

ERITREA

Journalists in prison

September 2009



DEAD

Medhanie Haile

- Aged 33 at the time of his arrest
- Deputy Editor, *Keste Debena (Rainbow)*
- Law Graduate
- Arrested : 18 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°8, Eiraeiro Prison Camp
- **Believed to have died in detention in February 2006 (source: prison guards)**
- His body was never handed over to his family



Emanuel Asrat

- Aged 31 at the time of his arrest
- Editor, *Zemen (The Time)*
- Agronomy Graduate, former EPLF fighter
- Arrested : 18 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°25, Eiraeiro Camp



Mattewos Habteab

- Aged 30 at the time of his arrest
- Editor, co-founder, *Meqaleh*
- Mathematics Graduate
- Arrested : 19 September 2001
- **Place of detention : Unconfirmed (in September 2009)**. In December 2008, he was transferred to the Dahlaks Islands.



DEAD

Yusuf Mohamed Ali

- Aged 46 at the time of his arrest
- Editor, *Tsigenay*
- Commerce Graduate
- Severe eye problems
- Arrested : 19 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°9, Eiraeiro Camp
- **Believed to have died in detention on 13 June 2006 (source: prison guards)**



Temesghen Gebreyesus

- Aged 36 at the time of his arrest
- Sports Journalists, member of the board of directors, *Keste Debena (Rainbow)*
- Married, one son
- Arrested : 20 September 2001
- **Place of detention : Unconfirmed (in September 2009)**. Up to December 2008, was in cell N°23, Eiraeiro Prison Camp. After December 2008, was held in the Dahlaks Islands.



DEAD

Said Abdulkader

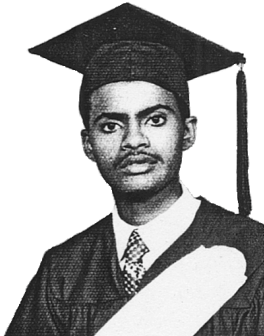
- Aged 34 at the time of his arrest
- Founder and editor, *Admas*
- Former journalist with public-owned *Haddas Eritrea*
- Owner of a family printing press
- Arrested : 20 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°24, Eiraeiro Camp
- **Believed to have died in detention in March 2005 (source: prison guards)**

Seyoum Tsehaye



- Aged 49 at the time of his arrest
- Freelance photographer and journalist, former director of *Eri-TV*
- Former EPLF fighter and author of several documentaries on the independence war
- Married, two children (living in France with their mother where the three of them have been granted asylum)
- Arrested : 21 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°10, Eiraeiro Camp
- Winner in December 2007 of the Reporters Without Borders – Fondation de France press freedom prize

Dawit Habtemichael



- Aged 30 at the time of his arrest
- Deputy editor and cofounder, *Meqaleh*
- Physics graduate
- Arrested : around 21 September 2001 after several days in hiding
- Place of detention : Cell N°12, Eiraeiro Camp

Dawit Isaac



- Aged 38 at the time of his arrest
- Owner and co-founder, *Setit*
- **Holds dual Eritrean and Swedish nationality**
- Married, three children (in exile in Sweden)
- Arrested : 23 September 2001
- Transferred to Halibet Hospital in March 2002 after he was ill-treated in detention
- **Place of detention : Uncertain. Believed to be Embatkala jail in Ghinda (35 kilometres north-west of the capital, on the road to the port city of Massawa).**
- Briefly released on November 19, 2005. Detained again on November 23. Interim Information Minister Ali Abdu explained he was only allowed to have a "medical check-up"
- **Deteriorating health condition.** Unconfirmed reports said he might have been treated either at Halibet or Sembel Hospital in Asmara. In 2009, he was in the Air Force Hospital in Asmara.



DEAD

Fessehaye Yohannes a.k.a. "Joshua"

- Aged 46 at the time of his arrest
- Cofounder, *Setit*
- Former EPLF fighter, poet and playwright, director of the children's group "Circus Eritrea"
- Married, two children
- Surrendered to the police on 27 September 2001
- Place of detention : Cell N°18, Eiraeiro Camp
- **Believed to have died in detention on 11 January 2007 (source: prison guards and security apparatus insiders)**
- His body was never returned to his family



Hamid Mohamed Said

- Aged 39 at the time of his arrest
- Sports journalist, arab section, *Eri-TV*
- Arrested : February 2002
- Could be accused on leaking documents to foreign diplomats
- Place of detention : Unknown



Saleh Al Jezaeri

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Reporter, arab section, radio *Dimtsi Hafash* and *Hadas Eritrea* newspaper
- Arrested : February 2002
- Reason of arrest unknown
- Place of detention : Unknown



Daniel Kibrom

- Oromo section, *Eri TV*
- Arrested : October 2006
- We was arrested near Senafe (South) while trying to cross the border to Ethiopia
- Place of detention : Camp pénitenciaire d'Ala Bazit (sud du pays)
- Daniel Kibrom est "condamné" à cinq ans de prison et de travaux forcés



Daniel Musie

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Reporter, oromo section, *Radio Dimtsi Hafash*
- Arrested : November 2006
- Around 10 journalists employed by state media were picked up in a wave of arrests that began on 12 November 2006, following the defection of several leading journalists. It seems the authorities were very annoyed by the defections and arrested colleagues suspected of keeping in touch with the fugitives or intending to defect themselves. All except Daniel Musie of radio Dimtsi Hafash's Oromo-language service were eventually released on bail but remain under surveillance in Asmara.
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito



Tura Kubaba

- Aged 40 at the time of his arrest
- Reporter, kunama section, *Radio Dimtsi Hafash*
- Arrested some time between August and December 2006
- Was initially incarcerated in "Track-B," a military prison in a western suburb of Asmara. Run by an officer known as "Colonel Berhane," this centre consists of undergrounds cells and metal containers holding a total of about 2,000 detainees.
- In the course of 2007, Kubaba was transferred from there to an unknown place of detention.



