



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES JOURNALISM  
AND COMMUNICATION**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**ANALYSIS ON MEDIA FRAMING OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN ETHIOPIA (FROM  
APRIL 2-OCTOBER 2, 2018): THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD AND THE REPORTER  
NEWSPAPERS IN FOCUS**

**BY: GETNET ENDEG BELAY**

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

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**School of Graduate Studies**

**Declaration**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Getnet Endeg, entitled “Analysis on Media Framing of Ethnic Conflict in Ethiopia (from April 2-October 2, 2018): The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers in Focus, and submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and notes the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Chair of the Department of Graduate Coordinator

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## **Acronyms**

AG- Attorney General

DTM- Displacement Tracking Matrix

IDPs- Internally Displaced Persons

NDRMC- National Disaster Risk Management Commission

NGOs- Nongovernmental Organizations

OLF- Oromo Liberation Front

SNNP- Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples

UN- United Nations

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## ***Abstract***

*Conflict is as old as human history. It is a clash of ideas resulted from the presence of incompatibility of beliefs, ideas, values, wants and goals of people. This definition shows that the presence of incompatibility is the cause of conflict. Ethiopia has been experiencing the most widespread and worst ethnic conflicts after the coming of Abiy Ahmed into power. This was really a tragedy for Ethiopians. The purpose of this study is to assess how the two print media namely, The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers, frame the ethnic conflicts that occurred from April 2, 2018- October 2, 2018. These newspapers were deliberately selected since they are well known and interested in dealing with critical issues and current affairs. These newspapers are from government and private print media. The English version of the newspapers was selected, because this avoids ambiguity during translation of its Amharic version. Similarly, the period was intentionally chosen because there were several ethnic conflicts during that particular period. Media were also allowed to cover issues freely. To meet the main objectives of the research, four main research questions were set. These are: what were the data sources for The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers during covering ethnic conflicts? What are the frames of The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers used during covering ethnic conflicts? How do The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers cover causes and consequences of ethnic conflict issues during the study period? Why The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers choose to use these types of frames in ethnic conflicts? The research used textual analysis and interview to answer the questions. The research has found the following findings: four frames: the annihilation, the attribution of responsibility, incapability of government officials and law and order, crime and justice are identified in the study. Government offices were highly used as sources by The Ethiopian Herald. The Reporter mostly uses victims, government officials and academics so as to cross-check the credibility of the source. The sources influenced the selected newspapers to frame the stories the way identified above. It also influences the newspapers to cover mostly the consequences ignoring the root causes of the ethnic conflict. The research also identified that the ownership and political ideology of the media has an impact in covering ethnic conflicts.*

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Conflict is as old as human history. Conflict dates from the beginning of human history and will probably never end (Jeong, 2008:4). This shows that conflict seems the inseparable side of human life. As far as human beings exist, conflict exists though the type varies. There is no all-inclusive definition for conflict. Different scholars have defined conflict differently based on their interests. The most common way of defining conflict basically focuses on the interests of the parties. Conflict can be defined as the friction caused by difference, proximity and movement (Francis, 2002: 3). Conflict represents the persistent and pervasive nature of inter-group and international competition among disparate interests and values that underlies power dynamics (Jeong, 2008:5). This definition shows that the presence of diversified human interests, needs and wants along with their abilities, and so as to fulfill these interests, people come in to clash.

It also occurs when two or more groups having incompatible desires, attitudes or needs want to get their interests through actions that hurt the other group. This idea is strengthened by Jeong; in conflict situations, the dynamics of actions and counteractions inevitably engage attempts to control the other's behavior, often with the intent to injure or destroy (Jeong, 2008: 5). Interests can be found in many ways, such as over access to and distribution of resources (e.g. territory, money, energy sources, food); control of power and participation in political decision making; identity, (cultural, social and political communities), status or values, particularly those embodied in systems of government, religion or ideology.

Conflict is a clash of ideas resulted from the presence of incompatibility of beliefs, ideas, values, wants and goals of people. Due to the presence of heterogeneous people in the world, it seems that this heterogeneity is a source of conflict in one or another way. Time by itself brings conflict. This is because people will not live the same life; they go in accordance with the time. Conflict is also always about change (Toit, 2012: 7). He states that among other things, people trying to meet unfulfilled needs, enhance their influence, defend their identities, gain increased access to resources and reduce inequalities and injustice. Actually conflict may not always be

taken as destructive; unless it is violent. Conflict is an important driver of change and change is at the heart of almost all reporting; it is what makes news a news (Toit, 2012: 7).

African societies like other developing nations' societies have been undergoing a crisis due to inter-ethnic conflicts since pre-colonial times a trend that even colonization did not break (Isacko, 2007:1). Ethnic, or inter-ethnic, conflict refers to disputes between contending groups who identify themselves primarily on the basis of ethnic criteria and who make group claims to resources on the basis of their collective rights (Henderson, 2010: 4).

Ethnic, or interethnic, conflict refers to disputes between contending groups who identify themselves primarily on the basis of ethnic criteria and who make group claims to resources on the basis of their collective rights (Henderson, 2010:4). Media play a very great role in society. If they are used properly, media can foster peace in the society. For instance, media events can be used in times of conflict to build confidence, facilitate negotiations or to break diplomatic deadlocks to create conducive atmosphere to negotiation. After World War II, media have been directly taking part in ethnic conflicts. Sudan, Rwanda, Yugoslavia, and Turkey are current examples of these conflicts (Arcan, 2013: 1). Media can play great roles in escalating or reducing conflicts. If hate speech is released from media to the audience, the role of media will be escalating conflict. For example, the most drastic and well known examples of hate speech communicated through the media that have brought worldwide attention, have been experienced in Rwanda and Yugoslavia (Arcan, 2013: 1).

In Rwanda the media were instrumental in the 1994 genocide, while the local media incited the killing based on ethnicity, the international media either ignored what was happening or misinterpreted the events there. The local population depended on the services provided by the radios especially for those who were unable to read and write. The radios also played a crucial part while connecting the government to the governed. Rwanda, until 1991 was a single party state therefore government used the radios to inform the population on the new cabinet lists, list of admission to secondary schools as well as dismissal of government officials. But in 1994 genocide was not the first time the radios encouraged ethnic killings (Mubiri Muthoni Ruth, 2014:3). The private broadcast company Libre des Mille Collines and the national Radio Rwanda took active roles in fomenting ethnic hatred among citizens driving the Hutu people to kill at least half million of the Tutsi population in 1994 (Arcan H. Esra, 2013:2). The news media play a significant role in the success of multidimensional peace missions (Gadzekpo, 2017: 20).

It is true that the media single-handedly cannot start a war; it is also true that the media single-handedly cannot end conflict (Arcan, 2013: 2). This is because there should be agents either to bring peace or to end conflict. UN or NGOs' radio stations and programs in peace missions in several countries have disseminated impartial, reliable news and information and developed conflict resolution strategies (Ibid, 2013: 3). The vital role of the media in reporting conflicts is to accurately present events in a fair and balanced way.

Ethiopia is a home of several ethno-linguistic communities with different histories, languages, beliefs and cultures. It has experienced war, ethnic clashes, ethnic tensions, and violence. This study, thus, dedicated for itself to prepare how the two print media houses have played roles in giving attention in covering ethnic conflicts.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Ethiopia is a home of over 80 ethnic groups with different languages and possesses different dialects. This diversity has been a source of strength, as demonstrated by the unity of all the ethnic groups in the fight against the Italian invasion in the 1890s and 1930s as well as the Somali incursion in the 1970s (Kebede, 2016: 23). It is composed of several ethno-linguistic communities with different histories, languages, and cultures. Despite their diverse historical origins and with several points of contacts over the centuries, all of them have coexisted and continue to exist as nations among nations (Lubo, 2012: 63). However, this diversity does not usually be guaranteed for strength because it may again be a cause of conflict.

Ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia currently are aggravating. The people in Ethiopia, who are divided linguistically, geographically, and culturally, have been experiencing ethnic conflicts that result a very severe loss of human lives and properties. All these ethnic conflicts are arising from the four corners of the country.

To show how ethnic conflicts are widespread, serious, and complex in the country, the Borana Zone of Oromia may also be another good example. In this zone, the ethnic groups Guji, Garba, Burji, Borana, Garre, and Konso have been experiencing fierce conflicts amongst each other, which have resulted in the loss of many lives. For example, the conflict between the Borana and the Konso ethnic groups killed 23 people in four months in 2008 (Mulatu, 2017: 25).

He has also added, “A conflict of the Borana against the Gabra and Garre killed three people in 2009” (Mulatu, 2017: 25). Even recently, there was ethnic conflict between Afar and Tigray, Amhara and Tigray, Sidama and Wolayta, Oromo and Gamo, Amhara and Gumuz, etc. in 2018. Though the government has interfered, they are increasing from time to time. If these problems do not get immediate solutions, things can go worse and worse. For this, the media have to interfere because the media are the most powerful entities on earth. They have the power to make the innocent feel guilty and the guilty feel innocent and that’s the power: this mostly happens the way the media present the story because media can control the minds of the masses. Media have a major role to play in controlling the spread of conflict by disseminating information to the public with the widest coverage, by preaching peace bringing very accepted elites to the media. It is so important to assess how media report ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia.

There are gaps that identify how the Ethiopian print media have reported those ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia. Most of the literatures have reported that the media can either show a negative or positive intervention in the escalation of conflicts in a given country. Researchers have discussed the negative roles of the media in escalating conflicts among ethnic groups by taking cases of Rwandan and Former Yugoslavian conflicts, which caused the killing of at least one million people in total in the two countries. On the contrary, the Northern Ireland local media are mentioned as playing a positive role in solving the conflicts and bringing peace to the two religious groups. As long as ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia exist, journalists should seriously work on reporting them according to the standard being socially responsible during framing conflicts particularly ethnic conflicts. Therefore, studying the ethnic conflict reporting in Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers may have vital importance for this discussion on the media and ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia. Ethiopian media somehow work in complex situations; printing ethnic conflict stories should not be seen as simple as the reporting of other issues. Reporting on these issues means that journalists are giving due attention to all ethnic conflicts. Then, journalists, and the media in general, need to be able to offer various professional and moral aspects. This is because the intervention of the media in reporting ethnic conflicts in a professional and responsible way becomes profoundly important, not only to inform the public credible information correctly, but also to let the media play a crucial role in solving those ethnic conflicts that frequently happen in the country. As the main concern of this study, the ethnic conflicts in the country and the Ethiopian media, conducting a research on these two cases might

show the overall situations of the media/journalists in the country, and might offer some contribution to academics in media studies.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Research**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to assess how the public and private newspapers frame ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives are to:

1. Analyzing the sources of ethnic conflict stories used by the two selected newspapers during the study period.
2. Identifying the type of framing used during covering ethnic conflict stories in the sampled period.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

The following are the main research questions:

1. What were the sources for Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers during covering ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C?
2. What are the frames of the Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter Newspapers used during covering ethnic conflicts?
3. How do the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers cover causes and consequences of ethnic conflict issues during the study period?
4. Why Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers choose to use this type of frame in ethnic conflicts?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Although different researches have been conducted on ethnic conflict, for example, inter-ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and Dassentech communities of Marsabit (Isacko, 2007), print media framing of the Niger Delta conflict in the two Nigerian Newspapers (Amenagahawon, 2017), the role of media in conflict management (Chebii, 2015), the news framing of the 2003 IRAQ War (El-Bendary, 2015), and Why Silence? Reporting Internal Conflict in Ethiopian Newspapers (Mulatu, 2017), they specifically did not see the framing of ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia recently. This research would contribute for journalists and academic staff on how to report ethnic conflicts the way it brings peace among different ethnicities. As it is known, Ethiopia is a home of over hundred million people with different religion, language, culture etc... The people may be in conflict as they do not have compatible, ideas, wants, needs and attitudes. During this time, the media should give care when framing the conflict. My comparative study of these two different newspapers could clearly investigate the way ethnic conflicts are framed. So, editors and journalists of the selected media houses would benefit from this research how they should report ethnic conflicts in accordance with media ethics to bring peace among ethnicities. The academic staff would get a starting point for further research. It would also show the way ethnic conflict reporting should be on the basis of social responsibilities and ethics of the media. In short, the researcher believes that the present study is important in serving as feedback on the presses' performance regarding the quality of their coverage concerning ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia in their publications. It specifically helps to fill the gap of the press in presenting or reporting ethnic conflict issues. It also serves as a reference material for researchers who are interested in studying the framing and coverage of ethnic conflicts in the Ethiopian media.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

There are many state and private owned newspapers in Ethiopia. However, this study focuses on the coverage of the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers (English version) in their last six months, from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C) publication. At the above mentioned time, several ethnic conflicts broke out in different parts of Ethiopia. The study typically concentrated on news stories about ethnic conflict issues in Ethiopia. The research relied on the Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers (English). The researcher chose these English version newspapers to avoid confusion during translation, and most researchers tend to study

Amharic published newspapers. There the researcher wanted to see the English version ones. The study focused on both private and government newspapers so as to find out if frame and coverage of content have a relation with variation in ownership and ideological view.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

Like other researches, this research has also got its limitations. The study did not include more media outlets i.e. electronic and online, neutral media and other local print media. The study also did not include newspaper readers to study their perception towards the framing of ethnic conflict. This did not happen because of the interests of the study, especially interests in the media, as well as the time limitation. The other limitation of the study was lack of local literatures. All the three theories were Western. The research also could not include many participants in the interview. To sum up, the above-mentioned limitations and other challenges occurred due to the limited time, and the focus of the research, to be more specific.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

The research has five chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and demonstrates the need and the background contexts of the ethnic conflicts in the country, the statement of the problem of the study, the research questions, objectives of the research, scope of the research, and limitations of the research. Chapter Two focuses on the literature review and theoretical frameworks. It has discussed the three theories that have strong relation with the research. These theories are agenda setting, framing and social responsibility. Chapter three deals the methods used in the study. It mainly focuses on defining the tools used for data gathering and analysis, and shows the reasoning around why and how they are employed here. Chapter Four presents data presentation and analysis, gives emphasis to the identified frames during the study. Chapter Five focuses on conclusion and recommendation of the study.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Related Literature

#### 2.1 Concept and Definition of Ethnicity

It is difficult to precisely define ethnicity. Different scholars define ethnicity in different ways from different perspectives. According to Lubo (2013: 2) it is “Due to the haziness of the objective and subjective criteria involved in the determination of members of the group.” He has added, “Usually ethnicity shows grouping based on primordial ties like origin, language, culture, history, territory etc. which are based on objectively determined factors.” (2013: 2). But others could not agree that ethnicity shows only based on objectively determined factors. Hizkias for instance states that “...it is not clear what is meant by the terms "ethnic group," "ethnicity"... [M]any concepts, such as...tribe, and ... clan, have been used interchangeably with that of ethnic group, and it is very difficult to distinguish them (Hizkias, 2001: 113; cited in Lubo, 2013). In discourses of ethnicity, perhaps the most serious deficiency is lack of a uniform criterion to define it. For some, ethnicity is assessed in terms of race, in others as a language still in other cases religious difference become vital tool to define it (Dagnachew, 2018: 2).

An ethnic group is commonly defined as “a body of individuals who purportedly share cultural or racial characteristics, especially common ancestry or territorial origin, which distinguish them from members of other groups” (Bojana, 2004: 15). An “ethnic group” is thus a set of people who have common points of reference to these ethnic dimensions of the social world and who perceive that they indeed have these things in common and that these similarities are captured by a label, the ethnic group’s name (Henery, 2004: 473).

Ethnicity is the state of being ethnic or belonging to a certain ethnic group or it is an affiliation or identification with an ethnic group (Kellas, 1998; cited in Bantayehu Demissew, 2016: 9). Ethnicity is that set of personal points of reference, thick and thin, that involve what we call “ethnic” distinctions between people (Henery, 2004: 473).

A commonly used definition is that an ethnic group is a collectivity of people who share the same primordial characteristics such as common ancestry, language and culture (Lubo, 2013: 3).

Lubo finally has defined it as “Ethnicity then refers to the behavior and feeling about oneself and others.”

## **2.2 Ethnic Conflict**

Ethnic diversity is the defining feature of many countries in the world, and its heterogeneity ranges from having different ethnic lines in the given federations to diversity within the same ethnic line but difference in clan and class (Tigabu, 2018: 1). Though it is very difficult to get all inclusive definition for ethnic conflict, it is advisable to see some definitions defined by different scholars. Interethnic conflict has been largely explained by psychological, economic, and political models of conflict in the scholarly literature (Henderson, 2010: 7).

Ethnic, or interethnic, conflict refers to disputes between contending groups who identify themselves primarily on the basis of ethnic criteria and who make group claims to resources on the basis of their collective rights (Henderson, 2010: 4). Mulatu has seen, “Ethnic Conflict is mainly defined as being based on its formation and nature” (2017: 5). Since it is very confusing, he emphasized as “It is because the focus is the conflict that happened between two different groups, which have different cultures, kinships, languages or settlements and that can be described as a nation, a nationality, a tribe, a clan, or in some other way”( Mulatu, 2017: 5).

Conflict is pervasive term. Its causes are numerous. Ethnic conflict may entail a clash of cultures; it pits against each other people whose values are in conflict, who want different things, and who do not really understand each other (Horowitz, 1998: 11). Ethnic conflict, however, is the result of feelings and sentiments in which members of a particular group develop as they interact and compare their positions with other ethnic groups (Hyden, 2006: 189; cited in Dagnachew, 2018: 4). In a situation of conflict, the local media can play a major role in preventing the conflict because the public relies on the media to identify facts and tangible realities from assumptions and spin, to provide a reliable account of what is really going on.

## **2.3 Ethnic conflict in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic state, composed of several ethno-linguistic communities with different histories, languages, and cultures. Despite their diverse historical origins and with several points of contacts over the centuries, all of them have coexisted and continue to exist as nations among

nations (Lubo, 2013: 1). But as time went on, Ethiopia has experienced ethnic conflicts both before and after 1991.

According to Galperin, between the 4th and 6th centuries, Ethiopia was a Christian Kingdom called Axumite that declined in the 8<sup>th</sup> century due to Muslim Arab's conquest that created the Muslim Sultanates of Ifat, Hadiya and Adal Kingdoms (Galperin, 1981: 58). He contends that between 1434 and 1468 Emperor Zara Yaqob had established a Christian empire over the Islamized peoples of the Eastern and Southern parts of the country (Ibid, 1981: 58). As a result, a feudal clerical state that continued to thrive until the beginning of the 20th century had come to exist. The 16<sup>th</sup> century history of this state was noted by the endless wars against the Muslims and the Oromo [expansion], which still have considerable impacts on the inter-ethnic and inter-religion relations of Ethiopians (1981: 58). Ethiopia not only in the ancient time but also currently is facing ethnic conflicts. Lubo has discussed the major causes of most of the post 1991 conflicts between the various ethnic groups in Ethiopia and classified them as follows:

[He classified as] socio-political, socio-economic, or socio-cultural scenarios. Thus, the causes of the Silte-Gurage conflict, the Wagagoda language conflict, the Sheko-Megengir conflict, the Anuak-Nuer conflict, the Berta-Gumuz conflict, and the Oromo-Amhara conflict were competitions over socio-political and socio-economic benefits. On the other hand, the causes of, the Gedeo-Guji conflict, the Borana-Gerri conflict, and the Afar-Issa conflict were socio-cultural problems. What is more, the Oromo-Somali conflict was a border political dispute which can be considered as competition over resource. Therefore, it is plausible to argue that ethnic differences have got little to do with regard to causing the post 1991 ethnic named conflicts in Ethiopia. (Lubo, 2013:7).

In the case of Hadiya Nationality Zone, there is a massive ethnic diversity, in which Hadiya ethnic group are settled in the form of territorially concentrated, and termed as local majorities, whereas, Amhara, Bahirawork Masimasa, Kembata, Danta-Dubamo, Temabaro, Gurage, Silte; Wolayita, Sidama, Oromo and others are termed as dispersedly settled intra-minorities (Tigabu, 2018:8). Even now a days, these ethnic conflicts are wide spread about all over Ethiopia. Since Abiy, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, came to power in April 2018 and escorted in reforms, the opening up of the political space and loosening of state controls have reignited long-simmering ethnic conflicts.

According to the 10th round (March-April) of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), at least 1,073,764 people were displaced by conflict as of mid-April 2018. While some IDPs were

displaced since 2012, the vast majority of the displacements occurred post-September 2017 in Oromia and Somali regions. More people have been displaced from Oromia and Somalia regions. In May 2018, renewed violence between the Borana (Oromo) and Garre (Somali) communities living in Moyale has led to new internal displacement and protection concerns. According to a multi-agency assessment that visited the conflict-affected areas on 26 May, 15,645 households/families (93,870 individuals) were displaced by this latest incident, including 3,702 IDPs children. In the meantime, the security situation in Moyale remains tense and unpredictable (Ethiopia: Oromia – Somali Conflict-Induced Displacement Situation Report, 2018:1). This report assessed some other areas like Gedeo and Guji and stated as:

Separately, The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) estimates that some 700,000 people are displaced by the West Guji (Oromia) - Gedeo (SNNP) inter-communal violence since April 2018. This situation report does not cover this group of IDPs (internally displaced children) since flash updates are being produced regularly, specifically focusing on the West Guji-Gedeo conflict-induced displacements. (Ibid, 2018:1)

Oromia, Somalia and SNNP's regions are not the only regions where these ethnic conflicts happened. There are other regions that ethnic conflicts were seen. Tensions between the neighboring ethnic groups in Ethiopia have spiraled into a growing humanitarian crisis. Ethnic Amharas who were evicted and displaced from the Benshangul-Gumuz and Oromia regions are yet to receive government assistance. Ethnic Amharas, for instance, have claimed ownership of the Wolqait and Raya territories in northwestern Ethiopia, leading to tensions with the Tigray region, which currently administers these areas and Violence, has often erupted over the claim (<https://theconversation.com/how-ethnic-violence-is-destabilising-ethiopi...>, 2018, accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2019).

Hundreds of innocent Ethiopians have died in the southern cities of Awassa and Sodo because of ethnic violence. And in the past two weeks alone, dozens of Ethiopians from the Gamo, Ghuraghe, and Dorze groups around the capital city, Addis Ababa, were targeted and killed by unidentified assailants, and rally that was organized in Addis Ababa to protest the killings was violently dispersed by police. The media reported that some residents were killed by government security forces (<https://theconversation.com/how-ethnic-violence-is-destabilising-ethiopi...2018>, accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019).

## **2.4 News Media and Conflict Coverage**

Conflicts are the central part of human lives and the media are active part of any conflict (Hamelink, 2011: 11). People use media as sources of information to know about what is going on around the globe. The mass media are vital to all sections of the population through their functions. There is popular recognition that media play considerable functions in different societies by providing information upon which critical decisions are based (Tesfagebriel, 2017: 2). Globally the magazines, newspapers, radio, television as well as other media platforms shape social disturbances such as conflict, war, social injustice among others (Francis, 2017: 1). Having those information, people can plan, judge, decide, and execute their activities. Media and politics mostly influence each other. Black stated that: “Officials are needed by the media because they provide information needed to produce news; officials on the other hand need the media to communicate their message to the public. This shows that media and politics have strong relation regarding information” (Black, 2006; cited in Tesfagebriel, 2017: 1). According to Ha (2003: 11), “Without news media, both the voters and political actors cannot even imagine how to participate in and maintain the democratic process”. In the same way, Ebenezer also supports this idea that the media have played and continue to play a significant role in many ethnic conflicts and wars that ever took place in history and through their reportage; humankind has become informed and aware about ethnic conflict on the globe through various forms (Ebenezer, 2018: 1). Media have a major role to play in controlling the spread of conflict by disseminating knowledge to the public with the widest coverage (Pegu, 2014: 2). Although conflict is pervasive, the media tend to be selective in their reportage of conflict. The news media do not give equal focus to conflict situations; some may enjoy maximum reportage, others are under-reported or not reported at all. Cottle states that those groups who have the power to own the media have been taking the advantage of owning the institutions to manipulate the content of the media to produce the message in the way they want it to be, and they thus make the other groups powerless (Cottle, 2006: 2). This can be illustrated taking the case of the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Media in the Rwanda Genocide in 1994 were very instrumental by promoting hate speech over the radio stations and print media.

