

## Ethiopia: A Democratic Developmental State?

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### Abstract

The ruling Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in its notable second reform appraisal held in the aftermath of the 2005 national election concluded that the utmost priority of the government should be realizing fastest and sustainable economic growth that fairly benefits its citizens' unless the very existence of the country wouldn't be guaranteed. Given the history of poverty reduction in developing countries, particularly in Africa, EPRDF realized that it is unthinkable to eradicate poverty from Ethiopia adopting neo-liberalism. Above all, the miraculous economic transformation of the South East Asian countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong has proved that there is another way to development, not just neo-liberalism. Accordingly, EPRDF, after examining South Korea's and Taiwan's history of economic development in particular where both countries have had a large section of rural population unlike Hong Kong and Singapore where both are urban, found 'developmental state' relevant to Ethiopia. However, unlike these countries which were originally under non-democratic regimes where their leaders fear the rural peasant and external aggression from their communist rivals, EPRDF has had a great support of rural and urban population with no imminent foreign threat(s), and decided to execute the ideology rather

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under the umbrella of democracy. Therefore, employing secondary sources, this desk study aims to analyze whether Ethiopia is a 'democratic developmental state?' And, concludes that given the practices of the government vis-a-vis the principles of democracy and developmental state, Ethiopia couldn't be taken as best model for democratic developmental state, rather emerging developmental state.

**Keywords:** Democracy; Developmental state; Miraculous economic transformation; EPRDF; Neo-liberalism; Poverty;

## 1. Introduction

As a matter of historical fact, the implementation of donor-induced neo-liberal programs in Africa and the adoption of the developmental state in South East Asia has coincided in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The juxtapose view of the two development paradigms as implemented in two regions brought two different outcomes. The South East Asians experienced a "miraculous" economic development in the post-World War II. While in Africa, those decades were "lost decades" where the continent experienced economic recession and debt crisis (Meyns & Musamba, 2010). This has resulted mainly two things. First, forced donor agencies to refocus their aid programs on debt relief-funded poverty reduction strategies. Second, it forced African states to search an alternative development path/paradigm which can get the continent out of the vicious circle of poverty and backwardness. This has brought the debate of developmental state to Africa.

Ethiopia's experience of neoliberalism is not something peculiar to others' experience of the ideology in Africa and other developing world. Considering the wind blowing in the international global system, the 'pragmatic' Ethiopian current government (which is in power as of May 1991 up-to-date following the downfall of the military dictatorship which was in power for 17 years commonly known as the "Dergue") has changed its ideological orientation swinging as a pendulum from left-right many times, until it gets its 'equilibrium.' But, currently, it seems that the equilibrium rests at pro-left, 'developmental state'. By drawing lessons from South East Asia countries in general, South Korea and Taiwan in particular, some politicians like the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia Zenawi (2006), openly argued that the developmental state model might be a

preferable way for development and “renaissance” of Africa. But, the doubt and the heated debate is on the nexus and compatibility between notions of developmental state and democracy. Because, as Hyun-Chin and Jin-HO (2006), noted that “...the 20<sup>th</sup>-century developmental states of South East Asia were autocratic.” In other words, as history showed us none of the South East Asians were democratic, thus, the question is, how developmental states could be democratic?

The main objective of this paper is to analyse whether Ethiopia is a democratic developmental state as the government thought through assessing the practices of the government versus the principles of democracy and developmental state. In doing this, the paper assesses the relevance of developmental state to Ethiopia taking the economic history of South Korea and Taiwan into consideration in line with Ethiopia's context. To this end, as a method of inquiry, the paper relies on secondary sources. So, it heavily depends on the exhaustive review of available literature on the subject matter at hand. Beyond this, it also uses official government documents as a source of information to meet its objective.

