



Meles Zenawi in the eyes of African leaders

Tedla Asfaw

I saw sixteen minutes of praise of Meles Zenawi by some African leaders on pro TPLF web site Aiga this morning, I was not surprised. You invite someone in your home and ask him or her how am I doing, no one says negative things about you. The real stuff is said during lunch or coffee break while no one is around.

Moreover, this praise of our leaders is not new. I still remember "Janhoye Ye Africa Abate, Talaku Mere " on his 80th birthday celebration. What did Africa do to him when he was murdered ? I can assure you that Meles Zenawi never condemned the murder of King Haile Selassie, many African leaders had good time with the killer Mengistu Halilemariam back then too.

Let me tell you my experience with other African students. Most of them were Mengistu's admirers and accuse Ethiopians for rebelling against him because he was "too dark for you". Praise and hate by outsiders is not a new phenomenon and what matters is a leader to be loved by his people.

I can assure you that if you made a survey in Ethiopia you will find that Meles Zenawi is the most unpopular person. The African leaders praising the development of Addis on Ethiopian TV are whispering about beggars and street children off the camera. What matters for our people, hidden or ignored by our African guests, is the lives of many Addis Ababbeans without food, water, sanitation and power suffering in their shacks.

Ethiopians are waiting for a leader, elected, accountable and loved. I hope they will vote for such leader as they did in May 2005 and were denied in four month time if there is a free and a fair election, the peoples right to assemble in public places and media are open right now without any delay.