## **2.5 Journalism and News Selection**

In the process of writing and reporting a given story in the media, journalists hold the prime responsibility for selecting an issue and producing it in a format that is to be disseminated (Mulatu, 2017: 36). According to McQuail journalism is described as a profession that produces, reproduces, and disseminates knowledge to large audiences through the media (McQuail, 1987:51; cited in Mulatu, 2017: 35). The media are a major player during periods of conflict by virtue of the influence they can exert on the public's understanding and perception of conflict situations because the agenda the media set and how issues are framed can also impact on the direction or outcome of conflict situations (Olomjobi, 2017: 1). Howard succinctly notes, "Conflict is a tremendous magnet for the conventional news media" (Howard, 2015: 65; cited by Mulatu). This may be the reason that many of the world's media are exceedingly interested in reporting on conflicts and wars (Mulatu, 2017: 37).

### **2.5.1 Conflict Attracts Media**

Media and conflict have great connection. This is especially the case for those who believe, "if it bleeds, it leads", and thus conflict is their primary focus in their coverage, since it sells large copies of the newspapers (Mulatu, 2017: 141). People are highly sensitive for conflict issues, and the media report on conflicts to meet the readers' interests. Since people naturally seem willing to share the pain of others, journalists cover conflicts not only to inform, as one of the functions of media is to inform, but also to share feelings, emotions, and to show the social, political, economic and psychological crisis. Then, they suggest possible solutions. Again conflict issues mostly are unpredictable and this newness usually attracts journalists for coverage.

### **2.5.2 Conflict Sells Newspapers**

Media generate or make money from selling newspapers and through advertises. Newspapers get customers when human sensitive stories are reported. Conflict is one of the issues which attract the emotions of readers. It is clear that the newspapers should be able to cover all of their costs for publication and circulation, either through the sale of copies of the newspapers or through the income from advertising (Mulatu, 2017: 39). This helps the news media house survive long in the market.

## **2.6 Theoretical Frameworks**

### **2.6.1 Agenda setting Theory**

There are many media effect theories in the field of mass communication; agenda setting theory is one of them. The development of the agenda-setting theory is credited to McCombs and Donald Shaw based on their seminal study published in 1972. The agenda-setting theory also draws from the assertion of Cohen who observed that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963: 120).

The media selectively highlight issues and influence the formation of opinion on such issues among members of the public. Agenda setting can therefore be defined as an ability of one or more actors to influence the degree of importance accorded to an issue either in the minds of citizens, in a programme of policies, or in the priority given to particular issue or news by media outlets (Dearing, 1989 and Soroka, 2002, cited in Davies ,2015: 5).

The main interest of the research is to assess how framing has been constructed in the Ethiopian print media context in the case of ethnic conflicts. Agenda setting refers to the idea that there is a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain issues (e.g., based on relative placement or amount of coverage) and the importance attributed to these issues by mass audiences (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; cited in Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2006: 3).

McCombs and Yuksel argue that “agenda setting theory basically explains how and why the public learn how much importance to attach to a topic from the emphasis placed on it in news coverage” (McCombs and Yuksel, 2004: 328). The mass media set the agenda for public attention and lay the groundwork for public opinion because “the idea that the media don’t tell people what to think, but what to think about” (Baran and Davis, 2003: 311). McCombs and Yuksel cite five major categories namely on who sets the agenda of the media: Influence from individual media workers, Influence of media routines, Organizational influence on content, Influence on content from outside media organizations, and Ideology (2004: 383).

The agenda-setting theory is basically about the causal relationship between media agenda and public agenda. Rather than directly telling the public to consider one issue as more important than another, the media set agenda by giving special treatment to issues in their coverage.

The agenda-setting theory also draws from the assertion of Cohen who observed that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen,1963: 120). Similarly, Grossberg, Wantella, Whitney and Wise affirm that the media cue the public to see certain issues as important by the prominence such issues are given and “by both the extensiveness of stories in a given day and duration of coverage over time” (2006: 367).

Agenda setting is considerably more than the classical assertion that the news tells us what to think about. The news also tells us how to think about it. Both the selection of objects for attention and the selection of frames for thinking about these objects are powerful agenda-setting roles (McCombs and Shaw, 1993: 5).

“The media are the primary sources of national and political information; for most, mass media provide the best and only easily available approximation of ever-changing political realities” (McCombs & Shaw, 1972: 185; cited in Mulatu, 2017: 66).

### **2.6.2 Social Responsibility Theory**

The social responsibility theory is one of the normative theories of the press. Social responsibility theory was born because there was a problem by its predecessor, the libertarian theory of the press. This theory can be described as an extension of the libertarian theory because it was conceived as an upgrade to address the shortcomings of the libertarian theory. The free market place of ideas had been advanced in the libertarian paradigm, but it failed to guarantee press freedom and bring about expected benefits to the public because it primarily focuses on selling ideas freely without considering the social values of the society. At the emergence of the social responsibility theory, however, it was sought that media ownership is seen as “a form of public trust or stewardship, rather than an unlimited private franchise” (McQuail, 2010: 171). The social responsibility theory shot into prominence around the period of the Second World War. Scholars specifically cite the year 1947, when the Hutchins Commission gave its report on the freedom and responsibility of the press, as the origin of the theory.

McQuail summarized the basic principles of social responsibility theory as follows: *Media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society. These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and*

*balance. In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the framework of law and established institutions. The media should avoid whatever might lead to crime, violence, or civil disorder or give offense to minority groups. The media as a whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various points of view and to rights of reply. Society and the public have a right to expect high standards of performance, and intervention can be justified to secure the public good. Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers and the market (Denis McQuail, 1987; cited in Baran & Davis, 2010: 116).*

### **2.6.2.1 The Relevance of the Social Responsibility Theory**

Sensational and inaccurate reporting may escalate a conflict situation into violent proportions; objective and balanced reporting by the press tend to act as a platform to commence conflict resolution. The media should report conflicts responsibly knowing the interests of the society than the media house.

### **2.6.3 Framing Theory**

Framing theory is very essential to this research because frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey (Druckman, 2007: 104). The concept of framing has been one of the most abundant areas of recent research in communication, politics and sociology because framing can clarify and interpret the extent the media affect public's understanding of politics and issues (Lecheler & DeVreese, 2012; cited in Muhammed, 2016: 5).

Framing theory offers the basis for understanding how conflict is reported in newspapers (Carpenter, 2007) because according to DeVreese, Boomgaarden, and Semetko, a frame is an emphasis in salience of various aspects of an issue such as conflict (DeVreese, 2005), Boomgaarden, and Semetko, 2011; cited in Muhammed, 2016: 5). The framing theory focuses on which topics or issues are selected for coverage by the news media because it happens when the way the events are reported in the media has an impact on how they are understood by the audience.

### **2.6.3.1 The History and Concept of Framing**

Different researchers and scholars define framing differently. Framing has emerged as one of the most popular areas of research for scholars in communication (Cacciatore, 2013: 2). Authors in the field of sociology and psychology have given their own definitions to framing but one who contextualized the definition of framing to the field of communication is Goffman. Goffman defined framing as “a schemata of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences or life experiences” (Goffman, 1974; cited in Abera, 2018: 11).

Reese described framing as “a process of giving meaning that can be embedded across stories, media, and time” (Reese, 2007:50; cited in Boesman, 2015: 2). In the case of the media, news stories appear to be systematized, based on narrative conventions that offer an explanation about who is doing what, and with what purpose. Tuchman describes news as “a window whose frame limits the perception of reality, by limiting the perception of different realities and focusing on a specific piece of it” (Tuchman, 1978; cited in Abreu, 2015: 2). If messages are specifically repeated, some aspects of the reality perceived through the news will be more prominent than others.

Entman defines framing as “a process in which some aspects of reality are selected, and given greater emphasis or importance, so that the problem is defined, its causes are diagnosed, moral judgments are suggested and appropriate solutions and actions are proposed” (Entman, 1993: 2).

Framing has been described as a concept, an approach, a theory, a class of media effects, a perspective, an analytical technique, a paradigm, and a multi paradigmatic research program (D’Angelo & Kuypers 2010: 2). Framing is, thus, present in the mind of the journalist who writes the news report, but also in the news report that he builds, reaching the reader through a decoding process that is necessary to understand the news report and the reality to which it refers (Abreu, 2015: 2).

“News narratives are constructed from and embodied in the keywords, metaphors, concepts, symbols and visual images emphasized in the news narrative. By providing, repeating and reinforcing words and visual images that reference some ideas but not others, frames work to make some ideas more salient in the text, others less so- and other entirely invisible (Abera, 2018: 11). Framing is beyond the stated meaning in the text because it incorporates what is not

written rather it also shows what implied. This idea is further supported by Abdisa as “framing is never based only on what is written and made comprehensible but “what is excluded or what is absent is as important as what is included or what is present” (Abdisa, 2010:186; cited in Abera, 2018: 11).

Framing essentially involves selection and salience (Entman, 1993: 52). For him to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and/ or treatment evaluation for the item described (1993: 52). Framing may have a wider room to install interpretations and affect public opinion in crisis communication like in covering protest conflicts and other social occasion events.

Cohen almost two decades before McQuail, wrote in his famous dictum that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about... The world will look different to different people, depending ... on the map that is drawn for them by writers, editors, and publishers of the papers they read” (Cohen, 1963: 13).

People usually look for information about conflicts, particularly ethnic conflicts since it is sensitive in multi-ethnic societies and other crisis to understand the causes and nature of the events as well as agents to identify entities that should be held responsible for those conflicts.

Different scholars have identified the various types of frames that would likely occur in news stories or articles. These include human interest frame, attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic, and morality frame. It does not mean that the frame types are the only frame types, but I preferred these for this research.

Semetko and Valkenburg explained that “human interest frame brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (Semetko and Valkenburg (2000: 95). This frame is perhaps a common frame in the news. In this case, journalists who seek to dramatize political crisis and shift public opinion may capitalize on the disastrous angle or picture. The researcher argues that this frame may be popular in ethnic conflict coverage as such event is naturally sensitive to be dramatized and emotionalized thereby to retain audience interest.

The second frame type, ‘economic framing or as some call it ‘economic consequence framing’ “reports issues in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution or region,” (Semetko and Patti, 2000: 96). Researchers argue that this is also a common type of frame as it has a news value (impact) to be considered in daily news coverage.

The third frame type is responsibility that presents an event, issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual, group, party or institution; news items suggest the issue or problem requires serious action (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000: 95).

The fourth frame type is morality that puts the event, issue or problem in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions; emphasizes collaboration and fellowship (Ibid, 2000: 96).

The fifth frame type is ‘conflict frame’ Sematko and Patti mentioned that conflict frame is the popular frame in the U.S and Europe (Sematko and Patti; 2000: 96). This frame popularizes conflicts between individuals, groups or institutions as a means of capturing audience interests. Because of the emphasis on conflict, the news media have been criticized for inducing public suspicion and mistrust of political leaders. From this definition, it can be presumed that this frame occurs in the coverage of political crisis like ethnic tensions, war, terrorism and protests.

### **2.6.3.2 The Framing Process (Frame-building and frame-setting)**

#### **2.6.3.2.1 Framing as a Process**

Entman notes that frames have several locations, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture (Entman, 1993: 2). Successful political communication requires the framing of events, issues and acts in ways that promote perceptions and interpretations that benefit one side while hindering the other (Entman, 2003: 417). There components integral to a process of framing that consists of distinct stages: frame-building, frame-setting and individual and societal level consequences of framing.

#### **2.6.3.2.2 Frame Building**

Frame-building refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames (DeVreese, 2005: 51). The interaction between the media content and the receivers’ prior understanding of the issue makes the framing in the text clearer and more meaningful (Mulatu, 2017: 79). This idea is supported by DeVreese as frame-setting refers to the interaction between

media frames and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions (DeVreese, 2005: 51). Frames in the news may affect learning, interpretation, and evaluation of issues and events.

#### **2.6.3.2.3 The Importance of Framing Theory**

This theory helps the researcher to investigate how the ethnic conflict stories were framed in the Ethiopian newspapers. In the process of identifying the frame of ethnic conflicts, Entman's category of framing, for instance, defining the problem, diagnosing the causes, making a moral judgment, and suggesting a remedy are relevant to 'digging out the frames', and understanding the techniques used in the newspapers (Entman, 1993: 52).

Before looking at the effect, framing literatures precede with identifying between frames in communication and frames in thought. According to Druckman, framing in communication is the way an individual uses words, images and elements of an event to transmit a message (Druckman, 2001).

### **2.7 Paradigms of Framing**

Entman defines a paradigm as "a general theory that informs a body of scholarship on the outcomes and operation of any particular system of thought or action" (Entman, 1993: 51).

Writing in response to Entman who believes there should be a single paradigm governing the framing research. Angelo, asserted "there is not, nor there should be, a single paradigm of framing (Angelo, 2000: 871). He criticizes Entman's assertion of "framing study as inconsistent and Angelo thinks that it is a result of Entman's' view that framing should be a singular paradigm" (Angelo, 2000: 871). Based on this criticism, Angelo proposed three paradigms that can govern a study of framing; Cognitive, Critical and Constructivist paradigm (D'Angelo, 2002:3). This classification has been supported by Rosengren and Beniger (Rosengren, 1993 and Beniger, 1993).

In the application of these paradigms in framing research, they provide researchers with distinct images about the interaction between textual frames and framing effects (Ritzer, 1975; cited in Angelo, 2002: 7).

### **2.7.1 Critical Paradigm of Framing**

Critical paradigm is a paradigm interested in the concept of media and dominance. Scholars who are within the critical paradigm including (Angelo,2002: 8) claim that frames are the outcomes of newsgathering routines by which journalists convey information about issues and events from the perspectives of values held by political and economic elites. These frames are thought to dominate news coverage.

Critical scholars argue that news organizations select some information and intentionally omit other information such that different frames of a topic either will not exist or will still foster a single viewpoint supportive of the status quo (Reese and Buckalew, 1995, Solomon, 1990, Watkins, 2001; cited in Angelo, 2002: 8).

Critical theorists contend that frames that are linked to power and hegemony can limit the range of debates and ideas. Proponents of this paradigm do not believe power is usually distributed pluralistically.

### **2.7.2 Cognitivist Paradigm of Framing**

The study under Cognitivist paradigm of framing regularly points out those journalists routinely create meaningfully different frames about an issue or event within a single news item or among many stories. To cognitivists framing effect ensue when information made accessible to an individual interacts with prior knowledge (Angelo, 2002: 8). Scholars engaged in cognitive framing studies may examine, through experimentation, individual's exposition to different framing.

### **2.7.3 Constructivist Paradigm of Framing**

The constructionist paradigm provides yet a third perspective on the study of framing. As constructionists argue, Angelo wrote, "Journalists are information processors who create interpretative packages of the positions of the 'politically invested sponsors' (news sources) in order to both reflect and add to the 'issue culture of the topic'" (Angelo, 2002: 877). In the process of framing, there are certain civic opportunities "to be thwarted." It will have the following effects, among others: It constrains economically distressed communities from seeing their assets, constrict political awareness of individuals, thwart the aims of social movement, and set parameters for policy debates not necessarily in agreement with democratic norms. In the

process of framing social and political issues the news media can play powerful role in determining the success or failure of social movements” (Brasted, 2005: 8; cited in Abera, 2018: 14).

Based on the above assertions, critical and constructionist paradigms, can be taken as more useful theoretical frameworks to the study of media framing and its effect while the cognitive one is more popular in the field of psychology.

## **2.8 Some Researches on Conflict Framing**

Framing research became popular in mass communication due to its ability to affect readers, when it is print medium, negatively or positively. Francis has studied “Print Media Framing of the Niger Delta Conflict in Two Selected Nigerian Newspapers” (Francis, 2017). His focus was framing techniques, dominant frame sources, and editorial formats used. He used content analysis as a method and found that episodic frames, centered on specific case or events, and the sources were highly dependent on governments. The editorial format used by the selected newspaper was News report.

Manian and Miles have studied “Framing the Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparative Analysis of Arabic and English News Sources” (Manian and Miles, 2018) Their focus was to know the key frames emerge in portrayals of the Syrian refugee crisis in the news media and their news sources in the framing of the Syrian refugee crisis. They applied textual analysis and found that English-language news stories typically framed the Syrian refugee crisis around domestic political, cultural, and economic concerns. Arabic language articles also focused on regional and global political dynamics and trends but more on the implications of war and conflict for the personal and humanitarian conditions faced by Syrian refugees as people. Abera studied “Framing of the 2015/2016 Oromo Protest by Local and International Media” (Abera, 2018). He has used text analysis. His focus was to know the narratives influence on the reader’s perception, widely used frame types and to know how the three newspapers framed the protest. He has identified that Anti-peace frame was used by the state owned newspaper, and therefore, rather than influencing their perception, this had disappointed the interviewees in case and pushed them to stop a detailed reading. The Aljazeera on the other hand used an ethnic tension frame that portrayed the case of the Oromo protest as a product of a long shimmering ethnic discontent.

Yang and Ishak (2012) have studied “Framing Interethnic Conflict in Malaysia: A Comparative Analysis of Newspaper Coverage on the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf)” (Yang and Ishak, 2012). In this study, Yang and Ishak have taken four newspapers. They have used content analysis as a method. Their purpose was to compare the coverage of Hindraf by the Malaysian mainstream Malay-, English-, and Chinese-language newspapers, as well as alternative publications using a framing analysis. They finally out of a total of 1,205 articles on Hindraf collected from the four newspapers, they found that Sin Chew Daily contributed the most news items (513 articles), followed by Malaysiakini (342 articles), The Star (185 articles), and Utusan Malaysia (165 articles). The mainstream newspapers used the leaders of the ruling party, Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) as their dominant news sources.

### **The Ethiopian Herald Newspaper**

This is one of the newspapers that is published by The Ethiopian Press Agency, a government organization that runs four different newspapers, namely, Addis Zemen, The Ethiopian Herald Al-Alem, and Berissa. Established in 1943, it is printed by the Berhanena Selam Printing Enterprise. This newspaper prints in broadsheet format. The maximum number of pages per edition is 10, its circulation is 9500. The Ethiopian Herald is published daily in the English language. The target readers are mainly the foreigners, diplomatic communities, elites and the staff members of international organizations. The Ethiopian Herald pays much of its attention to Ethiopian political and national news. The editorial goal of The Ethiopia Herald is primarily to focus on development, democracy, and good governance in the country and it is devoted to promoting and building the image of the country. Although its focus is on local issues, it has fewer local readers. The primary mission of the newspaper is not to generate income and to maximize profits from the sale of the copies of newspapers and advertising. However, it is still one of the newspapers that earn the highest amount of money from its advertising revenue.

### **The Reporter Newspaper**

Reporter is one of the long-lived newspapers in the country. It has been in circulation since 1996 (established on 6th of the 13 month, 1987, in the Ethiopian calendar) by the Media and Communication Centre, which is owned by Amare Argawi, who was one of the TPLF’s fighters. Amare initiated a media business and started publishing bi-weekly and weekly newspapers. The

weekly edition is published in English and circulates on Saturdays. It has 40 pages per edition. This newspaper is printed by the Berhanena Selam Printing Enterprise. On average, Reporter circulated 5000 copies. It mainly focuses on current and political issues.

# Chapter Three

## Research Methodology

### 3.1 Framing as a Method

Scholars employ different methodological approaches to frame analysis. Framing is usually taken both as a theory and a method. While it explains how frames are manipulated in a text to give a particular form of interpretation, it also puts mechanisms by which those frames can be studied or extracted. Some studies used quantitative content analysis or computer-assisted frame analysis (such as frame mapping), while others prefer a text-based interpretative, qualitative approach. Framing is one of the theories that suggest research methods of its own and has informed many studies in the world that were aimed to know how media represented several political conflicts as well as influenced public perceptions (Abera, 2018:24). According to Pan and Kosicki, utilizing framing as a methodological strategy requires “Constructing and processing discourse or characteristics of the discourse itself” (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 57; cited in Linström and Marais, 2012: 5). The framing approach links the competing tendencies of social analysis toward closure and openness and may be regarded as one of its strengths.

As Entman puts “Frame analysis serves the following purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose courses, to make value judgments, and to suggest remedies” (Entman, 1993: 52). It would be possible to study the representation of the ethnic conflict by the government owned and private media through other research methods, but methods other than framing are less efficient to enable the researcher look into words, sentences and paragraphs to explore meaning. Other methods may also enable the researcher to find out the effect of the media reporting on certain group of audiences, but only framing can serve as a method to bring into light how realities are, intentionally or unintentionally, cooked and served to the media consumer to produce a certain impact.

Moreover, during sensitive political occasions, the media tend to use frames as a hideout to existing political realities or as an instrument to shift public opinion. It is, therefore, based on this justification that this study used framing as the best method to analyze the media framing of

ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia from April 2, 2018- October 2, 2018 by the Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers.

There are five methodological approaches that are commonly used as measurement of media frames. This includes hermeneutic approach, a linguistic approach, a manual holistic approach, a computer-assisted approach, and a deductive approach. As to which method is best to conduct an effective media framing analysis is debatable, but as has been argued by Mathes and Kohring, and these five approaches “are not mutually exclusive” (Mathes and Kohring, 2008: 3).

Studies that employed the hermeneutic approach are “well documented, and especially thorough in their discussion of media frames.” In this approach, emerging frames are identified through careful, deep and repeated reading of news stories. The third method known as Computer Assisted Approach also called Frame Mapping uses a quantitative approach. In this method the researcher is not the one who finds the frames but computer program. The assumption behind this approach is that a certain frame may emerge due to the repeated occurrences of some related words such as kill, murder, terror, etc. and these words may form a frame like crime frame. But this approach has got criticism. The critic against this approach is that “computers are unable to understand human language in all its richness complex and subtlety as a can a human coder” (Ibid, 2008: 6).

The deductive approach uses predetermined frames identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). Conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility frame. Certain number of questions is usually prepared for every single master frame and the coder had to answer ‘yes or no’. This approach is assumed to be better but a researcher fenced by these predetermined frames may underrepresent new emerging frames during analysis. A failure to consider new emerging frames has its own role to create bias.

In this research, the researcher used the hermeneutic approach and was dominantly borrowing some of the coding strategies in the manual approach. As was explained earlier, these approaches overlap and are not mutually exclusive implying that they necessarily share some methods of frame analysis.

### 3.2 Research Design

In the qualitative research method, the hermeneutics approach allows the researcher to explore meaning from words and paragraphs in a content with all its richness and complexities which appears to be less possible in some of the other approaches, especially those that share the quantitative tradition. The term *hermeneutics* has its origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when it was introduced as a method for biblical and classical literary interpretation to illuminate the meaning of the text (Eberhart and Pieper, 1994). The interpretation is not only about what is stated in the text but also what is implied. Framing is also not only about what is included but also what is absent. Therefore, hermeneutics approach is important in this research. There are different scholars arguing on the appropriateness of both qualitative and quantitative methods during conducting framing research. Some prefer to study framing in the form of content analysis, which is more of quantitative. Media contents are coded for an already predetermined standard frames and the frequent theme is supposed to be the dominant frame of the media under study.

