

# RATE HIM FOR DICTATORSHIP



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When a political regime under which the power of government is not limited by any law; we call it dictatorship.

Dictatorship has some common features:

- (a) Concentration of power in the hand of a single person.
- (b) Fusion of government and ruling party
- (c) Total intolerance towards other center of power.
- (d) Extended rule of one party
- (e) Abuse of power
- (f) Unfair elections
- (g) No rule of law

So, let's calibrate Zenawi against the above Seven parameters.

- 1. Concentration of power in the hand of a single person:** Since TPLF's founding day to the late 90s it was led by a collective leadership. But following its split, the power was left in the hands of Zenawi and since then he becomes
  - a. The absolute power icon in the country;
  - b. As many dictators do, his photos has been printed and disseminated throughout the country on T-Shirts, Keychains, Bill boards etc.
  - c. Then he continues to be the irreplaceable:
    - Prime Minister
    - Chairman of TPLF
    - Chairman of EPRDF
    - Chairman of Council of Ministries
    - Chief of Army
    - And as a prime minister he is privileged to assign a Director for National Election Board.
  - d. As a prime minister he has a power to liquidate the Addis Ababa City Council; which means if by any chance the opposition parties win in Addis Ababa like they did in election 2005, he can liquidate them any time. So he has a veto power over the public vote.

Hence, Zenawi is the power house in Ethiopian politics at all measurement and in all spectrum.

- 2. Fusion of Government and Ruling Party:** Ruling party uses government resource unrestrictedly and there is no even a thin-air boundary between TPLF led ruling party and government. Then in Ethiopia EPRDF and government are one and the same that could be named interchangeably.

- 3. Total Intolerance towards other Center of Power:** In particular, since 2008 the new directives was enacted on NGOs and Civil Societies. Therefore,
- a. It is become very difficult to have legal registration for civil societies unless they are proved pro the ruling party.
  - b. Civil Society groups can be illegalized and liquidated by only announcement. For example the famous “Mecha and Tulema” was liquidated just by announcement and they were denied to defend.
- 4. Extended Rule of One Party:** For the last 21 years EPRDF was the only ruling party in Ethiopia. And there is no any glimmer of hope that opposition parties will take over since EPRDF iron curtained the political space. This failure in power alteration privileged the ruling party into abuse of power, corruption and dictatorship.
- 5. Abuse of Power:** In general the Police, Security and the Army are responsible to secure the well-being of the society and the sovereignty of the country. In contrast to this fact, these institutions are serving the ruling party and Zenawi to keep it in power.

We have seen such abuse of power once too often in many occasions like Addis Ababa (2005), Ogaden (2007 upto now), Gambela (2010 upto now), and different parts of Oromia and Amahara region.

- 6. Unfair Election:** Out of 21 years of EPRDF in power, only election-2005 was a fair one. Media access for oppositions was admitted, international observers were invited, opposition party members were not persecuted; and the result had showed EPRDF that how much the people of Ethiopia punished it by its vote. And we all remember how EPRDF used force to maintain its power and rigged vote. And since then election-2010 was a pseudo election with undemocratic features compare to the former.
- 7. No Rule of Law:** The autonomous function of courts is in a big questio mark. Besides the judges are under political pressure. We can also see that the constitution is ignored in many occasions and an arbitrary law prevail over the constitution.

So, when we measure up Zenawi by all the above dictatorial traits, he is a perfect fit to be called one of the first class dictator in the world.