**ETHNIC ADMNISTRATION CORRUPTION, MILLIONARIES & THE UPCOMING ELECTION IN ETHIOPIA = FAILED STATE.**

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**PART NINE**

Ethiopia is ruled by an ethnic minority leaders and the leaders of the regions are under the control of the ruling ethnic minority-- the Tigreyans. This method of rule completely negates the notion of building cohesive nation. Many scholars have voiced their concern fiercely saying that its application in any society is divisive as it structures society along ethnic groups, often leading into ethnic violence. It puts sole responsibility of the countries assets in the hands of few ethnic elites, it encourages favoritism giving much leverage to blood relations based on ethnicity, which directly or indirectly encourages corruption on a grand scale creating millionaires at the expense of the average person. In short any ethnic administration be it in Ethiopia or any other African countries becomes an affront to society, hindering progress in any country and any nation that exercises the perception of ethnic administration ends up becoming another failed state.

According to Ethiomedia the Tigreyan governance of Ethiopia has created business firms known as the Endowment Fund For the Rehabilitation of Tigrai. (Effort) Consequently these business corporations started with nothing and now they have amassed a wealth of about $ 4 billion assets. If this is true then those who own these businesses must have made their millions via privatization, the selling of public assets to foreign companies or via corruption. What is happening in some parts of Ethiopia at present is that government officials have been evicting indigenous people from their birth places by grabbing their land in the name of investment and economic development. The Mail on Sunday March 30th 2014 by Ian Birrel said that in November 2011 Ethiopian troops accompanied by officials arrived in one of the village in Ethiopia called Gambella and ordered every one in the village to leave for new location. Those who refused were beaten, women raped, some even infected with HIV, devastating the lives of some of worlds poorest people. Their lands has been sold to foreign investors or given to high Ethiopians officials with government connection. As for those Ethiopians who lost their ancestral lands to make ways for corrupt officials or millionaires will not sleep until they get their land back or they will rebel against the central government until justice is done. Therefore even if the ethnic rulers of Ethiopia want to forget the havoc and mayhem they have unleashed on the people of Gambella, the fight goes on because the fact of the matter is that for those who become victims of the ethnic administration will never forget on the tragedy that has befallen on them and their fight will go on regardless until they get justice.

In fact the fight has already started, that the people of Gambella blamed countries like Britain America and European Union collectively for providing Ethiopia with almost half of its federal budget amounting about $ 3 billion each year in various aid packages. That is European and the American governments know pretty well that the Ethiopian government has been misusing the money it receives from these countries to destroy the lives of other people in the name of economic development. But experience tells us western countries would not care much so long as their interest is not harmed. In other words we all know that these countries will keep turning a blind eye regardless to what happen to the people of Gambella or the rest of Ethiopia so long as their interest comes first. The Donner's pretty well know that such financial aid given to Ethiopian Officials has been abused by the authorities to drive their people out of their ancestral land. In any case an individual from Gambella has taken the British Government to Court here in the UK and if the courts find in favor of the people of Gambella then it will have sever repercussion on the financial aid that the British Government donates to Ethiopia.

Similarly in another newspaper, the Guardian on Thursday 5th December 2013, David Smith reported that the suffering of the people of Gambella was beyond belief, because they were driven out brutally by force from their ancestral land in order to make way for Multinational companies. Human right watchdogs have also voiced similar concern stating that strong arm tactic reminiscent of Apartheid South Africa was used to drive thousands of people who have been moved against their will to inadequate places where social amenities are not available. In another twist one can see that some Ethiopian officials are becoming millionaires because the country is registering fast economic growth of single digit of about 8.5%. The Guardian also told us that while admiring the economic improvement in the country its fast economic growth has yielded results that, the number of Dollar millionaires in Ethiopia has rose from 1,300 in 2007 to 2,700 by September 2013 and perhaps by now around 3,000. The increase in the number of millionaires, we are told, is associated with the economic growth of the country.

Yet the Journalist said, Ethiopia's per capital income per head is just $ 470 as compared with $3,187 for Egyptians and around $7,000 for South Africans. It is true since the Tigreyan government came to power they have scored positive economic development. Thus it can clearly be argued that while Ethiopia may have made remarkable economic progress, it has not trickled down to the general population. What matters to ordinary Ethiopian is whether they have food on the table or whether they can work on their land and make a living from it. Then one can say that the economic change is benefiting the whole of Ethiopia. However it is no good to say that there is economic growth of more than 8% when you have more than 100,000 young people roaming around the capital in search of food and twice that number who are destitute.

