

Somali Region of Ethiopia Caught Between Unjust Administrations and Anti-Peace Groups

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It appears as if there is a clandestine plan between unjust administrations of Somali region of Ethiopia and anti-peace groups aimed at crippling some zones of the region, disabling their leaders and marginalizing their population; but unless or until some zones get their rightful place in the Somali region of Ethiopia, the essence of the region's autonomy doesn't materialize.

The Somali region's administrations have discriminated against some zones and made their residents insignificant citizens. Here Jigjiga zone can be taken as a case in point and a vivid example. It is a matter of fact that the region's current unjust, corrupt administration, which is headed by Mr. Da'ud Ali, is seriously committed to sidelining and segregating some parts of the Jigjiga zone, for ill-advised reasons.

The Somali region of Ethiopia must be a place from which all its residents benefit. With big importance placed on regional autonomy in Ethiopia--corrupt, unjust administrations shouldn't be left unchecked, free to inflict whatever injustice and misery they desire on ill-represented masses. Truly, ever since Mr. Da'ud Ali came to power in late 2008, he has been committed to completing a clandestine plan aimed at crippling and marginalizing Jidwaq clan in the Jigjiga zone. This unjust man has succeeded in distancing the clan from holding the region's big, prominent positions which fall under his authority.



Chief administrator of the region

Head of the region's ruling party (SPDP)

"An injustice anywhere is an injustice everywhere." And as much as I detest citing clan names, they are just used here to pinpoint and paint a clear picture of the situation that is being described. The Jigjiga zone is the most populated zone of the Somali region's zones, yet the zone's peoples aren't represented adequately.

Particularly, the cited clan has been a helpless victim to the region's present regime, a regime which appears to be working on hidden plans that aren't in line with the interest of the region's people. The region's current chief administrator is responsible for the grievances of the above mentioned community, for he has disabled many of the community's active, competent members. But Da'ud Ali and his power-hungry associates must know that they don't have the right to suppress or marginalize the community in its own zone or deny them what they are entitled to get.

The Somali region of Ethiopia must reflect the composition of its residents. The region's residents are entitled to get their fair shares of the region, and no particular zones or peoples should be deprived of fair representation due to unjustifiable hostility. Indeed, many parts of the Jigjiga zone are disadvantaged for reasons that have to do with political views and clear stances taken by its residents. The above stated community doesn't support anti-peace elements and their lopsided ideologies; this might be one of the reasons that have led to its marginalization.

The marginalization and victimization of the above stated community are real, but how extensive are they? The marginalization that Da'ud Ali and his cohorts have meted out to this community in the Jigjiga zone is very obvious to the community and to other Somali people in the region, too. However, the root cause of this hostile treatment is neither reasonable nor justifiable. Da'ud Ali and his cohorts' antagonistic attitudes towards the people of Jigjiga zone is worth investigating; his sinister, clandestine plans must be uncovered and exposed to all justice and peace loving people of the Somali region of Ethiopia. But what's the essence of the man's clandestine plans and who's propelling them?

Residents of Jigjiga zone are peace loving people. They are against anti-peace elements and their unbalanced ideologies, which neither benefit the region nor bind its people together. The residents of Jigjiga zone make sure they don't shelter anyone whose intension is to inflict colossal damages on innocent people or displace them. Therefore, the zone's people and their elders have made clear they don't approve of destructive actions of the anti-peace organizations, regardless of their names and purported goals. But unfortunately, the peaceful stance of the zone's people has worked against them, and they have fallen victims to a secret plan that still is in the works.

Despite its tireless, peace oriented efforts, the Jigjiga zone hasn't been immune to invaders who attack civilians here and there and inflict miseries on them in the name of liberation. For instance, Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) is believed to have been behind a number of hit and run attacks which claimed the souls of innocent civilians in the zone, but killing the innocent civilians has never made the attackers rest in the zone; however, they killed innocent people and planted sorrow in the hearts of their families.

People who keep anti-peace organizations at bay and prevent their settlements from destruction are accused of mischief and against stability. The irony is the fact that civilians who opt for peace and fight against destructive actions are accused of being sympathisers of the anti-peace groups.

