

OPPOSITIONS' AND SUPPORTERS' ENDLESS SMEAR CAMPAIGNS (PART 6)

By Mathza

Most of the oppositions' leadership and their handful supporters, particularly the minuscule vociferous Diaspora, and some individuals obsessed with lust for power and hatred against Prime Minister Meles Zenawi have been and are doing anything to get rid of him, the TPLF and the EPRDF. They are intimidated and demoralized by his intelligence, capability, competence and the respect he commands in the international community. Their hatred is limitless. In their obsession and desperation to snatch power, they have crossed the line of treason by compromising and endangering the sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and national interests of Ethiopia. The following are examples supporting this statement:

They condemn Ethiopia's defense against jihadists;

They praise, congratulate, defend, encourage and support—instead of denouncing—the atrocities committed by separatists and jihadists;

They condemn Ethiopia's reaction to such atrocities;

They collaborate and scheme with the Eritrean government which has been and is trying hard to destabilize and disintegrate Ethiopia;

They belittle EPRDF's sound government policies and strategies, which have proved successful;

They deny and ridicule the double-digit economic growth, a remarkable progress and performance in socio-economic development in the last five years; and

They unashamedly accuse the Prime Minister of being a stooge of developed countries because of, among others, his success to mobilize foreign assistance (For example: by not giving in to pressure from such countries to allow foreign banks to operate in Ethiopia he not only shielded the development of local banks but also saved the country from the devastating impact of the current global financial crisis).

In short, these hate-mongers and anti-Ethiopia elements do not care at all about Ethiopia and Ethiopians. Their only desire is to be in power by any means—in the driver's seat—without any concern on how that might impact Ethiopia and its people, enie kemoṭku serdo aybqel.

One of their tactics is a negative smear campaign portraying the country's image and, in particular, it's dedicated Prime Minister with all kinds of monstrous adjectives and pictures. Among the methods used include politicizing everything, outrageous allegations, lies, exaggerations, wild generalizations, spinning, misinterpretation and spreading rumors. Practically all of the writings of these-diehard are replete of despicable descriptions and character assassinations, all intended purely to bring down the government. This writing ferrets out examples of statements that do not make any sense, are illogical, are concocted, or are not supported by facts—purely intended to misinform and mislead readers, particularly the Diaspora silent majority. It is a modest attempt to expose those bigots who have been hoodwinking and continue to hoodwink the Ethiopians and the international community. (In

the future, there will be a series of matrixes like the one below, each preceded by the current two paragraphs).

Title/Source/Date	Author's Statement	My Comments
<p>1. Video: TPDM fighters in action, ethiopianreview.com, December 30th, 2008</p>		<p>The title is a misnomer. The video is 30% on Tigray People Democratic Movement (TPDM) and 60% on interview of four Ethiopians. It was aired on Eri-TV. Those of us who have, thanks to the former Eritrean newscaster who appeared on ETV last year, know how propaganda materials and videos against the Ethiopian government are fabricated and orchestrated in Asmara and broadcasted on Eri-TV.</p> <p>One of the interviewees, Judge Teshale Abera, must have pleased his Eritrean patrons. He made use of languages (music to his patrons' ears) the Eritrean officials and media use to bash the TPLF and would like to see and hear others repeating them.</p> <p>There is a cartoon showing Meles, the boxer, on the floor of the boxing ring saying "<i>I am done</i>" and George Bush asking mn inrdah? Although not shown in the cartoon one could assume that the winning boxer was Issayas. From what we have been witnessing since the decisive Ethiopian victory in 2000 up to most recent turn of events in Somalia the boxer on the floor should have been Issayas, not Meles. One cannot expect this from Elias, a robot programmed to concoct lies and incredible innuendos, exaggerations, etc.</p>

2. ***Ethiopian Review's "The 2008 Person of the Year"***, ethiopianreview.com, January 1st, 2009

The person [selected President Issaias Afeworki] ... is * believed to have contributed the most to the betterment of Ethiopian in the past 12 months ...

