

## North Eastern Sahel Front: From birth to the demise Wuqaw Iz PART II

Written by shabait Administrator

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After enemy's second offensive the EPLF (Eritrean People Liberation Front), was on the waiting to conduct strong resistance against the third offensive by constructing trenches in the eastern plains at Mamide and Azhara, and also at Genfelom in Keren-Afabet route. As expected, the third offensive was launched through these two directions. Bearing in mind that the defensive place of Genfelom Front has been stretched too much, some units of the EPLF withdrew from that area to Gogay just before the launch of the offensive and took positions in an area that stretched from mount Agombosa to the hilly areas of Agamet. This way the enemy's infiltration attempt of the 1979 was blocked. Nevertheless, on January 25 of the same year the enemy had attempted to divert the EPLF's attention through mobilizing its strongest army division 505 from Massawa to Marsa Teklay and its mechanized units to Mahmimet- North Eastern Sahel in a way that seems to launch an attack on Mamide Front.

Since the EPLF's leadership had already expected the possibility of enemy's coming through the Red Sea, it assigned two battalions around Mahmimet and Marsa Teklay areas so as to prepare themselves for any eventuality.

However, as the enemy forces advanced towards North-Eastern Sahel, a large portion of EPLF units withdrew from Mamide to Goreyto and Wedgan leaving two battalions behind in Aget. Consequently, haven areas around Debat, Ziero, Seberkete, Blekat, Fah, Mahmimet that harbored people as well as essential goods and equipment of the EPLF had fallen under a threat of Enemy's attack. The EPLF had therefore to take a swift action to transport people and goods before it is too late. Taking the advantage of a very limited number of EPLF combatants who were in Mahmimet and Marsa Teklay, the enemy marched to Goreyto and Wedgan. So, the EPLF had to launch an attack to prevent the areas from being attacked by the enemy. Thus, in the first week of February 1979 the EPLF forces pushed the enemy to the plains and paved a way for save transportation of people and goods to Geregir-Asmara, Kebreweat, Halibet, and Agrag. Following the successful transportation of people and goods to safer sites, the EPLF took positions which stretched for about 40 kilometers from Wedganto Taba Selam, and through Desnett, Hatseyne and Debre-Emen and thereby to Tigih and that ends in Alalieb. Hence, North-Eastern Sahel Front was formed in these areas.

Documents of the EPLF indicate that with the ongoing war and successive offensives of the enemy the North-Eastern Sahel Front was by far stretched and interconnected with trenches of Nakfa to cover a total area of 667 kilometers.

In connection to the developments in the North-Eastern Sahel Front, the EPLF withdrew from the Keren-Afabet route to Qokay and leaving Afabet city behind moved to Hiday River and fortified a

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