This is a clear manifestation that Ethiopia is still unable to feed its people regardless of its economic growth. What matters to people, be it in Ethiopia, India or Congo is that, economic growth of any country should benefit everyone. If however you have a wealthy minority and a hungry majority like in Ethiopia, then the economic growth is not benefiting the majority of the people. Here in the UK, we have economic growth of about 1% but ti is not felt by ordinary people. The cost of living has shot up, utility bills are extremely high and some elderly people are in what is called here in UK “Fuel poverty meaning that they can not afford to warm up their houses during winter time. This has lead to a number of deaths and the government responded with the “winter fuel allowance of about & 200 payment to each elderly person of pension age or & 300 to a couple per year if living together to help them pay to heat their houses in the winter but to some it may not be enough. Note I am not trying to compare Britain with so many people that go hungry in Ethiopia. The UK is a sophisticated developed nation, the standard of living is very high and those on low Income can be supported financial by the welfare system, so no one goes hungry. Nonetheless the standard of living for those on lower income is still very low, the Guardian 22 April 2014 said that a record number of 1 million people including a rising number of low paid workers have used Food Banks in the past 12 months.

By the way, Food Banks are a kind of shops managed by Volunteers and provide free food to people on low income for free. The free food in the Food Banks are donated by well wishers, churches, businesses organizations, individuals and Supermarkets. There are about 500 Food Banks opened in in the United Kingdom in the last five years. Yet the UK is the 6th largest economy in the World. Nevertheless the economic growth that has been registered in the country was not shared by those who are on low income or those who do not have stable job like the million and half workers who are now working on what is called Zero hour contracts. Zero hour contract work is a form of employment offered to workers when work is available. What it does is it means you are on telephone standby and if the employer needs you he or she will call you. If there is no job you will have no job at all. It is not guaranteed job because it does not have any security for full time job. However for students it is OK for short period of time because they can work if they want to or carry on with their studies. Nevertheless it is hard to call the economic growth as positive, when those on lower income are left out because it has not been translated to the rest of the population. As in the case of Ethiopia the economic development registered is a welcome improvement, nonetheless so long as there are children and hungry mouths roaming the streets of Ethiopia, I would not call it economic growth or miracle. On the contrary I call it mirage.

As for the upcoming 2015 election in Ethiopia, the minority government will win it by hook or crook. As a matter of fact the European Union is not be sending their independent observers as they are pretty aware that this election like past elections in Ethiopia will not be fair and free. What is very strange about this election is that, the Tigreyan Minority have deliberately decided to hold its phoney election on the 24th of May 2014 Eritrean Independence day. I can only suspect their sheer envy of Eritrean independence or perhaps they do not want the people of Ethiopia to see happy Eritreans dancing in their country and abroad. To me it looks like political folly as the minority government consider us (Eritreans) as their arch enemy, but we do not see it that way. On the contrary the people of Ethiopia especially the people of Tigrai are our natural allies and when the present Tigrean leadership changes its views on Eritrea or vanishes from power, we will be able to celebrate each others independence with great respect and fanfare. Presently however the leadership in Ethiopia seems to be determined in using the UN and African Union institutions to destabilize Eritrea or inventing sanction against Eritrean on a false premise in alleging that Eritrea supports Al Shebab. The UN have even admitted it it is not true but the minority government is still making political capital out of it in order to inconvenience Eritrea using different tactics. But they have failed in the past and will fail again in the future because we Eritreans, wherever we may be, we are able to rally behind our people flag and country and at present Eritrea is one of the most peaceful countries in the Horn of Africa but we also have our own problems like other African countries. What need to be understood here is that the Tigreayns can do what they like when it comes for their election or celebration of their country. On the same token we Eritreans can also do what we want to do with our country that we will dance we will cry with joy if we want to because 24th may for us is a reminder of our country's independence from Ethiopia.

