

Imploding Eritrea: hell from inside, venom from outside

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My piece of article today dwells on Eritrea. It starts from the present; moves back to the past to understand the present and finally to suggest the way to the future.

1. Background

In the last couple of years, Eritrean youth are fleeing their country individually and en masse. Thousands have lost their lives in the fortified border by the 'shoot & kill' policy of Isaias. Others have been devoured by organ harvesters in the Sinnai Peninsula of Egypt. Still others are drowned in the Mediterranean and Red Seas. The recent Lampadusa island tragedy that claimed the lives of hundreds of African migrants (most of them Eritreans) is a fresh memory. Yet others are languishing in the thousands of prisons and prison like indefinite military service inside Eritrea. The parents of those fleeing youth are imprisoned, extorted and left in a disturbingly miserable situation. Those aged and infants are left without the support of their bread winners. In short, Eritrea unparalleled by any other African or other nation is a hell on planet earth. Hell to its very citizens!

Exodus of Eritrean youth is not the only problem in Eritrea. As a consequence of the disastrous economic policy (if so be it called) coupled with recurring drought has lead millions to malnutrition and hunger. The ruling junta forcefully confiscates the produce of farmers and feeds its 'military slaves'. Wary of this act, some peasants changed their produce to flour and dough as fast as possible. The regime severely punished those doing this act and even reported it took away the flour/dough. At one time it was reported that two thirds of the Eritrean population was plagued by famine. Guess what Isaias advised? He proposed the minimum calorie amount (indirectly the food intake) needed by each Eritrean. Mad, stupid?

Like Eritreans, Ethiopian and other African youth are also immigrating to the Middle East, Europe and America, mainly for economic reasons. The situation in Eritrea is far worse. For instance, following the savage treatment of Ethiopians in Saudi Arabia, the Ethiopian government is repatriating its citizens back home with plans and actions to reinstate them. The Entire public and the business community in particular are contributing their shares. Contrary to this action, however harsh and life threatening situation Eritreans are facing (in fact it is pervasive), they prefer death in a foreign land than going back to Isaias' Eritrea. Why is Eritrea such a horrible place to its citizens? Where has all the bravado sublimed ("Singapore of Africa, Israel of the Africa, self-reliance, economic miracles, Eritrean exceptionalism, ...")? Is there any inherent problem in the Eritrean societal fabric or is it because of the EPLF/PFDJ political cohorts this all horrific tragedy we are witnessing?

Not only is today's Eritrea a hell, it is also destroying its future. Asmara University was/is dismantled or scaled down. The future leaders of the country are not in schools: they are either fleeing or are in an indefinite military service. The regime constructs more prisons and dungeons than schools and hospitals. No hope in the near future. Even when the Isaias regime falls (which surely will), the possibility of the immigrated youth to go back home and start life anew is slim. Infrastructure (energy, ports, roads, etc.) is in absolute ramshackle due to disinvestment. It appears that Eritreans will face an unfolding crisis in the

future as well. As one acute Eritrean observer wrote ‘Eritrea is hollowed demographically, socially, economically,...’. A harbinger to a complete implosion! What a tragedy!

While the reality in Eritrea is in such a devastated situation, the regime is busy brewing wars. In less than seven years from ‘liberation’, Eritrea waged war with four of its neighbours: Yemen, Sudan, Djibouti and Ethiopia. The last one led Eritrean economy to rock bottom. The regime is still busy brewing proxy wars in Somalia; supporting terrorists, secessionists and dissidents in Ethiopia, Sudan, CAR, Yemen, etc. The Eritrean regime gets mad at neighbours’ peace and development. Like a Cobra snake it gets excited and spits venom. Infant Eritrea, hell internally venom externally!

In an attempt to understand the problem, I read few articles and books written by both Eritreans and Ethiopians. One of the books I read is Professor Berket Habte Selassie’s “Wounded Nation”. I also re-read a book by Ambassador Zewdie Retta, “የኤርትራ ጉዳይ” (The Eritrean Affair...). The foregoing discussion is supported with these books and other articles mentioned in the reference. But first, let’s have few reflections on “Wounded Nation”.