Some others argue that using qualitative approach in a frame analysis study is more rewarding. Referring to the explanation of Hertog and McLeod wrote quantitative analysis is more successful when there is a particular set of concepts clearly related to a frame and the number of times they are repeated reflects the emphasis in that frame (Hertog and McLeod, 2001:152; cited in Azpíroz, 2014:2). However, the attempt to classify and obtain a list of concepts characteristic of a frame may produce the loss of many nuances. What Hertog & McLeod mean by this, as they further argued, is that powerful concepts central to frames do not need to be repeated many times to have a big impact (Hertog & McLeod, 2001:76; cited in Azpíroz, 2014: 2).

Moreover, very essential instrument in framing research analysis is interpretation which exceptionally requires understanding context and implication. But according to Kuypers, “quantitative approach does not integrate the context” in the existing text which he thinks is the key to determine a frame (Kuypers, 2009: 34). For this study most importantly demands political and historical context to be interpreted, the researcher has decided to use qualitative method in analyzing the ethnic conflict framing.

Using a qualitative method can offer many advantages for framing study. Azpíroz noted that qualitative methods in framing (case of discourse analysis, focus groups or interviews) have a more realistic and contextualized interpretive look, so that they do not overlook the presence of

elements with a high symbolic content or cultural resonance, or what is evoked without being explicit, or the omission of important data (Azpíroz, 2014: 3). Qualitative methods are valuable when we wish not to count or measure phenomena, but to understand the character of experience, particularly how people perceive and make sense of their communication experience (Linström and Marais, 2012:6). Therefore, the researcher has decided to use a qualitative method as it has the aforementioned advantages. Many quantitative researchers claim that it is difficult to maintain objectivity in the hermeneutic (qualitative) research tradition.

According to Bradley, validity, reliability, and objectivity are criteria used to evaluate the quality of research in the conventional positivist research paradigm (Bradley, 1993: 431). As an interpretive method, qualitative content analysis differs from the positivist tradition in its fundamental assumptions, research purposes, and inference processes, thus making the conventional criteria unsuitable for judging its research results.

To evaluate an interpretive research work, the following criteria would be used. Lincoln and Guba proposed credibility (confidence in the truth of findings), transferability (showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts), dependability (showing that the findings are consistent) and conformability (a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents) as alternative criteria (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; cited in Abera, 2018: 27).

It is true that the interpretative approach has an inherent subjectivity but the fact that the data are subjectively analyzed does not mean that the researcher should necessarily become gravely biased. If one looks at the other side, it is an interpretation of a frame that enables present a comprehensive view of meaning. In quantitative frame analysis, on the other hand, frequency of elements that make up a frame is determinant but a word or phrase, as was argued above, may not occur several times in a content despite having a greater power to twist reality.

In qualitative method, an interpretation of one researcher may not be similar with the interpretation of another researcher who does analysis of the same data, but the key to validity in hermeneutic studies is to make sure that in-depth description or explanation of frames was made. But this rigidly does not mean that there are no other strategies used to realize validity in the qualitative framing analysis. For example, coding was used both to identify/categorize frames.

The how of coding use has been explained under the final subtopic ‘Procedure and method of data analyses.

### **3.3 Media Selection**

The first stage in framing study is choosing the media outlets whose news/story is to be studied. So, the researcher has selected The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers (the English version). The justification behind selecting these media outlets are discussed as follows: First, both of them are the English versions which avoid ambiguity during translation. Secondly, both are print media. According to Linström and Marais, “The print medium is a good choice for framing analysis because it has an inherent ability to communicate more complex ideas as compared to television and radio” (Linström and Marais, 2012: 9). Newspapers are a good choice for a medium of analysis as, according to McNair, they are able to “communicate more complex ideas”, as opposed to television and radio. But this does not mean the broadcast media cannot be an area of framing analysis (McNair, 2000:136; cited in Linström & Marais, 2012: 9).

Time frame is also the other determinant factor in framing analysis. The time frame of this study is from April 2, 2018 to October 2, 2018. During this time, Ethiopia has been rocked by ethnic conflicts. The researcher wanted to study on the above mentioned study period because Ethiopia has been experiencing different violent ethnic conflicts inside its territory. Media were also supposed to be free to report following the coming of a new Prime Minister into power. In addition, the other reason was since the role of the media is serving the people being voice for the voiceless, the researcher wanted to know whether all ethnic conflicts were given equal coverage or not.

### **3.4 Sample**

Even though sample is believed to be representative of the population, this research has taken all of the news stories that were about ethnic conflict covered from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018. There are eleven news stories from The Reporter (English version) Newspaper and twelve news stories from The Ethiopian Herald Newspaper. Because of there being manageable in size, all of them were selected to be studied. All the news stories are shown below in the table.

Table.1: Ethnic conflict news stories covered from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 by The Ethiopian Herald Newspaper.

<b>No</b>	<b>Title of the news story</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>Volume and number</b>
1.	Perspectives on averting execution capacity setbacks.	Tuesday, May 22,2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.217
2.	Commission condemns Jigjiga's violence.	August 9,2018:2	Vol. LXXIV No.285
3.	What went wrong in Somalia state?	August 11, 2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.287
4.	Clan politics characterizes not Ethio-Somali state.	August 19,2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.294
5.	Where does ethnic politics take us?	August 19,2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.294
6.	Ethiopian religious council condemns Jigjiga's violence.	August 19,2018:12	Vol. LXXIV No.294
7.	Perspectives on peace, order measures.	August 21, 2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.295
8.	TPLF is not the sole responsible body for the political instability.	September 9,2018:1	Vol. LXXIV No.312
9.	Deep investigation to be held over Burayu strife	September 18,2018:1	Vol. LXXV No.007
10.	Most displaced people return home.	September 22,2018:2	Vol. LXXV No.0011
11.	Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms.	September 27,2018:8	Vol. LXXV No.015
12	Why chaos, violence come back on positive sum era	October 2,2018:1	Vol. LXXV No. 019

Table. 2: Ethnic conflict news stories covered from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 by The Ethiopian Reporter Newspaper.

No	Title of the news story	Date of publication	Volume and number
1.	Ethnic conflict yet again contributes to more IDP's.	June 16, 2018: 3.	Vol. XXII No. 1136
2.	Sidama zone detains 226 in relation to deadly conflict.	June 23, 2018:11	Vol. XXII No. 1137
3.	Defense force intervenes in Assossa's deadly conflicts.	June 30, 2018: 9.	Vol. XXII No. 1138
4.	Human Rights Commission condemns Jigjiga's violence.	August 11, 2018: 3.	Vol. XXII No. 1144
5.	Djiboutians flee from Dire Dawa.	August 11, 2018:4.	Vol. XXII No. 1144
6.	Families of mob-attack victims fear for safety.	August 18, 2018:7.	Vol. XXII No. 1145
7.	AG indicts former Hawassa mayor over conflict.	September 1, 2018:5.	Vol. XXII No. 1147
8.	Addis on the edge.	September 15, 2018:1.	Vol. XXII No. 1149
9.	Ethiopia registers highest global IDP's for 2018.	September 15, 2018, p: 5.	Vol. XXII No. 1149
10.	September marks yet another deadly month.	September 22, 2018:5.	Vol. 23 No.1150
11	New PM's first real test	June 23, 2018:8	Vol. XXII No. 1137

### 3.5 Sampling Technique

This research used two non-probability sampling techniques to choose interviewees to get adequate information about the issue under study. It helped the interviewees to be selected at the preference of the researcher. Among the non-probability sampling, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were used. According to Deribsa, the basic assumption behind purposive sampling is that 'with sound judgment about the purpose of an inquiry, researchers can strategically select adequate cases for a study and organize the information effectively' (Deribsa, 2018: 203). Taking this point into consideration, the researcher used purposive sampling

technique to select very concerned reporters who were engaged in reporting ethnic conflict issues to get essential information for the study. The second type of non-probability sampling technique was snowballing. When the researcher is searching essential information using purposive sampling, he may not get the information fully. Therefore, snowballing was used because as to Deribsa, it is an extension of purposive sampling as it targets a specific group of people for data collection (2018: 204). Deribsa has further explained as it is the technique also called referral sampling because it involves chain of procedures to identify sufficient information to gather data (2018:204). It is very significant especially when additional information is needed for the study. Since the researcher wants to interview editors, snowballing was used to get and interview them. This technique was used after the researcher was informed to ask other staff members rich in information about the subject. First only reporters were purposively selected, but all the needed information was not found from them. Then, they recommended the researcher to interview deputy managers and senior editors of the press.

### **3.6 Data Sources**

Since consulting source of information is important, the researcher used both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are original data sources that are collected by the researcher for a certain purpose. Primary data can be collected in a number of ways. Interview, experiment, focus group discussion, observation are among the techniques of primary data collection. In the case of this research, in-depth interview was used to get first-hand information. So as to get adequate information, the researcher interviewed eleven participants who are in different positions. Secondary data sources are sources that are interpretations and evaluations of primary sources. Such kind of sources include books, journals, newspapers, magazines, published and unpublished materials including government archival sources such as policies, proclamation, field reports, etc.

Framing in communication can be studied based on texts published in media outlets. Hence, relevant stories in Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers (English version) were used as primary data in the case of this study. To access data from Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers (English version), the researcher will use their organizational archive where they usually store the pdf version of their daily and weekly publications of newspapers. The researcher reviewed hard copies of the newspaper from April 2, 2018 to October 2, 2018.

## **3.7 Data Collection Instrument**

### **3.7.1 The Researcher**

In qualitative framing research, the researcher is the primary data collector. In other words, data are mediated through human rather than through questionnaires or any other numerical techniques. However, to reduce subjectivity that can affect the analysis, the researcher has used a manual coding. The coding process has been further explained in the following subtopic i.e. procedure or method of data analysis.

### **3.7.2 Interview**

Creswell (2014: 239) states that in qualitative interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, telephone interviews, or engages in focus group interviews. In addition to assessing the framing of ethnic conflicts by using qualitative document analysis on the framing of ethnic conflicts from The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers, it is also very important to have an in-depth interview with journalists to get their brave insights and viewpoints about why the framing of ethnic conflicts in their newspapers was done in such a manner. Interview is an appropriate method when there is a need to collect in-depth information on people's opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings.

Interviews are useful when the topic of inquiry relates to issues that require complex questioning and considerable probing. Face-to face interviews are suitable when the target population can communicate through face-to-face conversations better than they can communicate through writing or phone conversations. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006:1). Newcomb also states the interview as a tool which is capable of bringing different views on particular points, and which helps the researcher to reach a better understanding from multiple perspectives (Newcomb, 1991: 101). Since it is usual to set interview questions before the actual interview session, the researcher has prepared few broad questions about how, why and what of the interview. According to Kvale, the key questions when planning an interview investigation concern the why, what and how of the interview (Kvale, 2007: 8).

### **3.7.2.1 Steps in the Interview**

The first step the researcher did in the interviews was getting the right informants from each newspaper. A great deal of attention was paid for searching the media practitioners. Even though getting their phone numbers and office addresses was easy, meeting the participants was very hard due to business in their side. Mostly, while he arranged an appointment, they were briefly informed about the main purpose of the interviews and mentioned the major discussion points. When he met them for the actual interview, he briefly told them again about the interview's purpose. He also told them that the information would be used only for the research purpose. After much effort to get their good-will to be interviewed, then their voice was recorded, and quoted in the research. While the researcher conducting the interview, he considered the sensitivity of the issue. Thus, all informants' ideas were preferred to discuss anonymously.

### **3.7. 2. 2 Key Informants in the Interview**

The researcher selected key Informants from the two media organizations (The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter, English version). This included journalists who were regularly covering news and, editors, chief-editors, managing editor and deputy manager of the press of the selected newspapers. They were selected for their being involved in the coverage and edition of the ethnic conflict stories. This helped the researcher to get the information needed for the research. In total, 11 key informants were interviewed. They were selected through purposive sampling and snowballing sampling methods to ensure that all ranges of possible ideas and sources of data were included.

Interview helps the researcher to ask participants to make their vague responses clear when it is face to face. Considering this as an essential point, the researcher used face to face interview to know the participants' experience about ethnic conflict issues coverage by their newspapers and how they get sources as well. Since it is qualitative research, only few open-ended questions were used in this research. Generally, these key informants were valuable sources of information in enabling the researcher to answer the research questions set in this research.

### **3.7.2.3 Transcriptions**

Transcription was the final process of the interview before the analysis was done. The researcher transcribed the recorded data. Even if transcribing the data manually was time consuming and tough, it was done manually. While the researcher was transcribing, he did many tasks

simultaneously. While listening to the audio recorded information, he simultaneously understood the idea, and then wrote it up under a certain subtopic or theme.

### **3.8 Unit of Analysis**

The researcher used words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and the entire story as unit of analysis for this research.

### **3.9 Textual Analysis**

Since the purpose of textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts, the researcher used textual analysis. It helped the study to provide in-depth analysis of the stories of ethnic conflicts. This is a method that is used to describe and interpret the characteristics, the functions, the structure and other elements of a text (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 1999, cited in Mulatu, 2017: 102). McKee has stated that textual analysis is the way in which researchers engage in analyzing text or information, and the way that readers or receivers make sense of the world. It is making an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be making of that text (McKee, 2003:2).

### **3.10 Procedure and Method of Data Analysis**

As Creswell, during the process of research, the investigator may collect qualitative documents that may be public documents (e.g., newspapers, minutes of meetings, official reports) or private documents (e.g., personal journals and diaries, letters, e-mails) (Creswell, 2014: 240). As of this research, newspapers were used. After this, it was very important to know how data would be analyzed critically in framing research since failing to follow the standard steps will lead to a wrong analysis and result. Therefore, the following standard steps were followed to make an effective framing analysis. A qualitative media framing research required the researcher to get the available data i.e. news stories into a meaningful cluster before starting to interpret the themes.

In this study, the frames identified by Semetko & Valkenburg i.e. conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility frames) will be used (Semetko & Valkenburg (2000). In qualitative framing study, the researcher has to be engaged in the data to identify the theme as well as frame device of each story. Reading deeply and repeatedly, the

researcher identified a total of four frames from 23 stories collected from The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter (English version). The researcher could not be forced to use the aforementioned five standard frames only. This is because the researcher may disregard new emerging frames as he might be restricted to standard frames. The identification of frames in the news stories was done very carefully through repeated reading. This was done not to overlap the previously identified frames with the new ones. To make it more successful, the researcher has followed the suggestions of Linström & Marias (Linström & Marias, 2012: 30). They suggested the following points to consider during identifying frames.

Frames must have identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics; it should be commonly observed in journalistic practice; it must be possible to distinguish the frame reliably from other frames. They also emphasized that a frame shall be understood by others and not be a fabrication of a researcher's imagination. The researcher has conducted a pilot study through deep readings of news stories of both The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter (English version) about ethnic conflict and has recorded notes.

### **3.11 Operational Definitions of Terms**

**Annihilation Frame-** is the media's attempt to ignore or exclude an object from readers or viewers.

**Omission-** It is the act of missing some important facts, causes, or other important elements in the texts during covering ethnic conflict stories.

**Omitting the Names of the Conflicting Ethnic Groups-** it is the state of ignoring to present the names of the conflicting parties (ethnic groups) in the news stories.

**Omitting the Cause of the Conflicts-** it is the state of ignoring to present the real causes of the ethnic conflict in the news stories.

**Withholding Information-** it is the act of not presenting news stories as soon as they take place by newspapers.

**Attribution to Responsibility Frame-** this is the way of directly or indirectly, motivating the readers to know the causes (not the true causes of the conflicts) as if the third party had initiated them (the conflicts), or to call the readers to be part of the solution to them.

**Blaming the Others-** is giving the responsibility for the wrong doings in relation to something, in this case, the cause of the internal conflicts is to other persons or groups.

**Urging Narrative-** is when a story narrates the case so as to give advice, or a guide, to the readers to make them do something in relation to the conflicts.

**Pushing Responsibility to Others-**is when a text that treats a conflict as a certain group pushes partial responsibility to others.

**Incapability of Government Officials Frame-** is used to show the treatment of the story against the government officials based on their performance on the positions they are assigned.

**Law and Order, Crime and Justice Frame-** is used to show how the story treats crimes and criminals to maintain peace and order based on rule of law and bring justice for the victims.

## Chapter Four

### Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter analyzes how the two selected media outlets framed the ethnic conflict stories that happened in different places of Ethiopia from April 2, 2018 –October 2, 2018, compare the narrative structures employed by each medium outlet (i.e. The Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter, English Version), and assess the sources used during covering the ethnic conflict stories and why they chose to frame that way. During searching frames for the texts, the researcher used Entman’s framing function as a benchmark. Therefore, by using this benchmark the researcher has identified four types of frames, namely, annihilation fame, attribution to responsibility framing, incapability of government officials frame, and law and order, and crime and justice frame. The researcher also identified the first two frames as dominant frames in the selected newspapers. These frames were obtained from a total of 23 news stories from the two media outlets based on their selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration of information about the ethnic conflict issues that occurred from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018. These frames are not only themes for analysis but also instruments of regulating data to simplify them into few clusters. The frames identified in the study have answered research question number two.

According to the first research question, the data sources for Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers used during covering ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C, different sources were found. The first is the government sources that The Ethiopian Herald mostly depended on, and the second one is the residents and experts. From these sources, the majority of the stories that The Ethiopian Herald were written by sourcing officials from government offices at all levels (Federal, Regional, at Woreda level, police, security, and military bureaus, and kebele level). These officials were used as sources of ethnic conflict stories through their offices and by their names. This idea was strengthened by the responses of the interviewees. “Our sources of the ethnic conflict stories are higher government officials, local administrators, security forces and local ordinary people”, said participant 6. This shows that they highly relied on government offices. Even though journalists are expected to balance the information from different sources, they preferred to use that. Participant 1 added, “We do not send our reporter to die because nobody issues the safety of journalists.” They mostly depended on government officials because without government officials’ will nothing will be done.

Participant 4 (April 8, 2019) assures, “Since the medium is government owned, it does not motivate journalists to cover ethnic conflicts.” from their the responses of the participant it is easy to understand that journalists are doing their reporting only when the government is willing ignoring the role of journalism. This again implies that since the government officials are sources of the news, the real and credible information could not be released because they do not want to be exposed as they are responsible to maintain peace and security of the people the govern. In addition to this, Participant 2 adds, “Not only the administration but also editors usually censor ethnic conflict stories.” The other participant said, “We have been living where little or no freedom of press. So, most of the time we do censorship, either we omit or publish.” This in fact exists in different media houses, but as far as ethnic conflict is very sensitive they were supposed to address it to the readers.

However, the Reporter newspaper highly relied on both the government and the residents (victims). Participants from this newspaper said that they mostly go to the conflicting area to extract the right information about the cases though there are times they do not go physically because of security problems. “Since it is private”, said participant 6 (4/08/2011), “the government does not assign security forces during covering the ethnic conflict issues.” So, he added, “Nobody wants to go there to die.” They rather use other mechanisms to get real information like contacting residents through phone and cross-checking with other means. They again use other political party leaders who actively attend what is going on around the country. “The sources of our news stories are government officials, community on the ground, neutral people, security forces, General Attorney, Ministry of Peace etc.”, said participant 11.

The second question of the research is: What are the frames of the Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter Newspapers used during covering ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C?

During researching frames for the texts, the researcher used Entman’s framing function as a benchmark. Therefore, by using this benchmark the researcher has identified four types of frames, namely, annihilation fame, attribution to responsibility framing, incapability of government officials frame, and law and order, and crime and justice frame. The researcher also identified the first two frames as dominant frames in the selected newspapers. These frames were obtained from a total of 23 news stories from the two media outlets based on their selection,

emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration of information about the ethnic conflict issues that happened from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018. These frames are not only themes for analysis but also instruments of regulating data to simplify them into few clusters. The frames identified in the study have answered research question number two.

## **4.1 Annihilation Frame**

This type of frame has also been used by Mulatu during studying the reporting of internal conflicts by the local newspapers in his dissertation (Mulatu, 2017: 156). Similarly, this research has found annihilation frame used dominantly in the selected newspapers. The media's attempt to ignore or exclude an object from the readers or viewers can be called symbolic annihilation (Gerbner 1972, Tuchman 1978; cited in Mulatu 2017: 156). This kind of frame happens when the newspapers are interested in tone down ethnic conflict. In this frame, the texts tended to ignore, exclude, undermine or delay reporting on internal conflicts (2017: 156). The researcher analyzed the newspapers and found them not giving serious attention towards the issue. For example though the story was about ethnic conflict, the newspapers were not confident enough to present the causes of the ethnic conflict, who was involved in the ethnic conflict, and other very significant points that can make readers aware about the incident clearly.

### **4.1.1 Omission**

It is the act of missing some important facts, causes, or other important elements in the texts during covering ethnic conflict stories. It is undeniable that everything cannot be covered in a story, but at least the major facts that make the story complete should be included. For instance, causes of the conflict, the number of individuals who were victims in the conflict, level of property damages can be the major components that make the story complete. The researcher thoroughly read the selected news stories, and found that some major facts were omitted from the narratives of ethnic conflict stories. Omission of very important facts was seen in different ways. In some cases, the names of ethnic groups involved in the conflicts were not mentioned. In others, the causes of the ethnic conflict were not clearly presented in the text.

#### **4.1.1.1 Omitting the Names of the Conflicting Ethnic Groups**

Some of the texts did not present the names of the conflicting parties (ethnic groups) in the news stories. Some examples were taken from both The Reporter (English version) and The Ethiopian Herald Newspapers to see it very clearly.

The first was published on the front page of the Ethiopian Herald Newspaper on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. The lead of the story says: “Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Commissioner Addisu G/Egziabher (PhD) said that deep investigation to be held over Burayu strife” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The above lead of a story is about a clash between the Oromos against the Gamos, Guraghes, Wolayitas etc... but the Ethiopian Herald was shy in treating the story openly. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Commissioner Addisu G/Egziabher (PhD) believed the presence of a conflict. But it could not clearly present who were involved in the conflict. “He explained on a press conference yesterday that his office condemns the act of displacing residents and loss of lives.” “The action violates human rights and including the right to move and work everywhere,” he added.

Here it confuses the readers very much because the information presented about the conflict in this story is incomplete. It does not answer at least the people involved in the strife. Not only who were involved, but also what was the cause of the strife were missed in the story. The story finally comes with a kind issue that asserts the arrest of the suspects. The other sentence was also taken from the last part of the same news story, and says: “Meanwhile, 600 plus suspects have been arrested over Burayu strife, according to Federal Police Commission.” The above sentence implicitly explains how hard the strife was since 600 plus suspects have been arrested. It again does not answer who these suspects are and where they are from.

The other example was taken from The Reporter posted on the 4<sup>th</sup> page on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. The extract says: “Most of the deaths were said to occur when unidentified group of individuals began to attack houses and torching some of them” (The Reporter, 2018:4).

The above extract is sure of the existence of deaths due to the attack of unidentified groups over others. Is there unidentified group who do not have any ethnic group? This shows that the newspaper did not go deep into the case to present complete information to the readers. Even

saying unidentified group by itself is being reluctant in giving attention to the very serious issue as many people died from this attack.

Still there is another story that clearly presents how reluctant the newspaper is in mentioning the names of the conflicting ethnic groups. This has also been extracted from the same newspaper posted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2018, that reads: “According to the commission several individuals and ethnic groups in the region are targeted and victimized since Saturday” (The Reporter, 2018: 2).

This detail presented the presence of several victim individuals and ethnic groups in the conflict. This is good. But the question is who targeted these individuals and ethnic conflicts? It fails to mention the names of conflicting ethnic groups. The other point here again is that what was the cause of the conflict was not openly discussed here. Even nothing is said about the targeted ethnic groups. The other point taken from the same paragraphs reads “As a result, besides the damage on human lives, churches and individual properties were damaged” (The Reporter, 2018: 2). Still the story said nothing about who the doers of this act were, rather than focusing only on the effects, which are observable.

