

## The demolishing of Nadew Iz and its aftermath (Part II)

Written by Yishak Yared

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The strong offensive of the EPLF against the enemy forces had also helped for the strengthening of the Ethiopian opposition groups. After the demolishing of Nadew Iz, the Tigray People's Liberation Front had been able to progress its military activities and inflicted heavy losses on the Ethiopian soldiers and was able to capture some towns. The Oromo Liberation Front also increased its military activities in the west of Ethiopia.

The EPLF accelerated its interaction with the different Ethiopian opposition groups for the sustainability of the victories already attained. As a result the EPLF reached into basic agreements in 1988 of March with the OLF and in April with the TPLF. The agreement that was expected to accelerate the end of the Derg regime and reinforce the power of liberation forces was developed into a higher level of cooperation from time to time.

During that time there was no Eritrean victory that got international media coverage as that of the demolition of Nadew Iz. Many predicted that victory at Nadew was the beginning of the end of the Derg regime. Many recognized the power of the EPLF and that the Derg regime could not defeat it. And many called for peaceful resolution for the conflict. Many also supported for the self-determination of Eritrea. The Government of the Sudan signed an official agreement with the EPLF to work in cooperation towards ensuring peace in the region.

The sum total of the result of all compelled the Derg regime to change its rhetoric that "We shall destroy the bandits" into admitting that "We shall not expect an immediate victory" and "Let's prepare for prolonged war". For the first time the Derg regime was compelled to admit its defeat through its mass media. Opposition groups also emerged calling for the peaceful solution to the war in Eritrea.

The Derg regime did not learn from its defeat but rather it mobilized soldiers from all over Ethiopia and brought it to Keren front. And issued state of emergency and declared war against the Eritrean people that ultimately revealed its cruelty. In 12 May 1988, 400 innocent Eritreans were massacred in Shieb. It continued burning villages and ransacking property in Shebah, Northern Red Sea, Godeiti, Rora-Mensae, etc. It also inflicted huge damage on people's property through aerial bombardment. And when all its military attempts failed it resorted to divide and rule system by trying to create rift between people in the highlands and the lowlands. This attempt that was carried out by the Derg stooges brought no result.

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The demolition of Nadew Iz was vivid testimony for the motto of the EPLF that said “Our victory is inevitable”.