

No.21, July 22, 2013(*) Seven Days, Vol. 20

Ethiopian police detained 40 opposition supporters distributing leaflets calling for the repeal of an anti-terrorism law they say has been used to stifle dissent, the Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ) party said. The arrests in four districts of the capital, Addis Ababa, occurred on July 15 as UDJ members distributed pamphlets asking people to sign a petition that also demands the release of jailed opposition members, religious leaders and journalists, the party said in an e-mailed statement (Bloomberg, July 16).

The Unity for Justice and Democracy Party (Andinet) said it would soon call protest rallies in 16 towns of the country acting upon the request of the people. The party last Sunday held protest rallies in Gonder and Dessie. UDJ had planned mass protest rallies in Addis Ababa later this month but postponed it to later in September. UDJ's head of public relations, Ato Daniel Teferra, said people especially in Oromia and in the Southern Region have repeatedly urged UDJ to hold protest rallies in their localities. He said that the party would conduct panel discussions in Addis Ababa in preparation for the September rally (Addis Admas, July 20).

The suspected ringleader behind the assassination of the moderate preacher in the town of Desse is in police custody. According to credible sources close to the investigation, the name of the vicious terrorist is Omer Hussein Molla. He was the person who recruited the paid assassin to murder Sheikh Nuru Yemam. According to the same source, besides Sheikh Nuru, the paid assassin was hired to murder three more individuals on the terrorists' hit list, namely, Sheikh Amedin Zeine, Chairman of the Southern Wollo Islamic Council, Ali Gwagwate, Imam of Desse "Shoa-Ber" Mosque, and Mohammed Sultan, Imam of Tuwaf Mosque. The investigation into the killing of the preacher is still underway as more witnesses are coming forward to expose the terrorist network (WIC, July 19). The Holy Trinity College of Theology was ordered closed indefinitely due to serious conflicts between the students and the college administration. The college administrator has requested police support to make the students leave the campus. The college administrator and the students have been urged to seek an alternative solution (Yegna Press, July 16).- The Board of the Holy Trinity Theological College in Addis Ababa has said the college has been closed indefinitely due to differences between the students and the college administration. The board has ordered all students to pack and leave the campus immediately. The board said it will keep the college closed until the office of the Patriarch makes a decision on the college's future. Earlier, students had presented a list of demands to the Patriarch referring it to resolve the conflict between them and the college administrator whom they have accused of corruption (Sendek, July 17).

Saudi border guards at the southern border nabbed 584 Ethiopian nationals trying to sneak into the Kingdom through the Yemeni border in the first week of Ramadan media quoted Capt. Ali Al-Qahtani, spokesman of Saudi Border Guards in Najran, as saying the Ethiopians constituted the largest percentage of infiltrators in the first week of Ramadan (Arab News, July 20).

Ethiopian troops who entered Somalia in Nov. 2011 to help fight Al-Qaeda linked Shabaab insurgents have begun their withdrawal from the key central city of Baidoa, the foreign ministry said. "Ethiopia's troops are pulling out of Baidoa and AMISOM will be taking over," foreign affairs ministry spokesman Dina Mufti told, referring to the African Union force in Somalia. Ethiopia has for several months said it plans to hand over control of the city to AMISOM, whose 17,700-strong force is backing Mogadishu's weak central government. Ethiopian troops captured Baidoa from the extremists last year, and AU troops later joined them (AFP, July 18).

The Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt said Ethio-Egyptian cooperation in the field of health has witnessed a number of remarkable achievements during the last few years. In a press release the embassy, 20 medical convoys have been dispatched to Ethiopia from the Egyptian Ministry of Health and the Egyptian Coptic Church so far. Endoscopy and Hepatology units have been established at St. Paul's and Felege Hiwot Hospitals in Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar, respectively, according to Ambassador Mohamed Edrees. He ded that Ethio-Egyptian Center for Nephrology and Dialysis has been established at St. Paul's Hospital. Ambassador Edrees also indicated that World Renowned Cardiothoracic

Surgeon, Prof. Sir Magdi Yacoub, accompanied by a highly specialized medical team coming from Egypt, UK and USA, had arrived Addis Ababa on July 13 to conduct complicated surgeries for Ethiopian children suffering from cardiovascular diseases. 12 specialists from Egypt are providing free medical treatment to children with cardiac problems at the Cardiac Center in the premises of Tikur Anbessa Specialized Hospital in Addis Ababa (WIC, July 18).