Armed militiamen are recruited from all the region's zones and are stationed in their respective zones to combat the anti-peace groups. In the years 2008 and 2009, a number of militiamen of the region were killed in the Jigjiga zone while combating the anti-peace groups. Regrettably, the killings were blamed for innocent civilians; and instead of blaming the killings that befell on the civilians and the militiamen on the anti-peace groups, the region's administration squarely put the blame on the innocent people of the zone. As a result, they were killed in big numbers and had their poverty-baked bodies thrown away for ravenous vultures. This was acute shock to the massacred, peace loving people as they didn't fathom what they did wrong to be massacred!

Who committed that unforgettable crime against the helpless civilians? It is Mr. Da'ud Ali's regime. The secret plan that he has stricken with the anti-peace companies is succeeding indeed. Supporting this statement of mine is an article published in August 2009 under the title "*Can the Young Despots in Somali Regional State Reconcile With the Diaspora Communities?*" The article's author, Ibrahim Yusuf, writes: "The end of 2008 Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) killed paramilitary militiaman in a Horakhalifo village nearby Jigjiga, consequently, region's notorious militia with the help of national military responded by slaughtering 47 elders from Yaasuf an Abaskul subclan who live in the village."

Community leaders who speak up to shine light on the condition of their people and unjust behaviour of the region's administrations face charges of mischief. But the zone's people have every right to speak up and demand their rights when it comes to their security and the region's power sharing process. Ever since the current regime exposed its unjust treatment to the people of Jigjiga zone, there have been traditional chiefs and elders who have rolled up their sleeves and decided to shed light on their people's condition and grievances.

The chiefs and elders have demanded the right their people have to full security and power sharing. Moreover, the chiefs and elders have approached the current administration and told it that their administrative conducts aren't acceptable, as the region's residents aren't treated equally. Oddly, the traditional chiefs who spoke up against the region's unfair practices were accused of mischief and working against the region's stability. Some were jailed, others were removed from positions they held for the region. For example, Suldán Abdirahman Bade of Abasguul clan asked the region's administration to fully investigate killings that the region's militiamen carried out in the Jigjiga zone, and to bring perpetrators of the killings to court. Instead of aiding him in the investigative efforts, he had been repeatedly accused of plotting against the region's instability. Suldán Abdirahman Bade, a highly regarded figure in the Jigjiga zone's communities, had been threatened by the region's security apparatus and had been told to end his fact finding mission concerning the massacre of the zone's innocent civilians. However, he didn't yield to the region's demand, but continued his investigative efforts. Before concluding the case, nevertheless, he was removed from his position to silence him. Suldán Abdirahman acted as deputy speaker of the region's parliament.

In support of this incident, once again author Ibrahim Yusuf writes: "It also led the removal of deputy speaker of the SRS parliament, Suldan Abdirahman Bade, who is also a traditional leader of Abaskul clan, after his public demand for an investigation of the case."

The argument saying that Jidwaqs hold the highest position of the region's governance so the community shouldn't complain about marginalization holds no water. Yes, Abdi Fatah Sheik Abdullahi who is the head of the region's ruling party hails from this community; nevertheless, the Somali Democratic Party is symbolic and doesn't have that much direct intervention or immediate access to the region's routine operations. In other words, the party's chairman has no power over what is happening to his community, or who gets what position or loses which seat. Instead, the region's chief administrator is responsible for dispensing and allocating zonal positions and other important ranks, so he gives them to whomever he desires, violating zonal representations and just divisions.

And the chief's mischievous actions have gravely affected one particular community, the above stated community. His biased actions aren't something common to other zones of the region; sadly, Cheif Da'ud Ali has neither divided the region's positions fairly nor showed any just behaviour towards the Jigjiga zone and its unfairly represented population. Rather, he is fattening and favouring other people at the expense of the zone's population; the zone's revenue is blundered on a daily basis and passed on to favoured individuals instead of helping the zone's impoverished people.

One would prefer to have seen fair administrations for the Somali region of Ethiopia. The current administration shouldn't forget or neglect the fact that it is responsible for the betterment of the region's entire population. It's their people, so Cheif Da'ud Ali and his cohorts are obligated to treat the region's people fairly, not to bring some people closer and distance others. And history will keep the current regime's actions alive to reveal it to future generations.

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