

## **Welde Mariam on Menkae**

I thank Weldemariam Abraham taking his time to tell me all his experiences of those times. He was reluctant to tell of his pre front life, but I insisted. 2004

As my personal history, as a student we revolted and were put in Sembel prison. I was in the technical school – Point 4. I was one of the last to get out of jail because I said my parents were dead.

Then I started working in Wenji and was fired because they said I had Bilharzias, then went to Jima and soon after went to Asseb at the refinery and from there went to the technical school. I was forbidden 3-4 scholarships after being accepted. From my view it was because I was an Eritrean as I passed the test first from all and yet was not allowed to go.

There were 4 Eritrean men in Asseb, in house arrest and signing 4 times daily so they could not flee. They were accused of collaborating with the front. They gave me information about the front that I left my job in Assab and went to Addis and we started the Tihisha secret grouping. We held it secret from friends.

In Alem Bekagn prison in Addis, there were Eritrean fighter prisoners. They told us that ELF was splitting to a new front Shabia that we chose to the new front. Mesih and I had contact with Rustom.

Once Rustom was caught in Asmera and because I had a passport in hand, I bought a ticket to Italy and then thru Austria went to Czechoslovakia and then to Germany. I took this long route because I had too little info. We knew something about Italy from the Catholicism at home.

I did not know visa was not asked to Germany. I went to Check because there were students there and a General Congress was to be held in Munich. There the way to meda was opened to me and I joined the front, after 8 months stay in Germany. And in meda I became against the leadership, even now.

## **Welde Mariam Abraham about Gereger battle**

We entered meda (Field) through Yemen end of 1972. We had captured arms from ELF and carrying them in camels, Habte Selassie and I lead the camels on foot. We all wore military outfits.

Because the Sudanese ordered us back and because ELF was on the way ahead into Eritrea, the Sudanese escorted us back lest ELF ambushed us or prevented us from getting water. Many fighters ELF under the Leadership of Abdella Idris were killed and the corpses were smelling when we left them that the Sudanese buried them with bulldozers.

I was new to meda when the battle started in Gereger Sudan. The first day of battle some of us were away and nearing the Temporary Base of the Organizations EPLF, Selfi Nezanet and Obel there when it started we were through our from Aden, the Red Sea, under the Leadership of Solomon Weldemariam and others that were cautious not to be caught by ELF.

We brought arms with camels. Tsehaye Weldegabriel, Selomon Weldemariam, Kidane Junubi, Haji, others and I were bringing the arms and we were few enough to be captured by ELF that we were very careful. As we were nearing Gereger when the battle started and we were radioed of the battle. Else we would have been forced to flee inwards into Sudan as we were very few, or caught by ELF.

It was just then that I lost my way and carried the weapons towards the Sudanese direction as it was getting dark, ca 6.30pm. Camels were not used to climb mountains and this camel refused to climb. I took another direction hoping to get in time to the road I wanted. When I neared the Sudanese I called to my comrades and they came to me.

It was widely accepted that there was no force able to defeat ELF. Their soldiers were called "Aremrem" by some, being strong and many, also that they paved their way out of battles. As Gereger was inside Sudanese territory, ELF had chased us all the way there. They were more numerous and stronger than us. They could have wiped us out if they had good planning before. We had just got kalashinkofs with 30 bullets and ELF had Siminofs holding 10 bullets could have been advantageous.

From there we entered Eritrean territory, to GleE and the date was 4 March 1973. From there we passed through Arag to Gereger Asmera and held it as a stronghold for a long time. There were two Geregers; one in Sudan called Gereger Sudan and the Eritrean side was called Gereger Asmera. From there we moved to Bliqat.

I do not have much recollection of moving there because I was wounded that time. I was wounded in battle with ELF at DeQsem village near Zager on 13 October 1974. Bliqat and Fah were strongholds until liberation.

