

Many Eritreans have heard of the prison Island of Nakura, especially in old songs and proverbs. This prison is situated in Dahlak archipelago. While standing on the main land of Dahlak Kebir, by the beautiful and only hotel, it is about 1 km away. It took me over one hour motor boat ride from Massawa in 2000, in courtesy of Eritrean Shipping Lines.

There are three big war ships sunk by the Russians near it, and was a military station by the Derg. I was not allowed to visit the prison, but another visitor saw it and explained how horrible it was. There are rooms underground, in this scorching heat and long nails protruding on both sides of the tiny wall that the prisoner could not rest on either side. There were numerous chains too.

In 26 august 1994, I was talking to a very knowledgable elderly man in Segeneiti, Aboi Keshi Tesfamariam Habtezgi. He was so keen to share his historical notes that this was an unexpected finding to me. He asked me to share it with all Eritreans, remember our heroes. He had hidden many documents at Derg time and let me copy names of the prisoners of Nakura. I have audio recorded many valuable history from him too.

These following list of prisoners' names is derived from an Amhric book called Ye Tarik Deset. Timing is pre 1900.political prisoners of the Eritrean elites too dangerous for the Italians to freely administrate Eritrea. The names found are

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| 1 Kentiba Nasheh W Mikel, Hamassien | 2, Kentiba Hagos |
| 3, Kentiba Medhin | 4, Kentiba Hayelom |
| 5, Kentiba Gere Mikel Iyesus | 6, Dejazmach Mengesha Asgedom |
| 7, Kentiba Hamed, Shum of Habab, son of Kentiba Hassen | |
| 8, Chika Shum Tsefu' W Haimanot | 9, Haneta Temelso Goshu |
| 10, Ato Mesfin W Mikel | 11, Ato W Mikel Kaleb |
| 12, Beremberas Hagos Andemikel | 13, Kegnazmach Welde Kidan G Sadek |
| 14, Dejazmach Hadgembes Gulwet | 15, Kentiba Arey |
| 16 Kentiba Kifleyesus Gofar | 17, Kegnazmach Tesfatsion Habteselassie |
| 18, Blatta Tesfu Nebaray | 19, Dej Welde mikel |
| 20, Grazmach Gizaw Wendafrash | 21, Balambaras Kifle Weldeyesus |
| 22, Dej. Abraha Haile | 23, Balambaras Meshasha Negusie |
| 24, Ato Hagos wedi Abdera | 25, Lij Asfaha Gebreab |
| 26, Ato Adgoi Kahsai | 27, Lij Ekubazgi |
| 28, Ato Ikud wedi Zemat | 29, Dej Negusie G Meskel |
| 30, Lij Tesfai Gebreab | 31, Lij Abraha Hagos |
| 32, Lij Habte Selus Hailu | 33, Lij Embaye Wendaferash |
| 34, Lij Beyene Biru | 35, Kegnaz. Fiseha Mogos |
| 36, Lij Alula Godefa, of Gura' | 37, Lij Kahsai Godefa, of Gura' |
| 38, Kentiba Emnetu | 39, Lij Berhanu Hailu |
| 40, Kentiba Gidei | 41, Kegnaz Hagos |
| 42, Lij Asfaha, Segeneiti (kentiba La'lewy) | 43, Bahr Negasi Fantaye |
| 44, Kentiba Eman | 45, Dej Tesema |
| 46, Blata Tesfai Kahsu | 47, Blata Tesfai Netseraab |
| 48, Kentiba Haylu Gebrai | 49, Lij Tedla Haylu |
| 50, She'ka Girmai | 51, Keshi Semere Mehari |
| 52, Keshi Gebreab | 53, Lij Khasai Abey -neyru |

54, Kentiba Araya Weldai
 56, Graz. Yigzaw Yohannes
 58, Bashai Tesfai Berhane
 60, Dej. Mehrai

55, Blatta Gerezgher Gilai
 57, Lij Geremedhin Ekubazgi, Segeneiti
 59, Beshai Habtom
 61, Bahr Negasi 'Cherom.

There were numerous more in that prison, some from Methat and Saho areas. One, Musa is still remembered for his daring and bravery to escape and cross to land.

Source from another book, in Tigrina "Kedamot jeganu Eritrean bahlena" by Isak Yosef, Eritrea, 1997, page 51 titled

Name lists of the prisoners of Nakura.

These name lists to follow were

- 1, Taken from Asmera or their villages and claimed to be held prisoners in Nakura but had disappeared.
- 2, Those taken to Italy and never returned,
- 3, Those executed or died of illness in Nakura
- 4, Those who escaped from Nakura prison and live in exile,
- 5, and those who made ammendments with the Italians and returned as civilians in their land.

We should not doubt that there more names whose we could not find. Because, elders of Eritrea have narrated that the Nakura prisoners were over 300.

Notice, in Nakura those who lost their lives in its sands, pained by bites of snakes or scorpions, those who were wounded and bled to death, those killed by hanging, shot and killed, those crippled by sickness of Rih, those who died of thrust and hunger, are not only the above numbered 300 only. Hopefully, other researchers will find the other names and add to the Eritrean heroes.

Some names or villages may not rightly written or voiced and we hope the reader will adjust it.

These prisoners were administrators, religious persons, supporters, etc....

Because of this the Italian colonizer was extremely disturbed. He was mistrustful and disliking the Eritreans. The Italian officers were constantly receiving telegrams, military commands, oral tegsats from Italy.

At last, it was said, "From now on, a prison for Eritreans in that hot area, near the harbour must be rebuilt with care". This way, hundreds of Eritreans for many years were liquidated in this new prison of Assab as replacement of Nakura, was opened.

