

THE VAMPIRE OF BARAWE

The Untold Stories

By Omar Hassan Sheegow

Every new era brings new realities that are harsh and difficult to contemplate. The continuous subjugation and torture exposed to the natives of Banadir, lower Shabelle and Jubba are new realities that are the consequences of the Somali Civil war which is mainly fought to conquer the Southern regions of the Republic. Somalia is a country that is politically dominated by the central region tribes, the domination is not however, because they exceed by number other Somali clans, but it is



Barawa: under complete control of a mobster

simply because they succeeded to transform the nation into a mobocracy. It is the result of the mobocracy that caused the natives of breadbasket regions to be marginalized and targeted. After the fall of the military regime warlords have emerged and instituted a clan based power or mob with instantaneous formation of ring leaders claiming to be the blessed representative of the Mogadishu warlord(s). This has led hundred of thousands of the natives of Banadir, Lower Shabelle and Jubba, including the Somali Bantus to flee to the neighboring countries. Cities like Hamar Weyne, Shingani, Afgooye, Wanlaweyn, Qoryoley, Marka, Barawe and the surrounding villages have witnessed horrendous crimes against humanity as they launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the natives of these cities.

Barawe which is one of the districts of lower shabelle is under the complete control of a mobster who is alleged for willful killing, torture, inhumane treatment, taking of hostages and extensive destruction and appropriation of property. The man, who could be compared as one of the cruel mobsters of Italy was resettled in the area in 1976 by the Somali military regime as the result of the famous Dabadheer drought that hardly hit the central regions of Somalia. Prior to the collapse of the military regime, the man, **Mr. Abdullahi Halane Duhulow** worked as guardian at the **Sandune Fixation Project in Barawe**. He started to pursue his dreams when members of his sub-subclan who were part of the USC militia captured the city in early February 1991. He commended his closely related militia to remain in the city and he is alleged to have ordered them to loot, rape and kill. These actions were widely reported by the media at the time. His violence and intimidation tactics led him to gradually emerge as the most unchallenged ring leader in the area. His conspiracy and intimidation has led to the displacement of more than 80%

of city residence and the surrounding villages. He collects taxes from the locals on anything and everything. He is a staunch advocate and a shareholder on the charcoal business that has caused a desertification of millions of square feet of land. "Killing you is easier for us" Mr. Halane repeats all the time when he meets local elders. His mobsters terrorize the city by shooting indiscriminately to crowded areas. The latest shooting took place in early January 2004, in which 1) **Mohamed Yahye Jeilani** was killed 2) **Mohamed Haji** (lost his both legs) 3) **Muhsin Abu-Mazeyn** (injured) and 4) **Mohamed Aweis Omar** (lost one of his hands). After the events, Mr. Halane personally briefed Shabelle Radio on the matter where he accused these young natives as terrorists. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Halane calculated that he could get away with impunity from the many atrocities he has committed. Similar ring leaders do exist in every city and village of lower Shabelle and Juba region, subjecting the residents of these areas to massacre, rape, displacement and endless intimidation.

The heartbreaking facts are that people like Mr. Halane have found a suitable environment to continue committing crimes without any one questioning them. The country is in shambles, consequently becoming a breeding ground for criminals. The only way to make Mr. Halane and his likes accountable for their criminal acts is to collect and record the witnesses and build the case for each crime they have committed in the last 14 years. Every Somali should honestly record the date, time of each crime, the name(s) of the victim(s) and the perpetrators and be confident that justice will be served one day. Somali lawyers with interest on human rights should lead and play role in bringing these mobsters to justice. No government can ever survive in Somalia without committing itself to justice and equal rights to its citizens.

Martin Luther King jr. once said "Our life ends when we become silent on things that matters". It is time for Somalis, particularly those from the suffering regions to speak out against the mobsters and clan organized criminals.

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