#### **4.1.1.2 Omitting the Cause of the Conflicts**

The other very important point that was widely seen in the newspapers is that the stories tend to either totally hide, or to only implicitly mention the actual cause(s) of ethnic conflicts. A number of examples were brought here to illustrate the idea. All of the following were brought from the Reporter. All the stories did not try to present the exact causes of the ethnic conflicts. And even the individuals or groups who initiated the ethnic conflicts were not thoroughly presented in the story. The researcher has identified about eight news stories presented omitting the real causes of the ethnic conflicts. The first one is posted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page of The Reporter on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. It says, “ethnic conflict yet again contributes to more Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).” Here the causes are shallowly presented. “The forced displacement from Beinshangul particularly began reportedly following a killing of a young man from Gumz Ethnic background, allegedly by a man whose ethnic background is Amhara” ( The Reporter, 2018: 3).

The cause according to the story is the killing of a young man from Gumz Ethnic background, but it could not be the real cause because the killing would come after a certain cause that

initiates a man from ethnic Amhara. The story gave much emphasis to the consequences than digging out the root causes of the conflict between the Gumuz and the Amhara. Even though it mentioned that the conflict had ethnic motive, it does not give much of a sense of what this means to the wider readers. The other case presented here is: “In related news, over the week, the long serving president of Ethio-Somali region has resigned from his position. In the same turn of events, similar unrests occurred in Jigjiga which claimed the lives of many” (The Reporter, 2018: 3).

This also does not state the cause of the unrest that claimed the lives of many. The second story was published on the 11<sup>th</sup> page on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2018. It was presented as: Sidama zone detains 226 in relation to deadly conflict. The story did not even believe that the conflict has an ethnic motive. This concept is extracted from the following detail. It says: “According to the head of the administrator, the conflict does not by any means represent the people of Sidama and it was perpetuated by individuals. He also added that the Administration will work to further identify if there are any officials involved in the violence and bring them to justice” (The Reporter, 2018: 11).

The above detail asserts that the conflict does not represent the Sidama people. Whoever was involved in the conflict, the story did not say anything about the causes of this very violent conflict. After presenting this detail, another explanation follows stating that: “Aklilu also said that he was frustrated by the mainstream and social media which has depicted this conflict to be an ethnic one between the Wolaiyta and Sidama ethnic groups, which he said were both suppressed during the past regimes” (The Reporter, 2018: 11).

This information reveals that the source is afraid of both the mainstream and the social media. The social media might sometimes disseminate fake information since they are open for everyone. But why the mainstream? The other point is their (the Wolaiyta and Sidama ethnic groups) being suppressed by the past regimes does not guarantee the conflict not to be ethnic. This shows that the newspaper is shy to present the real causes of the conflict and the right individuals or groups involved in the conflict. It again shows the presence of idea mismatch between the sources. It is vividly seen in the following sentence. “A relatively calm region, the South has seen three conflict flashpoints in a span of two weeks: Hawassa, Wolaiyta Sodo, and Wolkite towns, which were all said to be ethnically charged” (The Reporter, 2018: 11).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> one is about the intervention of the defense force in Assosa's deadly conflict. It was posted on 9<sup>th</sup> page on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. The lead states the case as: "The Ethiopian Defense Force interfered to deter the deadly ethnic clash that left ten dead and over 40 people injured in Assosa, the seat of the Benishangul Gumuz Regional Administration, in western Ethiopia" (The Reporter, 2018: 9).

The lead asserts that there was an ethnic clash, but did not present the cause of this ethnic clash and even the ethnic groups taking part in the conflict. Though not stated in the lead, it is very shallowly treated as presented here that "Reports indicate that the conflict broke out after indigenous communities in the region reportedly demanded other minority groups to leave the area" (The Reporter, 2018: 11).

The researcher believed that the cause presented in the story is very shallow because it did not widely discuss why the indigenous communities in the region reportedly demanded other minority groups to leave the area. The second point here is that, who are other minority groups? Not to present the actual cause of the conflict, the newspaper called the involved groups as anti-reformist groups for inciting violence in many parts of the country in addition to Assosa.

The fourth one was posted on the front page on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is about Oil companies that evacuate their personnel from Ethio-Somali region. It was presented as follows: "Following the security crisis in the fragile region, conflict erupted in the regional capital, Jigjiga, on July 28. Civilians have been killed and houses, a bank, shops and churches have been looted and torched in Jigjiga and other small towns in the region" (The Reporter, 2018: 1).

It has clearly presented the presence of conflict in Jigjiga, on July 28 that claimed the lives of many civilians, the looted of houses, a bank, shops and churches. Still it did not say anything about the cause of this conflict. The other story in the same article was: "In related news, following reports of atrocities committed against persons of Tigray origin in the Oromia Zone of the Amhara Regional Administration, the Tigray regional administration has sent an inquiry team to inspect harms and extent of damages inflicted against individuals of Tigray ethnic group in these areas" (The Reporter, 2018: 11). The above story similar to others did say nothing about the causes of this ethnic conflict.

The fifth story was posted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018, and is about the condemning of the Jigjiga's violence by the Human Rights Commission. It narrated as: "The recent clash in the region breaches the basic human rights enshrined in the constitution such as the right to live, the right of movement and the right to worship," Demesew Benti, head of the communication at EHRC, told journalists on Thursday August 9, 2018" (The Reporter, 2018: 3).

The above story is story relies on the consequences of the conflict rather than stating the real causes of the conflict. The responsibility is rather given for the other body i.e. deliberately orchestrated groups to commit act of vandalism.

The next is extracted from the story posted on the 7<sup>th</sup> page on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It was about the families of mob-attack victims fear for safety. The story narrowly and in an inconvincible way presented the cause of the conflict that claimed two lives. It was presented for readers as follows: "Haftu Hagezom, victims of the Wollega mob attack a week ago, expressed their concern for their safety following the brutal killings of the two individuals by a mob in Eastern Wollega Zone, The Reporter has learnt" (The Reporter, 2018: 7).

The researcher said the cause is an inconvincible because what is behind the mob attack was not discussed openly in the story. Saying simply mob attack does not convince readers to be a cause for the brutal killings of the two individuals.

The seventh issue was posted on the 5<sup>th</sup> page on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2018, and is about the ethnic clashes that resulted Ethiopia to register highest global Internally Displaced Person's (IDP's) for 2018. The newspaper as usual did not treat the cause of the ethnic clashes happened in different parts of the country. This was seen in the following details of the story. The detail says: "Recent ethnic clashes in the southern regions of Gedeo and West Guji, along with internal border disputes at the southeastern Somali border has forced 1.4 million people to flee their homes since the start of 2018, making it the world's highest level of violence-related internal displacement so far this year" (The Reporter, 2018: 5).

The last issue was posted on the 5<sup>th</sup> page on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2018, and is about how the deadliest month September was. It stated the violence that happened at Oromia Special Zone and other parts of the country. A number of clashes have happened on September, 2018 though the real causes were not briefly discussed. The lead stated these incidences as: "The month of

September is usually regarded as a festive month for Ethiopians as it is the first month of the upcoming year. However this year, it was marked as the deadliest month with a continued violence ripping through several parts of the country” (The Reporter, 2018: 5).

No cause was presented for the deadliest month with a continued violence ripping that happened in different parts of the country. The word deadliest used in the story shows how harsh violence took place in Ethiopia on the above mentioned month. But even the cause stated in the details does not convince the readers.

Apart from results of the texts, responses of the interviewees asserted that journalists do not mostly report the real causes of the ethnic conflict. Participant 7 said we are always challenged covering the real causes of the ethnic conflict because first it is difficult to know the stand of the sources and second the credibility of the sources.” The above expression implies that journalists are not critical of the real causes which they were supposed to be so. It means that reporters give incomplete information for readers. The other problem participants raised is the absence of skillful reporter who understands the ethnic conflict properly. “We do not cover causes because real causes might be known even after months passed”, added participant 8.

#### **4.1.1.3 Withholding Information**

Some news stories may not be presented timely because of some factors. The act of not presenting news stories as soon as they take place by newspapers is withholding information. Actually there is a time when an organization withholds information temporarily for some legitimate reasons. For example, it’s advisable and ethical to withhold the names of dead victims until the families are informed. It is also necessary to withhold strategic information because of concerns of national security, for instance, a case involving ongoing investigation of a terrorist plot. Or sometimes it is a good choice to temporarily withhold information that might unnecessarily terror the public. But it is unethical for a certain organization to withhold relevant crisis-related information, offering only selected disclosures, and creating ambiguity about the cases.

Withholding information can be either withholding all of the information about an event until there has been some form of change in relation to that particular incident or releasing the information to the readers through the newspapers after the conflict is resolved. In this case the

Ethiopian Herald is the best example. The researcher has identified the following. One of the examples was posted on the second page of The Ethiopian Herald on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2018. The lead says: “National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) announced that almost all citizens who were displaced by the recent unrest in various parts of the country are now resettled to their homes” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 2).

As presented above, there was unrest in various parts of the country that caused people to displace. In previous news stories, the Ethiopian Herald was shy in publishing such cases as the presence of unrest, and displacements in different parts of Ethiopia. But waiting for the solution, the newspapers have treated the issue. The story did not treat the causes of the displacements, and those who were involved in the conflict or violence. It also did not cover immediately though it happened about three months ago. The details that come after the lead would be explained this way. “NDRMC Public Relation and Communication Directorate Debebe Zewde told The Ethiopian Herald that over 153,000 people were displaced from homes in the Ethiopian Somali State due to the recent riots. Furthermore, 894 thousand peoples left their homes in West Guji and Gedeo zones of Oromia and SNNPS states respectively” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 2).

The above detail clearly states the presence of riots that caused over 153,000 people displaced from homes in the Ethiopian Somali State. No stories from the Ethiopian Herald have said something about the presence of riots in the Somali State. Similarly the case of West Guji and Gedeo zones of Oromia and SNNPS states was withhold till the so-called solution came. The second example from the same newspaper posted on the 8<sup>th</sup> page on 27th September, 2018 would also state the presence of information withholding. The lead states that: “In our day to day life, love, considerateness, and extending a helping hand are part and parcel of our social interactions. Yet disagreements and conflicts could surface at times. Various issues ranging from a trifle to burning one could be a source of conflict between human beings. Society has its own traditional or cultural ways of resolving conflicts that crop up among different people. In this piece, the writer tries to review the impact of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in among Ethiopian communities” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018:8).

The above story presents nothing about the conflict happened before except explaining how conflict happens among people in life. This is an example of withholding the information fully.

The story used the picture of the Gamo elders to show how they settled the conflict between the Oromos and the Gamos that happened around Burayu during welcoming the Oromo Liberation Front 9OLF). Instead of critically treating the incidents of Burayu, the newspaper goes round the bush to escape.

The other story to be regarded under this theme was posted on the front page of Ethiopian Herald on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2018. The story was about the violent acts happened in Ethio- Somali. It reads as: “More recently Ethiopian-Somali state was in chaos and civilian casualties as well as property damages were widely reported in various media outlets” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018:1).

The Ethiopian Herald is a daily newspaper, but reported it after about two weeks. Even it can be understood that this medium may be out of the various media which reported the incident. The other point here is that it presented the case because it believed as there is a relative stability in the region. This is justified by the following detail. “Now there is a comparable stability in the state and citizens are getting back to their normal lives” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018:1). The other point that indicates the lateness of the report is the following.

It was on Monday, August 6, 2018 that the federal government through the Communication Affairs Minister, Ahmed Shide announced as per the request of the Somali state government, the federal security force was ordered to intervene in a bid to pacify the state.

Where was this newspaper during this time? The Ethiopian Herald is mostly seen withholding information. The researcher thought that there might be a time to withhold the very essential information, either partly or entirely, from publication. As has been shown above, the newspapers may not report the ethnic conflicts immediately, until they get possible resolutions or public reactions to the cases. It is likely that it is becoming common to present the resolution of the event in a story, or the reaction of the people, rather than the sensitive part of the case, particularly in the government owned medium, the Ethiopian Herald newspaper.

The other important point found from the interviewees’ responses is that they mostly withhold the information when they do not get credible information and are not allowed to cover by the government officials including during censorship. Participant 9 said, “Sometimes we want to hold the story till we get credible information by contacting people around their through phone.” From this one can understand that they are waiting for good conditions to cover the story of the

ethnic conflict though it is a very sensitive issue. The cover only when government officials around allow them to go and cover, but they hold the issue if they are not given permission. He also added, “When government officials are reluctant, we try to hold the story because we want first-hand information.”

## **4.2 Attribution to Responsibility Frame**

This frame, directly or indirectly, motivates the readers to know the causes (not the true causes of the conflicts) as if the third party had initiated them (the conflicts), or to call the readers to be part of the solution to them (Mulatu, 2017:183). Under this type of frame, the researcher identified three important points. These are blaming others, pushing responsibility to others and urging narrative. Both blaming others and urging narrative are taken from Mulatu (Mulatu, 2017: 176). But pushing responsibility to others is obtained by the researcher after an intensive reading of the news story. Although it seems similar with blaming others, it has a slight difference.

### **4.2.1 Blaming the Others**

Mulatu used this technique to describe how the causes of the internal conflicts have been reported by different print media (Mulatu, 2017: 180). According to him by blaming others one is giving the responsibility for the wrong doings in relation to something, in this case, the cause of the internal conflicts is to other persons or groups. This research also used this technique to describe how the causes of the ethnic conflict issues have been reported. This section could clearly explain the question “who and why are they blamed?” by taking some news stories from the newspapers. Some individuals or groups are described as being responsible for the causes of the ethnic conflicts or the violence. For example, the mission of the activists is disseminating information to the public about what is around the globe. They may criticize the government when there is wrongly committed act, or support it when doing well. After youths are informed about the real situation of a certain environment, they might raise different questions. Their questions might be about employment, equal allocation of resources, security, peace and order, justice... However, it is observed that the causes of their questions are usually portrayed in a different way in the text mentioning that it is the interest and support of the third party e.g., the irresponsible activists and hatred speech disseminators. This is briefed below by taking one example posted on the front page of the Ethiopian Herald on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2018.

But, Adane points out irresponsible activists and hatred speech dissemination through social media as the triggering factors of the latest violence. “Taking the advantage of the present political freedom, several people who are actively engaged in agitating youths of some ethnic group against the other. That is why we witnessed the recent killings and forcible evictions.” extracted from “Why chaos, violence come back in positive sum era” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The above paragraph shows two things. First it shows that the newspaper is sure that the youth were agitated by the third party. Second there were killings of the youth of different ethnic groups. The story was presented to the readers in line with the interest of the government. This is because the triggering factors for the violence are the act of the irresponsible activists and hate speech disseminators. Though the government knows the presence of ethnic conflicts, the newspaper has brought it as it is not the real question of the youths rather is the question of irresponsible activists and hatred speech disseminators. This helps the government to ignore the question of the youths.

The other point in the story is that the clause “Taking the advantage of the present political freedom, several people who are actively engaged in agitating youths of some ethnic group against the other” does not give complete and logical meaning. If it is believed about the presence of political freedom, why these several people actively engaged in agitating youths of some ethnic group against the other? Political freedom is not about the misleading others to benefit only a certain group.

The second news story was posted on 12<sup>th</sup> page of Ethiopian Herald on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is about the condemning of Jigjiga’s violence by the Ethiopian religious council. Here representatives of different religions condemned the evil act stating the act did not represent neither of them. Good. But who? The story blamed the displeased. It says: “What happened was done by the displeased to tarnish the image of the nation, said the Cardinal” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 12).

The above statement is blaming others who are displeased about the current move of the country. Such kind of expression is highly used to show that the wrong act belongs to others and excluding the self totally from it.

The second story under this theme was posted on the 8<sup>th</sup> page in The Reporter on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2018. It was about the PM’s first real test about the recent Ethiopian politics to settle the unrests

happening in different parts of the country. The lead of the story states the issue as follows: “It all seemed like the conflict and public uprising that rocked the country for the past three years is finally coming to an end following the change of guard at the very top of the ruling party, Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), as Abiy Ahmed (PhD) assumed the chairmanship and the Prime Minister position of Ethiopia” (The Reporter, 2018: 8).

The lead explicitly tells that Ethiopia was experiencing conflicts and public uprisings before the coming of Abiy Ahmed (PhD) into power. His coming also brought those conflicts and public uprisings to an end. The detail below in other side states the above scenario.

But, it was not even three months into his tenure when a relatively calmer region of the country, Southern Regional State, was rocked by another ethnically charged violence. The unrest spread to three Zonal administrations in no time. Wolkite was the first of these three places that saw a bloody ethnic conflict which resulted in huge damages to property and loss of lives. The conflict that broke out between the Gurages and Kebenas, on June 13, 2018, claimed the life of one person while leaving seven others heavily injured. Several kiosks, shops, vehicles and other properties were set on fire (The Reporter, 2018: 8).

Narrating all the clashes that resulted loss of lives and destruction of properties, the story presented that the people involved in this very cruel and evil act are those who do not want peace, and called them “daytime hyenas.” This shows that the government does not want to be responsible for the evil act that claimed many civilian lives and destruction of properties. Even this narration does not answer the question who these people are. Unless the name is given to a certain group, nobody knows what daytime hyenas stand for. It is possible to conclude that such expression does not by any means make the wrong doers responsible and the government as well.

The other issue was also posted on the front page of The Ethiopian Herald on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is about the conflicts that happened in Ethio-Somali state. The lead says: “The explosion of weapons and mass destruction in the Somali State of Ethiopia cannot be associated with ethnic and religious matters, rather is a veiled mission for posing threats to national peace and security, and causing havoc across different parts of the country, according to political experts” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The above sentence clearly states the existence of clashes supported with weapons and mass destruction in the Ethio-Somali state. But the newspaper is shy to present the cause of the

conflict and those who were involved in it. It rather prefers to blame the other unknown group having the veiled mission that threatens the national peace and security.

The last issue under this point was posted on the front page of the Ethiopian Herald on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. The extract states as follows: “As the Ethio-Somali people are nationalists and adore their country Ethiopia they cannot buy the clan- leader- favoring –secessionist-sentiment triggered by the displeased few” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

It is similar with the above discussions. Instead of critically investigating the cause of the case and those who were involved, it simply gives a name and finally blames that. The newspaper would work better if it saw the cases very seriously so as to provide accurate and balanced information to make them aware about what is going on around the country.

#### **4.2.2 Urging Narrative**

According to Mulatu Alemayehu (2017: 176) urging is when a story narrates the case so as to give advice, or a guide, to the readers to make them do something in relation to the conflicts. The stories, either directly or indirectly, persuade readers to be part of the solution, or not to be parts of the cause, he added. This research has also identified one story that illustrates the above concept. The story was posted on the front page in The Reporter on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. It is about clashes between the youth of the city (Addis Ababa) and their counterparts from the surrounding towns of Oromia Special Zone erupted ahead of the return of leaders of the formerly outlawed political organization, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF).

This would be further explained by taking the main points from the speech of Premier Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia as it reads: “There will be no single winner when Ethiopians fight over flags or other controversial issues. We should cooperate with each other by resolving our differences through dialogue”, Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said (The Reporter, 2018: 1). This is implicitly advising the people to be part of the solution seekers exposing the conflicting parties and not to be involved in the conflict because it is said that there is no single winner in the conflict.

The other story was posted on 8<sup>th</sup> page of the Ethiopian Herald on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. It is about indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. The story discusses the presence of very important traditional conflict resolutions to be used to settle conflicts happening around.

In our day to day life, love, considerateness, and extending a helping hand are part and parcel of our social interactions. Yet disagreements and conflicts could surface at times. Various issues ranging from a trifle to burning one could be a source of conflict between human beings. Society has its own traditional or cultural ways of resolving conflicts that crop up among different people. In this piece, the writer tries to review the impact of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in among Ethiopian communities (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 8).

As has been described above, every step of human beings may not be free of disagreements and conflicts as far as the interaction among people continues existing. It is guiding readers to be involved in settling conflicts traditionally. One it is common to face a conflict. Following this people should learn cultural ways of resolving conflicts that crop up among different people. This story brought the incident that happened in Burayu but did not want to touch explicitly. The researcher understood it as it has incorporated the pictures of the Gamo elders when they were begging their youth not to confront against the Oromo.

#### **4.2.3 Pushing Responsibility to Others**

The researcher chose this concept to show a text that treats a conflict as a certain group pushes partial responsibility to others. In other words, it is a kind of concept that needs other groups to share the responsibility they take. There are cases when responsible body of a certain group fully takes the responsibility of any violent acts. But still there times when one points his finger towards others to make them concerned for the same issue. Typical example for this was posted on the front page of the Ethiopian Herald on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. The lead of the story presents the case as: “TPLF is the cardinal responsible body to the political instability that had been rocking the country but other sister parties or allied parties too share the blame are also responsible for, said Tigray People Democratic Coalition Party” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018:1).

The sentence, TPLF is the cardinal responsible body to the political instability that had been rocking the country shows two very important cases. The first is the presence of political instability that had been rocking the country. The second is the existence of responsible body. As has been stated above, TPLF is the cardinal responsible body for that incident. The word cardinal is used to emphasize how TPLF was dominant over other allied parties in the country. If it was dominating other sister parties, why it needs to get others shared the responsibility of the

instabilities that the country had been rocked by? It is because nobody wants to be fully responsible for any violent act.

Dr Aregawi Berhe, chief of Tigray Democratic Coalition Party said to The Ethiopian Herald that, it is obvious that the architect of these sister parties across the states is TPLF. The attendant ills almost in gross are ascribable to TPLF but the other parties it created in its image are not immune from the blame, for without their willingness it could not have done what it did. It may not have created the instability in the country (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The detail presented above still believes that TPLF is the architect of the sister parties. Being an architect, TPLF is blaming other sister parties participating in the current political instability across the country. This is shown by the sentence, the attendant ills almost in gross are ascribable to TPLF but the other parties it created in its image are not immune from the blame. Are not immune from the blame asserts that they were working together with TPLF, so the responsibility would be shared.

This concept is different from blaming others because under blaming others the responsibility is totally given for the blamed group, but in the case of pushing responsibility to others responsibility is shared.

### **4.3 Incapability of Government Officials Frame**

This frame in this research is used to show the treatment of the story against the government officials based on their performance on the positions they are assigned. There might be any public uprising, or violent conflict in different parts of the country. This incident is highly related to the incapability of government officials in their duties. For example the story posted on the front page in the Ethiopian Herald on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2018 states that: “The past unrest that engulfed some parts of Ethiopia emanated partly from lack of good governance. It also led the country declare State of Emergency for the second time. Many believe the triggering factor for the widespread maladministration is a failure in executing a given task” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1). There was unrest in the past due to a failure of government in executing a given task to the standard.

#### 4.4 Law and Order, Crime and Justice Frame

This kind of frame is used in this research to show how the story treats crimes and criminals to maintain peace and order based on rule of law and bring justice for the victims. The case was posted on the 5<sup>th</sup> page in The Reporter on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2018 stating that Attorney General (AG) indicts former Hawassa mayor over conflict. This indicated that there was a conflict at Hawassa and suspects including government officials were brought before the court. It can be inferred that any suspect be ordinary citizen or official is subject to be asked by the law. The detail presents the case as follows:

Along with the mayor, some 100 prison officials and individuals were brought before the court in connection with the recent deadly violence in Hawassa and the surrounding areas. On Friday, police brought the suspects before the Federal circuit court temporarily established in Hawassa. Among the suspects, six of them are senior officials at the Hawassa Correctional Facility” (The Reporter, 2018: 5).

The third question of the research is: How do the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter Newspapers cover causes and consequences of ethnic conflict issues during the study period?

