respectively.

The prisoners were bloodily harassed, molested and tortured to say yes to the accusations which are alien to them and know nothing about. Here, the main motive behind the curtain was to paralyze and to put an end or stoppage to the ongoing struggle being waged by the Kunama movement-DMLEK. Since DMLEK was getting strong backing and had intensified small scale military operations through which it became popular in the Gash-Barka regional administration; and to retaliate and foil the resistance, the regime has piled all the crimes and punishments up on the innocent civilian Kunama. The calculations of the regime was to cripple the movement of DMLEK by revenging up on the parents, close relatives and wives of the fighters. The purposes of the torture, harassments and killings are nothing but emanated from the frustration the regime is getting on daily bases for which it has failed to keep up with the opposition's pace.

Detailed cases abuses on the spot were as follows;

1. 10 children ranged from 9-13 years old were sentenced for 6 months at Halhale rehabilitation center of the third operational zone,
2. 13 individuals aged 13-18 were sentenced 1-4 years in Adi Quala languishing up to the present,
3. Around 250 Kunama of all ages including mothers with their little ones were sentenced 1-20 years in Adi Quala,
4. 12 individuals were used for propaganda purposes,.
5. 2 individuals died during interrogation,
6. **26 people were poisoned and killed, and**
7. 28 Kunama ethnic members were brutally executed.

Explanations for the cases abused under items 4, 5, 6, and 7;

It took 5 months (01/2007-05 /2007) to wrap up the out lined atrocities. To accomplish the project, the regime (PFDJ) has come up with a new dramatized fiction. The authors (writers of the fiction) were first, major General Omer Tewil, the commander of the third operational zone, Major Tekleberhan Hagos (weddi ayney) and the Minister of information, Mr. Ali Abdu .The prime motive was to look for Kunama individuals who are well articulated in Tigrinya language so that they can easily deceive Eritreans through mass media or propaganda. They were

forced to confess and blame themselves that they were those who planted anti-vehicle mines in Shambako, Geze, Erab, Bimbilna, Sinshale, and Adi Teklehimanot at the beginning of 2001.

Underlining the shortage of propaganda materials at hand, Mr. Ali Abdu was so grateful and once things are arranged well by the commanders of the third operational zone, he agreed to send the best camera man and journalist. He thought it to could be a great opportunity to blackmail the Woyane (Ethiopian government) in the eyes all Eritreans

Next, the leaders of the third operational zone, Major Teklebrhan Hagos and Kibrom Seyoum have selected 12 Kunama prisoners from Mendefera for the mission at hand and took them to Boshoka. In order to make the mission successful, those prisoners were treated well in all conditions by stuffing them with food, clothing, cigarettes etc. Hereafter, they were taken to the sites where mines were blasted to rehearse and took lessons on how to plant a mine though they were all soldiers. They were told by the mission organizers that they will be free once they accomplished the given task.

Later, completing the first phase of the fictitious operation, Ali Abdu sent Girmay Debesay as a Journalist, Mohamed as a camera man and Alem as a driver with all the needed media equipments to report and record the drama in Boshoka.

To decorate the drama in utmost level and color, the prisoners were well advised, taught and trained to say --they were stooges sponsored by the government of Ethiopia and planted minesetc. On the other hand they were also told to praise and thank the PFDJ regime for the good handlings albeit to their wrong doings. Amazingly enough, the contribution of Girmay Debessay--the journalist in organizing that drama was marvelous. What else can he do if ordered from Ali Abdu?

Since I was in person in the process, I had been astonished by the drama; and the following were the innocent victims during the scandal.

	Names of victims	Village\ town	Occupation
1	Kiros Beyene Adura	Faulina	regiment18 member
2	Hagos Shiday Boron	Faulina	demobilized Soldier
3	Bibo Fafu Tunga	Faulina	demobilized soldier
4	Andeberhan G/Micheal	Tsibuk Girat	demobilized soldier
5	Badme Gufle Bara	Faulina	militia
6	Anday Aroro Sale	Boshoka	pfdj member
7	Abdulahi Mario Andulu	Boshoka	farmer

8	Solomon Sahle (Ngaw)	Boshoka	militia
9	Yemane Merema Gobay	Boshoka	farmer
10	Munadil Siiday Alengay	Boshoka	soldier
11	Shali Frute	Tolegamuja	regiment 16 member
12	Gebremariam Desta(Aroro)	Faulina	farmer

After the successful completion of the dramatized project, the prisoners were immediately taken to the prison site of Maydima for which the intelligence unit of the 25th regiment is accountable. There after, the prisoners were told to dig a 4m x 4m hole with 5m depth around their prison cells. Additional 14 Kunama prisoners were also brought from Adi qaula to “help” the 12 prisoners in digging the hole. Now and then, the personnel of the prison site have used to tell the purpose of the hole as for a toilet. At other times they said for a water reservoir. Unfortunately they were digging their own permanent home with out their knowledge.

First, Major Tekle Berhan Hagos “wedi Ayney” has brought two containers of twenty litters each containing chemical zed poison from Meanderer to May Dima. Then, the previous securities of the Maydima prison cell were given 10 days leave to stay at home so as not to observe the end of the beginning. They were replaced by the following committed and loyal individuals who were selected and brought from Mendefera to carryout that massacre.