* leading and putting the resources of his government * opened up its doors to Ethiopians who are fleeing Meles

* Freedom fighters such as EPPF, OLF, ONLF, TPDM and others are given shelters

* humiliating defeat of Woyanne in Somalia — brilliantly masterminded by Issayas Afeworki.

Some of the criteria for the choice of dictator Issayas Afeworki as “The 2008 person of the year” are listed on the left column. We are told that the choice was made “*in consultation with associates and readers of the journal.*” This is another joke by banda Elias. I wonder if persons other than him were involved in the nomination and final decision. If there were why are their number and names not revealed as is done in a process like this? There is no doubt that the selection was at most done by a handful of his cohorts, if not by himself alone.

The first criteria, Issayas’s contribution to the betterment of the Ethiopian people is despicable. How can Issayas who squandered so much trust and good will of his people be good for Ethiopians? Elias is out of his mind to even think let alone choose Issayas, the despot and Ethiopia’s number one enemy. Issayas is the architect who is designing and working hard and squandering resources of his poor country to dismantle Ethiopia with the intent of benefiting from the resulting tiny states. In view of these and many others not mentioned here Elias must be crazy to even dream of declaring Issayas "The 2008 Person of the Year."

With respect to the last criteria, I thank Elias for inadvertently confirming President Issayas’s involvement in creating and sustaining havoc in Somalia. The world knows that Elias’s idol has been denying this. As for defeat, the Ethiopian government pulled out of Somalia following the Djibouti agreement which put the departure of the Ethiopian Defense Forces as a precondition for the implementation of the Djibouti agreement and reconciliation and Ethiopia obliged for the good of the long suffering people of Somalia. It should be recalled that Ethiopia went to Somalia at the invitation of the Somali government as well as to take timely pre-emptive measures to threats and declaration of jihad by the radical Islamists and their Al-Qaeda cohorts.

The “clear and present danger” is no longer there as the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) was defeated and driven out of power. After the

<p>3. Birtukan or the appeal of the heroine, by Messay Kebede, ethiomeia.com, January 4, 2009</p>	<p>We all wonder why Ethiopians remain so passive when the consequences of the Woyanne policy have such disastrous impacts on their daily life. We all expect the people to rise up and oppose continuous resistance.</p> <p>But no conciliatory effort is likely to succeed if the Woyanne government is not pressured to compromise by means of sustained and wide protest. In particular, the Tigrean community can play a decisive role by openly showing its disagreement over the imprisonment of a leader whose commitment to democracy and peaceful struggle can hardly be doubted.</p>	<p>There goes another professor! The simple answer to his pleading question is there is no need for the majority of the people to rise up. Why rise up when they see on a daily basis development and improvement in progress. They know who and what is good for them. They have, with time, come to realize more and more that the EPRDF genuinely works to improve their standard of living. They know that the EPRDF's priority is to eradicate poverty and working hard at it.</p> <p>They know the oppositions' and their cohorts' tactics of misinforming and inciting the people to achieve the formers' obsessive ambitions of being at the helm. They have, in the last few years, observed the oppositions' true nature, including cut throat competition for leadership, resulting in many splinter groups. They know the oppositions and their supporters preach democracy but do not practice it; the oppositions cannot therefore claim to be more democratic than the EPRDF.</p> <p>They know many of them encourage and support separatists and enemies of the country. They know they are empty barrels. In short, they know most of them are obsessed by sheer aspiration and hunger for power and would do anything to get rid of EPRDF. Toommaa Hamma's article is relevant supporting the above assertions: http://nazret.com/blog/index.php?blog=15&title=ethiopia_how_dictator_is_dictator_meles_&more=1&c=1&tb=1&pb=1.</p> <p>What is behind calling on the Tigrayan community to play a decisive role? The writer's naive call implies Tigrayans can pressure the government to compromise. This means that decisions are made by Tigrayans alone. In other words, he is harping on the absurd Tigrayan government mantra. His racist agenda, obviously, is to create a wedge between the Tigrayans and the rest of Ethiopians, a devilish idea.</p>
<p>4. U.S. investor believes Ethiopia likely</p>	<p>EDITOR'S NOTE: U.S. investors don't need to tell us that. The plan to break up</p>	<p>"US investor buys Sudanese warlord's land" is the original title in Financial Times. The doomsayer ER publisher converted it to "U.S. investor believes Ethiopia likely to break</p>