It was Abdella who led the attack, telling that there was arms depo with about few members of Medada- reactionaries and brought many fighters with him. Because we had free time, we had fortified our front by building stonewall chains 2-3 kilometres of about a meter and half in length. One goes by bowing the body from the enemy in case of shooting. It also helps from the cold winds. There was abundance of food, and were inviting each other to tea. Sabbe gave us ample weapons. The situation was good except from the leadership.

We were always in tension not to be targeted by the ELF snipers. In that battle, about 20 of theirs were near us and we told them to surrender. They were surprised and most of them started getting their hands up. One out of their side got angry saying they give up to Medada and started shooting and we too started shooting at them, and all 20 of them were killed.

The corpses of the ELF were beginning to smell and we could not bury them as the ELF still surrounded us and held tension to shoot on our movements. The Sudanese after our leaving buried them in masses. It was my first and inhumane and cruel battle where brothers killed each other. Hyenas eat on the dead and did not let the corpses alone. Our defence area was about 2-3 kms in diameter.

The Sudanese were also concerned when we started using artillery; the "Hau" bomb and it disturbed their security. It surprised them that we used more weapons than bullets and told us to leave their territory.

This date was 2 March 1973. I remember the date because the next day as we spent the night there, and Tewelde Eyob was wounded in the thigh, he was treated again and he wrote on the new bandage 3.3.73. The medic's name was Zerezghi. Adhanom Gebremariam was with us then.

That day too, Naizgi Kiflu had a leather jacket and it was cut to cover the arms from rain and wind. Isayas called him "Feudal like Wedi Giorgio" and pulled it from the refusing Naizgi. We entered Eritrea then.

The initial battle of Gereger was only one morning. But distant shootings and holding tension was for about one week. It is difficult to tell exact dates and time of more events. All writings we had were taken away from us and then the beatings, imprisonment and the time lapse took its toll.

We hid for a while to see to send a right signal we are coming in so and so (the name of the Place) direction and joined our group at night and participated in the ongoing battle. Later the Sudanese told both Organizations to leave Sudanese Land and to go to our side in Eritrea. On the Way to Eritrea it took us to days and the Sudanese Army were patrolling us both.

Since all sides were in fighting position, they were easily machine-gunned. It was saddening that 20 of our ELF brothers were killed uselessly. From our Selfi Nasnet side, we lost only one fighter, Gebresadik Guangul also known as Cuba because he had been in Cuba. He was looking into a loophole in the wall that a bullet hit him in the forehead killing him instantly. Tewelde Eyob was wounded a bullet entering both thigh piercing the other thigh. I do not recollect if anyone else from our side was injured.

We were not united yet with Shabia then and 6-7 (exact numbers is not known) were killed and I did not know their names. Though we were in the same position our leaderships and administrations were separate. We had a coordinating committee regarding arms and food. Food and arms were given in numbers of fighters.

At end of may 1973 ELF came to Gereger Asmera and took away a fighter guarding a mountain while the others fought their way out. He was taken to ELF strong hold Barka and later he left to Kenya I heard. I think his surname was Gebre Mikel.

Hilal a renowned brave and educated man from Dankalia was killed in the battle of Kebri Wu'ut. He was not in good terms with Isayas and Omaro.

Another fighter called Selomon Mengesha originally Tigrean brought up in Massawa who entered to Eritrea from Germany had spent all his bullets and was killed. He had come with me from Germany and I was present when he asked Isayas if he could fight for Eritrea though only his mother was Eritrea and had no demands afterwards. He was allowed to fight and was that about two months later martyred an innocent and brave person.

Bliqat area had been in my unit for long time before the leadership moved there, to make sure it was safe from ELF. And then when fighting was intensifying to our fighters in Kebessa my unit went there. On September 1974 fighters like Wedi Fenkil were killed in battle in Filfil.

The Bliqat-Fah area had been an ELF front. We were about 2 kms away by air, separated

by mountain and valley. It was difficult to pinpoint our and their positions. They could follow our movements standing in guard in the mountain with binoculars.

