

## **Sidama Region Changed to Military Zone: - Two students Shot Dead.**

**Sidama Nation Online, March 16, 2006**

### **1. Death of students and the teacher in Leku town**

One girl and a boy of high school students and one teacher have been shot dead by the security forces and police of the government on March 14, 2006 while they were peacefully demonstrating government's anti-Sidama plan in the Leku town, Shabadino district. About four other students were seriously wounded and taken by the security forces to unknown location. The dead bodies of two students and the teacher also have been taken away by the security forces. Their families couldn't mourn for their loved ones. Their names and ages yet to be confirmed.

### **2. Special Commando has been ordered to take action against the Sidamas**

Special commando of Meles's regime named 'Aga'azi and Gambella' special forces; the group that is feared for its ferocious acts against human beings; and that took part in the massacre of innocent demonstrators in post-May 15, 2005's rigged Ethiopian election in Addis Ababa in June 2005 is assigned to take chilling action against the Sidamas. These bitingly aggressive and non-communicative commandos are roaming on the streets of the Sidamas towns and city and ready for attack any time if Sidamas dare to peacefully demonstrate against the action of the government. Awasaa, the capital of Sidama region remained entirely military Zone until today when some of them left to the gold mining company (Shakiso) that was set on fire in Oromia region that neighbours Sidama, last night.

As we have uncovered about the military build-ups in Sidama region couple of days ago, the armies of the regime started to operate in a massive scale and torturing students who are emphatically resisting such an acts in entire region. The beatings and suppression associated with the killings is pervasive. Leku town is also surrounded by the 'Aga'azi-Gambella' Special Forces since the death of two students and one teacher.

### **3. Sidama influential figures put in Prison, others are in hiding**

Students and peasants were and are victims of continued arrest and relentless torture since the May 15, 2005 election. At the moment the arrest is reaching all segments of the society. The following are fractions of the victims of recent waves of arrests whose names we manage to get. Otherwise, it's impossible to go from place to place to visit friends or relatives to exchange information as the region is patrolled by the army:-

1. Tadesse Washo:- Awassa, Senior Nurse, head of Health Division; Human rights Activist, arrested on 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2006.
2. Haileyesus Nagesso:- Awassa, Sidama Development Corporation (SDC)staff, disappeared on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2006
3. Abate Elendo, Awassa, SDC staff, arrested on 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2006

4. Abera Dukamo,
5. Abraham Tuula,
6. Hanaga Tuula, 3 of them are from 'Gaara Riqita' Farmers Association and arrested on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2006.
7. Yosef Lalimo;
8. Tefera Jomba, whose leg broken and became incontinent, but arrested. Both of them from Awassa Tabour high School arrested on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2006.

#### **4. Students Movement Continues as does the torture.**

All over the region the movement of the Sidama people in particular students continued unabated. Entire 10 districts are engulfed with major popular unrest although the presence of the military in most part of the region is palpable. The treatment of the students by the police and security forces is very inhuman. Today, in the evening, there is an unconfirmed rumour of death in Awassa city. In another development one high school student in Abosto town, Dale district was beaten by the police and left unconscious. He is said to have been taken to Intensive care Unit of Yirgalem Hospital and remains unconscious until we brought this news to the public domain.

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