Generally, the paper is organized into three main sections. The first section discusses some introductory and methodological issues. The second section of the paper deals with some of the basic theoretical notion of developmental state along with the basic features and variants of developmental states. Here the necessary governance, economic and social conditions that would make the implementation of the developmental state possible are clearly discussed. The third section is devoted to analyzing Ethiopia's experience of the newly adopted so-called ideology "democratic developmental state." In this section, the paper try's to link and critically analyze the theories and concepts of developmental state model and democracy vis-à-vis the Ethiopia's experience. As the basic concern of this paper, this section aims to answer the critical question: whether Ethiopia is democratic developmental state as the government used to call himself? To this end, an analysis on whether Ethiopia can be taken as a democratic state is conducted. In addition, in this section criterion developed by developmental state theorists is used as a litmus paper to test whether Ethiopia is a developmental state or not. This two basic issues discussed in this section are basic and helpful to conclude on whether Ethiopia is developmental state or democratic developmental state either, accordingly. The final section, therefore, presents concluding remarks of the study.

## 2. The notion of Developmental State

It is widely agreed that the notion of developmental state is not new to the literature of development and international political economy. But, it was first analytically used by Chalmers Johnson to explain the very rapid and highly successful post-war reconstruction and industrialization process of Japan in early 1980's (Meyns & Musamba, 2010). However, in the latter decades, the concept is defined differently by various scholars from various perspectives. This has kept the concept nuanced where a precise understanding of its meaning, characteristic features and variant remained difficult. Some have even wrongly defined this concept narrowly and equated it with economic performance as synonymous to be taken interchangeably. Which means the existence of rapid economic growth and development per se can't make a state developmental. On the other hand "not all countries with good growth rates are developmental states" (Taylor, 2005).

According to Leftwich (2000: 163-4), as cited by Meyns & Musamba (2010, 18), Developmental state is,

*... governed by a political elite which is developmentally-oriented and which demonstrates high levels of commitment and will in attaining economic growth. The state must possess sufficient capacity to influence, direct and set the terms of operation for private capital...*

That means the notion of developmental state refers the existence of state-led macro-economic planning where the state has independent political as well as a clear power to control the economy (Kefale, 2011). This shows the big role the state plays in regulating, shaping and controlling the economy of a nation with the intention of enhancing economic development.

As various literatures show the so called developed world of our time have already gone through similar development path of developmental state in their early take-off period. In this regard, Chang (2003), has argued that "virtually all of today's developed countries became rich on the basis of policies that are contrary to the neo-liberal orthodoxy espoused under the Washington Consensus ...." That is why it is assumed that the developed countries activity of providing their 'ill-advise' of prescribing 'minimalist state' for the currently developing countries in Africa, Asia, and

Latin America, as Chang (2003), depicted is like “kicking away the ladder they used to climb” to their current economic performance and hiding the secrets of their success.

However, the successful economic transformation of the South East Asian countries commonly known as the “Asian Tigers”, countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Taiwan have proved and showed there is another way/path to economic development, not just neo-liberalism as the westerners have been thought for so long” (Daba & Mulu, 2017). The alternative paradigm is commonly known as “developmental state. Such kind of states are characterized for mobilizing the public and working hard to realize economic objectives as their top national priority despite they have social and political missions in their societies (Daba & Mulu, 2017). In this case, as Routley (2014), make it clear that the government is along with the private sector is a key actor/player in the market. The government makes some selective interventions to fill the gaps (market failures) left/or and unable to fill by the private sector mostly very risky and massive investments unless the market failure would threat economic development of a given country.

## **2.1. Characteristics of Developmental State**

As it has tried to define above, developmental state has its own characteristic features (principally drawn based on the experiences of East Asian countries) by which it can be differentiated from other forms of state. According to Mkandawire (2001), a developmental state is described by “its ideological orientation and institutional capacity.” Sehen and Tsegaye (2012), have also explained those elements as the ‘software’ and ‘hardware’s’ of developmental state.

### **2.1.1. Ideological Orientation**

Ideologically, a developmental state should promote the ideal and agenda of developmentalism (Sehen and Tsegaye, 2012). With regard to this point Mkandawire (2001), also strongly claimed that:

With developmentalism ideologically underpinning, a developmental state should conceive its mission as that of ensuring economic development usually to mean high rates of accumulation and industrialization ...The elite should establish ideological hegemony where the wider nation could follow voluntarily.

