

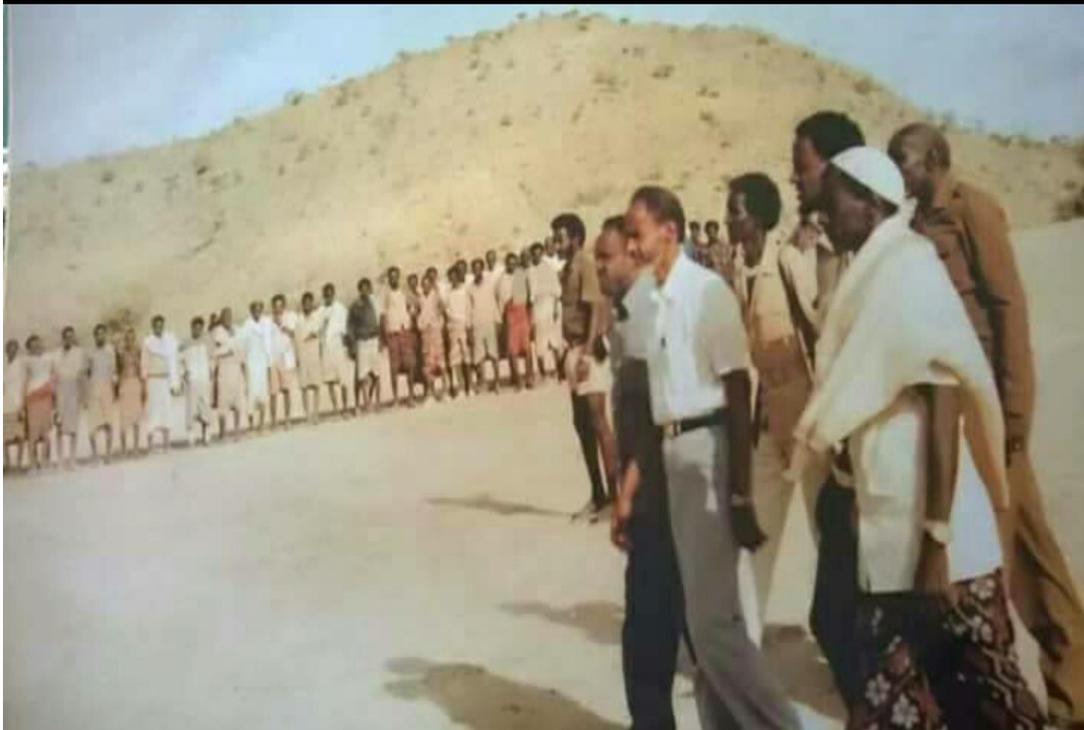
**Haji Ibrahim Yussuf:
A Man of Action and Principle Passed Away**

On
17, July 2017

In memory of a Prominent Friend, Relative and Comrade in Arm

Inna lillahi wa inna ileyihi raajiuun





I have heard and confirmed that my relative, friend and comrade in arm who had been a man of principled action passed away for good from this troubled World. May Allah bless his soul! I forward my heartily felt sorrow, Imaan and sabre to his family and relative. Although this fate of death is a life destiny to every human being which cannot be avoided, the feeling of sorrow and frustration is overwhelming to be accepted. May Allah place him in Jennet and give us all faith and endurance!.

Haji Ibrahim Yussuf was born and grown up in Dat Bahari, at present Dutie District of Zone one, in the Afar Region of Ethiopia. As grown up he replaced his father at death and gradually became as one of the prominent chiefs in Dat Bahari. As he represented an agro-pastoralist community around Magenta, he was involved in land disputes between the State Farm and the local communities along the Lower Awash Valley.

Landholding disputes. Land tenure among the Afar is communal. As Awash Valley Authority (AVA) was formed and given the responsibility to administer and develop resources of the Valley in 1960s, the communal ownership was suppressed in favor of State land ownership which caused disputes and conflicts. He was together with other local communities at loggerhead and to counter the pressure of AVA. The seriousness of the conflict led to direct confrontation and ultimately contributed to the emergency of revolt at the eve of the Ethiopian Revolution 1974.

Revolt at Awsa. Haji Ibrahim was one of the rebellious leaders together with other Awsan notables led by Sultan Ali Mirah Hanfare who opposed to the Derg. He organized resistance in and around Dat Bahari and met the Derg leader together with other Awsan elder's delegation

in Addis Ababa requesting and claiming the rights of communal land ownership and self-rule. He was among those who foiled the Dregs plot attempt to capture Sultan Ali Mirah alive in Aysaita. Finally as the reconciliation negotiation got deadlock with the Derg, he rebelled against the state in different places of Awsa.

Joined Armed Struggle. Haji Ibrahim gradually became among organizers and fighting leaders in armed struggle. As fighting became longer, he changed hideout to Northern Somalia. From there he used to take action. At the collapse of Somalia and looming civil war, he became target in cross fires, among the fighting Somali factions. Instead he decided to withdraw to Ethiopia through Ogaden (with a group of fighters) where they were captured to seek sanctuary.

Returned to Ethiopia. He and his fighters were captured and Imprisoned in Harar town. They were subject to tortures and beating until the last day when the Ethiopian authorities decided Haji Ibrahim to be executed. Luckily the same day he supposed to be killed the Derg suddenly collapsed and the prison doors were opened where the group freed. The group who were left empty handed and had no other alternative other than find their way to their home. They went on foot to Dire Dawa where they were helped to travel to Awash by train by Hummed Dauod an Afar resident there where they finally joined their relatives.

Under the Woyan Rule. As a rebel fighter, the woyane took over power, were expected to change the situation in Ethiopia to peace and stability. But on the contrary to his expectation the confrontation restarted in Awsa in general and that of his home area in Dat Bahari. At the beginning of September 1991, the woyane forces invaded Dat Bahari and confiscated all equipment of State Farms and shot dead people indiscriminately those who declined to cooperate in looting of all materials.

This aggression is remembered locally among the people in Awsa in general and that of Dat Bahari in particular, where hundreds of innocent people were massacred. The Awsan leaders were not in a position to go to war once again and instead tended to peace and stability. But the woyane had never wanted to be in peace with the Afar instead reinforced its position in each corner of the Region and confiscated the land and its resource through different investments. The Woyane threatens the local people to death and actively watches minor reaction to its rule. This policy of aggression has been accompanied by recurrent armed suppression, led by Abay Tsehaye and the like. It continues to cause latent tension which would lead undoubtedly to an open confrontation in the years to come in the region.

Haji Ibrahim left a legacy of firm and uncorrupted leadership that always put the interest of his nation at first place. His god fearing and generous personality will remain as hallmark in Afar nation.

By anonymous writer: Algana, Dat bahari, Afar Region Ethiopia