To answer the above question, the researcher used two techniques (intensive reading of the news stories and interview). In the texts no real cause of ethnic conflict is covered by both the selected newspapers. So as to strengthen the idea, the researcher conducted interview. The results of the interview suggest that covering causes of the ethnic conflicts is very costly. Participants from the Reporter newspaper said that covering causes of the ethnic conflicts is not an easy task for a journalist. According to the reply, it costs them finance, manpower, materials that can be used during covering the issue, and the security issue. Here they angrily criticize the government as it is careless for giving security for journalists. Even the government itself is an obstacle for their profession. For example said participant 6 and 10, after Abiy Ahmed took the power, many ethnic conflicts and other conflicts occurred in different places and called the responsible bodies “*Yeken Jib*” or day-time hyena, and to make residents of a certain area alert he ordered them to suspiciously attend the “*tsegure liwut*” to refer the unfamiliar person. “Now this word came to challenge us”, they said. The word challenges them because they are unfamiliar to those conflicting areas.

The other factor was the credibility of the sources. Even though sources know the real cause of the conflict, they give their witness saying unrelated facts for fear of security, according to the participants. As a result, the above selected newspapers could not present complete information for each incident. They might miss names of the conflicting ethnic groups, might present fake causes or might ignore the information. In the case of the Ethiopian Herald, not only covering the causes but also covering the presence of the ethnic conflict is very much costly. It may result journalists to leave their profession according to some participants from that newsroom. So they tend to cover the consequences which are easily observable because nobody denies the existing reality. This idea was supported by the responses of the interviewees. Participant 2 said, “We prefer to report the consequences of the ethnic conflict because it is very simple as it is observable.” As of participant 1 covering causes is very costly. He said, “we do not mostly cover causes of the ethnic conflicts because they are costly in terms of finance, manpower, resource for reporting like car, camera etc., even lives.”

The fourth question of the research is: Why Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers chose to use this type of frame in ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C? It seemed that the newspapers chose to frame the stories this way because of their sources. For example, sources for The Ethiopian Herald are mostly government offices. These offices do not appreciate ethnic conflict stories in the country covered by any medium, but they cannot control all the media. The only media that government officials can easily control are the state owned ones. From them, The Ethiopian Herald is one. In the case of this newspaper, most of the ethnic conflict issues were annihilated. The annihilation of the news stories was greatly found under omission of the names of the conflicting ethnic groups and still some of the issues were withhold. This was mostly done not to expose the gaps of the government. This therefore, makes the news stories to be framed on the previously identified types of frames. However, The Reporter believed the existence of ethnic conflict and gave coverage, the real causes of the conflicts were not really presented, and it is because of the sources.

#### **4.5 Comparative Discussion**

In this section, the narratives of the two media outlets i.e., The Reporter, and The Ethiopian Herald were comparatively presented. The comparison was made based on the frames identified and analyzed in the first section of this chapter. This section is necessary because in making

comparison, one can be enabled to easily detect the point of departure between the narratives of the two media outlets. As discussed above, there were differences in the framing of ethnic conflicts between the two selected newspapers in studied period. There were only 23 stories of ethnic conflict in the two selected newspapers during the sampled period, while there were many cases of ethnic conflicts in the country.

#### **4.5.1 The Ethiopian Herald Vs the Reporter**

It is very important to assess the coverage given to ethnic conflict issues in each of the selected newspapers. The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers were selected to be studied because both of them actively deal issues related to politics and current affairs. Knowing that ethnic conflicts occurred in the country during the study period, one could expect that there would be more or less similar coverage of these issues between the newspapers. Obviously, the Ethiopian Herald newspaper is supposed to cover relatively better stories as it is a daily newspaper than The Reporter newspaper which is weekly. But the result shows that there is quite difference in the coverage of ethnic conflict issues between the two newspapers.

The difference of framing ethnic conflict between The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter starts from the recognition of the conflict as ethnic conflict. The Ethiopian Herald was shy in confidently saying the conflict as an ethnic conflict though the intention of the stories found in the study period have ethnic elements.

#### **4.5.2 The Reporter**

Although it is a weekly newspaper, it has given a relatively better attention in covering ethnic conflict issues that occurred in different parts of the country in different times. It has published 11 major news stories and there are many related news stories stating the issues as ethnic conflicts. Some of them are the following:

The first one is posted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. It says, ethnic conflict yet again contributes to more IDP's. Here the causes are shallowly presented. "The forced displacement from Beinshangul particularly began reportedly following a killing of a young man from Gumz Ethnic background, allegedly by a man whose ethnic background is Amhara" (The Reporter, 2018: 3). It described the incident that happened in Benshangul Gumuz between the Amhara and the Gumuz. The story did not hesitate to say the conflict as an ethnic conflict.

The other issue that was believed to be ethnic is the second story that was published on the 11<sup>th</sup> page on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2018. It was presented as: “Sidama Zone detains 226 in relation to deadly conflict.” “A relatively calm region, the South has seen three conflict flashpoints in a span of two weeks: Hawassa, Wolaiyta Sodo, and Wolkite towns, which were all said to be ethnically charged” (The Reporter, 2018: 11). It is clearly presented that the three towns i.e. Hawassa, Wolaiyta Sodo, and Wolkite were victims of the conflicts which were all said to be ethnically charged.

The other one was also posted on the front page on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It has brought another conflict which was ethnic. It is presented as: “In related news, following reports of atrocities committed against persons of Tigray origin in the Oromia Zone of the Amhara Regional Administration, the Tigray regional administration has sent an inquiry team to inspect harms and extent of damages inflicted against individuals of Tigray ethnic group in these areas” (The Reporter, 2018: 11).

The above story shows the existence of ethnic conflict between individuals of Tigray ethnic group and the other unidentified ethnic group. Since it is to show some of the conflicts treated confidently by The Reporter as ethnic conflicts, it is better to see further the above explanations presented in the frames categorized above. Now it is better to see the status of the Ethiopian Herald in terms of ethnic conflict coverage.

#### **4.5.3 The Ethiopian Herald**

It is known that the Ethiopian Herald is a daily and state owned newspaper. Although it is daily, it did not give much attention to ethnic conflict issues. Even the covered ones are not treated as expected. The newspaper was shy to say the ethnic conflict as ethnic, the individuals involved were not mentioned, the causes of the conflicts were not addressed, the issues were not covered timely, and mostly the responsibility was given to other elements.

To make it more concrete, it is better to see some examples that illustrate the above issues. The first was published on the front page of The Ethiopian Herald Newspaper on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. The lead of the story says: “Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Commissioner Addisu G/Egziabher (PhD) said that deep investigation to be held over Burayu strife” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The above lead of a story is about a clash between the Oromos against the Gamos, Guraghes, Wolayitas etc..., but the Ethiopian Herald is shy in treating the story openly. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Commissioner Addisu G/Egziabher (PhD) believed the presence of a conflict. It is not known who were involved in the conflict. The story finally comes with a kind issue that asserts the arrest of the suspects. It stated as: “Meanwhile, 600 plus suspects have been arrested over Burayu strife, according to Federal Police Commission” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018:1).

The other issue was also posted on the front page of Ethiopian Herald on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is about the conflicts that happened in Ethio-Somali state. The lead says:

The explosion of weapons and mass destruction in the Somali State of Ethiopia cannot be associated with ethnic and religious matters, rather is a veiled mission for posing threats to national peace and security, and causing havoc across different parts of the country, according to political experts (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 1).

The above sentence clearly states the existence of clashes supported with weapons and mass destruction in the Ethio-Somali state. But the newspaper is shy to present the cause of the conflict and those who were involved in it. It rather prefers to blame the other unknown group having the veiled mission that threatens the national peace and security.

Still another news story was posted on 12<sup>th</sup> page of Ethiopian Herald on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It is about the condemning of Jigjiga’s violence by the Ethiopian religious council. Here representatives of different religions condemned the evil act by stating the evil act did not represent neither of them. Good. But who? The story blamed the displeased. It says: “What happened was done by the displeased to tarnish the image of the nation, said the Cardinal” (The Ethiopian Herald, 2018: 12).

The above statement is blaming others who are displeased about the current move of the country. Such kind of expression is highly used to show that the wrong act belongs to others and excluding the self totally from it.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to analyze the narrative structure of the ethnic conflicts that occurred in Ethiopia from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 by the government owned and private owned print media. The general objective of this study is to assess how the public and private newspapers frame ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C. and the specific objectives are to analyze the data sources of ethnic conflict stories used by the two selected newspapers during the study period, to assess the type of framing the selected newspapers used during covering ethnic conflict stories in the sampled period and to compare the framing of the ethnic conflict news stories used by The Ethiopian Herald and Reporter newspapers during the study period. To achieve these objectives, the researcher set the following research questions. These are: What were the data sources for Ethiopian Herald and Reporter newspapers during covering ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C?, What are the frames of the Ethiopian Herald and the Reporter Newspapers used during covering ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C?, How do the Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter newspapers cover causes and consequences of ethnic conflict issues during the study period?, and Why Ethiopian Herald and Reporter Newspapers choose to use this type of frame in ethnic conflicts from April 2, 2018-October 2, 2018 G.C?

To answer these questions, the researcher used qualitative method to identify the media frame on the coverage of the ethnic conflicts by both The Ethiopian Herald and The Reporter. Apart from the frames, the sources of data used by the two selected newspapers, how they cover the causes and consequences of the ethnic conflict stories, and why they chose to frame the ethnic conflict stories that way have been critically analyzed. From the total of 23 news stories, there are four frames: annihilation, attribution to responsibility, incapability of government officials and law and order, crime and justice. However, out of these four frames, the two, i. e, annihilation and attribution to responsibility were dominant.

The first frame, i.e., annihilation, was dominantly used by The Reporter newspaper and the second frame, i.e., attribution to responsibility, was dominantly used by the Ethiopian Herald

newspaper. The urging narrative technique in this newspaper was used to monitor the readers to attempt to bring solutions to the ethnic conflicts, to fight third parties, and to narrow the gap between the government and the public in order to solve the problems. Blaming others was also widely used by The Ethiopian Herald to externalize the responsibility regarding to the ethnic conflict. This shows that the newspaper wants to advice readers to be part of the solution or not to be involved in the conflict, and to externalize the causes of the conflict and the consequences to the third body. One story was found under the pushing responsibility to others frame to let others be part of the responsibility. The third frame, that is, incapability of government officials, was exclusively used by the Ethiopian Herald newspaper, and the fourth, (law and order, crime and justice) was exclusively used by the Reporter newspaper.

Shortly, the Ethiopian Herald is different from the Reporter in the following critical points. One is the frame type it belongs to. The findings revealed that The Ethiopian Herald is put under annihilation frame, particularly; withholding information and omitting the names of the conflicting ethnic groups and attribution to responsibility frame i.e. blaming others, urging narratives and pushing responsibility to others, and very few stories were categorized under the frame of incapability of government officials.

On the contrary, The Reporter news stories were highly found under annihilation frame of omitting the causes of the ethnic conflicts and very few stories were also found under attribution to responsibility frames of blaming others. Besides, the story was also found under law and order, justice and crime frame. Even though it is universally accepted that conflict attracts media, the Ethiopian Herald newspaper did not give much attention to it in the presence of many ethnic conflicts in the country.

However, one might argue that this is because of the language in which the newspaper has been published in English by considering their customers, who are from international and diplomatic communities, national elites and academics believing that, the ethnic issues may be less interesting to their customers.

This may mean that ethnic conflict is taken as an issue that may not deserve international attention. This might be one case to annihilate the ethnic conflict issues; nevertheless, the problem is highly seen in The Ethiopian Herald newspaper while both of them are published in

English. Therefore, language is not the reason, but the case is the editorial policy and ownership. As a result, it is possible to say that the political ideology has had a clear impact on the reporting of ethnic conflicts. In the same manner, the ownership's ideology has an impact on the extent to which papers cover ethnic conflicts. In relation to this, Mulatu (2017: 146) argues that ownership's political ideology had impacted the level of ethnic conflict coverage by taking as an evidence Amare Aregawi, one of the fighters of TPLF and owner of The Reporter newspaper, who allowed The Reporter to be more straightforward and journalists to become active in reporting on critical cases in relation to conflict and policy issues. The same is true in the case of this research because though the names of the conflicting ethnic groups were omitted in the news stories, The Reporter newspaper has relatively covered better ethnic conflict issues.

According to the sources that the selected newspapers used, they used different sources. The first is the government sources that The Ethiopian Herald mostly depended on. In addition, the residents and experts were also used as sources of news stories. From these sources, the majority of the stories of The Ethiopian Herald were written by sourcing officials from government offices at all levels (Federal, Regional, at Woreda level, police, security, and military offices, and kebele level). These officials were used as sources of ethnic conflict stories through their offices and by their names. For this, the researcher interviewed why the journalists from the Ethiopian Herald mostly depended on the government sources. They mostly depended on government officials because without their will, nothing will be done. Informant 4 (April 8, 2019) assures that since the newspaper is government owned, it does not motivate journalists to cover ethnic conflicts. Informant 1, 2, 3 and 5 share the idea. Informant 2 adds that not only the administration but also the editors usually censor ethnic conflict stories.

However, The Reporter newspaper highly relied on both the government and the residents (victims) and academics. Informants from this newspaper told the researcher that they mostly go to the conflicting area to extract the right information about the cases though there are times they do not go physically because of security problems. For this, it has a better ethnic conflict stories coverage compared to The Ethiopian Herald.

In the texts, no real cause of ethnic conflicts is covered by both the selected newspapers. So as to strengthen the idea, the researcher conducted interview. The results of the interview suggest that covering causes of the ethnic conflicts is costly. Informants from The Reporter newspaper said

that covering causes of the ethnic conflicts is not an easy task for journalists. It costs them finance, manpower, materials that can be used during covering the issue, and the security issue. Here they angrily criticize the government as it is careless for giving security for journalists. As to them, even the government itself is an obstacle for their profession. For example, according to informant 6 and 10, after Abiy Ahmed took the power, many ethnic conflicts and other conflicts occurred in different places and called the responsible bodies “*Yeken Jib*” or day-time hyena, and to make residents of a certain area alert, he ordered them to suspiciously attend the “*tsegure liwut*” to refer the unfamiliar person. “Now this word came to challenge us”, they said. The above word challenges them because they are unfamiliar to those conflicting areas.

The other factor was the credibility of the sources. Even though sources know the real cause of the conflict, they give their witness saying unrelated facts for fear of security. As a result, the above selected newspapers could not present complete information for each incident. They might miss names of the conflicting ethnic groups, might present fake causes or might ignore the information.

The selected newspapers seemed choose to use the above identified frames because of their sources. The ultimate goal of the media is to serve the public by providing accurate information timely. However, the above selected newspapers fail to provide accurate information to the public; some of the ethnic conflict issues were ignored or given less attention. For example, The Ethiopian Herald newspaper was not on the position of covering those ethnic conflict issues that occurred in Ethiopia at different times. Even those covered ones were seen very shallowly. This makes the newspaper irresponsible to the public as the public has the right to access the right information timely. Moreover, this newspaper did not want to present the issue being critical. The Reporter also did not go further to be critical of finding the real cause of the ethnic conflicts and mentioning the exact names of the conflicting ethnic groups though is relatively better than The Ethiopian Herald in believing the existence of ethnic conflict and mentioning some of the names.

## 5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings in this framing study, the researcher recommends the following.

- ✓ It is important for The Ethiopian Herald to give better attention for ethnic conflict issues coverage.
- ✓ The two newspapers should clearly state the real cause of the conflict, who was involved in the conflict and the real figure of the consequences. When this is done, the public may go one step into the solution.
- ✓ As far as the government is responsible to safeguard its people, it has to give guarantee for journalists to properly exercise their profession and abstain itself from using odd words that indirectly may initiate conflict against others. For example the word “*Tsegure liwut*” to represent unfamiliar person to the area used by the Premier may expose journalists to be hurt easily when they go to cover.
- ✓ Both media houses and journalism schools should work together to produce qualified journalists that can act according to the professional ethics.
- ✓ They should cover complete news stories to let the readers know the truth.
- ✓ This study will initiate many research ideas to be studied on the framing of ethnic conflicts by the Ethiopian media. This can be done by selecting the setting of the conflict and the media. For example: how did the media frame the ethnic conflicts that occurred in Benshangul Gumuz between Amhara and Gumuz? Assessing the framing of the ethnic conflicts that occurred between the Guji and Gedeo by the Ethiopian print media. Or the framing of ethnic conflict before and after the coming of Abiy Ahmed (PhD) into power by different media outlets.

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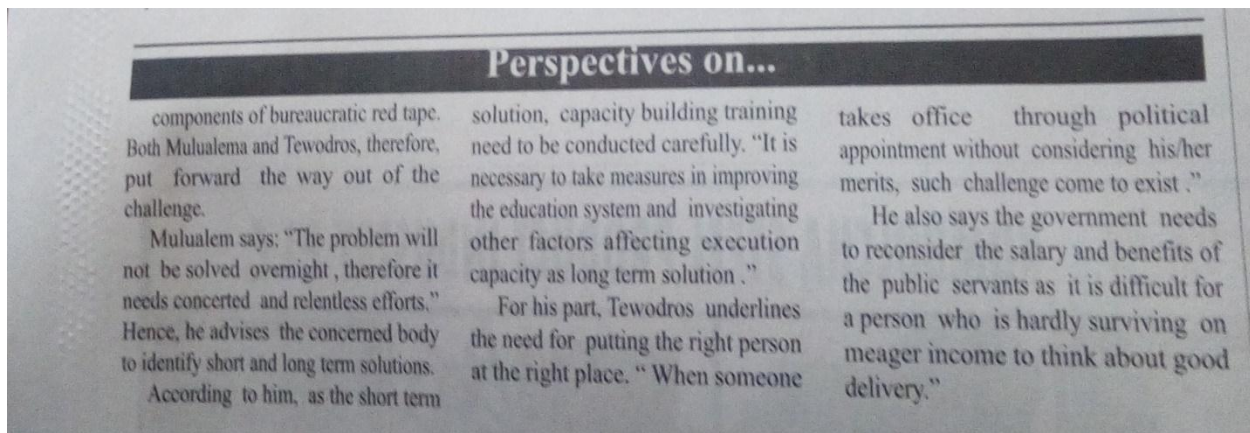
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## Appendices

### Appendix A: News from the Ethiopian Herald

#### Appendix I



# National

## Commission condemns Jigjiga violence

BY HAFTU GEBREZGABIHER  
and AMBO MEKESA

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ethiopian Human Rights Commission said that the recent violence in the country's Somali State has resulted in loss of human life, violation of human/democratic rights, and destruction of religious and government institutions including the Commission's regional branch.

In a press conference yesterday, Information and Communication Director with the Commission Demsew Benti said that the Commission strongly condemned the damage on human life and property in Jigjiga, capital of Somali State and latter on in towns.

The State is under political crisis said Demsew adding that the government has to take care of the life

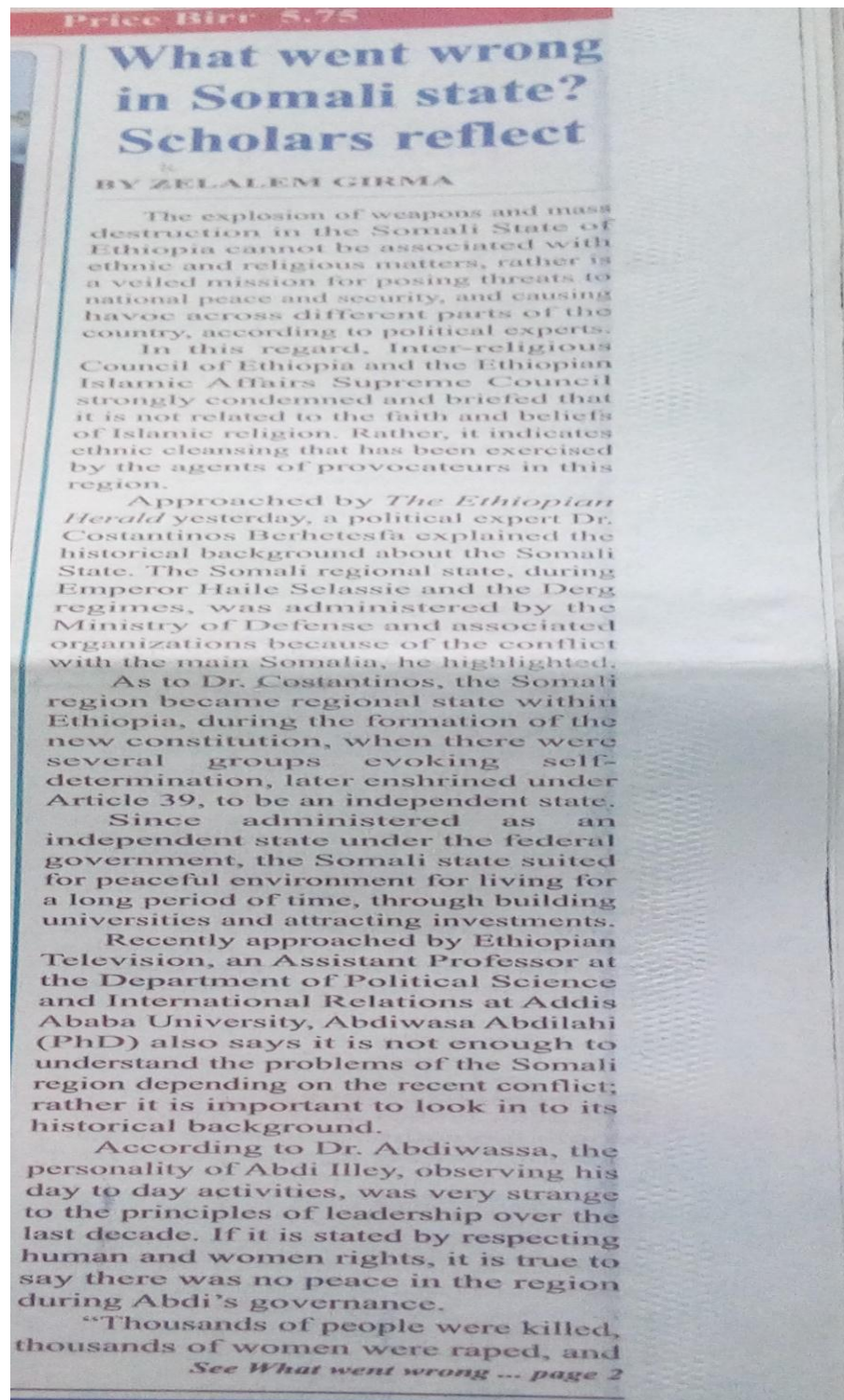
and property of citizens.

"The top officials of the State have also been part of the problem than being the solution."

According to the Commission, several individuals and ethnic groups in the region are targeted and victimized since Saturday. As result, besides the damages on human lives, churches and individuals' properties were damaged.

In addition, the Commission's regional office was also damaged while its employees and regional branch were humiliated, said the Director.

The Director also revealed that the Commission has prepared investigative reports on the violence occurred in various parts of the country. Besides identifying the causes, in collaboration with senior experts, it has also forwarded recommendations to root out the causes of the violence.



## What went wrong...

thousands of people are set off to leave their homes. In these years, the people have chosen silence rather than confronting against him," Dr. Abdiwassa condemned.

Dr. Costantinos also condemned the conflict that threatened the lives of many people, resulting death, and destroying churches and other public institutions. But, the unlawful actions indicate the combination of religious hatred, and opposing the governance of the regional state, he adds.

"Most of the conflicts in the region were related to border demarcation between the Somali and Oromia states, that caused for displacement of over millions of Oromo peoples from Somali."

"It is really gloomy in Ethiopian history, especially at a time that Dr. Abiy came to front talking about love, unity and peace," Dr. Costantinos commented.

"The government has to come up with the details how the state fell in to such horrific situations, and why these things are happening at this time while the new Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed preaching the peace and reconciliation lessons."

"The government should also

find out what really happened in this region, and its root causes as well as what was the role of the federal government in addressing such kind of issues," Dr. Costantinos states.