We used to spread writings for them to move and receive, that we came to the field to fight against Ethiopia, not against each other. We even used loudspeaker once as they were nearby and we had about 10 of them in a small old Italian fortified place we could surround them easily if it was necessary. We could have killed them but it was not our aim. We said we should all struggle against the common enemy.

Soon, there was a battle with Ethiopian soldiers and Isayas, Mehari Debesai and Omaro collected the loud speakers and writings of Zena - news section.

We had written articles what democracy means between fighters, with civilians, between fighters and civilians, among fighters and the leadership. We also had written a national anthem, song about discarding regional and religious differences.

The leadership said they were burying the articles. But when digging the sand, reddish under soil was visible and the Ethiopian soldiers took them. Isayas and Omaro started propagating that the Menkae let Ethiopians take our property. To the Muslims they said we were communists and would forbid them from praying and reading the Koran.

We new naïve fighters joined into the traps of Isayas EPLF and Abdella of ELF. I am lucky to be alive as I was protesting against Isayas. I had even said once, and also wrote that we should kill him.

### **The rise of the Menkae situation**

When Isayas saw that the situation was not going to his favour, he feared that he would lose in election. He then used Asmerom G Zghier, Tewelde Eyob and Tsegai Keshi. (Keshi died from DDT poisoning. He had washed his cloths with DDT so as to kill lice. He put on his cloths when it dried, but he did not shake it well. The poison slowly was absorbed into his body and killed him.)

At that time, Adhanom was with him, also Wedi Fenkil in one group. They expanded to 11 persons meeting. If they killed Selomon at that time it would be known the leadership did it. So they wanted to add all from the leadership and veteran fighters. They had planned to kill him accusing him of being regionalism etc, but did not manage so. He confided in Mebrahtu Weldu crying on his shoulder.

The reason of the conflict in the force was power struggle only. When they realized that the situation was getting out of hand and that many fighters were hearing of it, the veterans concluded that they should come to agreement among themselves otherwise the educated ones would overpower them. It spread to the 65 fighters meeting and then to common fighters knowing about it. Isayas, Selomon and Omaro made an oath not to oppose each other. This made the conflict different and the name Menkae was started.

I have told you earlier what the word Menkae meant. In 1970 Naizgi Kiflu had used this word on the ELF. He had come from the US and being with the Selfi Natsnet, he had to reconcile them and ELF at Wina. He was later asked what his opinion was, and he answered that this front the ELF was like Menkae – bat.

He had returned to Europe and when he was joining the front to be a fighter, we went together through Aden. His character is not good and I had written about him earlier. He had earlier studied at Lubumba University in USSR and had supposedly contacts with their security apparatus.

We had 3 haili in Sahel and 2 hailis went to Kebessa to bring new comers. Because they had missed their area, they went onward inside Kebessa. But there they were met with difficult battles. Naizgi did not want to be killed that he was firing to the sky while hiding and one comrade noticed him. It was Abraha Chaalo. Yemanu Y and Girmai...

Those such as Yohannes Sebhatu, Dehab, and Werku etc disliked Naizgi. In fact one day Werku said how he got his MA degree. That was because he was repeatedly observed saying foolish and ignorant meanings.

The educated fighters were against Isayas and Naizgi sided with him. He was asked of his opinion on this movement and he answered that it was a Menkae movement, just like what he said to the ELF. The name Menkae stuck onwards. Some of us were trying to encourage members saying Menkae meant leftist, progressives, and they should not be bothered with that name.

The female fighters used to be scolded that they came to Sahel looking for men, as prostitutes, washing in beauty salons etc. They were not beaten while free and we others would not have sat idly if it was tried. But in prison anything can happen.