to break apart soon,
ethiopianreview.com, by Javier Blas and William Wallis, January 10th, 2009

Ethiopia into 9 small countries has been in the works for a while. It is clearly stated in TPLF's manifesto that calls for the creation of Greater Tigray. To prevent that from happening, every Ethiopian must rally around resistance groups that stand for united Ethiopia, such as EPPF and Ginbot 7.

Mr. Heilberg is unconcerned. He believes that several African states, Sudan included, but possibly also Nigeria, Ethiopia and Somalia, are likely to break apart in the next few years, and that the political and legal risks he is taking will be amply rewarded.

apart soon.” The article is on the Sudan, not on Ethiopia. The only place Ethiopia is mentioned is on the second paragraph on the middle column.

How credible is **Mr. Philippe Heilberg who bought land from a warlord in Southern Sudan which** awaits referendum in 2011 to decide between independence and joining the ruling party to form a government of national unity. **His purchase of the land for speculation in Unity state is, apparently, based on the hope of the breakup of the Sudan. He is sure he “will be amply rewarded.” Is it possible that he or other investors will end up with no access to water because of the pending redistribution of the Nile waters. With respect to Ethiopia, his prediction is based on his contact with** dissidents in Ethiopia. What else would he expect to hear from dissidents! They would not reveal or admit to him that the country is more united than ever under an ethnically based federal system which is supported by 80 ethnic groups. His theory of break apart is even worse than his highly speculative venture.

There is no need for EPPF, Ginbot 7 and others to shed blood causing heavy human sufferings and sacrifices and destruction of property. The institution of federal system of government is what saved the country from dismemberment like that of former Yugoslavia and this system—whether one likes or not—is what will ensure the security and territorial integrity of the country. Can the editor cite concrete evidence that supports his and his likes lies that Tigray will break up to form the so-called “Greater Tigray”? Like those who have been repeating this monotonous allegation he has no shred of evidence. Anyway what territories should complement to make present day Tigray “Greater Tigray” now that the other Tigrigna speaking people are part of Eritrea?

5. *Nothing more than a common thief,*
by Yilma Bekele,
ethiopianreview.com, January 13th, 2009

So when we read the Indian Ocean Newsletter report ... Where exactly does it say that thousands died so a few can accumulate obscene amount of **wealth**?... fattening one's **bank account**?... ...have secret bank account in all four corners of the world?...those who use State power to rob and steal, at the end of the day 'you are nothing but a common thief'

The article is based on the Indian Ocean Newsletter report ('Dignitaries in Business.' N° 1253 10/01/2009). Many of us may have good impression of the Indian Ocean Newsletter as a reliable source of information. From personal experience I know this is not true.

"A 36-page article written under the pen name "Mathza," a pseudonym widely believed in Ethiopia to be used by Meles ..." was fabricated by Finote Radio and ethiomeia.com following my article in 2004, OPPOSITIONS DURING EPRDF ETHIOPIA. The above culprits succeeded in making The Indian Ocean Newsletter (ION) and others echo their absurd allegation. This, in effect, made the ION accessory in fulfilling their objective of misinforming the public.