Of course, human rights were abused, constitutional rights were violated in the region in those days. However, the regional states have constitutional autonomy to determine what to do, the federal government was a bit delayed in intervening and ensuring peace and security, he adds.

Currently, the security forces are now in the region to help both the people and government of regional state to ensure peace and order in the region, Dr. Costantinos noted.

Cognizant of the fact that there have been confusions in the political, social and economic spectrum, Dr. Abiy had made his first trip to the Somali region after taking office as a prime minister to be able to quell the kind of animosity that have been developed between the regional and the surrounding states, Dr. Konstantinos recalls.

Although the government intervenes and tries to bring peace and stability in the region, the issue is more than that if they burnt churches and kill innocent civilians.

In this regard, Abdiwassa stressed that the federal government needs to set some requirements for state leadership, particularly for such imperiled region.

According to him, there may be external agents who involved in this turmoil, because the actions like burning churches reflected the support of some elements like al-Shabaab, and al-Qaida.

Straightforwardly, it was not the entire society that goes out to destroying institutions, robbing banks, and burning religious institutions.

Though it requires deep inspection to identify the reasons why and how the things have been occurred, the problem perhaps related to economic issues, as the region was severely hit by drought and poverty for the last few years.

Regarding good governance in the Somali region, Dr. Abdiwassa says the oppression of Abdi Illey is not new for the people of Somali for the last 10 years; there was no good governance, rather the state was invaded by rebel groups.

According to Dr. Abdiwassa, President Abdi Illey has ever boasted his power more than the kind of Monarchs, as he can do whatever he

wants to do.

"If someone oppose him, he will send them to jail or kill, or rape women, which can be expressed as shameful negligence."

Dr. Abdiwassa also questioned that who allowed him to do such abnormal things, in a country where there is strong federal government, strong security, and strong military. It is not left to him alone to blame, there must be other entity that provokes him to do so.

In fact, many scholars have been witnessing that Abdi was successful in maintaining peace and stability in the region, but the truth is he was retaliating his internal people and violating human rights, Dr. Abdiwassa recalls.

As to him, the recent conflict cannot be related with ethnicity and religious issue. In history, Somali people have never been burnt churches. It rather is a deliberate action taken by Abdi himself.

"It is a lesson for the federal and other state governments to ensure both state and human security. The Military alone will not bring lasting peace in the region, so that all stakeholders need to collaborate and work together to figure out anti-peaceful elements," Dr. Abdiwassa suggested.

# Clan politics characterizes not Ethio-Somali

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

ADDIS ABABA - As the Ethio-Somali people are nationalists and adore their country Ethiopia they cannot buy the clan- leader-favoring-secessionist-sentiment triggered by the displeased few.

This remark was made by Dr. Moha Farah Jire, a highly-educated African Political Peace and Security analyst.

She noted, true to their siblings else where in the country Ethio-Somali people might have passed through ups and downs but as the wind of change is wafting across the nation their case could be no different than other states.

The newly appointed government officials must handle things in a prudential manner.

She expressed condolence to the bereaved and the looted.

Ethio-Somali people have been peacefully living with their neighbors the Oromo People.

*See the full interview on the Society column.*



# Ethio-Somali state

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Dr. Moha Farah Jire is an Ethiopian gem far-famed for her strong ideology of Pan Africanism. She is a highly-educated investigative journalist, an intellectual and an academician. Once, she had served the Prime Minister's media adviser. She had also worked in African Union's Communication Department. She had played a major role in the peace-building process between the two Sudanese. For her dynamism, she was also decorated with awards from both local and international robust activists.

Dr Moha is Ethiopian Somali with a Harare mother. She has a full grasp of the current situation in the state, she knows things on the ground like the palm of her hand. Therefore, with this fact in mind, *The Ethiopian Herald* had approached her regarding the issue as she is a political, peace and security analyst on the current affairs.

**How do you assess the peace and stability of Jijiga after the detention of Abdi Iley, former state chief?**

In fact, currently the state is stable. Almost everything is back to normal. Markets are reopened. Government offices are functioning. But people are still grieving for the loss of their dear ones. They are worried for they have lost their money and properties. In some places, their business did screech to a halt. For some weeks, the situation had spiraled out of control. In places where they have fled to, internally or external displaced people are traumatized. But thanks to God this temporary solution is at least helping people to recover.

**Does the return of quiet shows**

the secessionist move was groundless?

Dear Journalist to reassure you, Ethiopian-Somali State of Ethiopia belongs to this great country and people of the state, soul-and-body Ethiopians, are not going anywhere! Why would they make a secession as a knee-jerk action instigated by some behind the scene? Why is it being propagated they will join Somalia?, Is it because they share the name Somali? This is a rootless propaganda of those sniffing for personal advantages. The state has its own pride. We, Somalis, are a very proud people. We have core values that we cherish and greatly care about. We love our Ethiopia so much. Of course there are yet things that the Somali state demands from the federal government. But we believe in dialogue and healthy discussion. The country has a consolidated constitution, article 39 of which mentions any state can make secession after a referendum has taken place. To make secession, 2/3 of majority must vote "Yes!". It is in fact sad and a very cheap propaganda people can simply say what comes to their mind without pondering over and digesting it before they utter it out.

Once again, I say this country had gone through tough times and the systems were almost dictators for so long. As such, one can not simply open all doors at once, it is natural to expect a challenge. Now, look at Jigjiga. The PM Dr Abiy Ahmed had lift the ban of terrorism placed on ONLF. Its members came in, they are fighters whose best solution of all times is to go to jungles and disturb. So they came in to Jigjiga and from force of habit began disturbing the people and the federal government.

said Mufti. In addition, Mufti called up

# ate people are nationalists

How could they look up to the leadership immediately? They were supporting Abdi Iley simply in the name of clan. This is not a clan issue. Oromos and Somalis share a very long border. They have ties and many things to share on their daily lives. They are more connected than any other clan in the country because of that border. They are sisters and brothers. But the situation has turned horrible when ONLF came to the state and said "We are here to defend our Abdi Iley because the leadership of the country is from another clan." This is a clan attack! I feel sad. I extend my condolences to families who have lost beloved ones. I feel pity to people who were robbed and all for those who got affected by the unnecessary tragic episode.

**What is expected from citizens of living there, newly appointed officials and elites like you in normalizing things and upholding national sentiment?**

First let me remind you that throughout Somali's history, Somalis never accept suppression, oppression and invasions. If they sense there is some thing fishy confronting them they fight against it. I assure you the state of things in Somali state is not a suppression, the whole country is going through changes and the Somali state is part and parcel of it. Let us all accept that in a healthy manner and welcome the new changes. Let us be cooperative and positive citizens, for instance people are worried why the federal police is there while they have their own system and well functioning Liyu (Special) Police. I believe it is a temporary step and the federal government is

responsible for the security of all of its citizens. I suggest the new-mandated leaders to take it very easy. Of course, it is a challenging time and their patience is an important factor.

The federal government has to keep its eyes peeled on what state leaders are saying or writing. This is a very sensitive time and people of the Ethio-Somali State are nursing an injured feeling. So, keeping their feelings high and extending them moral support is necessary. Keep them warm! They are feeling desperate. Some may feel in they do not deserve to decide for their state. Also at times, as may be the case elsewhere, there might had been pockets of racism in the system. So, let us keep things in order.

**As a final point is there anything you would like to convey?**

To wrap up, the Ethio-Somali state people are nationalists and would do anything for their country, they can't simply leave their country and be refugees in other country. They are proudly Ethiopian and nothing can change that.

Citizens are demanding justice and equality for all the states and that is their reward.

The whole country is undergoing a transition. I pray for this great nation, we need to be very attentive and aware of our actions. They may give rise to a no turning point to our democracy and stability. I feel sad by what had happened in Shashemene. It is the first time Ethiopians practiced such a barbaric act of killing an individual on public. This is a tragedy. It was what we got used to see in recently decolonized state of Africa, indeed it was very inhuman. I call the security officials to do their



Dr. Moha Farah Jire

job. How can one feel safe to travel from one point to another if this can happen in a broad daylight? We have an age-old culture of tolerance. Thus we need to say "No!" to such inhuman witnessed in Jigjiga, Shsemene and some other parts of the country. This is unbecoming of Ethiopians, for ages, marked for cordiality. We don't have to allow such cruel actions to continue.

BEREHANENA SELAM PRINTING ENTERPRISE

# Where does ethnic politics take us?

**BY LEULSEGED WORKU**

Lately, the issue of ethnic politics is being fanned in the social media and by ordinary citizens, who take top leadership for a way of optimizing benefits for own ethnic group. If the top political position is taken by a leader from X ethnic group, it is not few who consider the unfolding a God-sent opportunity. Using this as a ground, *The Ethiopian Herald* had contacted scholars about their reflections.

Abebaw Ayalew, is historian at Addis Ababa University. For him, ethnic politics was not as such characteristic of Ethiopian politics. "If we go back to medieval times, 1890s and 20th century ethnic-based politics had no place in the heart of leaders. Whoever comes to power was considered as a leader who represents the whole society not a particular group.

In those days the Amhara king does not necessarily represent the Amhara people. An Oromo ruler does not necessarily represent the Oromos. Leaders used to represent the whole Ethiopia. This system had been the case for almost a century in Ethiopian history.

Ethiopian politics has become ethnified beginning from 1991 when EPRDF implemented an administration system based on ethnic and language identities. Administrative divisions have become largely dependent on ethnic identity," says Professor Abebaw.

He added, "For that simple matter, most people started to manifest a particular privilege and ownership. Most people living in a particular state started to consider administrative division as a means for political autonomy and ownership of property, land, resources and everything."

This system has led to the development of a bent considering a particular leader (in this case a Prime minister) represents solely a

*See Where does ethnic... Page 2*



## Where does ethnic...

given ethnic group he hails from. For instance, during the time of the late Prime Minister's administration some who hail from his background started to claim "This is our time. We must have a privilege."

This trend seems to have continued during the time of the former Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, but with a lesser degree. Because, under pressure, he was not as such powerful in exercising his authority. But, some people from the South have take it for granted that it is their time to have a special privilege in terms of economic advantage and political posts. But this is the understanding of the ordinary people. It does not include the majority.

This type of people dream to have special privilege in terms of economy and political posts, among others.

Professor Abebaw recommends that the political system of the country should detach itself from ethnicity. What is more, political leaders have to play a leading role in convincing citizens that they are representing Ethiopia not a single ethnic group.

The ruling EPRDF party has to reform itself. It has to adjust itself in terms of the political interest of the majority. Not necessarily ethnic identity.

As long as political parties including the incumbent are following the same trend the problem will be there. Rectifying this has to be an assignment of opposition parties. They have to reflect the interest of the people not the interest of a particular group. After all the fundamental question of Ethiopians is democracy.

Kassu Chamiso, is a lecturer of History at Arba Minch University. According to him, divide and rule was the strategy of colonizers. It is the legacy of colonialism. But it is still at work in most African countries.

Ethnic-based administration had been applied by colonizers to divide and rule their subjects. But it had caused challenges for themselves. After decolonization, the African politicians have tried to sustain the divisive play. But for most of them, it has become a time bomb. For instance, the Ethiopia-Eritrean conflict is not simply a conflict of two countries. It is a repercussion of the colonial legacy.

Girmay Haleform is the other Historian at Aksum University. He believes that ethnic-based politics has never been profitable. Ethiopia is not suitable for such type of system.

"Ethnic based politics does not properly work in Ethiopia as Ethiopians have developed a century-old culture of living in harmony and tolerance."

Ethnic-based politics is not a problem by itself. The problem is when people abuse the system. They way they perceive it will distort the real meaning.

This is particularly true for ordinary people who associate political position with special privileges for particular ethnic group.

In parliamentary system, the people will elect their prime minister indirectly through their representatives. He might hail from Oromo, Tigre, Amhara, Kembata or any Ethnic group. But, the moment he assumes power, he is no more representing a particular ethnic group. He represents the whole nation.

Emlalu Fisha, is a legal professional and member of Semayawi party. According to him, Ethnic politics is costing the country a lot of things.

We are talking about the greatness and Renaissance of Ethiopia. At the same time we are focusing on ethnic-based politics. If the system is not run in consonance with a democratic system, it will be a challenge for our greatness.

Whenever a given political party comes into position it has to join the system representing the majority not a particular group.

The political system has to respond to economic and political injustices. The country should not be built on ethnic-based party.

He suggests that the nation needs a political institution that embraces all members of the society free from ethnicity. Political parties have to be responsible and liable for their deeds. Civil societies and medias have also a responsibility in promoting a political system that is free from ethnic-based political system.

Scholars have also responsibility in this regard, says Emlalu. "There are some scholars who observably are buckling under influences. They are seen giving up the concept of Ethiopians to pursue ethnic-based politics. We need to dissuade them to fight for the truth. We have divided the nation with ethnicity lines within two decades. It is not too late to mend things and unify the people within the shortest time possible."

# Ethiopian religious council condemns Jigjiga's violence

BY AMBO MERASA

The Ethiopian religious leaders condemned the violence in Ethiopian Somali's and some part of the countries, in a press conferences held on August 13.

Relating about the unfolding, Patriarch of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, His holiness Abuna Mathias, Archbishop of Axum and Ichoge of sea of the saint Taklehmanot, condemned the human causality and destruction on properties. Many orthodox churches were subject to conflagration. The servants and priests in the churches were scalded by the fire, said his holiness. What happened in Jigjiga and its environs was immoral and unbecoming of a human being whose faculties are enaot, said his holiness.

As to him, the church will organize mass for the repose of the soul of victims and martyrs and they will be honored for the great sacrifices they paid. The church will also pray for those who committed such immoral crimes on the church, because the Holly Bible commands the faithful to pray for wrong doers rather than blaming them. The Gospel we preach is a Gospel of love and mercy, added the Patriarch. The country was known for her peace, love, respect, and unity. Though, what happened is painful, we have to pray for the peace of the nation. May God help us to forestall a similar challenge again, said the patriarch.

Many Ethiopians are living abroad



in peace, but what is happening in the nation is evil and cruel. Though the prime minister has been preaching about love, unity and synergy, the responses in some pockets of the nation was the reverse said his holiness. The patriarch noted that the church has opened a Bank account to solicit fund for the displaced.

In addition, the patriarch stressed the government must not let down its guard in protecting the innocent from the heinous.

Mufti Hajji Omar Indris, representing President of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, condemned the offense a politically-instigated crime by the less sagacious. All human beings are from the lineage of Adem, the first man created by Allah. Allah did announce the mushrooming

of different religious. The diabolic few who perpetrated such a brutal, cruel and immoral sin have gone astray from the way of Allah. Pray we shall for them!

In the Holy Qur'an, there is no verse that encourages and allows such destruction and violence. Even the Qur'an commands, kill s/he who kills the innocent, cut the hands of s/he who cuts the hands of others. Robbery and murder have no place in Islam. What happened in Jigjiga and some parts of the country has nothing to do with other religions, said Mufti.

As to him, every religious father should prudentially shape the way of their preaching. They have to preach love and patience. We have to preach how to peacefully coexist with others, said Mufti. In addition, Mufti called up

on the government to punish the wrong doers and protect the nation.

Help from Allah is the greats of all, "Parallel to our prayer we have to work on how victims could easily resume normal life going back home and start their businesses," said Mufti Hajji at press conferences.

Ethiopian Catholic Cardinal, Berhaneyesus Demerew Souraphiel announced that his church vehemently condemns the immoral act of destruction in some parts of the country. As to him, Jigjiga's violence was heartbreaking. It was an evil act and foolishness. The country is well known for her hospitality and cordiality. What happened was done by the displeased to tarnish the image of the nation, said the Cardinal. In addition, he noted that his church is always ready to extend support and to stand with the displaced.

Ethiopian Evangelical Church President and Chief Committee's of Ethiopian Religious Council, Priest Yohanes Yegezu stated that every citizen has equal right in the country and it is concerned about its peace. In the previous years, the country had lapsed into a serious political and social crisis. "Thanks to Almighty God and martyrs, we have got freedom to express our fillings." But at some pockets, citizens are seen dying and killing each other for unknown and inane reasons, said the priest.

As to him, humanity doesn't need

to belong to a religious group. Tolerance and living together in love is an instinct given to all men by God. Everyone, who had hand in such atavism will be judged before God. In addition, they called up on every Ethiopians to support the displaced.

Ethiopian Full Gospel President and Committee's Chief of Ethiopian Religious Council, Pastor Tsediku Abdo on his part condemned the unaccountability of some government officials that triggered the political crisis. As to him, the government should accuse groups and individuals involved in the violence, because protecting the peace of a nation is the great role and responsibility of the government.

The church will continue preaching and teaching love of the good news, it is because of this reason why we are here and created for. On top of prayer, the Church will give financial and moral support to the displaced, said the president.

Ethiopian seventh days Adventist International Church, Pastor Temesgen Bulti and Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church and Chief Committee's of Ethiopian Religious Council, Dr. Iyasu Elias condemned the violence. As to them, everyone should pray and create awareness among citizens regarding peaceful coexistence. In addition, the church will delightfully help the displaced, said the leaders.

# Perspectives on peace, order measures

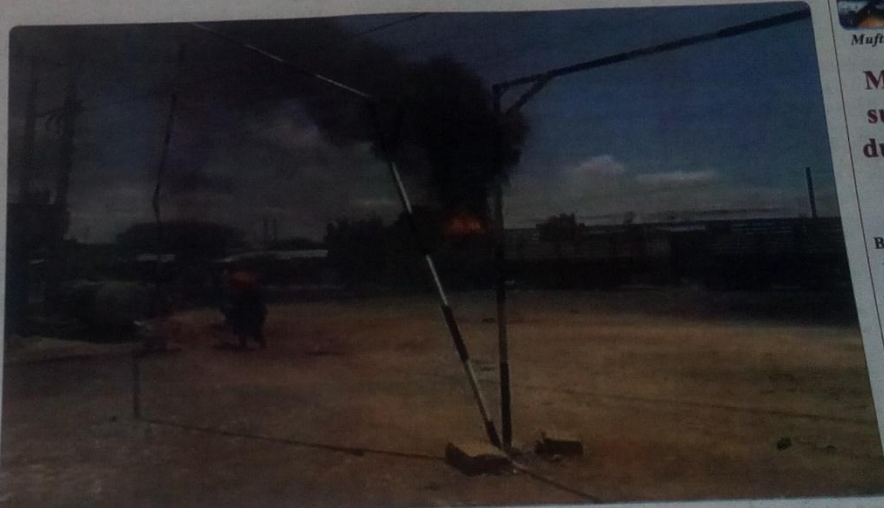
BY YOHANES JEMANEH

More recently Ethiopian Somali State was in chaos and civilian casualties as well as property damages were widely reported on various media outlets. But, experts have their say on the legal grounds for the measures taken to restore peace and order apart from upholding human rights in this State.

Now, there is comparable stability in the State and the residents are getting back to their normal lives. Many believed that the major reason behind the instability was the fabrication news by some of the state authorities on the federal government claiming on practice article 39 of the constitution, which states the right to self determination up to secession.

It was on Monday August 6, 2018 that the Federal Government through the Communication Affairs Minister Ahmed Shide announced as per the request of the Somali State Government, the federal security force was ordered to intervene in a bid to pacify the state.

However, Temesgen Tessema, a



Jijiga during the unrest

Law Lecturer at Wollo University, is doubtful of Ahmed's statement. He says although it was necessary to intervene to save basic human rights from violation, the federal government should

have been strategic in dealing with such incident. "According to the constitution and other laws of the nation, the Prime Minister could pass state of emergency to pacify the state, but he did not do

so." Even the current instability is emanated from the request to apply the Constitution. "The state leader was

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provide services such as sauna, steam bath, food and beverages among others," the Hotel Deputy

he indicated. Also Jupiter International Hotel has during their arrival and departure time

## Perspectives on ...

asked to apply article 39 of the constitution while we do not have any idea why he decided that. However the federal government intervened without the request of the state. And this is also breaking the law.

The federal government might need to practice its responsibility but the way it has engaged was legally wrong."

Ethnic based federalism mainly hinders the respect of human and democratic right. And it is hard to interfere in states' affairs as the system is very sensitive by its nature. Due to this, various human and democratic

violations happen but do not get the needed nee-jerk reaction. Biniyam Abate Acting Director of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council is second to Temesgen.

The human right violation is not new to the country; it has been clearly seen month ago when the Somali and Oromia States got into conflict. However the government is hesitant to take instant measure. It has to play its responsibility of protecting human right of the people, he says.

The federal government reaction to pacify the Somali State human right violation was too late. The government

shall give emphasis on human right violations beyond the intervention mechanisms. Biniyam also calls on the government to bring those perpetrators who took part recently in human right violation before law.

Blue Party Chairperson Yeshiwas Assefa indicates that the instability of the country as a general reflection of the sabotage made by corrupted officials to disrupt the national reform agenda in a bid to cover their misdeed.

The state administrator is also part of the instability. Therefore the government needs to take strict measures on the officials and their connivances, he notes.

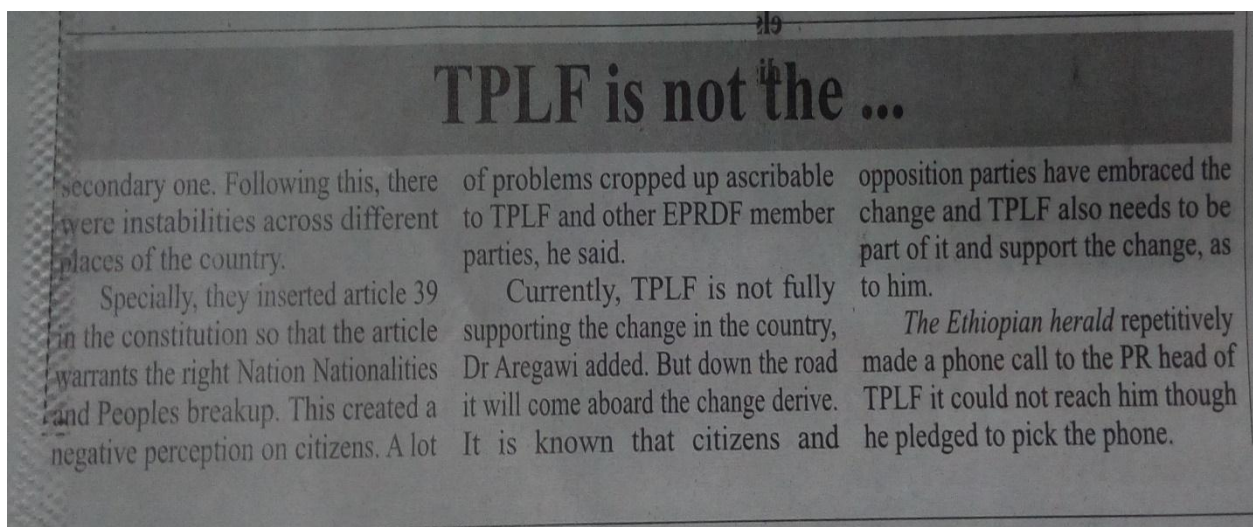
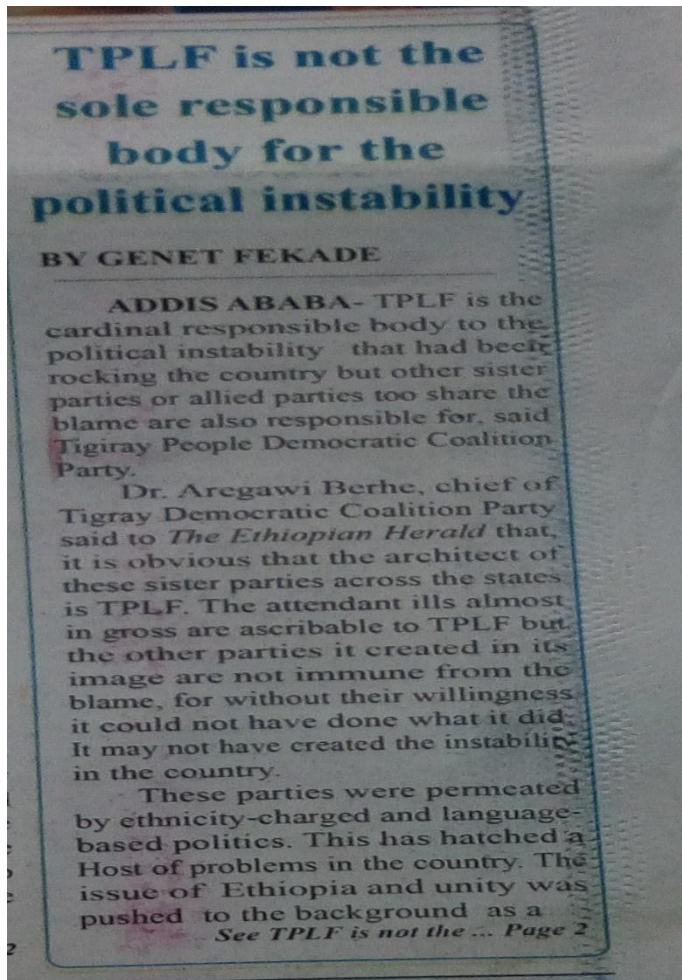
As to Yeshiwas, the federal government must take strong measures on those engaged in human right violation unless otherwise, it should be asked by the local and international organizations working on human and democratic rights. It has been hesitant for a long time when human right violated and institutions were destroyed. From now and on, the government must take immediate measure against the criminals, Yeshiwas underlines.

