

Residential Houses said to have been burnt by the Angry Farmers; Sidama

January 31, 2004

Commentator,

Farmers in Sidama region expressed their anger by burning government's representative's houses. Four private residential houses of farmers' association executive committee members (regional government representatives') have been turned to ashes after they were set on fire by the angry Sidama country farmers in Hachche and Da'ela farmers' association in Bansaa district according to eye witnesses.

Drought, famine, indiscriminate mass arrest and killings of innocent and armless civilians, displacement of the Sidamas by the name of re-settlement, forced current military recruitment for the purposes of Ethio-Eritrean war and injustice on one hand; increased taxation for plots of land by the TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front) led dictator regime on the other had infuriated farmers of the Sidama all over the region which led them to react in such a way up to going to set fire on government representatives houses.

On January 27, 2004 the farmers of the said association have set fire on four Hachche farmer's association government representative's houses and kept on until the houses were changed to ashes. No casualties were reported as the farmers deliberately set the houses on fire while people were away in day light so that no lives will be lost. Eye witness added saying, 'the farmers wanted to express their deep-rotted repugnance towards the government and their unjust policies towards the Sidama people, in particular since the May 24, 2002 massacres of the Sidama people in their capital Awassa by the Security forces of Meles Zenawi'.

In the same development, it has been learnt that such reactions are growing all over the region. On January 28, 2004 at Dambe farmers association, in similar district, farmers have confronted face to face with government's security forces and wounded one armed representative of the TPLF/EPRDF who went to collect 600% increased tax over the farmers. A number of people are said to have been captured and put in prison after and at the scene.

In 'Da'ela' farmers' association in similar taken, in Harorresa (also called Aroressa) district, the same reaction of the farmers has been reported. Houses of government cadres were set on fire by the farmers. However, no casualties were reported from the fired house. Violent clash between the government security and farmers led to unidentified number of casualties. The source said that it has been difficult to get the number of farmers wounded or arrested, but confirmed that there have been a number of people who have fallen a victims of indiscriminate arrest by the cruel and inhuman security forces of Meles's regional representatives in all districts. The ultimate goal of the Sidama farmers, however was that expressing their anger over the government's unjust policies which deliberately obliged the Sidama people to be beggars where there are resources and potential to keep the Sidama people self-reliant. Political cadres in Sidama region virtually run the agenda of repression, not development activities to tackle socio-economical problems of the region. Such acts, according to

the reporter from the district are the main reasons for the food and social problems of the Sidama region which are leading to unstoppable socio-political unrest.

According to this report, the patience of the farmers to such inhuman acts and injustice is virtually exhausted. Therefore, they are obliged to resist TPLF/EPRDF's regime and their loyalist's tyranny by all possible means. Thus all farmers are expressing their anger over continued dominations of Abyssinian regime through their surrogates robustly.

Commentator,
Sidama Nation on Line