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TO: EMNETU TESFAI
 FAX NO: 47-4-503632
 FROM: YOHANNES
 DATE: 24.03.88 TIME: 11:10
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Dear Emnetu,
 Following is the article for your
 information.

Eritrean rebels capture three Russians

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Three Soviet military experts have been captured by Eritrean separatists in Ethiopia and a fourth is missing, foreign ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov said yesterday.

Thirteen Soviet experts, sent to assist the Ethiopian army and help service Soviet combat equipment, had gone missing after the Eritrean People's Liberation

Front (EPLF) captured a part of the disputed province. "Nine of them have returned," said Mr Gerasimov. "Three of the missing persons have become prisoners of war, according to Eritrean separatist statements. One is missing and no information is known about him."

The EPLF's clandestine radio station said on Saturday that it had captured a Soviet colonel and

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a lieutenant in northern Ethiopia. The guerrillas, who have been fighting the Addis Ababa authorities for 25 years, said they were the first Soviet officers to be seized since Moscow began providing substantial military help to Ethiopia's Marxist government in 1977. The EPLF later said it had captured Asabet, the largest town in Sahel province in northern Eritrea.

Wed. 23 MAR '88

Mr Gerasimov did not say when the Soviet experts had gone missing. He said the incident occurred in the area captured by the separatists during a recent intensification of fighting.

In Oslo, the Norwegian foreign ministry said Viggo Gilberg, a journalist, was killed in a bomb explosion on Saturday, when he entered the town occupied by the guerrillas.

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