2. Berket’s “wounded nation”[1]

Professor Berket Habte Selassie is an academician cum Eritrean politician. He was educated in Ethiopia and reached to a higher post in Ethiopia before he joined the Secessionist movement in 1975. He was a member of the EPLF/PFDJ until his fall out with Isaias. He published a book in 2010 with the title “*Wounded Nation: how a once promising Eritrea is betrayed and its future compromised*”. I got a copy of the book six months back from a book shop in Arat Kilo, Addis Ababa. But, I read it just last week, three years after its publication and six months after I acquired it. For a long time, I lost the appetite to read anything written by Eritreans, mostly due to their substance. More often than not, I found them to be propaganda outlets than professional opinions. The Lampadusa disaster initiated me to read.

I read the book with high expectations to get something worth as to the size and complexity of the problems Eritreans are facing today. I was also expecting high on the etiology of the major root causes of the problem including a suggestion on the future course of action. I was of the opinion that a book of 300 pages written by a seasoned academician cum privy politician of EPLF/PFDG is the most valuable. To my dismay however, my reading proved my expectations were too much.

It will be sheer negligence from my side if I skip without mentioning the good points of the book first. First and foremost, the book provides names, dates and other information on the issue of ELF and EPLF infighting, the whole process from 1975 well up to the recent past, the strength and weakness of the drafted constitution, etc. This may be good source of information for those who need to study the history of Eritrea. The other strong point I could see is he advises Eritreans to have empathy and avoid antipathy. The way he described about the humiliation of the elders by the misguided EPLF members is also worth noting. There also other such and such information discussed.

While the information provided and discussed here and there may be important to Diaspora Eritrean politicians, the book does not adequately address the fundamental problems of Eritrea. In fact, the book describes “...immaculate deception as the original sin of Eritrean politics” (page 282, and also pages 59 & 126). The book further describes, the full trust the author had (according to the author, also shared by

the Eritrean public) on the leadership of the “freedom fighters”, has led to the present miserable condition. By “immaculate deception”, the author added more confusion to the problem than portraying the hitherto underlying facts. It is very difficult for me to fathom, a seasoned academician and privy politician at his final active years of his life failing to present the true nature of the Eritrean problem. The mention of ‘immaculate deception’ may satisfy some gullible people but remains miles away from indicating the true problem.

After 35 years of political honeymoon with the strong man, Professor Bereket tells readers that he was deceived immaculately. A highly educated man and revered elder of the EPLF, he was rather supposed to analyze and forecast the future than wait all this time to get deceived with innocent Eritreans. He could not even have the late Woldeab’s premonition of the 1990s: “Isaias will destroy himself and might unfortunately take the country with him.”[3]

While the book is meant to Eritrea, professor Bereket was busy injecting stale propaganda on Ethiopia, albeit with a little subtlety at this time. By doing so, he tried to obfuscate facts and added the redundant propaganda on the mountain of lies that we have been watching in the last 50 years?

To mention few, the author clearly stated that Emperor Haile Selassie I has abrogated the Eritrean federation. Unless the author is deliberately deceiving readers, the truth is the Eritrean federation was dismantled by Eritreans themselves through a legal means at the Eritrean parliament with full endorsement of all Eritrean parliamentarians [2,3,8]. If there is anything the Emperor is to blame lies in his misguided administrative system after the reunion. He relegated those Unionists that sacrificed a lot to come to complete reunion than staying under an externally imposed federation. The Emperor gave Eritrea to anti unionists and to his good-for-nothing sycophants while those that burnt under the motto “Ethiopia or Death” were neglected. This is a continuation of his policy of favoring *Bandas* over *Arbenoch* as clearly seen in the rest of Ethiopia. Just to refresh a live memory by way of relation, the Emperor and his *Banda* entourage plotted, orchestrated and hanged Dejazmach Belay Zeleke, a renowned *Arbegna*.

At this juncture, it is appropriate to forward questions to Professor Bereket.

- 1) Had the Federation been maintained to this date, do you think that there would be no Secessionist (freedom) movement?
- 2) Is it not true that ELF was formed, supported and guided by external forces having ulterior motives? So did/does the splinter EPLF thereafter.
- 3) Would these external forces sit idle their hands crossed had the federation been there?

The answer to these questions will obviously flash light to the true nature of the conflict that led us to blood bath until today. A blood bath between sisters and brothers across the Mereb!

The author also went out of his way in disposing some wrongly wielded information about Ethiopia. He concluded without any iota of doubt that the 16th century internal war of Ethiopia as a religious war. The Truth is otherwise. The war between Gragn Ahmed and Atse Libna Dingil was mainly of political & economic. There was a persistent struggle between the highlanders (including Eritrea) and the lowlanders for a long time; the former to expand its tax base and reinstate its former regions and the latter to be autonomous. During the Gragn war, Islam was the ideology of the lowlanders and Christianity for the highlanders. What other ideology can one use in 1527?