Several of the 240 named prisoners are

Name	Village_____	Province
1,Dej Mesfin Dej W Mikel	Hazega	Hamassien
2, Dej Mahray Hagos	Wegera	Akele Guzai
3, Dej Hadgembes Gelwet	Adi Teklezan	Hamassien
4, Dej Tesemma Imam	Tsezazega	Hamassien
5, Dej Negusie Gebre Tsadek	Areza	Serae
6, Dej Kifleyesus Gofar	Dekuno Reda'	Hamassien
7, Kentiba Arey wedi Weldu	'Kushet	Hamassien
8, Kentiba Hamid Hidad	Habab	Sahel
9, Kentiba Hailu Gebrai	Hazega	Hamassien
10, Kentiba Hayelom		
11, Kentiba Manna Idiley	Deki Shehai	Anseba
12, Kentiba Bahta Ferzun	Dukuno Reda'	Hamassien
13, Kentiba Habtyes Habte Selasie	Anseba	Hamassien
14, Kentiba Teku'	Deki Shehai	Hamassien
15, Kentiba Nasheh Lijam	Adi Teklezan	Hamassien

16, Kentiba Aman		
17, Kentiba Gebre Mikel	Melezenai	Hamassien
18, Kentiba Kidane 'Ukbit	Debre Sina	Hamassien
19, Kentiba W Giorgis Teklai	'Arato	Akele Guzai
20, Kentiba Debas Hailu	Hazega	Hamassien
21, Kentiba Hedad Hassen	Habab	Bet Asgede
22, Kentiba Medhin Sahle	Meshal	Akele Guzai
23, memhir W Giorgis (Abemnet)	Gedam Debre Sina	Hamassien
24, Keshi Tequabo		
25, Sheik Osman Naib	Base'	Semhar
26, Sheik Ibrahim	'Chira Kurkure	
27, Sheik Idris Nur	Keren	Bet Asgede
28, Sheik Abubaker Ali Bet	Keren	Adi Tekleyes
29, Sheik Idris Mohammed	Habab	Bet Asgede
30, Sheik Fekak Ali	Keren	Habab
31, Bahr Negasie 'Churum	Adi Gehad	Akele Guzai
32, Blata G Zghair Gilai	Tsada Kristian	Hamassien
33, Blatta Bachena		
34, Blata Tesfa Nesereab	Hemberti	Hamassien
35, Blatta Men Ameno Tesfai	Tsezega	Hamassien
36, Mrs Tsa'du Menameno	Hemberti	Hamassien
37, Fitwerari Habte Sion Sebhatu	Hemberti	Hamassien
38, Fit Debalkaw Baryagabir	Ha'ley	
39, Fit Gurmu	Adyabo	Tigrai
40, Fit Sebhat Bekhit	Afdeyu	Hamassien
41, Fit Selomon		
42, Fit Meles Gebrezgi		
43, Fit Zerefa Tesfazgi		
44, Kegnazmach Gebre Tsadik Ekubazgi		
45, Kegn Gebre Yohannes Demoz		
46, Kegn Welde Kidan		
47, Grazmach Manna Gaim		
48, Graz Tesfamikel		
49, Graz Gebreyesus		
50, Graz Hagos		
51, Graz Hadgu Tesfa Mariam		
52, Graz Tekle Goshu		
53, Graz Abraha Gebre Negus		
54, Belamberas Yilma Dej K Yesus	Dembelas	Serae
55, Balmb Tek'e Weldu		
56, Balmb Gagna Hailu	Tselot	Hamassien
57, Balmb Zerai Ekubazgi	Afelba	Akele Guzai
74, Ato Mohammed Haji	Akordet	Akordet
75, Ato Mohammed Ali Osman Buri	Denkel	Denkel
76, Ato Mohammed Said Abdella	Inda Lalish	Serae
77, Ato Mosazgi Sebhatu	Adi Nehbai	Serae
78, Ato Mohammed Nur Mantai	Base'	Semhar
79, Ato Hambir	Adi Gebrai	Hamassien
80, Ato Selomon Kifle	Tsezega	Hamassien
81, Ato Birre Hailai	Da'ro 'Paulos	Hamassien

82, Ato Tesfa	Da'ro Kune'at	Serae
90, Ato Eyob Getahun	Adwa	Tigrai
91, Ato Abdella Lehat		
92, Ato Hamed 'A'ka 'Umer		
97, Ato Abo Zaul	Zaul	Hamassien
110, Ato G Medhin Ekubazgi	Segeneiti	Akele Guzai
128, Ato Tewelde Medhin Gebrai	Debre Sina	Hamassien
134, Ato Adgoi Kinfe	Imba Derho	Hamassien
161, Ato Adgoi Gurja	Deda	Hamassien
162, Ato Asgedom G Dengil	Habela	Hamassien
163, Ato Ahmed Elos	Bet Elos	Keren
164, Ato Izaz Ali Bet	Adi Tekleyes	Keren
165, Ato Idris Abubaker		
166, Ato Gilaizgi		
167, Ato Garza Tsige Yohannes	Habela	Hamassien
168, Ato W Mikel Kelb	Anseba	Hamassien
169, Ato W Mikel Fiseha Awhene	'Arato	Akele Guzai
170, Ato Zemat Ikut	Methat	
171, Ato Debesai Haileyesus	Habel	Hamassien
172, Ato Fetaw Mer'u	Berakit	Akele Guzai
173, Ato Mohammed Mahmud	Habab	Keren
174, Ato Hibret Ekubazgi	Bet Asgede	Habab
201 Ato Abebe Welotai	from Wello	Ethiopia
230, Ato Semere Kidane		
237, Ato Beyene Tesfa		
238, Ato Berhe Gebre Amlak		
239, Haleka Tekle Sa'ol		
240, Ato Meles Eshetu		

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