The men had asked to marry them and the girls refused saying they wanted to fight for liberation and there were many men in towns if they had wanted to. When they went to wash their hair, the Isayas, Asmerom group etc said if the girls were in beauty salons. We always had muddy hair and slept in mud and the girls had to wash their hair thought they had cut their hair short. It is expected that they were beaten while imprisoned.

There are persons here who know even the timing of the executions. One who was with them is in Frankfurt who was a prisoner, now member of civics society. Two are here with me and one was a prison guard.

There is one called Abraham Antonio whom we captured from ELF in a battle near Dekemhare, Keren road. He was a political cadre of ELF from Senhit to Asmera area and took him to Sahel. Mesih and I stopped his execution by forbidding it. He was a schoolmate of Isayas, Musie etc and he was a prisoner the day the Menkae members were executed.

This correction centre had multiple purposes. One purpose is when a prisoner is released, that fighter is unable to walk because of the bad beatings and if put with fighters, he would tell of his experiences. This person is made to stay in this correction centre until the wounds are healed. This fighter is threatened not to reveal any information of how the beating was or tell of any prisoner's name.

At the time I was a fighter these centres were in Sahel and when the areas under us were getting more, there were more centres in many places. Dr Bereket was put in one of these centres when we captured him.

There was a martyred fighter of early 70s called Mesih Rusom, also known as Mesih Berhe who was my friend and we were together in Tihisha. He was chief of a department in the Commercial Bank of Addis, and had studied at the Commercial School.

### **The Menkae uprising**

For gathering note on the Menkae, this movement was not a movement who tried to oust Isayas. They were five with Isayas, being Tsegai Keshi, Wedi Fenkil, Isayas, Tewelde Eyob and Asmerom Gherezghiher held a meeting. And later on another meeting there Adhanom G Mariam was present saying how they could defend themselves from these oppositions within.

The five in the leadership of Selfi Nasenet (PLF 2) were Isayas Afwerki, Tewelde Eyob, Asmerom Gherezghiher, Mesfin Hagos and Selomon Weldemariam. In decision-makings the first three had majority when voting. Selomon was with Mesfin whereas Isayas, Asmerom and Tewelde voted together which gave Isayas majority vote in decision-making.

Isayas did not want this to continue as he and Selomon were against each other. He could not remove or kill Selomon as he was in the leadership too and he had to come up with a good reason.

These 11 against Selomon then became more to 35 and held a meeting where the 3 other fighters selected from the hailis. These held discussion and accused Selomon of regionalism. When the situation was now more serious, they added more persons becoming 65, 30 being Moslem and 35 Christians.

There were constant new comers and Selomon was allied with them because he was chief of security, it was easy for him to make friends with the new ones. Because they knew him more, they would vote for him as a good person. And Isayas did not want Selomon to be leader because they were at odds form long time.

Planning how to get rid of Selomon, Isayas conferred with the 4 with him and then grew to 11 in number Adhanom with them, accused Selomon and Mesfin Hagos over regionalism. That was the time we were uniting with the Shabia, in august 73.

To make the matter wider support, the Isayas group were moving. Asmerom went to all hailis saying they were concerned of this new friendship because Selomon was getting close with the Shabia leaders.

It was in the 35 fighters that Tsegai Keshi hit Musie Tesfa Mikel. Because then Isayas' supporters were making much noise, Musie said to Isayas 'can you silence your dogs we cannot understand each other'.

Before hitting Musie with his rifle butt, Tsegai Keshi said 'have we not said earlier that before hitting the ELF, we should get rid of these students'. And then Tsegai hit Musie. They had plans of getting rid of ELF, even though our number was less, new comers were constantly flowing in and had good chance.

And when Selomon was accused of regionalism in the 35 men meeting, he started talking around that they would kill him. Selomon said that to Mebrahtu Weldu from Anseba, who was one of the first accused of being Menkae, crying on his soldiers. Mebrahtu answered saying let alone kill you, they cannot demote you from the leadership.

