

The Post Election Vote Rigging Continues; Regional Government Employees Call for the end of EPRDF rule in Ethiopia.

From our reporter in Awassa, Sidama.

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The TPLF/EPRDF regime has crumbled as Ethiopian peoples have overwhelmingly voted against it on May 15, 2005 parliamentary elections. However, the regime continues to defy the will of the peoples and tries to cling to power by using various illegal measures which have been its main characteristics for the past 14 years. The recent massacre of peaceful demonstrators in Addis Ababa is one of such brutal repressions the regime has been using since it came to power in 1991. The police of the regime shot and killed an elected MP in Shashamane district of Oromia regional state in a broad day light after the elections. The MP belonged to the opposition UEDF party.

In Sidama the TPLF/EPRDF party has lost in each and every voting station with an amazing vote differences. For instance, in Alamura voting station, near Awassa town, the TPLF/EPRDF has got only 2 votes against over 3500 votes garnered by the opposition. Alamura rural sub district is the place where over 10 of the 69 victims of the May 24, 2002 massacre of innocent Sidamas died. The Sidama people have thus said enough is enough to the murderers and gave their massive support to the opposition. Accordingly, in two constituencies of Awassa and Tula the opposition CUD won overwhelmingly while in all other districts the Sidama Liberation Movement, a coalition partner of UEDF, has won with absolute majority. However, the TPLF /EPRDF cadres have refused to accept the verdict of the Sidama people. They denied defeat in all other areas except in the previous two constituencies and the Guguma constituency which they say was the only constituency won by the opposition Sidama Liberation Movement (SLM).

The government owned National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) have endorsed these false claims. Elections have been rigged in over 17 consistencies in Sidama alone. It was learned that EPRDF cadres have intimidated Berhanu Dukamo, the representative of NEBE for the Sidama region, to carry out the re-election in Hula and Bursa constituencies in Hageresalam district where the notorious cadres of EPRDF, the Minster of Justice Harka Haroye and the organizer of the May 24, 2002 massacre Melese Marimo were rejected by the gallant Sidama voters despite intimidation and harassments. Both of these cadres got only 6000 votes out of tens of thousands of votes in the district. However, the cadres have erased the figure and made it 26000 votes. Even then they were defeated by SLM in a large margin. Although, the Election Board has got the evidence that the two cadres who masterminded the May 24, 2002 massacre of the Sidama people were overwhelmingly defeated in the elections, it decided to carry out the re-elections in order to enable it to rig the election to impose them on the people of Sidama. The people are waiting for the outcome with a great anger.

On the other hand the regional government of South Ethiopian summoned the government employees in Awassa regional offices in June 2005 to brainwash them about the recent defeat of EPRDF. However, the relatively educated staff of the regional government offices in Awassa rejected the continued deceptions of the cadres and told them to peacefully handover the power to the elected opposition's parties. Participants have unanimously called for the end to the oppressive regime of Meles Zenawi and asked for a peaceful power handover to elected opposition parties. There was a massive chanting and applause for those speakers who condemned the EPRDF regime while whatever the cadres uttered was given a deaf ear by all the participants. This was said to have broken the heart of EPRDF cadres chairing the meeting.

Meanwhile the panicked TPLF/EPRDF cadres in South Ethiopia were said to have been running here and there begging the Sidama individuals whom they illegally removed from their employment three years ago to report back to their respective offices and start their work as soon as possible. It is not clear why the party is involved in this posthumous good gesture to the people whom it was killing like flies yesterday. However, analysts say that it is too little too late for EPRDF and its brutal regime to regain any more sympathy by using its well known deceptive tactics either in Sidama or in other parts of the country. The Ethiopian peoples have spoken in one voice: Enough is enough to the dictatorial and deceptive rule in Ethiopia. It is now up to the international community to listen to the voices of the peoples and stop rewarding dictators.

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