The other misinformation is about ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Most Eritrean elite members, in so far as possible, try to magnify every silly problems of Ethiopia and Professor Bereket is not exception in his listing of problems “Oromo, Somali, etc. ”. In his conclusion under the subtitle “conflict”, he discusses about conflicts in Ethiopia in the near past and says nothing about Eritrea. With due respect to the author, may I inform the reader that the author’s out of context interference reminded me the Amharic proverb that reads *የራሷ ሲያርግት የሰው ታግስላለች።*

Professor Bereket is not alone in this matter. It is an inherent problem of most Eritrean elite members when it comes to Ethiopia. It appears as if there is a policy that all anti-Ethiopia Eritreans are following. Instead of solving their own myriad of problems, they get carried away into Ethiopian affairs. I presume their policy is “*fabricate any information that disparages and belittles Ethiopia whence your solace*”. But that could not and will not. The crux of the problem is somewhere.

3. The crux of the matter

Ethiopia is one of the ancient states on planet earth. Northern Ethiopia including present day Eritrea has been the Kernel of the ancient Ethiopian civilization. In its heyday, Ethiopia was one of the four superpowers of the world together with China, Persia (Iran) and Roman Empire []. Present day Yemen, Hejaz (Saudi Arabia), Sudan and eastern Africa in its entirety was under the Axumite Empire. For instance, in 525AD, King Kaleb of Axum lead a military expedition to Yemen and rescued Christians that were under severe treatment by a Jewish local leader. One can understand that the fore, fore.... forefathers of present day Eritreans were in this expedition.

Due to a combination of internal, external and environmental pressing factors, this great Empire collapsed a thousand year back. Most regions were lost and Ethiopia was restricted only to East Africa. The scenario continued until the coming of Ottoman Turks to the Red Sea area in the 15th/16th century. Hereafter skirmishes started and continued until the 19th century. In 1890, Eritrea was amputated from Ethiopia as a colony of Italy.

The amputated parts were tried to be sifted by colonial surgeons. So reckless was the colonial surgical operation, it left mother Ethiopia’s blood vessels open to flow. Likewise, the amputated pieces were bleeding in search of their original self. The incorrect sifting could not create a self-standing independent nation state. Rather it created a turf of the big mass substantially with the psychic of its main part plus some weeds of false image. The 1952 UN sponsored referendum and Eritrea’s union to Ethiopia in 1962 was appropriate in closing the bleeding vessels from both sides of the body.

Nevertheless, there were disgruntled Eritreans due to fear, hate and excessive thirst for political power. There was no timely measure from the Ethiopian side in understanding and giving a political solution to the simmering problem. In the mean time, external forces exploited the situation.

In a series of three articles that appeared in different websites, Ghirmay Yiebio¹ takes up from this point. Under the title *"Independent Eritrea" A crumbling nation and a tragedy, born of baseless fear, meaningless Hatred and a mountain of lies*", he portrays a clear picture of the initial phase of the secessionist movement and the motives of the so-called founding fathers. He calls them the "Architects of destruction". I a little differ from Ghirmay in this last terminology. The real architects are in Cairo and these Eritreans are only Surrogates of the Architects of destruction.

The "founding fathers" and their real motives are described as below;

1. *Abdelqader Kebire - propelled by extreme hate of the Christian Abyssinian Empire*
2. *Sheik Ibrahim Sultan - representing the Muslims of lowland Eritrea and who was motivated by fear of being subjugated by the Christian Abyssinian Empire*
3. *Woldeab Woldemariam - consumed by extreme hate to Amharas and the Shoa dynasty*
4. *Hamid Idris Awate - A criminal outlaw "Shifta" who shot the first bullet in the name of the revolution.*
5. *Isayas Afeworki and the students from the Christian highland who joined the struggle in droves from the middle of the 1960s up to the mid 70s, and who carried the revolution to the conclusion of its declared objective i.e. secession.*

Here, mention should be made about Isaias and his group. They were voracious power mongers driven and blinded by Marxist ideology. Professor Bereket clearly describes Isaias as a man having 'pathological zero tolerance' for being 2nd. He is hell-bent to be the first. An absolutely dictatorial personality!