That means it is mainly this ideological hegemony which can help the incumbent regime to easily mobilize resources and deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development seriously. In this regard, Ethiopia's late Prime Minister Zenawi (2006), noted that the government shall have and establish a political and economic hegemony free or independent from the private sector. This shows the government shall have a source of income, and development agents owned and run by the state to execute its programs independent of the private sector. This helps the government to play a front role in directing the private sector what to play under its guidance and leadership.

### 2.1.2. Institutional Capacity

As many scholars like Leftwich (2000), have discussed developmental state needs strong state institution which has the capacity to implement the pursued policies effectively. According to Adrian Leftwich as cited in Meyns, "the state must possess sufficient capacity to influence, direct and set the terms of operation for private capital and effectively manage both domestic and foreign private economic interests" (Meyns & Musamba, 2010). Johnson noted that, as cited in Musumba et al, a worthwhile developmental state for the purpose of realizing its objective and sustainability it prerequisites "professional and efficient [merit based] state bureaucracy. To this end, Meyns & Musamba (2010), depicted that states should pursue meritocratic recruitment and provisions of incentives to them". This implies that a developmental state needs empowered, capable and depoliticized bureaucracy, in one side who can remain 'insulated' from powerful pressure groups and election and on the other side can craft state intervention in the economy (Chang, 2003).

Beyond this, an effective developmental state also needs visionary elite, strong and committed leaders who can mobilize the resources and the people to enhance economic development. Sehen and Tsegaye (2012: 8), in their work entitled "Democratization in a Developmental State: The Case of Ethiopia Issues, Challenges, and Prospects" have summarized the basic traits of a developmental state as:

*...economic nationalism, focus on foreign technology transfer, large government bureaucracy, corporatism (alliance between state, labor, and industry), skepticism about neoliberalism and the 'Washington Consensus', prioritization of economic growth over political reform, legitimacy, and emphasis on technical education*

### **2.1.3. The state, the private sector , and the market**

As it has discussed earlier, unlike in neo-liberalism where the government is expected to play no or little in the market (also known as the night watchman), in a developmental state, the government is a crucial economic and development player. Thus, the government has to play a great role in macro-planning, make a selective intervention in the market, not just do the same business of what the private sector is doing (Johnson, 1982). In this case, the effect of market failure on the economy, if not avoided, would be reduced/mitigated. Likewise, the private sector, under the guise of the government, plays a vital role in the market, but must be efficient and effective in production and filling the market gaps left by the government.

### **2.1.4. Aim and legitimacy**

The utmost agenda of developmental states are realizing fastest and sustainable economic development, expected to go across generations sustainably regardless of changes of governments or leader, which benefits their citizens through which they secure legitimacy from their people. In this case, Johnson (1982), calls the government who in charge of leading the state and the market should bring about a meaningful reduction of poverty and unemployment.

## **2.2. Variants of Developmental State**

All 'developmental states' are not identical. They differ one from the other across countries, time and society in various ways. The developmental states have emerged at different times and implemented in different social-cultural and political contexts. For instance, the developmental states of South East Asia have emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and are mainly autocratic while the 'developmental states' of Africa including (Mauritius, Botswana, Ethiopia, South Africa...) have emerged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where the global political context is totally different from the earlier century. That means developmental states varies based on the level of totalitarianism on one case and democracy on the other. Generally, as Atlaw (2013), clearly stated that developmental states have differed in their evolution, context, trajectory, and manifestations. The

old dictum “no one size fits all” also works for the adoption and transplantation of the developmental state model.

South East Asia development states like South Korea, Taiwan, for instance, were under non-democratic leadership while they began to execute this ideology while, in fact, they able to build a strong democracy in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. But, Ethiopia, in this case, is peculiar to these countries. In other words, Ethiopia adopted this ideology not just as South Korea and Taiwan did. Rather, Ethiopia is a “democratic developmental state.” The late Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi has been repeatedly arguing that democracy is not a matter of choice in Ethiopia’s context, rather it is a must. In its absence, Ethiopia would not survive as a country, therefore. In fact, it is possible to falsify neo-liberalists’ claim that a country would not grow/develop in the absence of democracy taking the South East Asians case. Plus, as in one of EPRDF leading policy document entitled “Ideologies for Transformation and Ethiopia’s renaissance”<sup>1</sup> stipulates history tells us Union of Soviets Socialist Russia (USSR), Germany under Hitler etc were industrialized and rich countries though they were under dictatorship.

