

### By Muluken Tariku

Nations Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia had for long been fighting for their rights. Their fights had been violated by several regimes that roam in and out of the national palace since the organized state of Ethiopia was formulated. Their quest for political and democratic equality had profoundly been considered as an act of dismantling the existing systems of different times. As a result, the NNP had been coerced and brutally marginalized out of the system.

The then Ethiopia had been the prison house of the NNP of the country. The then Ethiopia had served the interest of the very few monarchs and their siblings. Such an Ethiopia hadn't served the interest of the vast majority of the people. The NNP of Ethiopia had, in the pre text of the Solomonic Dynasty's natural right over the people, been made subjects.

History shows that the NNP of Ethiopia had raised questions of democracy, equal representation, inclusion and more significantly, the right to be considered human. Nevertheless, history again shows that the country was a reserved habitat and conducive living place for the very few people of the country that claim to have a natural right over the land and its people.

As the questions of the NNP of Ethiopia got stronger and stronger the responses of the regimes in the past had remained ill conceived, thereby their questions remaining dismal. As a result of external pressure and internal dynamism of history, Emperor Hailesilassies's administration had tried to respond to the questions of the NNP of the country in 1931 by formulating the country's very first written constitution.

The constitution granted absolute power to the monarch. Among others he could appoint and dismiss members of the legislature. The Emperor could also appoint and dismiss high rank civil and military officers. Such promulgation of the constitution didn't respond to the basic questions of the NNP of the country. It rather strengthened the power of the Monarch over the people.

Following the federation of Eritrea to Ethiopia the monarch intended to include the Eritrean administrative and justice systems into the existing one. Similarly, the UDHR of the 1948 demanded member states of the then LoN to include some basic human and democratic rights in their constitutions. As a result, the Emperor managed to amend the first written constitution in 1955.

The revision of the constitution included rights like, freedom of speech, freedom of press, and people's participation in election of members of the Chamber of Senate. The rights declared in the constitution, however, were limited by the administration. Ideas of liberty, freedom of expression and assembly were all included in the constitution though none were implemented in practice.

The first two constitutions didn't safe guard the rights of NNP but rather they made the people mere subjects of the emperor. The suppression of economic, social and political rights

provoked nationwide opposition against the monarch. Students, soldiers, peasants and workers, teachers and other members of the society from different ethnic backgrounds joined together to fight for their violated rights. The cumulative effect of the nationwide struggle for freedom brought about the fall of the imperial regime in through the 1974 social revolution.

The social revolution did not necessarily end the thousands years old Solomonic Dynasty. Nevertheless, the end of the monarchical rule didn't end the misery and marginalization of the NNP of the country. The coming of the Derg following the revolution didn't safe guard the rights of NNP which they fought for. Rather reign of terror, and authoritarianism sufficed in the country and democratic break down and authoritarianism predominated the first years of the revolution.

Though the marginalization of the great mass of the NNP of the country continued, the military administration managed to formulate a constitution and in 1987 the draft of the PDRE constitution was presented to the people for ratification. The constitution was almost the mirror image of its predecessors for it didn't limit the power of the ruling junta and didn't necessarily safeguard the rights of NNP. Even worse the constitution gave legal right for the one party system there by eliminating all political opponents, hence rise of authoritarianism and democratic breakdown.

NNP of the country again managed to continue their struggle against the military dictatorship. The armed struggle against the coercive military administration continued until finally the deg was overthrown in 1991. Following the down fall of the derg, several political parties of the armed struggle time formed the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. The TGE has worked hard on the peace and stability of the post war Ethiopia. It also promulgated the transitional charter that paved the way to the promulgation of the FDRE constitution.

The FDRE constitution is regarded as a bench mark of Ethiopia's political transformation. The constitution made it clear that the federal arrangement of the country has clear separation of power between the federal and regional states. Such separation of power has given the NNP of the country to decide upon their fate.

The constitution made it clear that the NNPs are the source of all political power. More over the power of the government is limited and the office tenure of the ruling party is dependant on the consent of the people. More over the constitution granted the NNPs of the country the right to self determination.

The owner of the constitution, NNP, has finally got the fruits of their long time struggle. The third chapter of the constitution details the rights of NNP thereby stating he valid safe guard for the rights and privileges of the NNP. More importantly, their right to use develops and promotes their culture, language and customs. The constitution gives the right to develop and work for their benefit as well. Such a right serves the country to bring the developmental endeavors at equilibrium by supporting the development of the regions that lag behind.

The FDRE constitution, among others, has answered the centuries old religious, cultural, language and economic equality questions of the NNPs of the country. The constitution has paved the way to the democratic transition of the country from what it had once been the prison

house where nations are coerced. The NNPs of the country can now openly discuss on the issues that affect their lives and they have the saying over the matters that affect their lives.

The constitution has made the justice system free from the central state apparatus in order that it safeguards the rights of the citizens to the level they enjoy the privileges of the legal system. Unlike the old ones the FDRE constitution has made it clear that the justice system should serve the interest of the nation to the detriment of limiting and checking upon governmental jurisdictions. In addition to the independent judiciary, there are other institutions that are intended to further strengthen the human right and democratic system of the country. The prescience of the anti corruption commission and the federal ombudsman entails that the rights of the citizens are given due focus.

NNPs of Ethiopia had for long been deprived of their rights and privileges. Excising political rights and freedom had been reserved only for the very few members of the royal family and their nobilities. Most NNPs, however, had either been marginalized from the political system or deprived of their hedonism. Politics of exclusion and mistreatment of NNPs of Ethiopia has resulted in sever fight against oppressive regimes through out the country's history.

Nations from different ethnic, religion and cultural background came together and fought against the brutal leadership of the imperial time. Consequently, they managed to overthrow the old system by sweeping it away from its very foundation.

Following the abolition of the military dictatorial rule, Ethiopia transformed into a democratic nation thereby paving the way for the equality of NNPs of the country in economic, social and political arenas. More significantly the post-derg era has marked the political transformation by promulgating the democratic constitution of the country that emanated from the consent of the NNPS of the country.

NNPs of Ethiopia are now enjoying the fruits of their meager fight against all the brutal systems through out the history of the country. The main fruit of the bloody fight, the FDRE constitution, has paved the way to real political transformation of the country by making the democratic system sustainable. Among others, the NNPs are now jointly working for better future. Such is democratic transformation, such is the political advancement.