While Isaias is power hungry dictator, the other four 'fathers' are mere puppets to external forces. They have been fabricating lies which continued until today. Power monger Isaias carefully purged them all and took center stage. He added more lies and fears on the one already piled by the puppets.

Leaving a mark at this point, let us revisit the role of external forces in exploiting the Eritrean problem. The period covering 1950s and 1960s, when Eritrea was federated and re-united to Ethiopia, the time was the era of the Cold War. The USSR-China block was busy fighting with the West (headed by USA) in terms of ideological propaganda and mushrooming proxy wars. It was trying times for poor nations like Ethiopia where allegiance to any one of the blocks brings punishments from the other block in its various forms. As Imperial Ethiopia was clinging to the West, the other block supported anything anti-Ethiopia. Somalia's Said Barre and Eritrean secessionists were favored by both USSR and China. In 1967, Isaias was selected and trained for 18 month on gorilla fight in China. Somalia invaded Ethiopia. The turn of events was so dramatic that when the Emperor was deposed and the Dergue comes, USSR and USA exchanged positions in Ethiopia and Somalia. So does the Eritrean case.

A little earlier than this and concurrently a while later, there were two important geopolitical concerns in the Middle East and North Eastern Africa: the Red Sea (Arab-Israeli problems) and Nile. It was the heyday of Pan-Arabism. Nasir's Egypt and Assad's Syria united their two countries under one flag, although short-lived. Egypt, with the support of USSR was antagonistic to the West and the de facto leader of Pan-Arabism. The Arab-Israeli enmity was at its peak.

¹ Ghirmay is an Eritrean residing in Canada.

Concurrently, Nasir's attempt in the 1950s to create Egyptian hegemony under the guise of cooperation of Nile countries failed because of Ethiopia outright rejection []. Egyptians followed a different course: The policy of dividing and weakening Ethiopia.

The Egyptian intelligence service devised meticulous plans that enable ignite devastating wild fire in Ethiopia. It carefully crafted a set of planed actions that still is smoldering in through Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia.

- 1) Eritrean Muslim students were carefully selected and given scholarships in the religious Alzar University and other Universities of Egypt.
- 2) Those nascent Muslim students were carefully inculcated by Egyptians to deny their black African and Habesha/Ethiopian identity for Pan-Arabism. They became anti -Tigigna, anti-Tigre languages, the two major languages spoken by well over 80% (?) of Eritreans². The reason is these two languages descended from Geez (an Ethiopian language) just like Amaric and should be condoned. Forged Arabs emerged. Well done!
- 3) Its nucleus being in Egypt, Eritrean Student unions were formed in Baghdad, Damascus, Yemen and others.
- 4) All political dissidents from the Muslim League and the likes of Woldeab Woldemariam were agitated and supported to fabricate anti-Ethiopia propaganda. Woldeab had a radio program from Cairo.
- 5) The Eritrean Liberation Front /ELF/ was formed from the forged Arab students and political dissidents. The first military training was given to ELF members by Egyptians near the Mediterranean Sea city of Alexandria.
- 6) A local outlaw (*Shifita*) in Western Eritrea by the name Hamid Idris Awate known for his cattle tussling and highway robbery was approached to shoot the first bullet in the name of the "liberation struggle". Bloodletting started to engulf all Ethiopians and Eritreans for the next decades.
- 7) Now, Egypt sure of the fire ignited used its de facto Arab leadership to make the Eritrean issue part of the Middle East Problem. They did it through their craft, the Arab League. Eritrea was recognized as an Arab state long before its separation from Ethiopia. This makes the Red Sea a Sea of Arabs. Then came the support of Assad of Syria, Saddam of Iraq, Gadafi of Libiya and the wealthy Saud family. Even Yemen and other mini-states were supporters and sympathizers of ELF. Sudan was the launch pad. Sudan also contributed its ex-soldiers to fight alongside ELF.
- 8) A splinter group came out from ELF in the 1970s and formed EPLF. The charismatic young leader of EPLF disparaged and/or assassinated any of his potential competitors and lead the 'Libration' to its final destiny. This man is the President Isaias Afwerki, Eritrea's leader since 1991.
- 9) Result? Bloodletting, misery, Lampadusa tragedy,!!!!!!
- 10) Who benefited from this tragic experience? Egypt!