That is when the 'Menkae' situation arose. They said one cannot be charged of regionalism and there should be a counter part to it. Who are these in the opposition? said Musie, and he meant Isayas, Tewelde Eyob and Asmerom. Isayas a Hamassien, Tewelde an Akele Guzai and Asmerom Serae, which region are they inclining to? That is when Tsegai could not control himself and hit Musie. At this meeting, I was in sickbay and in a haili in the 65 meeting.

Since the sick bay was near the leadership's station, Musie came to us. There was Afwerki Amharai from the news section friend to Musie, and because they were saying so much, I said why don't you cool down and consider this as a comrade's mistake. He said, "Weldemariam, this is not the case", and told me the whole story.

I said to him, "here are only 3 civilian families around this large area and you will not win telling them this, and the leadership may crush you in the meantime. Wait until we move to Kebessa and spread it to our people and keep it secret until then". He agreed saying he did not think of it earlier.

Afwerki Tekle was called Amharay and used to use Amhric when he first joined us. As Isayas had plan in the 35 meeting, the outcome was spread out to the hailis. We all were understandably interested in it. The rising of the Menkae was that we said the truth should come to Isayas and Selomon's dislikes to each other. We did not rise against the leadership or the front.

When they realized the wave was going against them, Isayas gathered the veterans saying these students are exploiting us and let us forgive and forget amongst us. This way, Isayas, Selomon and Omaro made an oath. In no circumstances shall one rise against the others or oppose or give out secret on any one of them, and they vowed on blood. This was the start of turning against the students.

To clarify earlier, they used to say "Than 100 pens, 10 cheguar danga" cheguar danga meaning the peasant who having worked most of their lives would not tire climbing up a mountain. If he dies in battle, he's history and if not, he does not ask questions. He dies not know his rights and follows all orders. But a student is aware of his rights and asks many questions and harasses Isayas as they used to do so.

In EPLF songs cassette nr 23, on side B, "lomi zi dekesa..." which I have, is a song that Isayas is from adi guana - foreigner, and was distributed, without the leaders awareness and many still do not know it. Ibrahim Afa was head of Kifle Hailetat and is one of the reasons he was killed.

On the Menkae, the first imprisoning happened in 1st February 1974, exactly the date when Derg rose against Haile Selassie. Was it a coincidence or not. At 5:30 pm at Arag Musie Tesfa Mikel and Mebrahtu Weldu were imprisoned.

These were cast out of haili and were sitting. They were surrounded like guerrilla warfare. We were over them in a mountain near by and saw it all, we told this to our haili at night while standing guard and asked for a haili meeting.

3 gantas then were one haili consisting of 35-45 members. 2 gantas were ordered to move and they obeyed, but I wrote them that in my ganta nobody budges. I said that they made all Eritrea Alem Bekagn because they forbade all from movement, we did not come here for it. There was a fighter we called Ali Geder, because he worked there, we are from same area.

Habte Kidane "Gorilla" and I said no body will move from here and sat all day. You imprison us today and tomorrow will come execution and we will not stop until this is resolved and we demand to meet the leadership.

We were told to leave our weapons to meet the leadership, and we did so. We talked from 11am to 1:30- 2 pm and challenged them in all facts. The leadership were Isayas, Selomon and Romadan. He (Isayas) told us to return to our ganta or be put in jail, and we refused to return to our ganta, and 6 members of that ganta were imprisoned, this was in Arag.

This was 2 February 1974, the next day after Musie and Mebrahtu. Then a guard who was not in the movement for months was brought like a prisoner amongst us to spy on us. After a day and a half, he was taken away and gave all accounts of what we talked about. He was then sent to Iraq to learn about heavy armaments.

Habte Gorilla and I were released because they needed fighters to battles. Isayas wedi Flansa was not imprisoned with us. He was kept in a correction camp (me-arem Tebay) as we had one and he too was released.