Of course the election in Ethiopia on the 24th of May will be a forgone conclusion that EPRDF will win the election by about 90% of the electoral vote because there is no any credible opposition or force in the country to stop the minority government from winning. The opposition is completely fragmented, toothless and not fit for any purpose, most of them live in America enjoying themselves with their lives and they are unable to have any influence in the upcoming election. Moreover they do not have any space or land to fight the government, and according to the Independent Newspaper on Sunday 22 of March 2014 the Ethiopian government regularly records the phone calls of any opposition activities and Journalist using equipment provided by foreign companies.

This means the Minority government has everything at its disposal that it can crush any opposition at ease. It is also true that the minority government have bribed neighboring countries or has given them land at the expense of the Ethiopian people in order to buy their favors so they do not harbor Ethiopian opposition members. Even Egypt at the last minute was given concession that with out its consent, Ethiopia is unable to divert water from the Nile as much as it wants for its own use. Therefore neighboring countries of Ethiopia from Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti to South Sudan have all been bought or bribed to give in to Ethiopia's demands, that none of them harbor Ethiopian opposition and that is why the minority government of Ethiopia will win the upcoming election unhindered.

In addition they will use their long arm tactic to crush any one who becomes an obstacle to them including Tigreyans who oppose them. As for the current PM Hailemariam Desalegne who was elected by the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi he will continue in power. The simple reason is that they are damned if they select him or damned if they don't. Because if they got rid of him as a man who comes from small ethnic minority then he may rebel against them with the rest of discontented majority of the Amharas and Oromos. Therefore my view is that the Minority government want to continue the status-quo and the guy can be monitored by them and I am sure he will not do anything to upset the Tigreyans. It will be business as usual and he will be confirmed PM after 24th of May. However it remains to be seen what he will do for his country once he is confirmed officially as Ethiopian PM in his first 100 days in power. If the guy wants to be his own man and start many new initiatives about his country and his neighbors including Eritrea it remains to be seen what direction he will be taking Ethiopia. I hope he will start peace talks with Eritrea and if he does not then things will continue the way they are and Eritrea will still remain defiant because sovereign Eritrean territory is still occupied by Ethiopia and if Ethiopia thinks that no war no peace would exhaust Eritrea they are mistaken. On the contrary it will be Ethiopia who needs to blink first, otherwise the politics of attrition will continue and Eritrea will triumph at the end of the day.

Finally ethnic minority administration is as dangerous as cancer, it can not be cured. If the central government was to fall, people would rally round their ethnic group, they may not share power with other ethnic groups, that they can be radicalize on ethnic lines, and any power struggle that may ensue afterward can easily take an ethnic dimension that may lead to ethnic violence. Note also the ethnic administration that has been practiced in Ethiopia has led the nation to become a failed state. In a book called why Nations Fail written by Daron Acemoglan & James A Robinson, they told us that nations fail because they do not have independent institutions that reflects the needs of the people. The Minority administration in Ethiopia at present does not provide reassurance to the citizen of its country, the leaders of ethnic establishment forces people into submission, they do not create an atmosphere for investors or individuals to invest in their country without fear, they do not create an environment for the private sector to flourish as they want to have control of everything, there is too much interference from the central government to control the markets, corruption becomes endemic, millionaires are created due to bribery and ethnic based favoritism in employment and education by siphoning off capital for their own use, that power and wealth are concentrated in few hands, as we have seen in many developing countries.

The above mentioned points are therefore some of the key instruments ethnic administrations use to extend their authority and at the end of the day any nation that practices ethnic rule based on ethnic lines will fail and the outcome will be power struggle that can eventually lead into ethnic conflict. That is ethnic groups can rally communities along their ethnic prints rather than on common shared grounds and Ethiopia’s case is not dissimilar. In short ethnic minority administration is a ticking time bomb that is waiting to happen and I am sure Ethiopia may not go the way other African countries like Kenya Ivory Coast, Rwanda, South Sudan, have gone. Nevertheless if more than 200 peaceful demonstrates can be killed for demonstrating against the government in 2005 election, then in a spontaneous grievances after May election, it may result in the killing of four times that of past elections. We have to remember the leadership in power, came by the barrel of the gun and will go by the barrel of the gun--- what form it will take remains to be seen but Ethiopia will not be exempted from ethnic Violence since the minority government have introduced ethnic administration.

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**PART TEN TO FOLLOW.**