

Ethiopian Dictators' 'Cat-Mouse' Game Continues: *SIDAMAS* once again under Enormous Pressure.

Our reporter from Sidama

October 7, 2005,

Sidama Nation Online

Western supporters of Meles's so called 'Democracy, Development and Good Governance' have been utterly disappointed after the shameful out-come of May 15, 2005's election result that is ended up by the death of at least 42 innocent peaceful demonstrators in the capital in the lights of international observers; extra-judicial arrestment of many thousands all over the country; killings of oppositional party members including the elected MP's death in Oromia region. International observers reported various irregularities and unlawful arrestment and killings of innocents although Ethiopian PM regarded such reports including that of the EU's 'GARBAGE'. He is inevitably revealing his hidden face of democracy galvanised arrogance and clear dictatorial rule.

The said election fiasco that drew international attention since May 15, 2005; in particular in the past five days is growing in intensity and systematic deception of the international community by the incumbent. PM continued his strategic silencing of the oppositional party members. His security forces are intimidating the citizens at all levels at the moment. Addis Ababa is said to be profoundly intense under the control of tens of thousands armoured vehicles patrolling all villages; as is true in Sidama region.

The demonstration that was called by the main oppositional parties to take place on Sunday, October 2, 2005 in the capital was called off due to profound diplomatic pressure from the western diplomats including the UK, EU and the USA on Ethiopian regime as well as the oppositional parties to come to the table to resolve their disputes. The main theme of international diplomats was lobbying Ethiopian TPLF/EPRDF's leader and his political party to consider his promise of democratising Ethiopian political system as per his long-term rhetoric by negotiating with main oppositional parties based on their complaints regarding the irregularities of the election results.

The said western Diplomats exerted their utmost effort to bring both sides to the table for negotiation that was emphatically rejected by the TPLF's regime labelling the opposition party leaders criminals and threatening to kill demonstrators should the demonstration take place. Entire TPLF's leaders remained adamant until Sunday October 1, 2005 when Prime Minister Meles Zenawi obliged to negotiate with oppositional parties. Practicality of the perceived out come remains. Since October 2, 2005, late evening, both sides are said to have been negotiating in a closed door without briefings and news conference. Opposition party leaders begged their supporters those are furious, to remain patient until the outcome of the negotiation and further notice from them.

While opposition parties are abiding to the law and order and ideas brought forward by the international community representatives; hoping that the discussion yields positive out-come; TPLF/EPRDF's regional puppet government are working hard for the past five days to establish five years tyrant TPLF's regime. Many critics agree that Meles is buying time until he successfully establishes his regime to label any opposition movement's terrorists as usual; once his government is being established. Until this time, the negotiation is continuing in a closed door.

Meanwhile, the Sidama people are under enormous pressure once again simply because of their quest for regional autonomy. The Sidama people didn't vote for tyrant TPLF's regime. It was evident that despite tactical vote rigging and continued campaign by the so called loyal affiliates including former SLM's leader's campaign for the regime; in the first instance TPLF lost entire seats to the oppositional party in Sidama region. Many PDO's including Federal Justice Minister, Regional deputy President and Regional Finance Bureau head (those who conspired during the massacre of the May 24, 2002 Sidama peaceful demonstrators) lost their seats; and that has been huge blow to the PDO's.

After the Sidama region remained as one of those without tangible results, the central regime ordered the re-run of the election in most Sidama districts so that their loyalists could be brought back to the game. Accordingly, they systematically arranged to bribe some Sidama traitors; making former SLM leader good instrument to silence any Sidama resistance during the re-run period. And, in most parts where they re-run the election, the regime used their strategic harassing approach by intimidating the peasants and warning them that if they don't vote for TPLF, they can't get fertilisers and seeds for the next season. In some parts, Aroessa district they destroyed the farms of oppositional party members.

As a result, firstly the vote that has been won by the Sidama opposition has been soled to the incumbent by the so called former SLM leader. Secondly, TPLF's PDO's claimed victory without independent observers and fair voting system in place in entire Sidama region. Thirdly, the PDO's started to harass and arrest those Sidamas who raise the issues regarding election. Many have been arrested in the past five days in Arbegona, also called 'Harbaagona' district including those who have previously won the election such as 'Tadesse Goobe'. According to the sources from Arbegona and Awassa, more than 23 people those are supposed to be vocals are arrested without any reason. The prisoners remain in 'Yayee' town without legal representation and visitors' access. Some of the names of the prisoners we received are as follows;

1. **Gezahegne Mekuria**
2. **Duula Dumaraa**
3. **Tadesse Goobee, (was elected in the first and appropriate round)**
4. **Dikale Didoo**
5. **Captain Tafesse Barasso**
6. **Petros Garamba**
7. **Aleamyehu**

Further development revealed that in the past three days regional PDO's are conducting meeting to establish regional puppet government as we have mentioned above. One of the Agendas was the Sidama regional quest that was covered up yesterday by the previous regional president; and would be president by telling entire southern Ethiopia regional representatives that the Sidama issue will be addressed during the year ahead. No one raised the name Sidama then after. It's learnt that the former regional president, 'Haile Mariam Desalegn' is the one to continue on his position. Shiferaw Shuguxee that was one of those who ordered the killings of peaceful Sidama demonstrators on May 24, 2002 with the president is said to be deputy president of the regional puppet government.

The Sidamas are waiting for the decision of this meeting to think about the following step to push their regional quest that is their basic and constitutional right. However, this will not be an easy task according to the Sidamas who are suffering all round injustices in their land. In general, the situation remains tense and fluid in entire Sidama region as is the case in most parts of the country.

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