What Romadan said that day, though he became corrupt like them later, said we cannot solve the situation by imprisoning fighters, but the two told him to shut up. When the discussion was in height, Selomon said to a manjus, Aradom, " jis, zero". Aradom answered "If I was zero, I would not have left my property and study to liberate my country". Isayas and Selomon started arguing among themselves and at last told us to obey military order and we refused.

One by one were freed and Habte Gorilla and I were left in prison. We had demanded that imprisoning does not solve crisis and they should be freed.

Interrogation and beatings are at nights. A prisoner is let out to relieve himself at 5 am before the others got up, no going out allowed other times, so that no body sees there were prisoners. The prison was not underground then but an old half demolished Italian house. We were made to sit by the walls. This is the first imprisonment, and in Arag. Then Vinac of Adi Nefas and then Afwerki Amharay and then Yohannes were brought in, then Habte Selassie.

Earlier, around Christmas of 1973 we had fought with Ethiopia. Musie had written that the enemy was controlling our logistic route, and we will invariably retreat after finishing bullets and medicine, it is better not to fatigue ourselves and better to retreat. Because of this, it was said that the Menkae were afraid of battles and ran away.

Since beating and interrogation is at night, they come at 1am and without wakening the others, one is taken out carried. The prisoner is still groggy from sleep and 3 or 4 flashlights are lighted on his face.

Of the interrogators, Welde Mikel Haile was head, the others being Ash-al wedi Zere, Naizgi Kiflu and Haile Jebha, 4 men. After long interrogation other prisoners were added, namely

'Dottore' Mikel Pharmacist, Dr Rusom also a pharmacist, and the girls Werku, Dehab and Aberash, also in Arag. Others like Ammanuel came from Bahri and started opposing and were brought to us.

As Welde Mikel Haile was head of interrogation, he said that these people have military discipline mistakes but they have not committed crimes and decided to close the case. Isayas was not there but Selomon. Because they did not want to accept this decision, Mesfin Hagos and Selomon and Ali Said said they did not need the present interrogator and put up a new committee.

Saleh Tetew then said that the leadership makes a committee to use it and put in action the decision of the committee. But if does not suit them, the leadership should not change committees every time like they are doing and this is not right and workable.

Because Saleh said that, Ali Said got up and hit Saleh Tetew, they were both in the leadership, and both being Muslim was a relief it was not on religious basis. Saleh was named Tetew because he fought standing and had many wounds and Ali who his from battles felt he was stronger to hit him. Saleh was then sent to Zager and was martyred there.

Welde Mikel was degraded from head of 'TseTeta' now called 'Halewa Sewra' and made haili leader and sent to Zager battle too so he may be martyred. I have already written on these in details earlier. But my format was in Yada and later a virus destroyed my computer that all is erased. It was published in Messelna, Eritrea intay iyu haTyata. I wrote it completely.

Asrate Kassa had wanted to get rid of Haile Selassie and wanted a military wing of his own. He did not trust the Ethiopian military and wanted his own secret army started by Isayas who was entrusted by the Americans and Israel, to Eritrean front. And in the other hand bring chaos in the Eritrean struggle, bringing animosity between Christians and Muslims, and in regionalism.

The female Menkae fighters were beaten naturally like the men. Werku is alive and will not talk until the right time comes. I do not believe she turned against her comrades. There was a situation what led to her saving. Her menstrual flow would not stop.

Fearing for her life, she was sent to Aden and received medication. Since her passport was with them, she had nowhere to go. The others were executed while she was in Aden and the thing was left to be.

In Kuwait, Romadan held a meeting for all women workers and Ghirmai Bahre challenged him in front of all. He was wounded in battle. On returning back to Eritrea by boat, now imprisoned Berhane Gherezghiher and others killed and cast him into the Red Sea.

From Beirut, two wounded fighters Habte Gorilla and Habte Ab Seyum were taken away to Sahel and killed. We wanted to get away from the field and expose them to our people.

