

OPPOSITIONS' AND SUPPORTERS' ENDLESS SMEAR CAMPAIGNS

PART 4

By Mathza Jan 06, 2009

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 diehards 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 data-bbox="235 300 456 730"> <i>1. THE LINK BETWEEN ETHNO-CENTRIC MINORITY RULE AND CORRUPTION; THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA</i> Professor Seid Hassan, Ethiolion.com, <i>November 24, 2008</i> </p>	<p data-bbox="487 300 753 762"> ...Those of us, who know the level of misery in each village of the country, albeit the EPRDF's lies of continuous double-digit economic growth, know and strongly believe that Ethiopia is on the brink of catastrophe, albeit slowly but surely, that we have never seen before... </p>	<p data-bbox="776 300 1383 1465"> Practically each paragraph of the Professor's article is loaded with numerous lies, exaggerations and hearsays which essentially question his credibility. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to comment on each and every statement. The sentence under the middle column, a part of one of the paragraphs, is therefore, meant to serve as an example. Despite the fact that the IMF, the World Bank, donors, etc., have repeatedly confirmed and hailed the double-digit rate of economic growth, the Professor and his likes go on relentlessly repeating the same song ad infinitum. They give the impression that they know better than these institutions and donors who, because of their collaboration and dealings with the government and monitoring the uses of their aids, are in positions to know what goes on. Contrary to the professor's doomsday prediction, Ethiopia, based on what has been done, is being done and is planned to be done is on the right track to realize its objectives of enabling more and more citizens attain the level of standard of living which has already been achieved by a segment of the population in the last five years. The only mitigating factor is the uncertainty of the global crisis, the extent that the crisis will negatively impact developing countries, including Ethiopia. The most recent Economist Intelligence Unit's "Ethiopia 4th Fastest Growing Economy in the World in 09" obliterates the doomsday prediction of the good professor. This shows that the Professor and his likes, who are supposed to know better but manipulate facts, have been and are trying to discredit the government by pretending that development can be achieved overnight, a delirium, particularly coming from economists. </p>

<p>2. Televised debate: ER vs. Mebt Radio, Ethiopian Review Online, Ethiopian Television Network (ETN), November 29th, 2008</p>	<p>[Ato Gizaw Legesse’s, the program host of Ethiopian Television Network's (ETN), interview with Ethiopian Review publisher Elias Kifle—The debate was changed to an interview as Ato Meshesha Biru was not available.]</p>	<p>The interview exposed the true nature of Elias. It was indeed sad to listen to his ranting during the interview. The swindler (achberbari), like his friend President Isayas Afeworki of Eritrea, has no qualms in blabbing and evading questions. Examples of his babbling replies include: armed struggle is necessary because Ana Gomez (the pal and ally of Behanu of Ginbot 7) believes so; Al Amoudin investment consists solely of loans from local banks (ignoring his over \$ 1 billion investment); and Meles Zenawi has a Yemeni passport, not an Ethiopian passport. I raise my hat to Ato Gizaw for trying to extract in vain sensible replies through follow-up questions, an impossibility from a liar who is obsessed and convinced he is a semi-God, omniscient and infallible. When Ato Gizaw challenged him a number of times that he had no evidence to support his assertions and replies the pathological liar would, unhesitatingly, say he has. The tone and body language of Ato Gizaw were indications that he was far from satisfied by many of the replies and arguments.</p>
<p>3. Analyst Not Surprised by Ethiopia's Troop Pull Out From Somalia, by James Batty, VOA, Ethiolion.com, 01 December 2008</p>	<p>“First of all, the Ethiopian government sent troops into Somalia without any debate and discourse within Ethiopia, specifically in the parliament...”</p> <p>“The parliament discussed it but not very seriously. The opposition groups in the parliament were opposed to the idea of sending troops to Somalia. About three opposition parties ... did not see the wisdom of sending the troops,” Metaferia said.</p>	<p>As the two paragraphs on the middle column glaringly show the interviewee, Getachew Metaferia, contradicted himself. I myself have witnessed the parliamentary debate via the internet.</p> <p>As we all know, in any parliament decisions are made by majority vote. This is exactly what happened in the case of sending troops to Somalia, the majority the House of Representatives (HoR) voting in favor. Note that not all opposition groups in the parliament were opposed to sending troops to Somalia; UEDP-Medhin supported it.</p>