Various human and democratic right violations and ethnic based conflicts are once relating to the ratification process of the Constitution in one or

another ways, according to Temesgen. At that time, the people were not properly represented, during the ratification process there were confusion and the nationalities had not have clear position on it.

The constitution was just the product of a winning party. And the inclusion of the articles that stated about various contradictory issues including the secession clearly shows the flaw.

Therefore to serve human and democratic rights and to ensure lasting peace, the government might examine its ethnic based federalism, the professionals suggest.



## Deep investigation to be held over Burayu strife

BY TEWODROS KASSA

**ADDIS ABABA**—Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Commissioner Addisu G/Egziabher (PhD) said that deep investigation to be held over Burayu strife.

He explained on a press conference yesterday that his office condemns the act of displacing residents and loss of lives. "The action violates human rights and including the right to move and work everywhere," he added.

The Commission finalizes preparations to undertake a thorough investigation and will work to the supremacy of rule of law, he said.

Similarly, the Commission also sends investigating group to the Dawaro and Guraghe Zones of the Southern Nations,



*Addisu G/Egziabher*

Nationalities and Peoples, he indicated.

According him, the Commission presents recommendations to the government body to work widely on rehabilitating the displaced and provide reliable protection to citizens.

Meanwhile, 600 plus suspects have been arrested over Burayu strife, according to Federal Police Commission.

# Most displaced people return home: Commission

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA- National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) announced that almost all citizens who were displaced by the recent unrest in various parts of the country are now resettled to their homes.

NDRMC Public Relation and Communication Directorate Debebe Zéwde told *The Ethiopian Herald* that over 153,000 people were displaced from homes in the Ethiopian Somali State due to the recent riots. Furthermore, 894 thousand peoples left their homes in West Guji and Gedeo zones of Oromia and SNNPS states respectively.

The Director noted that among people displaced from Gedeo zone, over 450,000 returned home meanwhile over 188 thousand people who were flee from West Guji zone are now restarted lives in places they were born.

He said that NDRMC is extending support for the displaced



and helping them to rehabilitate by providing food and other amenities for six months since their return home.

Debebe pointed out that the Commission is also conducting various precautions activities that have been proven fruitful in hampering the

occurrences of both natural and man-made disasters in various parts of the country.

NDRMC is partnering with relevant stakeholders including Federal Affairs and Pastoral Area

Development and Ministry of Defense to identify the victims and render integrated support through modern means including helicopters to access people in difficult terrains, he noted.

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# Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

In our day to day life, love, consideration, and extending a helping hand are part and parcel of our social interactions. Yet disagreements and conflicts could surface at times. Various issues ranging from a trifle to burning one could be a source of conflict between human beings. Society has its own traditional or cultural ways of resolving conflicts that crop up among different people. In this piece, the writer tries to review the impact of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in among Ethiopian communities.

Approached for his take on the matter, Addis Ababa Linguistics and Folklore Instructor and Researcher, Professor Alemu Kaassa noted that "When we talk about the ancient civilization of Ethiopia we are saying it has its own home-grown or local means of resolving conflicts. Now, we are trying to run traditional conflict resolutions system parallel to modern ones."

Cultural conflict resolution system is taken as one effective option of resolving clashes. More often, citizens residing in the rural towns, have their own system of managing disputes through local means they developed all along the road now. *Shunglana*, which literally means the council of elders, uses beliefs and words of honor to broker peace and strengthen ties.

Regarding its implementation, Professor Alemu explained that though practices vary from place to place, there are commonalities between traditions. In a bid to solve disputes that occur between two bodies, the elders order individuals locked in a conflict to shake hands in a bowlful blood of a slaughtered livestock. In so doing the conflicting parties prove they are one. The practice signifies that; "You are siblings of the same womb as such there is no need for conflict."

In other places, there are different traditional practices such as, dipping into a river, washing one's bodies to wash off



Cultural conflict resolution system is taken as one effective option of resolving clashes

criminal chaffs. The other culture is ostracizing the criminal from the community. Still, others put fire arms on the ground to stride over it. In other community people locked in a conflict eat a portion of meat together. Some others declare truce holding the opposite ends of wet grasses and kissing each other going to certain religious institutions.

The judgments passed in the conflict resolution system vary as per the degree of the severity of the crime—lightness or hardness, said Prof. Alemu adding that most of the verdicts are directly related to people's day to day activities. Some of them are causes for the loss of lives while others for the continuation of peaceful lives. Anyways, people have their own contribution in further strengthening their social fabrics and unity.

When we look at cultural conflict resolutions in the prism of modernity, it could be taken good or bad. A criminal who killed a person, for instance, could be punished as per the dictates of modern law. Greasing one's hand with manures or animals' refuse, the cultural system facilitates conditions to clean the hands of a person though such a trend is the

violation of human rights and an odd practice.

Both modern and traditional conflict resolution practices have their own positive and negative sides. Hence, one could pose the question "Which one is better?"

Responding to such questions, Prof. Alemu said, it is better to make use of traditional conflict resolution systems blending it with the modern system, he added.

So far, here, society has been conducting traditional conflict resolution system as per its own belief. It therefore goes without saying people feel discomfort when traditional systems are replaced with modern ones. Are things affecting society's way of living? Responding to the inquires, Prof. Alemu said that, as it is intrinsic, no one could completely distance itself from conflict. It is an internal behaviour. The important thing here is, checking whether the merit outweighs the demerit or vice versa? Thus, differentiating should be the number one task. Hence, doing away with the ones with negative repercussions and distilling from the past modernizing the important traditions than ever before pays. Indeed, such a task takes time. As knowledge is

soured for a certain group practicing it. It is another person outside the culture is heard referring a certain cultural practice as good or bad.

According to him, even a boy may suffer a cold shoulder when he returns home right after bitten by someone else. A male family member is also expected to take even for a relative whose blood is shed by someone else. Otherwise, society members will distance him or shun him. They insult and discourage him day and night. He would be treated as if he were a member of the fair sex. To avoid such ill treatment he could sometimes commit a suicide. Such a problem is manifest in certain community.

As this tradition is deeply entrenched, it is being taken as an identity of the community and affecting the society, he said adding, concerned bodies should mobilize the public to raise awareness of the society to overturn such mentality and eradicate other harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, abduction and others.

In a bid to effect change, could we claim the proverbs, poem, and folktales must disappear? Responding to the question, he said it is possible to preserve the ones and transfer them to generations to come. In this regard, more is expected from professionals to conduct study on the matter.

Approached for his say on the issue, Addis Ababa University Law Instructor, Jetu Idossa said that in traditional conflict resolution system, there are various useful things. If they are included in criminal code of the country or acknowledged, the society can resolve its problem by its own. This way they can ease courts' burden.

Especially, by resolving conflicts in a traditional way, they could assist the government by ensuring peace within a given society. When such implementation faces problem, it could be refined based on feed backs, he added.

We can tap such traditional knowledge in redressing the knotty challenge the nation is confronted with lately.

Tool to rebranding Ethiopia

# Why chaos, violence come back in positive-sum era

BY YOSEF KETEMA

Sooner after all Ethiopians welcomed the New Year in great zeal as the nation has already begun to get back on the rails with the current popular slogan, positive-sum a.k.a 'Medemer', unfortunately some parts of the country had witnessed the comeback of chaos and violence as well as casualties and unlawful evictions.

Why is that and what needs to be done to prevent and tackle such turnouts for good?

For the Addis Ababa University Department of Political Science and International Relations Undergraduate Program Coordinator and lecturer Adane Alemayehm, the current situation of Ethiopia is a type of transition in which the government is striving to widen the country's political landscape taking basic political and democratic measures. He, therefore, says the recent violent activities were expected to unfold and so they should not be taken as the failure or problem of the reform. "It is rather the result of our immature political culture in-terms of entertaining and respecting various ideologies."

According to him, there are a lot of things that could surface in such transitional period; because, when there is a transition movement, it means power, resource (money), political



positions and other things are being transferred. Thus, the situation could bring clash of interests over those things between groups and individuals.

Also the same University Political Science and International Relations Lecturer Ermias Kebede says : "Though there are components of transition within the same regime, it is complicated and too early to generalize the situation."

As to him, the comeback of violence and chaos are the result of friction between

different groups in order to gain political gains .

But, Adane points out irresponsible activists and hatred speech dissemination through social media as the triggering factors of the latest violence. "Taking the advantage of the present political freedom, several people who are actively engaged in agitating youths of some ethnic group against the other. That is why we witnessed the recent killings and forcible evictions ."

Entirely agreeing with Adane's remarks

on the negative impacts of the dissemination of hate speeches through social media, Ermias notes that, "We are now on early stages to adopt democratic culture ,however, most social media users seem to lack critical thinking, therefore it can cost a lot to let the social media without any regulation at least for the security of citizens."

In addition, he says it shows that these violent groups could do more, if the situation was more conducive in these days, therefore the government needs to save the ongoing change ensuring rule of law."

Moreover, he says the government is now taking a number of measures that widen the political landscape such as inviting various political parties and figures that were living in exile to come back home.

"This by itself makes the ruling party to shoulder a big commitment in terms of strengthening law and order more than ever."

As to Adane , the ruling coalition member parties made leadership reform and remove some senior officials, and the same thing was also being carried out at the federal level to replace some officials and authorities that are hated by majority of people, however, they have failed to make them accountable for the crimes which

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## Why chaos,...

they have committed : “I believe this action have contributed in undermining of the rule of law .”

As the remedy of the situation , Adane stresses that there are number of social grievances that need to be solved through deep discussion and dialogue at wider public level.

“There are historically claimed happenings that different groups interpreted in a divergent ways. These all need to be discussed openly. The youths should also be involved in discussion.”

Ermias also underlines that Dr Abiy and his leadership brought

very genuine ideas that have won the hearts and minds of many individuals and also believed good for everyone; “But I'm doubtful on how much his brilliant ideas have been understood at a grass root level. Again, I believe it is better for Dr Abiy to replicate his reform efforts through rigorous trainings, discussions and dialogues.

There should be a well established common ground on the idea of national unity.” For him, Ethiopia has a number of common sentiments that other countries lacked in order to develop common identity.

# Ethnic conflict yet again contributes to more IDP's

By Dawit Endeshaw

Despite a little support by regional governments and officials, hundreds of displaced people from Oromia and Beinshangul Gumz Regional States are languishing in the harshest living conditions in Bahir Dar, the capital of Amhara Regional states, *The Reporter* has learnt.

The latest round of internally displaced Ethiopians comes just months after the United Nations' last year report which indicated at least one million Ethiopians were internally displaced. The situation is far from over where thousands of Ethiopians are still feeling the pinch of ethnic conflict and conflict driven displacements across the country.

Last year, the majority of the displaced population was from Somali and Oromia Regional States.

Once again, thousands of Ethiopians, this time ethnic Amharas, are displaced from different woredas of Beinshangul and Oromia. The forced displacement of Amharas from Beinshangul began in October, 2017 while Oromia saw its influx in February, 2018.

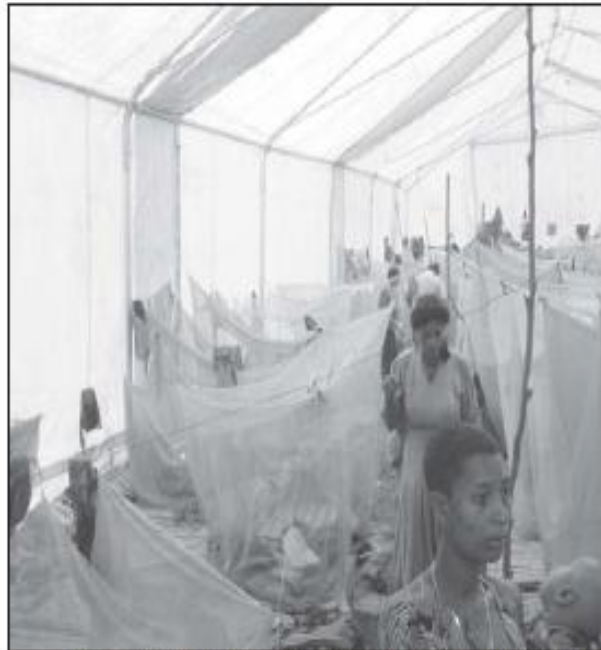
*The Reporter* met with those who are displaced from the two regions on June 11, 2018 (Bahir Dar) where around 421 of them are temporarily living in churches and temporary shelters.

*The Reporter* paid a visit to these places. From the total number of displaced Amharas, close to 135 are currently sheltered in St. George church, just a few minutes' walk from the office of the Amhara Region president, Gedu Andargachew.

Moreover, from those who are living under the mercy of the church, children under the age of five and lactating mothers account for majority.

*The Reporter* observed that they are now living under tents donated by Red Cross and houses owned by the church.

"We are getting no support from the



Children and lactating mothers are among hundreds of ID who currently living inside tents.

regional government," said a father of two who is displaced from Kamashe Zone of Beinshangul Region. *The Reporter* chose to hide his identity given the political sensitiveness of the situation.

In fact, officials came and confront us when we speak out about our situation. They told us we either have to go back to Beinshangul or to our families in different Woredas across Amhara Region, said the father. He has been living in Beinshangul since 2006, owning his own land and involved in business activities.

The forced displacement from Beinshangul particularly began reportedly following a killing of a young man from Gumz Ethnic background, allegedly by a man whose ethnic background is Amhara.

Following the incident, a conflict has erupted which led to the forced evictions

and displacements of Amharas.

Unconfirmed testimony from those displaced from Beinshangul stated that at least dozens of killings have taken place in a vengeful killing of the teenager from Gumz.

At the time, all of us were trying to escape and the security forces from the region were very negligent to protect us and our homes from arsonists, said another man who is in his late 20's.

It was only after the involvement of the federal force that we managed to run for our lives, told *The Reporter*.

Then he and others were transferred to Amhara region. In the first place, the region sends most of the displaced to their families and temporary shelters. After staying at their families for a few weeks,

most of them went back to Bahir Dar in search for a solution from the regional administrations.

After moving from one church to another, 135 were allowed to live inside St. George Church. Around 286 of them live under a tent inside the premises under the region's Disaster Prevention & Risk Management Commission.

The group inside the church was composed of people mostly displaced from Beinshangul. While the one under the supervision of the Disaster Prevention & Risk Management Commission are dominated by those displaced from Oromia.

Moreover, from the 286 individuals, 170 of them are from Buno Bedelle and Jitma Zones of Oromia Regional states.

*The Reporter* learnt that those displaced from Oromia began to come from places including Denehi, Dabahana, Limukassa, Bedelle, Atnago and Agaro Woredas.

The forced eviction was conspired and conducted by a group of men, said those evicted from the aforementioned district.

A father of four who used to live in Buno Bedelle Woreda said he and his friends were told to live their houses because of their ethnic identity.

"During that time, we were forced to leave. We were told by officials of the Woreda that we cannot even sell our houses," he said.

He lived in the area for more than 20 years as a farmer. He has a two-hectare plot of land where he has the right over the land. *The Reporter* saw the legal documents issued by the region.

For the past months, both Oromia Regional and Amhara Regional states were silent about the fact that there were actually displaced Amharas from Oromia Region.

In fact, officials from Oromia till this week have not openly said there were forcefully

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## Ethnic conflict yet . . .

CONT'D FROM PAGE 3

displaced or who was involved in the eviction.

In a recent statement by Negeri Lencho(PhD), communication head of Oromia region, those particularly displaced from Buno Bedelle Zone were said to have left willingly despite an interference by Zonal Officials begging them to stay.

Two days ago, in his personal Facebook account, Nigussu Tilahun, Communication Bureau head of Amhara Regional State, said that liaisons have been in place to assist those displaced from both regions. He also said that there were consultations held between officials of Amhara, Oromia and Benishangul Regions.

However, *the Reporter* confirmed that those sheltered in Churches and temporary tents are getting little support from the Amhara Region.

People who are still living there late June told *The Reporter* in a phone call that a significant number of people inside the tents are suffering from diarrhea which they said is due to a lack of sanitation of the daily meal provided to them.

In addition, those sheltered in churches are getting

no support. They rely on generous help from the residents of Bahir Dar and the surrounding Woredas.

On a daily basis, at least ten people suffer from AWD caused by contamination, said one of the displaced person living in the tents.

After *The Reporter* paid a visit to the temporary shelters inside the regions Disaster Prevention Commission, it was told that the security at the gate became stricter where no one is allowed to go inside or outside.

*The Reporter's* attempts to reach Nigussu Tilahun did not bore fruit despite repeated phone calls and SMS messages.

It is to be recalled that according to a report jointly released by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicated that close to one million people have been displaced due to the conflict along the borders of the Oromia and Ethiopian-Somali regional states as of last year.

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# New PM's first real test

By Brook Abdu

It all seemed like the conflict and public uprising that rocked the country for the past three years is finally coming to an end following the change of guard at the very top of the ruling party, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), as Abiy Ahmed (PhD) assumed the chairmanship and the Prime Minister position of Ethiopia.

But, it was not even three months into his tenure when a relatively calmer region of the country, Southern Regional State, was rocked by another ethnically charged violence. The unrest spread to three Zonal administrations in no time.

Wolkite was the first of these three places that saw a bloody ethnic conflict which resulted in huge damages to property and loss of lives. The conflict that broke out between the Gurages and Kebenas, on June 13, 2018, claimed the life of one person while leaving seven others heavily injured. Several kiosks, shops, vehicles and other properties were set on fire.

Perhaps the most distractive of three conflicts is the one that happened on the day of the Fiche Chambalala celebration (June 14) which marks the New Year according to the Sidama people customs and traditions. The celebration is held every year in the regional capital Hawassa. What began as a small clash

and throwing of stones grew to be a full-fledged conflict between the Sidama and the Wolayta ethnic groups, according to Solomon Hailu, communications head of the regional government.

Solomon told *The Reporter* on Tuesday June 19 that 10 people have been killed by the conflict and nine sustained major injuries while 80 people walked away with minor injuries. As a result of the conflict, 3,500 peoples have also been displaced from their residential areas and their properties have been damaged. The conflict also resulted in property damages which are not yet accounted for fully.

Although the conflict in the region assume a different form resembling a question of self-administration, later on, Solomon said that such questions could have been forwarded using constitutional means; and that it cannot be a justifiable action by any reason.

Wolayta was another part of the region to experience a similar conflict after two days on June 16. What began as an opposition to the attack on the ethnic Wolaiytas in Hawassa grew to a full-blown violence and the Wolayta Sodo University, Sodo Agricultural College, Sodo Primary and Secondary School as well as government institutions and private properties were damaged and set on fire. Damage to property was unaccounted for and both private and government services have not

commenced for almost five days.

Three have also died in this conflict and 10 people injured.

According to the deputy administrator of the Wolaiyta Zone, Getahun Garedew (PhD), the public's outrage came as a result of the attack on the ethnic Wolaiytas especially related to the annual Fiche Chambalala celebration in regional capital. And the scale of the attack has been growing from time to time.

In his Eid Al Fitr message, Prime Minister Abiy said that the conflicts were caused by groups that do not want peace and the public has to understand that these "daytime hyenas" want the people to kill each other and benefit out of it.

After addressing to the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) on Monday June 18, the Prime Minister flew to Hawassa to discuss with the society and the administration of the Sidama Zone.

The Prime Minister condemned the attacks and stressed that they should not happen again. While assuring the PM that the attacks on the innocent civilians by no means represent the Sidama people, they presented their questions relating to self-administration to which he replied "the need for self-administration should be discussed thoroughly both at the regional and federal level and its benefits should be analyzed in terms of the projected costs".

After his discussion, the Prime Minister visited the displaced people camped in various locations in the city.

Meanwhile, similar discussions were held in Wolaiyta Sodo and Wolkite towns where similar questions of self-administration were raised to the Prime Minister.

Getahun, the deputy head of the Wolaiyta Zonal Administration, stated that the acknowledgement of the growing attacks inflicted on the ethnic Wolaiytas by the Prime Minister was a big move as it has never been acknowledged by any governmental body both at the regional and federal levels.

In a meeting that the Prime Minister had held in Wolkite, he urged the leaders of the Sidama, Wolaiyta, Gurage and Kebena zonal and woreda administrators to resign as soon as possible taking responsibility for the damages that happened because of the conflicts.

Following the call of the Prime Minister, five senior officials from the Wolaiyta region have resigned: the head of the Zonal Administration, his deputy, Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM) Zonal head, rural as well as urban politics heads of the SEPDM.

The Prime Minister appreciated the move by the Zonal Administration officials and called for the others to follow suit.

# Sidama Zone detains 226 in relation to deadly conflict

Brook Abdu

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The Sidama Zone Administration has detained 226 suspects who were said to have been involved directly or indirect in the recent violence that rocked the city of Hawassa resulting in the death of 10 people, caused severe injuries to nine people and minor injuries to 80 people, *The Reporter* has learnt.

The conflict had also resulted in the displacement of 3,500 individuals.

"We have detained suspects involved directly or indirectly in the recent violence in Hawassa and we will continue to assess and identify whoever is involved in the conflict," Aklilu Adula, head of the Sidama Zone Administration told *The Reporter*.

According to the head of the administrator, the conflict does not by any means represent the people of Sidama and it was perpetuated by individuals. He also added that the Administration will work to further identify if there are any officials



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*The conflict had also resulted in the displacement of 3,500 individuals.*

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involved in the violence and bring them to justice.

The Zonal Administration has also

established a task force which will reinstate the displaced and return the looted property.

Aklilu also said that he was frustrated by the mainstream and social media which has depicted this conflict to be an ethnic one between the Wolaiyta and Sidama ethnic groups, which he said were both suppressed during the past regimes.

But, Aklilu said that the resignation of the Zonal and Woreda administrators which was demanded by the Prime Minister during his visit to the Southern Region will follow the political decision-making procedure. Hence, it is not up to the individual officer to relieve himself or herself from their duties given to them by the public.

A relatively calm region, the South has seen three conflict flashpoints in a span of two weeks: Hawassa, Wolaiyta Sodo, and Wolkite towns, which were all said to be ethnically charged.

All of the conflicts in the region resulted in property damages that were yet to be accounted for fully.