Egyptians carefully crafted their strategy, they rest assured and used Nile water lavishly and extravagantly in the middle of the Sahara Desert. Eritrean fighters effectively carried out and still are carrying out the

² In the above mentioned book, Professor Bereket describes the problems he faced in Bagdada in 1975 when he spoke Tigigna to ELF member students.

plan of Egyptians. The half century Eritrean problem made Ethiopia poor not to try harnessing its water resources. Eritrea is dismembered by force and became worse than it was 50 years back. While brothers across the Mereb River are in continuous fighting, Egyptians built the Aswan High dam and anchored their economy on a firm foundation. How intelligently Egyptians used Eritreans to weaken Ethiopia is extremely musing. Perhaps, it is the finest piece of strategic intervention by Egyptians since their independence.

Sadly, these very Egyptians and Arab Bedouin tribes devouringly harvest Organs of Eritrean migrants in the Sinnai Peninsula. Egyptians return back Eritrean asylum seekers to Asmara knowing that they will die or be thrown to the dungeons. After all Egypt benefits from Isaias not from these asylum seekers and they need to be punished. So callous! Who rescues these asylum seekers? Mother Ethiopia! Who gives free education to Eritrean asylum seekers? Only Mother Ethiopia! The Isaias killing squad sneaks into Sudan and kidnaps asylum seekers. Only Ethiopia gives them a safe heaven. Such is the reality of Ethiopia and Eritrea today.

Generally, the root causes of Eritrean's problems can be summarized as;

- 1) During the Italian/British colonial period, Eritreans learnt some craft from their masters, used forketta (fork) to eat food. Although extremely lowly and petty, some Eritreans considered themselves advanced and modern than their southern brothers in Ethiopia. Slowly, it led them to develop a sense of "superiority (?)" complex. The paradox here is that a Colonial Slave considering himself superior than his fellow brother on the other side who kept his identity intact! What a nerve!
- 2) The nation is created out of baseless fear, meaningless hatred and a mountain of lies, as Ghirmay succinctly presented it. [6]
- 3) ELF was formed, supported and guided by foreign architects with ulterior motives using self-identity denying Eritrean Students (Forged Arabs). Except for power infighting and infusion of Marxism with Arabism, EPLF is identical to its harbinger ELF. The Eritrean public was never given freedom to air views on the 'Libration'. The purpose of the public was only to serve as cannon fodder.

This sums up that Eritrea is a nation built on heap sand close the shore of troubled waters, far very far away from sound rock. It never had a promising past and will never have one in the future unless and otherwise it finds its original self. Contrary to Professor Berket's "immaculate deception" by Isaias, Eritrea's core problem starts from denying its Habesha/Ethiopian identity. It is not late to remind Eritreans this saying: "if Eritreans are not Ethiopians, who else then?"

4. Two Eritrean politicians

When one discusses Eritrean elite, two persons usually come to me. Professor Berket is one and Dr. Amare Tekle is the other. Let's make sense out of the following two expressions.

"Was Eritrea part of Ethiopia? Those who argued that Eritrea was never part of Ethiopia are either ignorant of the history of the region or simply want to revise it or, even worse, were simply invoking a milder version of Signor Mussolini's Fascist thesis about the nature of the

Ethiopian state" and regarding the union with Ethiopia he further adds that "Ethiopia should not be criticized for actions related to the dissolution of the federation".[8]

“What I should counsel to you my Ethiopian brothers and sisters is that Eritreans will feel genuine Ethiopianity only if they are treated normally, just like yourselves. Otherwise, if you try to treat people separated for a time with special treatment different from other Ethiopians—they are likely to feel more like foreigners than Ethiopians...” [3]

The first quote is taken from Dr. Amare Tekle’s Doctoral Dissertation (University of Denver, 1964). Dr Amare was commissioner of the 1993 Eritrean Referendum (aka Liberty/Slavery referendum). The second quote is of Kes Habte Sellasie Gulbert, addressing a large crowd of unionists in Cinema Adwa in Addis Ababa. Kes (Priest) Habte Sellasie is survived by his son Professor Berket.

Dr. Amare’s political acrobat and professor Berket’s departure from his father’s un-shattered Ethiopianity beliefs is intriguing!

5. The view from Ethiopia

While the Eritrean affair is undergoing the bumpy road, it is timely to forward few reflections coming from Ethiopia. The view from the Ethiopian elite can be divided into three categories. I just gave them the following names: Nationalist, Antiunion and the Ferment.