I suspect that the ION is a victim of its sources (oppositions, their affiliates and individuals) that carry out campaigns of misinformation. The fact that the officials targeted are practically from one ethnic group says it all, i.e., some of its sources are purposely misinforming it in order to achieve their objective of toppling the government. Readers may have also observed the ION's use of language utilized by oppositions that no other foreign media use. Does not this support my suspicion as to who the informers are?

6. ***Ethiopians in DC demand freedom for political prisoners,***
ethiopianreview.com, January 14th, 2009

Addis Dimts Radio reports that some 500 Ethiopians participated in today's Washington DC rally.

The considerable effort put on organizing the much publicized great demonstrations finally took place as planned on January 14, 2009 in cities in the U.S., Canada and Europe. The number of demonstrators in Washington DC, according to Addis Dimts Radio, was 500. In the words of one of the demonstrators the number was expressed as “bemetowoch yemiqoteru Etiopiawian.” From past experience numbers are always exaggerated by up to ten fold. In other words, the actual numbers are probably one-tenth of the claimed numbers. As per VOA (1/16/09) there are 250,000-300,000 Ethiopians in the Washington DC area. Based on the average of this range the highly exaggerated 500 works out to 0.18%. One-tenth of this, i.e. equivalent to 0.018%, seems to be more realistic from the picture included with the article and confirmed by Wondu Assefa in his “*Ye-alem aqef self drama gmgema*” (ethiotion.com, 1/19/09). These obviously show the miniscule but vocal group have no support nor represent the Diaspora Ethiopians in the US. One would have expected a similar situation in Europe. Although no figures were cited one of the participants in Brussels was heard saying “*betam egig bzu sewoch qutr yalew etiopiawi new yetegegnew.*” (VOA)

Examples of ludicrous statements purported to have been made by government officials of the countries where rallies were held:
1-Seattle “...*Representatives of Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell, who assured the activists...their respective offices would make sure the rule of law and democracy are respected in the country [Ethiopia].*” (Ethiomeia.com)
2- Brussels...the European Union Parliament “*zare ende agenda yeyazew keгна selamawi self bewhala endehone new yenegerun.*” (VOA) Does this mean that the member(s) of the European Parliament listened what the demonstrators had to say, went back to the Parliament, conducted consultaion with colleauges and returned to the scene of demonstration to make the above statement?

7. President Isaias' Interview with the National Media Regarding National, Regional and Global Issues - Part II, shabait.com, Jan 17, 2009, 14:35

...The ruling clique [TPLF?] has not been able to bring about economic or social change even within their own place of origin...

...What do the development projects in different regions look like? Some regions, including those in dire need of governmental intervention have never received any attention. For instance, even with their vast and fertile lands the Oromo people's participation in the country's economy is almost nonexistent...

Whatever problem the region is facing, the TPLF regime will accuse Shaebia or the Eritrean government as if they were the 'cause' for that.

Readers may wonder why I included President Isaias in this reporting which targets oppositions and their supporters. As we all know the President manipulates Ethiopian oppositions: organizes, nurtures, trains, equips, instructs and even imprisons them. This makes him the mother of all oppositions.

The president is obsessed with destroying the TPLF. I do not think a day passes without he mentioning TPLF in negative terms. About 50% (7 of 14 pages) of Part II of the interview is devoted to bashing the TPLF. The remaining part is replete with references to TPLF and Ethiopia. TPLF is mentioned 113 times. There are many reasons for his hate of TPLF (see http://www.ethiolion.com/article/020709_The_Referendum_That_Never_Was.html, ethiolion.com, 2/8/09). One of them is the fast industrial development in Ethiopia, particularly in Tigray. Issayas became infuriated and desperate when he saw industries cropping up in Ethiopia, particularly in Tigray where previously there was none, soon after the fall of the Derg.