Furthermore, some developmental states execute their programmes in a population who are totally urban. A good example, in this case, is Singapore and Hong Kong. While countries like South Korea and Taiwan execute the ideology in a context where most of their population were rural dwellers and peasants. The same is true with Ethiopia's case. More than 80% of Ethiopia's population is expected to live in rural areas where agriculture is the main economic sector that majority of the population is working in as further indicated in EPRDFE’s 2003 policy document.

### 2.3. Developmental State and Democracy: an overview to the debate

On the academic, political and economic arena, there is a hot debate on the relationship between development and democracy. Still, there is no conclusive agreement on whether development needs to precede democracy or that democracy is a (pre)condition for development. But, what is agreeable is both are essentially important for Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular. In most cases, scholars recalling the history of

<sup>1</sup> One can find this policy document written in Amharic Language as “የታላቁ ሰላም ማስፈጸምና የኢትዮጵያ ህዳሴ ፣ ብርሃንና ሰላም ማስፈጸም ድርጅት፣ አዲስ አበባ፣ ኢትዮጵያ፣ 2003 ዓ.ም. (This policy document is translated by the authors of this article as follows: “Ideologies for Transformation and Ethiopia’s renaissance, 2003, Birha ena Selam prenting Press, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).



development states from South East Asian used to argue that the notions of developmental state and democracy can't entertain together at the same time in a given state. This view is termed as the "impossibility theses". In a manner which strengthens this argument, Leftwich (2000), as cited by Meyns and Musamba (2010: 40), clearly stated that both democracy and developmental state differs in their purpose, so needs different institutional settings. To use his Leftwich (2005: 692, 695) words:

*...the institutional requirements for stable and consolidated democracy are structurally different to the institutional requirements for rapid and transformative growth and, especially, development..... The processes of development have both required and engendered radical, transformative and pervasive change in the formal and informal sociopolitical and economic institutions of societies, but these changes are very different to those required for democracy. Democracy is essentially a conservative system of power, geared to stability, not change*

By considering the western saying "starved man don't know reason" (Alebachew, n.d.), for full-fledged democracy, development seems necessary. In other words, democracy and economic capability of citizens go together. Meaning, in a poor, traditional and agrarian society it is less likely to exercise democracy in a meaningful way. If a developmental state is going to create this section of society in a short period of time as it promises, it may create an opportunity for the prevalence of democracy in the future. Contrary to this claim, some politicians like late Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi argued that taking the case of Asian Tigers, countries can develop even under a dictatorship.

### 3. 'Developmental State' Model and Democracy in Ethiopia

#### 3.1. Introduction

In the aftermath of the 2005 national election, the EPRDF led-government under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who was credited as the architect of Ethiopia renaissance, has repeatedly claimed Ethiopia as 'a democratic developmental state'. The former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi became an ardent proponent of 'democratic developmental state', and argued that neo-liberalism is up finished, in his word-a 'dead end in Africa' (incapable of bringing about the African renaissance) and proposed/declared 'democratic developmental state'

model as a new beginning or paradigm capable of getting Africa out of its poverty trap and ensuring its renaissance (Zenawi, 2006). His view is, therefore, a kind of thought given the nature of the state and demographic make-up of countries, for the purpose of entertaining competing interests (may be among various ethnic or religious groups) a developmental state could be democratic. But, the real picture and practice is different.

Leftwich (2000), has also recognized that developmental state may exist in a democratic state, only in the dominant part state. Botswana and Singapore were considered as such type of states (Klausen, 2005). In the last decades, the ruling EPRDF has exerted too much effort to monopolize development resources by establishing a de facto one-party system and by restricting the activities of other stake holders (Nishi, 2013). Especially after the 2005 Ethiopian election, for many reasons, the opposition political parties have disintegrated where currently there do not forward any capable ideological option around which strong political opposition would be able to create.

