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Men whipped for shaving, women made to shake breasts

Somali hardliners whip women for wearing bras



The women were told to remove their bras and shake their breasts (File)

MOGADISHU (Reuters)

Somalia's hardline Islamist group al-Shabaab has publicly whipped women for wearing bras they say violate Islam by constituting a deception, north Mogadishu residents said on Friday.

The insurgent group, which seeks to impose a strict form of sharia (Islamic law) throughout Somalia, amputated a foot and a hand each from two young men accused of robbery earlier this month. They have also banned movies, musical ringtones, dancing at wedding ceremonies and playing or watching soccer.

Al-Shabaab forced us to wear their type of veil and now they order us to shake our breasts

Halima

Residents said gunmen had been rounding up any woman seen with a firm bust and then had them publicly whipped by masked men. The women were then told to remove their bras and shake their breasts.

"Al-Shabaab forced us to wear their type of veil and now they order us to shake our breasts," a resident, Halima, told Reuters, adding that her daughters had been whipped on Thursday.

"They first banned the former veil and introduced a hard fabric which stands stiffly on women's chests. They are now saying that breasts should be firm naturally, or just flat."

Officials of al-Shabaab, which Washington says is al-Qaeda's proxy in the failed Horn of Africa state, declined to comment.

The group's hardline interpretation of Islamic law has shocked many Somalis, who are traditionally moderate Muslims. Some residents, however, give the insurgents credit for restoring order to the regions under their control.

Al-Shabaab, which means "youth" in Arabic, control large swathes of south and central Somalia.

My brother was jailed after he wrestled with a

Jailed for defending his sister

Abdullahi Hussein, a student in north Mogadishu, said his elder brother

man that had beaten my sister and forced her to remove her bra. He could not stand it

Hussein

was thrown behind bars when he fought back a man who humiliated their sister by asking her to remove her bra.

"My brother was jailed after he wrestled with a man that had beaten my sister and forced her to remove her bra. He could not stand it," Hussein said.

Men were not spared the "moral cleansing." Any man caught without a beard was been publicly whipped.

"I was beaten and my hair was cut off with a pair of scissors in the street," Hussein said.

"My trouser was also cut up to the knee. They accused me of shaving my beard but I am only 18. They have arrested dozens of men and women. You just find yourself being whipped by a masked man as soon as you leave your house."

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