

Prosecutors in Ethiopia drop charges against *Feteh* editor

The International Press Institute (IPI) on Tuesday, 28 August 2012, welcomed the news that charges against Ethiopian editor, Temesgen Desalegn have been withdrawn, and called for Ethiopia to reform its stance toward the media and free all journalists who are currently in jail for their criticism of official policies, and cease its harassment of *Feteh* newspaper.

Prosecutors sent a letter to the 16th Criminal Bench of the Federal High Court saying that charges against Desalegn had been dropped to allow time to further investigate, the *Ethiopian Reporter* said. IPI was told that the journalist had been released from Kality Prison.

Desalegn, editor of the critical weekly newspaper *Feteh*, was arrested last week just after the death of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was officially announced, according to reports. He was charged with inciting the public to overthrow the constitutional order, defaming the state, and spreading false rumours to incite the public against the government, a legal expert in Ethiopia told IPI.

The prosecutor provided examples of newspaper articles as evidence. Among others, they included articles calling for protests inspired by the Egypt revolution, articles alleging that the government had implemented hateful ethnic policies, and an article alleging that the government had infringed on religious freedom and that Christian and Muslim leaders were ruling party cadres, according to the information provided by the source.

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