Despite the setback in the democratization process in Ethiopia, Leftwich (2000), appreciates the economy had been growing at an encouraging rate around 10% every year since 2004. Even though scholars like Mkandawire (2001), has been criticizing defining developmental state simply for its economic performance, the Ethiopia government has been propagating the achieved encouraging development result in the last decade as an outcome of its developmental state policy. Beyond this, the EPRDF-led Ethiopian government is attempting to use this sustained economic growth as a coat and an instrument of getting legitimacy, which it failed to gain in a democratic way. In this regard, Kefale (2011), has also explained that:

*After the debacle of the May 2005 elections in which EPRDF victory was controversial and the crackdown on the opposition parties, civil society, and the media, the Ethiopian government seeks to strengthen its legitimacy on the sustained high rate of growth and infrastructural development that were witnessed in the country in the last several years.*

According to an EISA conference report (2008), a democratic developmental state is very crucial for the purpose of realizing social welfare of Africans. But, in reality, if a government becomes really democratic, it will pose a challenge to stay in power for a longer period of time as experienced in other developmental states and ensure the

implementation of its long-term policies. Which means adopting genuine democracy will be self-defeating for a developmental state.

### **3.2. Is Ethiopia a developmental state?**

Even though the Ethiopian government calls itself as a developmental state, in reality, it is arguable and controversial. To answer this debatable question, this study tried to analyze the actual situation in Ethiopia vis-à-vis the criterion forwarded by Mkandiweri's definition of a developmental state. Which means to know whether Ethiopia is a developmental state or not, checking the existence of the known "software's" and "hardware's" of the developmental state in Ethiopia is very essential.

#### **3.2.1. Developmental Ideological Orientation in Ethiopia**

According to Mkandiweri, the first criteria (the software) of developmental state is 'developmentalist ideological orientation.' In Ethiopian case, it can be argued that this in some degree exists. The FDRE government realizing that a very sustainable economic development that fairly benefits Ethiopians and fighting poverty is the only means to guarantee Ethiopia's existence as a country and reduce ethnic grievances. In other words, the government took the issue of development as the issue of "life-and-death." To this end, the government found out developmental state a best ideology. As Kefale (2011), has clearly stated:

*..... ERPDF since 2000's coined the motto that the worst enemy of the country and its peoples is 'poverty' and hence all sections of the society by the leadership of the state - which is both developmentalist and democratic should strive to end poverty.*

In addition to this, by systematically cracking down the opposition parties, civil society and the media after 2005 controversial election, Kefale (2011), the EPRDF regime has clearly emerged as one dominant party state at the expense of democracy and freedom, as the opposition political groups accused EPRDF, has gained ideological hegemony which Mkandiweri has assumed as an essential element of a developmental state.

#### **3.2.2. Institutional capacity**

The other basic element Mkandiweri identified and usually termed as the 'hardware' of developmental state is institutional capacity which

mainly refers to the existence of strong political leadership and bureaucracy.

As per the existence of strong political leadership is concerned, the 21<sup>st</sup> century Ethiopia is mainly characterized by the existence of strong one-party dominant rule. Especially, in post-2005 election, EPRDF's leadership has further 'undemocratically' strengthened and become visionary. As Desta (n.d.), noted that "The government has ambitiously planned not only to attain the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 but also to become a middle-income country by 2020- 2030." Fortunately, the economic performance is not in contrary to the vision.

However, something a very critical element is missed in Ethiopia .i.e. the "hardware of developmental state" which is committed/dedicated, educated/well trained, effective, and depoliticized bureaucrats. Even though the Ethiopian civil service was established in the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by Menlelik II, it has remained weak (Leftwich, 2000) Because, unlike South East Asian developmental states, where the national education systems expanded rapidly during the process of state formation, Sehen and Tsegaye (2012), in Ethiopia, let alone the existence of adequate higher education institutions, universal access to primary education is a recent phenomenon. As some argued, expecting strong and sufficient bureaucracy in the absence of adequate higher education institutions as well as claiming developmental state status in the absence of strong and empowered bureaucracy is "searching for dung in the absence of cow" or simply impossible.