<p>4. Window Dressing the Star Chamber, by Alemayehu G. Mariam, Ethiopian Review, December 1st, 2008</p>	<p>It is difficult to characterize the National Judicial Institute (NJI) of Canada report as hogwash or whitewash. More likely, it is both.</p>	<p>I give credit to the author for quoting statements from the National Judicial Institute (NJI) of Canada report on the “Independence, Transparency and Accountability in the Judiciary of Ethiopia.” These statements detail success stories in the Ethiopian judiciary system brought about by the EPRDF. However, he quotes extensively laws and cases in Canada and the U.S.A. to refute the report. In other words, he does not accept the report simply because the judiciary system in Ethiopia is not at par with those in Canada and the U.S.A. To him and his likes whatever is done in Ethiopia has to meet standards of the developed world. This is the basis for most of their criticism on human rights, administration, politics, etc. They compare Ethiopia with other African countries which inherited modern governmental institutions and social and physical infrastructures. All these countries had to do was to maintain and improve the system of governance. Unlike their African brothers and sisters Ethiopians, lacking exposure to modern thinking and concept, had to go through a process of evolution from feudal and communist systems to the present one. It is abundantly clear that the process of democratization in the absence of any democratic political culture is fraught with all kinds of difficulties: obstructions, complexities, complications, political conflicts <u>and</u> cultural and traditional stumbling blocks. These, among others, are very well known but purposely ignored by him and his likes.</p> <p>He also dismisses an official report on riot control entitled “Modernizing Internal Security in Ethiopia” by saying it “was supposed to paint a kinder and gentler face for the Zenawi regime.” That report was prepared by a retired British Colonel Michael Dewars, an independent consultant.</p>
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<p>5. Ethiopia: Flower export doubles, while people starve, Ethiopian Review Online, December 1st, 2008</p>		<p>The rascal, treasonous and seditious Elias Kifle changed the Reuters title of the article “Ethiopia seen doubling '08 flower export income” to “Ethiopia: Flower export doubles, while people starve.” This way he could, unfortunately, fool readers who had not had access to the original article to believing that the development of the flower industry has contributed to shortage of foodstuff in the country. Readers who are familiar with the use of green houses to grow commercial flowers know the area under flower cultivation is so minute that its impact on the production of foodstuff is negligible.</p>
<p>6. Op Ed: Dancing with the Devil!, by Tedla Asfaw, Ethiopian Review Online, December 3rd, 2008</p>	<p>For the question of responsibility for the destruction of Kinijit, Judge Birtukan put the blame more on the leadership of Kinijit than the TPLF...</p> <p>If we take Judge Birtukan Medekisa assertions of failed leadership seriously... It is very hard to prove or disprove Judge Birtukan on who is responsible for destruction of Kinijit among these leaders of Kinijit because our people are not allowed to speak and gather freely.</p>	<p>Countering Judge Birtukan’s assertion by giving the excuse that the “people are not allowed to speak and gather freely” is both flimsy and outrageous. What has such an excuse got to do with the intrigues of the power hungry leaders to outmaneuver one another to be at the helm? As we all know much has been said and written on Kinijit’s leadership responsibility for the demise of Kinijit.</p> <p>In all honesty how can one say “our people are not allowed to speak and gather freely”? We know there are many independent newspapers and magazines as well as radio stations operating in Ethiopia. The mere fact that oppositions and their supporters use the media, including their own, to denigrate, discredit and character assassinate government officials, deny the achievements of the government, create obstructions to development, incite violence, support separatists and external enemies (Eritrea in particular), etc. prove they are simply liars. There is, however, no denying that media owners and editors have been held responsible for misinforming and misguiding the public (printing materials not supported by facts, fabricating materials in order to incite people and create chaos, writing materials detrimental to ethnic and religious harmony, etc.). The government has the responsibility to protect the people and the country from such harmful reporting. The editor and his likes would surely accuse the government, if as a result of such reporting, lives were lost and property destroyed as happened in 2005 or chaos reigned in the country leading to the demise of Ethiopia as such.</p> <p>It is a known fact that the Diaspora Ethiopians and</p>