Nationalist: This group believes that the way Eritrea dissociated is not acceptable. Neither the Eritrean public nor the Ethiopian people were given the right to air their views on how to exist/co-exist. Neither both peoples freely neither discussed their future relations nor were given any attention. Even the referendum was based on an awkward manner giving two choices only: Liberty versus slavery. How can being Ethiopian equate to Eritrean slavery? The group further argues that no people in the world were given slavery as a choice and this political ploy is not the intention of the innocent people of the two sides. It was rather engineered by politicians and external forces making it unacceptable to the public. This group further argues that if Eritreans under no duress choose independence, then Sea outlet for Ethiopia should be guaranteed.

Antiunion: This group recognizes and accepts Eritrea as an independent nation. It also does not want to engulf into the myriad of problems that comes with Eritrea. In so far as possible, this group needs peaceful co-existence and when this is not possible through damage limitation exercise. Generally this group is fade up with Eritrea related problems and needs to test the untested, separation.

Ferment: this group is the silent group. Its stance is in the short-term is to keep the status quo. Proponents of this group generally agree that “let Eritreans enjoy their liberty (*Natsinet*), we are better off without them”. In the long term, this group thinks future generations of both nations (free from lies, distortions, etc) will freely discuss and decide upon their relationship. Perhaps, the group has more elite members than the other two.

Which elite opinion dominates the future remains to be seen. That being my crude assessment of the views from Ethiopia, I am of the opinion that Ethiopia and Eritrea are unable to reconcile their differences today. But surely they will do tomorrow or the day after.

6. The way out

An intricate problem (stuffed with lies, hatred, remorse, fear and what not?) is not easy to have a solution right away. But, with cool head and rational approaches, it is possible to first create conducive working atmosphere and thereafter a lasting solution. In this regard, I have the following points for normalization of cyber space and other discussions.

a. To the Eritrean elite

- i. The mountain of lies propagated in the last 50 years has brought nothing more than misery to Eritreans. It is time for Eritreans to find their true self through open and courageous discussion. Ghirmay has started it. Very precisely and professionally.
- ii. The Eritrean elite (both EPLF and ELF) have been venomous snake to Ethiopia. The elite from both groups need to show humility. If we cannot live in unity, we can at least co-exist as good neighbours.
- iii. Eritrean elite need to understand that tirades, vilification, intimidation, disparaging, belittling and so forth on Ethiopia brought no solace to the colossal frustration in Eritrea. Rather it found counterproductive to Eritreans. Better to tame this venom, cool down and think.
- iv. Eritreans should understand the meaning of neighbours. A neighbour than a relative faraway, goes on the saying. (ከሩቅ ዘመድ የቅርብ ጎረቤት). Does not require much research to understand Ethiopia is much important to Eritrea than Egypt or other Arabs across the Red Sea.
- v. Eritreans need to understand that the problems associated with Nile and the case of Arab-Israeli conflicts will be with us, perhaps for centuries to come. Instead of being surrogates to forces coming from this region, let them do their nation building at home and learn to co-exist peacefully.
- vi. Eritreans should decolonize and de-Arabize their mind. This is the key to the solution.

b. To Ethiopians

- vii. In so far as possible, Ethiopia should give unrestricted access to all asylum seekers from Eritrea. This is a very trying time in their history and we should help them on humanitarian basis. After all it is the youth that is suffering, who contributed nothing to the sordid past.
- viii. We Ethiopians shall never forget that today's asylum seekers coming to Ethiopia are our brothers and sisters, the grandchildren of those Eritreans who fought under the motto: Ethiopia or Death". History will never forgive us if we betray their grandchildren at this difficult time.
- ix. At its death bed, to garner internal support, the Isaias regime may instigate war. It may be supported by petrodollar countries for other ulterior motives. Ethiopians should cautiously follow up and respond appropriately.
- x. Ethiopian elite should show humility and refrain from offending Eritreans at this very harsh time in their history. We should rather be magnanimous to show them we are not after their failure, we benefit from peace than war. We should show them the true Ethiopian gesture, against which Eritrean elite has been perpetrating for over half a century.
- xi. Hollowed Eritrea is visibly imploding by each day. The Ethiopian government and the public should get prepared for any spillover effects. If anything natural or manmade happens to Isaias, it

will have several ramifications. There may follow internal infighting, more flow of asylum seekers, movement of arms, terrorism and similar other undesirable outcomes. Security forces should closely follow and alert the public in advance.

From the bottom of my heart, I wish the best to innocent Eritreans (the youth, children, the elderly and the victims of war)! They are punished by each day for no fault from their side.

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