In addition to this in Ethiopia, regrettably the government, is not able to attract highly qualified manpower to its office and on the other, it has also failed to use the existing skilled manpower effectively. "Because recruitment and promotion within the bureaucracy are not merit-based. Merit is tertiary which comes from the primary party loyalty and affiliation (Johnson, 1982)" This would inevitably result in a number of consequences. First, it affects the Ethiopian state bureaucracy very weak so that the political elites would be unable to devise a good strategy or mechanism how the state to intervene in the market in a very productive way and execute developmental state policies and strategies in a very effective way. Second, above all, it makes the civil servant discouraged so that it may result in mutual distrust, conflict and political opposition that would drain or question the legitimacy and ideological hegemony of the ruling government. This is a huge fiasco which demolishes the Ethiopian

government's claim of a developmental state status. In other words, "unlike developmental states of South East Asia, in Ethiopia there is a huge gap between the political leadership and the bureaucracy (Sehen and Tsegaye, 2012). "

### **3.3. Democratization process in Ethiopia: A glance synopsis**

Ethiopia's experience of democracy seems too little and too late. It was a post-1991 phenomenon. In terms of democratization, the unprecedented multi-party competition in 2005 Ethiopian national election was considered promising and the government's decision to open the process for international observers is considered as 'bold move' by many (Kefale, 2011). But in the post-election period, where the notion of developmental state model become a fashion for the government, there is an allegation that political space is narrowing by a systematic action of the incumbent regime. Even immediately in the aftermath of the election, Kefale (2011), stated that "the human rights situations have severely deteriorated as dozens of citizens were killed by the police and thousands were arrested....as a result, the 2010 election is passively followed by the electorate..." In the 2010 Ethiopian national election, EPRDF and its allies won 545 seats in the 547 member-parliament. This was a major setback for the prospect of country's multi-party system (Meyns & Musamba, 2010). It is in such situation the 2015 national election is looming ahead with no hope of competition. So with the systematic approach of weakening opposition political parties (though they are also suffering a lot from their own internal weakness), civil society organizations and the media, it seems that democratization process in Ethiopia has faced a huge blow and setback.

### **3.4. Is Ethiopia a Democratic Developmental State?**

Historically, states with developmentalist aspirations were mostly authoritarian. This has led to the emergence of the 'impossibility theses'. However, the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Zenawi (2006), has strongly argued that developmental state can also be democratic. Unlike to the government's claim, but in line with the analysis of Leftwich (2000), as Ethiopia's experience has revealed that, a democratic developmental state is difficult to establish and maintain. Because during the heydays of 'developmental state' in Ethiopia democracy has fallen to its margins. In the last decades, seemingly in a similar way with other developmental states, Ethiopia has also experienced sustained economic growth and development, with huge role of the government not only in regulating the

economy but also in controlling it. Similar to other developmental states, key economic sectors of development in Ethiopia are kept in the hands of the government (Dejene, n.d.). In the absence of strong and adequate production oriented private sector, this role seems sound and appropriate.

But, currently, the Ethiopian government has also engaged not only in a facilitation role or acting as “a night watchman state” but also has engaged deeply in production as well as marketing. Provided low capacity of the Ethiopian state, it becomes very difficult task for the government. To validate this argument one can walk around the ‘Kebels’ and look how the edible oil and sugar is marketed and how the people are frustrated as a result of inefficient service delivery and artificial shortage created in essentially important consumer goods seems sufficient.

In such occasion, the good news is, the country is registering continued economic growth in the last decade. But, unfortunately, in the economically successful year's democracy, as some argue taking the 2005 national election following in which a large number of parliament seats were controlled by the opposition political parties, democracy is deteriorating in the country. Above all, the promulgation of the Charities and civil Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 of Ethiopia and Anti-terrorism Proclamation 652/2009, with lots of restrictive provisions, were considered by many as broad measures taken to narrow the political space for civil societies and opposition political parties.

In this regard, Hopkins et al (2009), argued that the Ethiopian civil society law “severely weaken the work of independent civil society organizations, particularly human rights defenders and advocates of democratic governance”.

The proclamation prohibits foreign non-governmental organizations from engaging in activities pertaining to human rights, women’s rights, children’s rights, disability rights, citizenship rights, conflict resolution or democratic governance. Even local NGOs that receive more than ten percent of their funding from foreign sources are considered “foreign”. Since the vast majority of domestic human rights NGOs in Ethiopia receive the bulk of their funds from foreign sources, the new CSO law will force them to either close their doors or drastically alter the scope of their work.