Names of the individuals selected to carry out that massacre were;

1. Sergeant Kidane Tesfamicheal (wedi keren) group leader,
2. Sergeant Mihretu group leader,
3. Sergeant Girmay Ghebrezgher (Commando head),
4. Sergeant Kiflay (wedi Gash) group leader,
5. Sergeant Tsegab Measho (Chealo group leader), and
6. Sergeant Tsegay Abraham interrogator.

All the 26 prisoners were poisoned together in one day and murdered in April 2007. Out of the 26 massacred Kunama, I have the names of six victims in my mind and these are;

	Names of the Victims	Village \town	Occupation
1	Tesfay Sheli	Boshoka	farmer & Priest
2	Musa Kebede	Boshoka	farmer
3	Meme Shara	Boshoka	militia
4	Gebremariam Dudu	Faulina	farmer
5	Awate Nada Baden	Aymaba	militia
6	Dule Abdela	Aymaba	farmer

Names of the two individuals died while being interrogated were;

1. Gala Tabe Faki- Administrator of Faulina and who was tied in the style termed as *helicopter* and died soon,
2. Ali Musa Geshu- tortured and gunned down by Tekleberhan Hagos (weddi ayney) and Major Bereket (Kewhi)

Evidences of my testimonies about the Genocide

- I was there in person when the prisoners were taken from Mendefera to May Dima.
- After the Genocide, we were ordered by Major General Omer Tewil commander of the third operational zone to send all the personal documents of the victims to the head office.
- In one occasion after the Genocide Mr. Ali Abdu was looking for the Victims for another propaganda mission but Kibrom Seyoum told him that they have gone. I was with Kibrom while the two giants were talking over the mobile cell phone. Ali Abdu has expressed his dissatisfaction and regret by the measures taken so swift.
- As usual, when I was preparing reports of 3, 6 month and of year to the third operational zone and ministry of Defense, I have reported that 28 prisoners were executed.
- One day when we went to Mai Dima with a member of the intelligence unit who has took part in that massacre, the guy has asked me if I know that graveyard hinting me through a body language and when I said “yes” he nodded at me with a grief of any one can read from his face.

- The exact place of the graveyard is located inside the prison premises of regiment 25 intelligence unit in May Dima. It is around mountain Berakit on the way to Obal.

Profile of the poisoned and killed:-

Both, Tesfay Shuli and Gebremariam Dudu are ex fighters of EPLF captured at the Barentu battle in 1985 during the Dergue regime and sentenced life long in Addis Ababa, discharged together with the political and war prisoners at the independence time.

*Kiros Beyene and Badumme Gufle are maternal brothers.

*Andebirhan Gebremicael is Tigrinya speaker, Tsibuq Girat of Mulqi sub zone is his birth palce.He was hired as a field guard in Faulina with a Kunama espouse.

*Hagos Shadda Boron is killed for the very reason that he has a son called Abbu Hagos who joined the liberation struggle and his families are in Addi kuala.

*Shulli Frute is killed because he has a brother called Bibi Furute who joined the Kunama movement.

*Anday Aroro is killed for he has a maternal brother called Manna Maku who joined the Kunama movement.

*Galla Tabbe Fakki is killed because he has a son called Danga who is a member of the Kunama movement.

Those whom I left languishing beyond the bar:-

*Kenna Tonki is sentenced 15 years for the sheer reason that his son Kuba is a member of the Kunama movement and is languishing in Add Kuala.

* Kalli Sabbot of Tole gamuja is sentenced 8 years for his son Dergi is member of the Kunama movement.

*Tokko Abbadar along her baby and a resident of Boshoka is sentenced 10 years for her husband Sabab Bashay is member of the Kunama movement.

*Asha Abdot,a resident of Boshoka is sentenced a year for she had a child from Woldemicael Lili,a members of the Kunama movement.

Mehari weddi Mentur is a member from Tigrinya speaking ethnic group and married Gennet Mario, a lady from Kunama nationality has a vast arable land in Boshoka.He was interrogated severely for the very reason that he married a Kunama lady and suspected him as a sympathetic towards the Kunama and was released after three months with a strong warning.

I am giving a condensed part of the vast. From the 12 men selected for propaganda consumption, the former four, Anday Aroro, Yemane Meremma, Abdullahi Mario, and Selemun Sahle were brought in the Eri TV screen and the whole drama is presented by a journalist Gebremeskel Gerezgiher.

At the final analysis, the government of Eritrea being accountable for the mass killing and genocide, those who are responsible for organizing such horrific plans of Atrocities are,

1. Major general Omer Hassan Tewil-commander of the third operational zone,
2. Major Tekleberhan Hagos (Weddiayney)-staff intelligence member of the third operational zone,
3. Captain kibrom Seyoum Tsaada-Guna,head of the counter intelligence unit of the third operational zone, and,
4. Major Bereket Weldegebriel (qewhi)-Staff intelligence unit of the 25th regiment.

Translated by:

EDA, English unit.