		<p>Ethiopians in Ethiopia who write all kinds of damaging statements, articles, commentaries, editorials, etc on the government and its officials and against the interest of the country; side, support, conspire and cooperate with separatists and foreign enemies; and demonstrate and appeal for foreign interventions have no problems entering and leaving Ethiopia. If the writer himself has not visited Ethiopia it is probably because he mistakenly thinks, as many of his likes do, that he would be exposed to danger. Can he name a single Diaspora Ethiopian he knows who has had politically motivated experience while visiting his homeland? Most probably none.</p>
<p>7. Teddy is in jail but his spirit is free, by Prof. Alemayehu, ethiomeia.com (Reposted December 6, 2008)</p>	<p>“...I predicted long ago that he [Teddy] would be “convicted.” Logically, Zenawi had no choice but to convict him. After all, Teddy is the ultimate musical symbol of Ethiopian unity. His songs foster Ethiopian unity and reconciliation. His music was a bridge -- an arch -- across ethnic and religious lines.</p>	<p>‘Ethiopian unity’ is another trite daily repetition. Who said Ethiopia is not united? It is united more than ever. Apparently, it is not for the chauvinistic Professor and his hardliner likes who deny such a naked truth. As I said a number of times before, on the contrary EPRDF saved Ethiopia from disintegration; freed the people from oppression and being governed against their will; and united the country based on the free will of the people. In the federal system nations and nationalities under each state are governing themselves down to the Kebele level using their own respective languages. There is no discriminatory practices along ethnic or religious lines as the likes of the Professor would have us believe and there is, therefore, no relevance for Teddy’s ethnic and religious bridge. The enthusiasm with which the nations', nationalities' and peoples' day is celebrated shows how the nations and nationalities are savoring their renaissance since EPRDF’s victorious entry of Addis Ababa. With respect to religion, the acknowledgements made by foreign Moslems during the past and recent Eid al-Adha and other Islamic celebrations testify religious freedom and tolerance in the country.</p> <p>Any attempt to go back to the unitary government system—the dream of those who want to restore their hegemony over the oppressed, now freed, nations and nationalities—would, in the extreme and unlikely possibility of attempts to usurp power, be resisted by the nations and nationalities. If such reckless action leads to a Somali type situation it would be the responsibility of his and his likes. By the way, it is worth quoting here Ababiya Abajobir, a founding-member of the OLF. In an</p>

	<p>economic activities, the unplanned nature of the economic policy, and the lack of principles, from which all social, economic and cultural setups are drawn, proves that the regime does not know how it could organize the entire society.</p> <p>...it is practically impossible that without technology there is no genuine economic development</p> <p>Hence forth, this writer takes the courageous path to show that without a science driven technological development, no economic and social development is possible.</p>	<p>writer intentionally forgot, the government has been encouraging young Ethiopians with R&D projects relevant to the country by providing them with funds. There is, therefore, no need to blow his trumpet he "...takes the courageous path..." His writing is typical of many writers who kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, to the innocent readers they appear to be knowledgeable and therefore commanding respect. On the other hand, they intend to show that the government does nothing or is doing the wrong thing. They have the audacity not to acknowledge government activities in the subject of their writings and to come up with recommendations on what the government should do when it has already done or is doing it. I have practically not seen any new and relevant recommendations that the government is not engaged in.</p>
<p>10. An Appeal to fellow Ethiopians to cancel their holiday travel to Ethiopia 120808, ethiolion.com</p>	<p>...Moreover, the ruling group controls over \$25 billion in official development assistance that Ethiopia has received in the last seventeen years.</p> <p>Yet, there is very little to show for all that money. In fact, Ethiopia under Meles Zenawi has gone from the frying pan into the fire. Malaria, once contained to a few lowland areas, has now spread to 80% of the country</p>	<p>Leaving aside the reliability of the \$25 billion, the denial of remarkable development against all odds attested by development partners (donor countries, International institutions, NGOs, etc.) is mind boggling. How come donors continue to give Ethiopia increasing aid. Contrary to the editor's assertion, the control of malaria is a success story. Control and use of bed nets have brought about huge relief to and drastic reduction in incidence in malaria areas which could have slightly increased in size because of climatic change (a phenomena common to many countries), not the highly exaggerated 80% of the country. The rest is the usual litany of repetitive listing, many of them lies, exaggerations, etc. of alleges of EPRDF's failures, wrongdoings, etc., deserving no wasting of the readers' time.</p> <p>Of course, there is plenty to show that the country has made progress in development and is on the right track. What more can there be to attest this</p>

		<p>fact than the most recent Economist Intelligence Unit's "Ethiopia 4th Fastest Growing Economy in the World in 09"?</p> <p>The call for canceling travel to Ethiopia will, as usual, be unheeded and futile. The Diaspora, with the few exception of the minority hardliners and those who have reason will definitely face the law for wrongdoings, do not believe in this non sense.</p>
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PART 3: http://www.aigaforum.com/articles/smear_campaign_part3.pdf