

Media Monitoring Report, Somalia

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9 – 16 February 2015

Ceasefire in Place Following Deadly Battle in Guri'el

[Ahlu Suna Forces Seize a Central Somali District from Government Military](#)

Raxanreeb, February 10

- Ahlu Sunna, a Sufi Islamist group, have attacked Federal soldiers in Guri'el and seized the town from government control
- The town is said to be in chaos as fears rage that government forces may besiege the town.
- President Hassan Sheikh is currently touring the Gal-gugud region

[Militias Retain Control of Guri'el After Deadly Battle](#)

Garowe Online, February 13th

- Militias loyal to Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamea have taken control of the town of Guri'el in the Galgaduud region following a deadly battle with government forces.
- At least six deaths have been reported.
- The Ahlu Sunnah militias dislodged government troops from the town earlier in the week as debates rage over the formation of a federal state in central Somalia

Mediation Underway in Guriel Following Deadly Clashes

Garowe Online, February 14th

- A committee led by the former Galmudug President is brokering a ceasefire between Somali government forces and militias loyal to the paramilitary group Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamea
- The two sides have reportedly agreed to come to the negotiating table. Residents say the situation in Guri'el has largely returned to normal, but military movement is high.
- Ahlu Sunnah was part of a tripartite agreement that could have paved the way to the formation of a federal state in south Mudug and Galgadud.

Somali Civil Society Group Worried About Displaced People in Guriel

February 15, Dalsan Radio

- Sahro Maalim has expressed concern over families displaced in Guriel after fighting broke out between government forces and Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa
- The chairperson of the group has said that scores have lost their lives, while the fighting impacts hundreds of others.
- She added that some of the displaced are living in appalling conditions and require urgent attention.

Ceasefire Takes Effect in Guri'el Following Deadly Battle

February 16, Raxanreeb

- A ceasefire has taken effect in Guriel following deadly clashes between moderate Sufi Islamists Ahlu Sunna forces and the Somali government.
- Clan leaders and politicians were appointed to ease the tensions in the region. The chairman of the commission formed to oversee negotiations has confirmed that both sides have agreed to implement the ceasefire.
- Residents are urged to return to their homes.

Third Ahlu Sunna Cleric Shot

Ahlu Sunna Cleric Shot Dead in Baidoa, Third in Month

February 14, Garowe Online

- An Ahlu Sunnah-aligned cleric was gunned down in Baidoa, the third to be killed within a month
- The cleric was shot by two masked gunmen on his way home from a nearby mosque.
- The men escaped, but authorities have reported that they have three suspects in custody.
- Al Shabaab has not claimed responsibility for the attack.

Detained Journalists Face Delays

Mogadishu Court Postpones Trial of Radio Journalists

February 15, Dalsan Radio

- A regional court in Mogadishu has postponed the trial of two journalists for the fourth time.

- The two men, from Shabelle and Sky FM, are accused of incitement. They have been in detention since their arrest in August 2014.
- The owner of both stations is also in prison
- International media advocacy groups have called on the Somali government to free the detained journalists

Somali Detained Journalists Seek Justice

February 15, Shabelle News

- Somalia's detained journalists have been brought before the regional Banadir court in Mogadishu.
- The judge confirmed the cases would be tried as soon as possible, but the trial was delayed after witnesses and evidence were not brought before the court.
- A hearing has been rescheduled for March 1st
- Radio Shabelle's lawyer blamed Somali authorities for the delays, accusing them of politicizing the trial
- The NUSOJ has requested the men be freed on bail, but the judge rejected the suggestion.

Somaliland Denies Supporting Al Shabaab

February 16th, Garowe Online

- Somaliland's separatist administration has denied Puntland's accusations that the breakaway state supports Al Shabaab.
- The Minister for the Interior says there is no tangible evidence to support Puntland's claims. He went on to say that Puntland's Security Minister is now recognized by Somaliland as a criminal, and will not be allowed to enter the region.