Gebreamlak Isak was a petro-chemical engineer from Kiev, and one of the outstanding in literature in the front. He was known while in the USSR and used to be called Pushkin, even in Russian language. I heard Haile Selassie gave him a medal.

He wrote in long sheets the Eritrean Sem ina Werk in 900 pages. I do not know where the writing has gone. Since he, Habte Gorilla and I, Wedi Flansa (Isayas Tewelde Birhan) were in the same ganta, I used to read it. We do not know what happened to his writings after he was taken to prison. I know he is from somewhere near Adi Quala, I do not know exactly which village.

The first of the Menkae executed were six. Here in Germany lives a head guard stationed in the execution. We have talked of telling all we know, but he works very much now. He has agreed to it and we plan to write it all. He and two others, one residing in Frankfurt were present in the execution. The six are Musie, Yohannes, Afwerki, Tareke, Habte Selassie and Rusom.

In the national congress, Isayas took out a small and dirty paper from his pocket and said they have taken the proper measure on these persons. It is understood as secret what it meant and militarily it means execution.

When a person was to participate in the congress, the person must be in the struggle 2 to 4 years. This was in the congress preparation 3 months prior. One must be free from Menkae, Yemin or the 'Hub-aan' the unknown opposers, or any kind of dissidence.

Those they feared to be challenging were sent away on courses in meda. A haili sends a delegate and those already in courses could not be sent. They are without teachers in the congress days or are given some books to read in the meantime. This means these in the course cannot be nominated for ranks. One man, Alem Abraha somehow slipped them, and you can read how Mesfin Hagos returned him back.

Those like Vinac are still alive who were beaten or made to change their minds and still serve them.

About beatings, they used to beat Habte Selassie the most because he knew that Isayas was a spy of Asrate Kassa and the Americans, and they wanted to get rid of him. There are written articles on H Selassie. In the early days, Isayas was said to have told Ethiopian commandoes and left the fighters in tight spots and fled. You may not have followed the writings, but they were written earlier – like 'Janda Higdef' etc and I will search for them.

There are narrations of how Isayas fled from a truck, even its colour and how he crossed to Tigrai and how he disappeared there from fighters for 6 months. And those who were with him are all dead and the questions are not answered. Some have written and I will tell them to fill more.

If one makes noise with weapon at night, they were told if a person dies we can get someone else but not a weapon, be careful with weapons. These feelings were happening earlier.

New comers were beaten on the way to join meda and there many names we do not know of who died on the way. We who were in the Hailetat were not given their names and those who knew them should tell. One time while we were in Sahel, there was a fighter called Mebrahtu - Dayan, because he was one eyed and was a haili leader. Because 2 hailis were in Kebessa and while coming to us, there was a battle and one new fighter got exhausted, having been a city boy.

A fighter called Shalu-balu a nickname, thought it meant kill him and did so. This we know well of. We were not told of his name but how he was killed. Ammanuel T Mikel should know of it if he was not wounded because they were in the same haili. There were others too.

Remind him about after Abraha Chaalo was martyred. Abraha was wounded and his intestines coming out but still fought. Naizgi Kiflu was shooting upwards so he would not be asked why he did not fight and Abraha Chaalo said take this man away from my side until he Abraha would die.

As Isayas had planned in the 35 meeting, the outcome was spread out to the hailis. We all were naturally drawn into it. The rising of the “Menkae” was that we wanted to defend the truth from Isayas accusing Selomon. We did not rise against the leadership or start the movement.

Names

Musie Tesfamikael

Mebrahtu Weldu

Yohannes Sebhatu

Weldemariam Abraham

Afworki Tekhlu

Gebresadik Isaak

Habte Kidane – Gorilla

Habteselassie

Tareke Yihdego

Dehab Tesfatsion

Aberash Melke

Werku Zere

Mikael pharmacist – Dottore

Dr Rusom pharmacist

Amanuel Tesfamikael

Girmai Bahre

Ekubeab Seyum

Vinac