His unrealistic vision and dream to make Eritrea an industrial power (the Singapore of Africa) using Ethiopian raw materials and exporting industrial goods to Ethiopia—a tradition based on Italian factories established to facilitate the invasion of Ethiopia—evaporated into thin air. He blamed and hated the TPLF for this and hence the main reason why he and his cohorts day in day out condemn the TPLF. His realization of the loss of his fantasy of influence over Ethiopia drove him crazy. This was so painful to his ego that he sailed on an impossible and suicidal mission, invading Ethiopia.

With respect to lack of economic or social change and some regions not receiving governmental interventions in Ethiopia—including the Oromia State where most development is taking place—the answer is the President simply lied. Suffice it to draw his attention to the fact that donors and international institutions and recently The Economist have been testifying the impressive

<p>8. <i>President of Ethiopia's Benishangul-Gumuz region defected</i>, ethiopianreview.com, January 17th, 2009</p>	<p>President of Ethiopia's Benishangul-Gumuz region, Ato Yaregal Aysheshum, has defected and joined the opposition camp earlier this month.</p> <p>Ginbot 7 officials facilitated his trip to Uganda where they took him [to] the office of the UNHCR's director.</p>	<p>Ato Yaregal's reply: "<i>I am not the kind of person who desert[s] his country nor do I have a reason to do so.</i>" Apparently, the lie was manufactured by the so-called Ethiopian Review Intelligence Unit. Currently Ato Yaregal is back home and performing his new official function. In his "Former Benishangul president is still a whore" (ethiopianreview.com, January 19th, 2009) Elias showed how disappointed and frustrated he was to learn Ato Yaregal has denied defection. The latter called the former's lie "bere woleda."</p>
<p>9. <i>Close Ranks, Open Hearts and Minds, Shake Hands and Get Busy!</i> by Alemayehu G. Mariam, ethiomediam.com, January 19, 2009</p>	<p>...pro-democracy Ethiopians in the Diaspora have remained organizationally fragmented, politically divided and remain incapable of working collaboratively with each other...</p> <p>...Because we have been unable to learn from our past mistakes, make corrections and come to a collective resolution on an action plan to help overcome the challenges facing the Motherland, we find ourselves in a state of political paralysis. Because we have been locked into a zero-sum game where only one side wins and the other sides always loses, we</p>	<p>The writer laments on lack of cooperation among the Ethiopian Diaspora to get rid of the current government of Ethiopia. It appeals to the Diaspora to transform this lose-lose situation into a win-win situation. How is it to be achieved when the miniscule vocal Diaspora has no backing from the Diaspora. It has been proven time and again that they do not have the support of the Ethiopian Diaspora. Based on the number participating in demonstrations they represent less than one-tenth of 1% of the Ethiopian Diaspora in the US (see # 6 above).</p>

	find ourselves in an endless loop of lose-lose outcomes...	
10. David and Goliath reversed, by Yilma Bekele, ethiomeia.com, January 24, 2009	The cadres cannot even leave the palace with out armored vehicles, Federal Police protection and citizens not allowed to venture out until they pass. The regime is afraid of its own citizen. The regime is terrified that the people will do it what it did to them.	<p>This is the latest of the many none senses said and told many and at different times. The only difference here is this time the targets are cadres whatever and whoever they are. It is not clear to whom the writer is referring. Can one imagine or has one seen so many cadres criss-crossing Addis escorted by armored vehicles?</p> <p>Many writers have been challenging the Prime Minister to move around without security escort. They think he would be foolish enough to expose himself so that their dream of bringing him harm will come true, childish plots. The other reason is to mislead readers to think that the Prime Minister has no courage and therefore he is not does not deserve to lead the country. This is an appeal to egoistic traditional thinking of valor.</p> <p>Where on earth does a Head of State or a Prime Minister moves around without security protection? Those Diaspora Ethiopians who are behind the challenges and have witnessed — personally or through the TVs—very well know what happens when the US President is on the road or flying. I do not doubt their knowledge about extensive advanced preparations on the way and at the destination made before the President leaves the White House and on his way back.</p>