This has hugely tied the feet and hands of CSO’s in Ethiopia not to play the expected role in the democratization process of the state. Beyond this, such restrictive provisions have a huge repercussion on the wider freedom of association.

Similarly, the FDRE proclamation on anti-terrorism, Proclamation No. 652/2009 has given 'excessive' power for the police and national intelligence security service:

*....to intercept or conduct surveillance on the telephone, fax, radio, internet, electronic, postal and similar communications.....make a covert search on the resident of a person suspected of terrorism...to do this the police may request a warrant from the court either in writing or in telephone...".*

This provision poses a danger to freedom of expression. By considering this the opposition parties and some other observers like Demissie (2013), has argued that "the anti-terrorism proclamation is passed with a view to use it as a tool to dismantle political opposition and dissent".

Generally speaking, based on the discussion made above, it is possible to argue that in Ethiopia, the government is approaching towards establishing a developmental state, not a democratic developmental state, in many regards. Given the experience of the South East Asian developmental states, mainly South Korea and Taiwan, as Mulu & Daba (2017), noted that what is missed in Ethiopia to not become a fully-fledged developmental state is "the absence of [very] strong, efficient, merit-based bureaucracy. But, since one size of developmental state model might not fit all, the absence of strong civil service may not disqualify the Ethiopian government's claim of being a developmental state. During those times the country has fortunately registered a sustained economic growth for more than a decade. But, the emergence of 'a developmental' state model has coincided with a commensurate diminishing of democracy and worsening human right conditions in the country. In practice, the 2010 Ethiopian election has revealed the multi-party system in the country is at risk where the ruling EPRDF and its allies won all the 547 seats with no any opposition party in the parliament. Beyond this, the newly promulgated proclamations on civic society and anti-terrorism have also a huge impact in narrowing the political space. So, 'the impossibility theses' or the incompatibility between democracy and developmental state model seems correct in Ethiopian case. Because even though the country has progressed in terms of building 'developmental state' it was clearly at the expense of democracy. So the government's claim of 'democratic developmental state' makes it 'black skinned under white mask' (to use Fanon's word). So, the main intention behind unsuitably bringing the notion of developmental state with democracy depicts that the ruling EPRDF is at paradox to play in

the hands of the West and the east. On the one hand, to secure neo-liberalist and their agencies financial aid and political support) and on the other hand to gets financial support from the East especially china without the issue of democracy.

Generally, as it is discussed above, despite the 1995 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) constitution named the state democratic (Art 1) and stated "It is prohibited to assume state power in any manner other than that provided under the Constitution" (Art 9(3)), the government is repeatedly accused of its bad human right record, being oppressive, limiting political space, censoring media, oppress freedom of speech etc by various opposition political parties, western allies and so on. Though five consecutive national elections were held since 1985, the number of seats controlled by opposition parties decreases significantly. Above all, there was only one seat and no seat was controlled by the opposition block in the 2010 and 2015 national elections. Media censoring is common in Ethiopia. You can see what happened last year where violent popular opposition broke out in Oromia and the Amhara Regional States. Thus, it is valid to conclude that Ethiopia cannot be taken as democratic state, rather emerging developmental state.

#### **4. Conclusion**

A developmental state is mainly characterized by its ideological orientation and institutional capacity to implement the ambitious development policies. In this regard, the Ethiopian state lacks the institutional capacity. Even though the regime is trying to be visionary and assume ideological hegemony at the expense of democracy, the bureaucracy remained weak and is not in a position to shoulder the responsibility of developmental state effectively. The prevalence of party loyalty at the expense of meritocracy in recruitment and promotion coupled with corruption and rampant rent-seeking political economy would be additional threats to the country's existence and development.

Furthermore, Ethiopia's experience shows that, as the country progresses in establishing a developmental state, democracy is regressing to its margins. This shows the difficulty of establishing democratic developmental state and probably the incompatibility of the notions of developmental state and democracy. So, the existence of the claimed 'democratic developmental state' in Ethiopia is controversial.



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