Identity unknown

- In his forties at the time of his arrest
- Journalist, *Hadas Eritrea*
- Arrested : Week of 12-16 March 2007
- Reason of arrest unknown
- Place of detention : Unknown



Ibrahim Abdella

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Archives employee, *Eri-TV*
- Arrested : Week of 12-16 March 2007
- Reason of arrest unknown
- Place of detention : Unknown



Identity unknown, ministry of Information employee

- News archives employee, *Eri-TV*
- Arrested : Week of 12-16 March 2007 with Ibrahim Abdella
- Reason of arrest unknown
- Place of detention : Unknown



"Johnny" Hisabu

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Editor, *Eri-TV*
- Arrested : May 2007
- Place of detention : Police station, Barentu (West)
- Caught while trying to flee to neighbouring Ethiopia in part because he is a member of the so-called "Amiche" community of Eritreans who were born or raised in Ethiopia prior to independence and because he therefore still has relatives there.
- Attempts by Reporters Without Borders to locate him in the Eritrean refugee camps in Ethiopia have so far been unsuccessful. At the same time, there are unconfirmed reports that he was arrested when border guards intercepted the group of refugees he was travelling with, and that he has since been held at a detention centre in Barentu.



Eyob Kessete

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Journalist, Amharic-language service of public radio *Dimtsi Hafash*
- Arrested : May or June 2007
- Caught by Eritrean border guards on an unknown date as he tried to enter Ethiopia.
- Place of detention : Metal container, May Srwa Detention Facility



Eyob Netserab

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Amharic section, radio *Dimtsi Hafash* (The Voice of the Masses)
- Arrested : 2007
- Place of detention : Karsheli prison, 2nd police station, Asmara
- Very bad health condition



Mengesha (Father name unknown)

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Essayist
- International desk journalist, radio *Dimtsi Hafash*
- Arrested : 2007
- Place of detention : Unknown



Isaac Abraham

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Journalist, *Eri TV*
- Arrested : 2008
- Place of detention : Unknown
- Reasons : Unknown



Mulubrhan Habtegebriel

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Worked for the former twice weekly *Meqalih* and for *Setit*
- Essayist, commentator and translator for *Radio Zara* and *Hadas Eritrea*
- Single
- Arrested : 2008
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito. Along with other prisoners, he was taken by armoured cars at night on 22 May 2009 to an unknown destination and then sent back to Adi Abeito.
- Reasons : Unknown



Girmay Abraham

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Artist and journalist on radio *Dimtsi Hafash*
- Arrested : February 2009
- Place of detention : Unknown. He was first held in the Dobozito detention centre and then in the military prison of Adi Abeito. No news since then.



Bereket Misghina

- Also known as Wedi Misghina
- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Famous actor and playwright (top young Eritrean play writers)
- Staff member at Radio Bana
- Single. Comes from a very prominent family in Keren (North)
- Arrested : 22 February 2009
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito. He was first held in the Dobozito detention centre and then in the military prison in Adi Abeito. Along with other prisoners, he was taken by armored cars at night on 22 May 2009 to an unknown destination and then sent back to Adi Abeito.
- Reasons for his arrest : Unconfirmed. Possibly the close working association with foreigners and a programme aired in January 2009 on *Radio Bana* about participatory government
- Was tortured in 2002 after a showing of his film, *Fistametat*



Yirgalem Asfha

- Aged 30 at the time of her arrest
- She is from Adi Keyih (south of Eritrea)
- Essayist and former art critic for the newspaper *Zemen*
- Journalist, staff member at *Radio Bana*
- Arrested : 22 February 2009
- Place of detention : Unknown
- Reason for her arrest : Unconfirmed. Possibly the close working association with foreigners and a programme aired in January 2009 on *Radio Bana* about participatory government



Basilios Zemo

- Also known as Wedi Zemo
- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Career teacher and member of the revolutionary school
- Staff member at *Radio Bana*
- Arrested : 22 February 2009
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito. He was taken without explanation to the Dobozi detention centre and then to the military prison in Adi Abeito
- Reason for his arrest : Unconfirmed. Possibly the close working association with foreigners and a programme aired in January 2009 on *Radio Bana* about participatory government



Senait Habtu

- Aged unknown at the time of her arrest
- Teacher
- Amharic section, radio *Dimtsi Hafash*
- Staff member at Radio Bana, working in the production studio
- Arrested : 22 February 2009
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito. She was taken without explanation to the Dobozi detention centre and then to the military prison in Adi Abeito
- Reasons for her arrest : Unconfirmed. Possibly the close working association with foreigners and a programme aired in January 2009 on *Radio Bana* about participatory government



Meles Negusse Kiflu

- Aged unknown at the time of his arrest
- Writer and poet
- Journalist for *Radio Zara* and *Radio Bana*
- Formerly working for *Tsegenay* independent newspaper
- Married, two children
- Arrested : 22 February 2009
- Place of detention : Adi Abeito. He was first held in the Doboziro detention centre and then in the military prison in Adi Abeito. Along with other prisoners, he was taken by armored cars at night on 22 May 2009 to an unknown destination and then sent back to Adi Abeito
- Reasons : Unknown



Yirgalem Fisseha Mebrahtu

- Aged 27, female
- Poet and teacher
- Journalist, *Radio Bana*
- Date of arrest : Unknown
- Place of detention : Unknown



Wedi Itay

- In his forties at the time of his arrest
- Freelance journalist, former journalist for *Keste Debena*
- Writer and essayist
- Former member of EPLF
- Date of arrest : Unknown
- Seriously ill
- Place of detention : A hospital in Asmara