# Defense force intervenes in Assosa's deadly conflicts

*Tigray sends inquiry team to Amhara regarding recent attacks in Kemise, Bati*

By Tamiru Tsige and  
Birhanu Fikade

The Ethiopia Defense Force interfered to deter the deadly ethnic clash that left ten dead and over 40 people injured in Assosa, the seat of the Benishangul Gumuz Regional Administration, in western Ethiopia.

*The Reporter* confirmed from the Chief administration of the Region, Ashadli Hassen, that the national Defense force has arrived in Assosa and surrounding towns on Thursday afternoon and took control of violence stricken areas like Menge, Ura, Komsh Sherkole and Ma'okom towns apart from the regional capital.

He also pointed out that unstated amount of properties that has been damaged due to the violence in addition to human casualties.

"The police have arrested 46 suspects in connection to the deadly violence that rocked different parts of the region," Ashadly told *The Reporter*.

"The deadly violence that affected our town and other parts of the region has killed and injured many people," he added.

Reports indicate that the conflict broke out after indigenous communities in the region reportedly demanded other minority groups to leave the area.

However, the government has been blaming anti-reformist groups for inciting violence in many parts of the country in Addition to Assosa.

It is to be recalled that similar clashes has claimed the lives of more than a dozen of people in Hawassa, Wolaita Sodo, Wolkite as well as Harare towns, recently.

According to sources, the clashes appeared to be between the Berta people—who are indigenous to Benishangul-Gumuz Region—and other ethnicities living in the regional capital and the surrounding.

Conflicts along these regions' borders have become increasingly destructive.

Last year, nearly 1.1 million were displaced due to fighting along the Oromia

and Ethio-Somali regions' borders.

On Wednesday, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that, weeks of violence between Oromia and Southern communities has forced at least another 978,000 people out of their homes.

In related news, following reports of atrocities committed against persons of Tigray origin in the Oromia Zone of the Amhara Regional Administration, the Tigray regional administration has sent an inquiry team to inspect harms and extent of damages inflicted against individuals of Tigray ethnic group in these areas.

Reddaie Halefom, the newly appointed communication affairs head of the Tigray Regional State, told *The Reporter* that a team has been dispatched to Kemisse and Batti, the center of and a town in the Oromia Zone of Amhara Regional State, respectively, where reports and allegations of attacks against residents from Tigray ethnic group are coming out.

According to Reddaie, details of the attacks and the degree of damages will be

made public soon. He, however, declined to specify as to how many individuals have been affected by these attacks. However, he expressed the position of the regional state saying: "We condemn any attacks and atrocities directed towards all citizens on the basis of their ethnic origin to the strongest possible terms." He added that citizens have the right to live and work in any part of the country as recognized by the constitution.

Efforts made by *The Reporter* to include the views of the Amhara Regional State on the matter bare no fruit. Repeated call to get a hold of Nigussu Tilahun, head of Amhara Region communication Office, was unsuccessful.

In related news, the Tigray Regional State has extended a five-million-birr financial aid to support victims of last week's grenade attack committed during the rally organized in support of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). It is to be recalled that the bomb attack claimed two lives and wounded 154 of individuals at the rally.]

# Oil companies evacuate their personnel from Ethio-Somali region

By Kaleyesus Bekele

Alarmed by the political and security turmoil that occurred in the Ethio-Somali Regional State

last week, oil companies engaged in oil exploration projects in the region have evacuated their staff to Addis Ababa, it was learnt.

Following the security crisis

in the fragile region, conflict erupted in the regional capital, Jigjiga, on July 28. Civilians have been killed and houses, a bank, shops and churches have been

looted and torched in Jigjiga and other small towns in the region.

Poly GCL Petroleum  
Oil companies . . . page 24

## Oil companies evacuate . . .

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Investments, the Chinese company engaged in oil and gas exploration and development projects in the Ogaden basin, has evacuated its key personnel by air early this week. Sources told *The Reporter* that the company transported its key personnel mostly Chinese by chartered plane since July 29. Ethiopian Airlines has suspended flights to the region. The Chinese petroleum experts and engineers were stationed in Hilala, Calub and Warder oil and gas projects. Sources said the oil workers will be redeployed to the project sites once the security situation improves.

A senior executive of Poly GCL denies the evacuation operation. "It is a crew change," he told *The Reporter*. Koang Tuflam (MD), state minister of the Ministry of Mines, Petroleum and Natural Gas, has also denied the report. "This is not an accurate information. Why would they evacuate their employees? Things are moving as usual," he told *The Reporter*. According to Koang, it could be for a vacation that the Chinese came to Addis Ababa.

Poly GCL has been engaged in the exploration and development of oil and gas resources in the Ogaden basin since 2014. The company is in the process to develop the Calub and Hilala gas fields. The company has discovered crude oil reserve in the Hilala locality and began test production last June. It has also discovered additional gas reserve in a locality called Dohar.

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Another Chinese company, BGP Geoservices, which is contracted by Poly-GCL, has also evacuated its staff to Addis Ababa. BGP has transported its team of Chinese petroleum experts by a chartered plane. BGP is a geophysical service company that collects, interprets and process seismic data.

Sources told *The Reporter* that the Poly GCL and BGP's camps, which are highly guarded by the National Defense Forces, were not attacked. According to sources, the National Defence Forces have mobilized more troops to the project sites. "There is no reported incident near the oil

and gas projects but the companies took a precautionary measure," sources said. "The oil projects are far from Jigjiga where the security situation has deteriorated. We hope that peace and security will be restored soon," they added.

However, another source told *The Reporter* that a field vehicle that belongs to Poly GCL has been taken away by local residents.

Poly GCL Petroleum Investments is planning to develop the Calub and Hilala gas fields which were discovered by an American company Tenneco in 1972. The

Chinese company is in the process to construct a gas export pipeline to the Port of Djibouti and a gas refinery plant at a cost of four billion dollars. The pipeline line construction work was scheduled to begin in September 2016. "Work will not commence unless peace and security is restored," sources said.

New Age, South West Energy and Delonex Energy are the other companies engaged in oil exploration projects in the Ogaden basin. *The Reporter* has learnt that currently these companies do not have active personnel at the project sites.

## Ethiopian students in . . .

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serious quandary has happened nine months ago. Starting from 2016-17, there was no problem in getting the fixed money on time. However, after 2017, the problem started to manifest more frequently," a PhD candidate at an Indian university, told *The Reporter*.

Asked what response the students had received from the Ethiopian Embassy in New Delhi and as to what caused the delay of student's stipend? He said that "they [the Embassy officials] repeatedly responded to the inquiry of the students saying that the Ministry of Education has not yet transferred dollars to their bank account".

Continuously frustrated, in an email exchange, the PhD candidate wrote to The

Reporter stating that they do not receive proper support from the Ethiopian Embassy through which the students are paid their stipend.

Another student also confirmed that the Embassy is not helpful to students saying that "they are care only for themselves".

According to students, beyond the looming fear of starvation, the current stipend crisis has brought threats to their health with Dengue virus coming into play.

"What matters most is that the current problem is far serious than before," says another frustrated student, adding "As far as I know, in some of these universities such as Andhra University - located in the southern part of India - more than 25

students suffer from the new virus.

Students told *The Reporter* that the virus is becoming a serious threat to student's lives. The number of students' who are being treated in hospitals is not stated and others have recovered and are going back to their residence.

The virus has no treatment, except taking some pain killer medicines.

"Unless the Ethiopian government sends them money, they could not survive. No extra work is here. Everybody is coming to learn, not to do business," a student warned.

The Reporter's attempt to obtain the reaction of officials of the Ministry of Education bore no fruit.

# Human Rights Commission condemns Jigjiga violence

By Neamin Ashenafi

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) denounced the recent conflict in the capital of the Ethio-Somali Regional State, Jigjiga.

"The recent clash in the region breaches the basic human rights enshrined in the constitution such as the right to live, the right of movement and the right to worship," Demesew Benti, head of the communication at EHRC, told journalists on Thursday August 9, 2018.

"The conflict that occurred last Saturday in Jigjiga town has caused the loss of lives, destruction of property and devastation of churches. In this regard basic human rights of citizens were at risk," Demesew highlighted.

Apart from this, the regional office of the EHRC located in the town was also a target and the offices were burned and vandalized which resulted in the loss of documents and other properties that belonged to the branch office, Demesew further stated.



Photo By: The Reporter /Digital Geashew

After repeated appeals from community elders, scholars and other residents of the region regarding the violations of human rights by the administrators of the region, the EHRC launched its investigation, Demesew

said, adding that such vandalism that targeted the branch office of the EHRC is deliberately orchestrated by those groups to eliminate documents of the investigation and the findings.

Moreover, the head of the communication told journalist that the Commission will launch its investigation right after the restoration of peace and stability in the regions and promised to inform its findings to the public.

The conflict that began in Jigjiga town of the Ethio-Somali Regional State in eastern Ethiopia on Saturday, August 4, 2018, also spread to other towns of the region.

According to sources in the area, widespread attacks have been reported, especially targeting people that came from other regions. Sources also added that many hid in their homes and retreated to churches for safety.

Sources also said that a bank, a church, businesses and residences were set on fire due to the conflict.

# Djiboutians flee from Dire Dawa

By Dawit Endeshaw

The number of Djiboutian who left the country days after the unrest in Dire Dawa city -450 km east of Addis Ababa - has reached over 2,000, *The Reporter* has learnt.

According to sources from Djibouti Council Office in Dire Dawa, the number of people who are demanding to leave the city in fear of more unrest is increasing from time to time.

This humanitarian and political crisis comes after an unrest that left six Djiboutian individuals dead and 15 more sustaining injuries.

Among those who are killed, three are kids from the same family who died after their house was attacked and caught fire.

"We are now in the process of transferring Djiboutian to Djibouti," said source from Djibouti Consul Office. In the earlier days of the unrest alone, 1,700 people were transferred to Djibouti, said the same source.

Most of the deaths were said to occur when unidentified group of individuals began to attack houses and torching some of them.

The violence in the city began on



Close to 2,000 Djiboutian fled from the city of Dire Dawa

the weekend of August 2, 2018 after a meeting was held in Dire Dawa. The meeting included hundreds of Somali communities, scholars, elders, former officials of Ethio-Somali region critical of the former president Abdi Mohammed Oumer and his administration.

The city, however, rocked by the violence finally called for the intervention of the National Army as well as the federal police.

These two forces, equipped with heavy machine guns are now patrolling the city, according to residents of the city.

In related news, over the week, the long serving president of Ethio-Somali region has resigned from his position. In the same turn of events, similar unrests occurred in Jigjiga which claimed the lives of many.

Following the violence, the federal government deployed the army to the region.

In relation to this, a social media platform by the name of *Cakaaranews.com* administered by Ethio-Somali Regional States government reported that President Abdi and his aides went to Addis Ababa to meet officials in the federal government.

The platform also said that, though former president Abdi is believed to be in Addis Ababa, but the region is not aware of the current whereabouts of the former president.

Furthermore, it also indicated that there is an interest and a pressure from the federal government to appoint Ahmed Shide, minister for Government Communication Affairs Office.

*The Reporter's* repeated efforts to reach Ahmed Shide bore no fruit. The Minister failed to respond to our repeated calls and SMS enquiries over the matter.

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## Families of mob-attack victims fear for safety

By Dawit Endeshaw

The families of Fitsum Mehari and Haftu Hagenom, victims of the Wollega mob attack a week ago, expressed their concern for their safety following the brutal killings of the two individuals by a mob in Eastern Wollega Zone, *The Reporter* has learnt.

The two individuals were killed on August 11, 2018, around 5:00 pm local time. They were stoned to death as well as attacked by a blade. The deceased were on their way to their birth place in Northern Ethiopia, Tigray Region, when the attack happened.

Obtaining permission from the local administration, Subasrea woreda, the two victims were transporting their property out of the locality. The two, ethnically Tigray, were planning to resettle their families in Tigray following recent deteriorating security condition and their personal safety.

According to family members and friends whose names *The Reporter* decide to withhold, the two farmers decided to leave the area following ethnic related attacks targeting non-Oromos in the woreda.

The attack took place while Fitsum, 40 and Haftu, 37, were driving, just a few kilometers from Suberea woreda. The two came to East Wollega back in 1984 as a child following one of the worst droughts which largely affected Northern and North Eastern Ethiopia. They were part of a resettlement program by the then Ethiopian government. During the drought, thousands of families were resettled in the then Wollega District.

In the woreda where Fitsum and Haftu used to live, there are currently close to 800 households settled by the same resettlement program.

Following the killings, families and friends of the deceased told *The*



Burial ceremony of Fitsum Mehari and Haftu Hagenom

*Reporter* that they are in a grave danger and are concerned that similar attacks might occur again. They also expressed their anger over the local police's failure to protect the two farmers from the attacks.

"There were similar attacks four months ago and it stopped after the ascendance of Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to the Premiership; however, over the past few weeks, the attacks are resurfacing," said a friend of the deceased.

The farmers, both fathers of six, were stopped by a mob comprised of largely youngsters who forced the drivers to hand over the vehicle. As minutes went by, one of the attackers started to drive the vehicle, according to multiple sources.

The driver stopped near a police station, 25 km from Subuserea. By the time, Fitsum was forced to hand over his legally registered weapon by the police.

As they reached near the police station, the mob started to attack them with stone, knife and sticks.

The sad part is no one was able to save them or stop the attackers, the families told *The Reporter*.

After the killing, the family of the deceased found their bodies at a health station in the woreda.

The families of the two farmers are planning to take their body to Tigray and have the funeral there, *The Reporter* was told. However, they claim that they were forced to bury the bodies there instead.

"We were forced to bury them there instead of their birth place," said one member of the family.

"Yes, they were killed near a police station," Bekeri Tamesgen, head of Justice and Security Bureau of the woreda, confirmed to *The Reporter*.

"By the time our members tried to

stop the attackers, it was beyond their capacity," he said. "We are not sure about the motive behind the attack and we are still investigating the case," he added.

So far, Bekeri said, three police officers were arrested in connection to the attacks.

As to the burial arrangements, Bekeri admitted that the officials of the woreda favored a local burial for the deceased fearing another incident during the transportation of the bodies to Tigray. However, he said this happened in agreement with the families of the victims and that it was not forced.

Friends and family members claim the killings were ethnically motivated.

And hence say: "We fear for our life and we need a protection from the government". "We were born and raised in Oromia. We know less about Tigray," said the same sources.

# AG indicts former Hawassa mayor over conflict

*100 officials, individuals included in charge sheet*

By Yonas Abiye

The Federal Attorney General has instituted charges against top officials of the Southern Regional State including the former Mayor of the regional capital Hawassa, Tewodros Gebaba.

Along with the mayor, some 100 prison officials and individuals were brought before the court in connection with the recent deadly violence in Hawassa and the surrounding areas.

On Friday, police brought the suspects before the Federal circuit court temporarily established in Hawassa.

Among the suspects, six of them are senior officials at the Hawassa Correctional Facility.

It was also learnt that prosecutors has filed two separate charges in connection to instigating violence between the Sidama and Wolayta people, which led to the killings and the displacements of several civilians in the area.

It is to be recalled that Tewodros along with Aklilu Adula (who was the Administrator of Sidama Zone) were advised to resign from their posts in connection to the recent conflict in the



Hawassa City's partial view

town of Hawassa and its surroundings.

The conflict had resulted in the death of ten people and the injury of more than 80, while close to 3,500 people have been reported to be displaced from their homes.

On the other hand, five senior officials

from the Wolayta Zonal administration had also resigned from their position in relation to the conflict that took place in Wolayta Sodo town last June which began as a rally to denounce the attack on ethnic Wolaytas in Hawassa and its surrounding towns.

The resignation of the officials in

Wolayta came immediately after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) called on Wolayta, Sidama, Kebena and Gurage zonal and woreda administrators to resign and take responsibility for the conflicts that happened in the area. The PM toured the conflict stricken areas days after the clash.

# ADDIS ON THE EDGE



Youth from Addis Ababa surrounding Oromia Zones receiving medical care from Ras Deeta Hospital following a clash with the youth of Addis Ababa on Thursday September 13, 2010



The red beret special force members of the National Defense Force heading to guard the Menelik II statue at the heart of Piazza on Friday September 14, 2010.



Riot police watching out for potential riots around Piazza where the youth from Oromia clashed with Addis Ababa youth on Friday September 14, 2010.



Youth holding an emblemless flag of Ethiopia and marching on the streets of Piazza on September 14, 2010.

By Yonas Abiye

Although a rarity in Addis Ababa, clashes between the youth of the city and their counterparts from the surrounding towns of Oromia Special Zone erupted ahead of the

return of leaders of the formerly outlawed political organization, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), leading to an unknown number of youth injured in a three-day confrontation. The reason for the hostility revolves

around the flag and colors of OLF. The clash, which started on Wednesday continuing through Thursday and Friday, occurred when supporters of the previously banned group, who mostly came from towns surrounding Addis

Ababa and beyond, entered the city waving OLF flags. This gesture angered some residents of Addis Ababa who clashed with the OLF supporters, with both sides using sticks and stones against each other.

The Reporter has witnessed that the confrontation is over the hoisting of flags symbolizing the Oromo resistance movement and the painting of sidewalks, roads,

Addis on the . . . page 31

# Addis on the . . .

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

fences and other places with similar colors of red and green with a yellow at the center; by the youth from Oromia and city dwellers who wanted to prevent them.

Some Addis Ababa dwellers said that they were provoked by OLF supporters whom they accused of attempting to remove the national flag and to erect the OLF emblem.

In another twist, on Friday, the youth from Oromia a.k.a. *qeerroo* marched to Piazza in what was said to be an attempt to takedown the statue of Menelik II, which is located at the heart of the city. However, they were confronted by Addis Ababans and security forces including Special Forces of the Army and were forced to retreat.

Police told *The Reporter* that youth that came in buses from different parts of Oromia were holding machetes and sticks with nails hit onto them. They also attempted to loot the police station in Piazza and the police dispersed them by firing bullets.

According to the police at the Piazza Community Policing Center, the vehicles that came carrying around 700 youth have been put under arrest. The Reporter witnessed that injured youth have been sheltered inside the police station waiting for medical support.

The confrontation; widely condemned by several political groups including the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), first occurred on Wednesday morning as supporters began erecting OLF emblems around the vicinity of Medhanalem and

Pasteur area in the Western side of the capital where they clashed with residents of the area before the Federal Police were deployed at the flashpoint. However, the next day, the clash spread to the northern side of Addis Ababa mainly in Addisu Gebeya, Semen Mazegaja and near Mercato area.

Nevertheless, some support of OLF numbered in the hundreds were also seen staging peaceful rallies around Bole and Megenagna areas sounding slogans like "OLF is Peace", "OLF respects nations and nationalities" and "Oromos are not narrow nationalists".

The clash immediately prompted PM Abiy, who was chairing the revitalized Peace Deal negotiation between the warring factions of South Sudan; to come out of the highly anticipated meeting of IGAD leaders, to denounce the clash and called on the two sides for calmness.

Abiy criticized the incident as an attempt to incite violence under the guise of a flag. The right of freedom of expression includes holding flags of their own liking as well; Abiy said adding "we should not marginalize political parties coming from abroad."

"There will be no single winner when Ethiopians fight over flags or other controversial issues. We should cooperate with each other by resolving our differences through dialogue," he said.

He further warned that the government will not tolerate such provocations, urging the people to refrain from acts that can incite violence.

On his part, Federal Police Commission Commissioner General,

Zeinu Jemal, also called for calm and stressed that his outfit will do what it takes to maintain peace and calm. He said while Oromia youth were within their means to wave any flag of their choice, it was not right to paint Addis Ababa in their preferred colors.

He also blamed young city dwellers who according to him had taken the law into their own hands by taking down flags hoisted by the other party. He also confirmed violent incidents like cars being destroyed, attempts to burn a police station and other properties.

"The youngsters from Oromia are arriving in Addis Ababa to take part in the welcoming ceremony and an open air concert on September 15th. The event is organized for members of a faction of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) led by Dawud Ibssa.

Though police confirmed that several youth have been injured due to the clash, no exact number is yet disclosed.

Head of the regional state's communication bureau, Negeri Lencho (PhD) said that all the necessary preparations have been finalized to warmly welcome the delegation of OLF at the event to be held at the Meskel Square in Addis Ababa.

He called on the public, the youth in particular, to do their parts for the warm welcome and peaceful end of the event.

He also urged the people to inform security officers when they see something suspicious.

Once designated as a terror group, the OLF was delisted earlier this month as part of a political reform undertaken by the Abiy administration which assumed office in April.

# September marks yet another deadly month

By Yonas Abiye

The month of September is usually regarded as a festive month for Ethiopians as it is the first month of the upcoming year. However this year, it was marked as the deadliest month with a continued violence ripping through several parts of the country.

Just 20 days into the New Year, the nation has already endured the death of over 58 people in Oromia Special Zone and other parts of the country.

Over the past few days, the suburbs of Addis Ababa such as Ashewa Meda and Burayu were the scenes of a deadly violence which claimed lives of some 23 people, according to official sources. Two days later Oromia police announced that the figure rose by three more deaths.

On Monday, protesters angered by the killings blocked roads in Addis Ababa in a demonstration that left five more people dead. Later that day, mobile internet service was shut down for one day in bid to control the situation.

"This type of incident will not continue," Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said on Tuesday while visiting a school housing people displaced by the attacks.

Witnesses said that last week's attacks



Newly spiraled lethal skirmishes in and around Addis Ababa resulted in numerous killings

began and continued through the weekend with the group of youth targeting specific ethnic minorities in the area.

Prior to that, clashes broke out in the capital between youth from the city and supporters of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), a once-banned political group that returned to Ethiopia on Saturday, September 15, 2018, after decades in exile.

The violence was not confined to Burayu, Ashewa Meda and other communities on the outskirts of Addis Ababa.

The deadly violence has also left over ten thousand people internally displaced. The IDPs have been sheltered inside various schools, Churches and Mosques.

In related news, a series of violence was also reported this week in Guba area, Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, with at least 10 people killed and dozen others wounded.

According to the information provided by the regional authorities, the clash happened among citizens who are employed by an investment farms in

the area.

The regional police said it has detained over 85 suspects accused of inciting the deadly violence. The Federal government has also dispatched a team to the area to assist the regional police in the investigation process.

Similarly, the deaths of some 10 people was also reported in Gurage Zone of the Sothern Regional State after a clash broke-out between residents of Mesqan and Mareko districts which share the same district. However, some commentators claim that the death toll could be as high as 31.

Last year, it is to be recalled that over 100 people died and close to one million people were displaced from Oromia and the Somali regional states following the long standing clashes along the borders of the two regions.

Similarly, the previous year (September 2016) also saw the tragic death of over 56 people who were killed during a stamped while celebrating the Irrecha festivity in Bishioftu town of the Oromia Regional State. It is to be remembered that the incident has angered millions of youths across the region and drew them to a deadly confrontation with security forces.

Photo By: The Reporter/Gannet Getachew

## KEY INFORMANTS INCLUDED IN THIS RESEARCH

Informant 1- a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 4, 2019.

Informant 2- a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 4, 2019.

Informant 3- a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 4, 2019.

Informant 4- a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 8, 2019.

Informant 5 - a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 8, 2019.

Informant 6- a staff member at The Reporter newspaper (English version), Addis Ababa, April 10, 2018.

Informant 7- a staff member at The Reporter newspaper (English version), Addis Ababa, April 10, 2018.

Informant 8- a staff member at The Reporter newspaper (English version), Addis Ababa, April 10, 2018.

Informant 9- - a staff member at Ethiopian Press Agency (The Ethiopian Herald newspaper), Addis Ababa, April 13, 2019.

Informant 10- a staff member at The Reporter newspaper (English version), Addis Ababa, April 17, 2018.

Informant 11- a staff member at The Reporter newspaper (English version), Addis Ababa, April 17, 2018.