

PERSONAL TESTIMONY ARDO DUNI BUBA

Introduction

I am a cattle grazier and community leader (Ardo) and elder living in Bamunka, Ndop, Ngoketunia Division of the North-West Region. My two sons Adamu Dohma, Mallam Dewa and I were arbitrarily arrested, tortured, detained and money extorted from us by the Ndawar alkali Court acting on orders of Baba Ahmadou Danpullo.

Before our arrest

In a public meeting in Ndawarain March 1993, Baba Ahmadou Danpullo declared that he has banned MBOSCUA a cultural association to which we belong. One Friday evening at 6.30pm two men came to my compound and handed me an envelope addressed to me and stamped 'Alhadji Baba of Ndawara'. In the envelope was a threatening convocation requesting me and my two sons Adamu Dohman and Mallam Dewa to report at Ndawara Alkali Court the following day Saturday at 8am. The Convocation was signed by the Alkali but bearing the business stamp of Alhadji Baba.

Unfortunately one of my sons Adamu Dohma had travelled to Nso. Early Saturday morning Mallam Dewa and I left for Ndawara ELBA Ranch. Once there I was detained without charge, while my son Mallam Dewa was instructed to produce his brother Adamu Dohma before 6pm same day else both of them will pay 150,000FCFA each for coming late.

He left Ndawara via Ndop and hired a vehicle to Nso. He succeeded in returning to the Ranch with his brother at 6.30pm but they were both fined 80,000FCFA for being 30 minutes late.

Our arbitrary arrest and illegal detention

All three of us were locked up in a shipping container until Monday.

Our Kangaroo trial

We were brought out of our 'cell' and taken to the 'Court' and the following charges were read out to us:

Ardo Duni – you initiated the creation of an Islamic School in your premises without the authorisation of Alhadji Baba Ahmadou Danpullo. This was construed as an offence against Alhadji Baba of Ndawar in Boyo Division irrespective of the fact that there is an Alkali Court in Ndop, Ngoketunjia Division.

Second offence - you allowed my premises to be used for the holding of MBOSCUA meetings, an Association which has been banned by Alhadji Baba Ahmadou Danpullo.

My punishment was to pay a fine of 150,000FCFA.

Adamu Dohma (Divisional Coordinator of MBOSCUDA for Ngohketunjia) two counts

That he was holding MBOSCUDA meetings in his home whereas the Association has been banned by Alhadji Baba Ahmadou Danpullo.

The he called Alhadji Baba some where as a slave. This was accepted without evidence and he was not given the chance to defend himself.

His punishment was 50 strokes of the cane and a fine of 1.500,000FCFA.

Mallam Dewa's offence was that he was always in company of his brother Adamu Dohma, therefore promoting the activities of MBOSCUDA.

His punishment was to be flogged 10 strokes of the cane and fined 1,500,000FCFA.

During the court session Alhadji Baba sat in his house and there was an intermediary who took information to him from him back to the court. As such all the charges against us and the penalties came from the almighty Alhadji Baba Danpullo.

We were told by the Court that any parent who sends their child to our school will be arrested and fined 1,500,000FCFA.

We were also told that no Appeal or Supreme Court can rule against the decisions of Alhaji Baba's Alakli Court and they can pass life and death sentences with no one to stop them.

I like to point out that the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA) with head quarters in Yaounde is a registered accordingly Association with the Ministry of territorial Administration.

After the reading of the verdict

We all denied all the charges levelled against us and refused categorically to pay the total fine of 3,230,000FCFA. Consequently we were again detained in the so called Court Cell. We were detained incommunicado, no light, no toilette facilities, no ventilation and no food. Dohma and Dewa were not given any medical attention despite their injuries from beatings.

We stayed in the cell without facilities or food till the following day Tuesday when my two children considering my worsening health condition and advanced age decided that we should agree to pay the fine to secure our release.

Our release

We had no such money but our families were forced to raise the sum of 1.9 million which we paid to Alhadji Baba through the Court to secure our release. We were released and ordered to pay the balance within 10 days from the day of our release.

Following four days of starvation in inhumane conditions, my health deteriorated seriously. I have lost my voice and given all the torture inflicted on us we were physically and psychologically traumatised and we straight to hospital. We were examined by a Doctor who issued medical certificates and our photographs taken.

Because of the wanton flogging, Adamu Dohma and Mallam Dewa sustained injuries all over their bodies and it should be noted all his charges centred around MBOSCUDA.

We refused to pay the remaining balance of so called fine and consulted a lawyer who went to Ndawara alkali Court to challenge their illegal activities and we also filed an Appeal against the ruling at the North-West Court of Appeal in Suit No. BCA/5CC/53 of 17/04/1993. The Appeal has never been heard.

We complaint to various authorities and human rights organisations but we have received any redress to date. The government set up and Inter-Ministerial Commission also called the Jani Commission to investigate human rights abuses against the Mbororo community by Baba Ahmadou Danpullo to which we provided evidence but to date we have heard anything further.

Conclusion

We wish to appeal that you take appropriate action against Baba Ahmadou Danpullo and free us from his untold menace and to get him to refund the money extorted from us and to compensate us for damages suffered. We also urge the Cameroon government to fully implement the Jani Commission Report.