

## Bloodline Politics in Ethiopia and its destructive power

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The honeymoon of the government of Dr Abye is now over. The business, as usual, is now truly started; the mass arrest, the lack of due process, the terrorism law has been resurrected and used on people who have different or critical voices to the government. The right indicator is that this law is used on the members of the Balderass movement lead by the journalist and human right defender Eskendir Nega. This group has no intention or aim to hold government power.

I see a danger when a leader thinks that he knows it all, any field, from philosophy, economy, religion, education, medicine to law. When a leader summoned almost all professions from artists, politicians, to medical doctors telling them about their profession what they should and should not do must worry many professionals. Ethiopia's problems are complex; you need all experts, elders, traders and farmers to work together to bring about lasting peace and democracy in the country.

The danger created by bringing in all independent voices to the government side, who stand against tyranny in the past is Abye's perfect strategy to neutralise any sensible critical voices. These independent voices become part of the government, have access to government officials, have their channel to the government that they will express their critical voices discretely. As Professor Berhanu informed us, they have passed their concern through the appropriate channel to the government of Ethiopia.

It is clear where the main point of argument by those who recently joined the government including ESAT who are staunch supporters of Abye's Government; for the greater good, for building of democracy and the continuation of Ethiopia as a country, we have to tolerate some level of human right violation by Dr Abye's government. This makes those supporters accessories to the human right violation. The more they stay in the government, the less acceptable they become an independent defender of human right. The mass arrest, after the alleged coup, is a reminder of the TPLF era. If they are silent now, or claims that they have advised/consulted/warned the government, does not mean much for the cause for defending the human right in the country. As the human right violation continues, it contaminated these individuals, and their influence reduce to the extent they will be irrelevant to the struggle to establish a democratic nation or even to hold the country together as we know it. The good indicator of the erosion of trust and support in the past few months clearly show that ESAT becomes irrelevant in the struggle as it becomes the new Fana.

There are some politicians that their relationship with Ethiopian people can only be explained as host and a parasite relationship. Dr Abye's treatment of this politician, letting them live on the public expense to create peace is justifiable for some. However, that politician accepted to leave on the taxpayers, mind you the money is collected from the farmers and traders, that they always claim they fought for and represent. This is an immoral act accepted and executed by the government. These immoral politicians have a justification for their immoral act, you can make a living by creating chaos.

This appeasing strategy by Abye's government is not going to help, for how long you continue to support these politicians is to be seen. The logical argument is that these politicians will continue to create chaos to sustain their lifestyle. Their comfortable life is based on the existing of continued problems, that they will continue in this strategy to maintain their significant role in creating a chaotic condition in the country. They will use their influence to hold the government hostage.

Abye's strategy of bringing all critical voices to his side, by offering government posts, or by creating new organisation such as the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund removes all critical voices. The impact created by this strategy resulted in the split of ESAT. One thing should be clear to all; there is no change in the main structure of the political system in Ethiopia.

These dissenting voices brought to the government side, for example, the election commissioner, Birtkan Mideksa, is powerless to exercise the office's primary function in all regions. Dr Daniel of the Ethiopian Human commission can not investigate human right violation in Tigray, Oromia or any other regions without the blessings of the regional administrators. Many of the board members of the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund are human right defenders, with an impeccable record of voicing the inhuman treatment of the Ethiopian people. However, once they become the insiders, once they think they have access to power, completely stop defending the human right, at worst these makes them accessories to the human right violation.

Those who have joined Abye's government should ask themselves two main questions. For how long they will tolerate the human right violation in the government before they start voicing. What they should have asked before they joined the government is what are the minimum organisational capabilities that they must have to be real on what they can do to bring a democratic system. The core point is that the current Ethiopian political structure will not allow the implementation of the changes required to bring about democratic change.

Ethiopia has a huge structural problem to sort itself out and build a functioning democratic government. The political system that is defined on bloodline, where ownership of the land is demarcated based on the same principle is a cause for conflict. What we are witnessing at the moment in Sidamo is a demonstration of the political system. You can be born, raised, and build your fortune there if you are not Sidama (you are mete [ሞጌ]), as the claim goes "Sidamo for the Sidama" is the moto, your bloodline matters.

The bloodline politics is Abye's principal guideline, that is why he declares war on Balderas. Balderas stand against this principle that is why their representatives are in prison. The government is now following a twin-track security strategy. The bloodline politicians and their associates are going free even if they are committed severe crimes. Good examples are twenty banks robbed; many were uprooted from the place they call home or worst killed; all this initiated by these politicians ( who follow bloodline politics) and their associates; the government response is to negotiate with robbers and killers ( Shemagle melake). Whereas if your principle is against a bloodline politics, you will be in prison (Balderas is a good example). This trend will continue in the future, wait until Professor Berhanu's new party becomes a significant player, will face a similar fate like Balderas.

Long live Ethiopia!

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