

Somali 2016-Vision marred by Federal Government Sponsored Galkaio Conflict

Galkaio, the capital city of Mudug Region, is ablaze with the Damjadid-sponsored clan conflict. The inhabitants of the city were displaced. Scores of people either died or were wounded. The militias trained as national government army were deployed for this heinous crime in support of one side of the conflict. In addition, the deployment of AMISOM troops in Mudug Region is in the pipeline to ensure Damjadid-dominated Federal government's political ambitions to extend its term.

The conflict degenerated into destructive wider clan hostilities that will produce festering wounds that will prove hard to heal in the clan wars. It is a revisit of 1990s destructive civil strife which polarized the Somali clan groupings.

After the Damjadid Group in the federal seat sought to pit one federal state against another, the hope for Somali stabilization in 2016 vanished in the thin air. Even the consultative committee handpicked by the ruling clique which was scheduled to present the best possible approach to 2016 transition to a democratic election in December seems to have been stalled. The Group in Villa Somalia had earlier announced that the democratization process based on one-man-one-vote is not feasible due to the restriction of the time frame. The cancellation of the democratic process and the civil war raging in Mudug Region and elsewhere is attributed to the Group's ambitious plan to extend its term unconstitutionally or get re-elected dubiously. The government's mandate is coming to an end in August 2016. The four-year mandate had envisioned that democratic election is set in motion to end the anarchic situation prevailing in Somalia for a quarter of a century.

Damjadid had come to power in an ad hoc arrangement whereby clan elders representing four major clans and a conglomerate of minorities constituted a parliament. The arrangement produced parliamentary council which had been marred by corruption whereby the selected parliamentarians used their positions as money-making machine where voting on any upheaval was peddled for the highest bidder. The arrangement became conflict-prone as it to created scuffles that provided opportunities to trade votes. The stalemates created bled Somalia to near-demise situations and disintegration.

The meager resources mainly contributed by the international donor community were used for buying out votes for undemocratic dubious activities. This wanton embezzlement resulted in the lack of budget for government institutions including the vital security organs of the government. Consequently, this widespread misappropriation and corruption made Somalia a black hole of the international aid. Scandal after scandal surfaced involving the president, the parliament and the premiers within the four-year term of Damjadid's mandate.

In the current crisis in Galkaio, All fingers are pointing at the federal government's involvement in the clan-based conflicts. A member of federal parliament, Abdi Barre Jibril, openly stated that the Federal government is airlifting arms and federal troops to Adado, the capital city of Galmudug on their way to Galkaio to reinforce Galmudug troops. Likewise, the Puntland State government alleged that it has

enough evidence that President Hassan's government is heavily involved in the conflict. Reacting to these allegations, the President of Puntland refused Hassan's invitation to come to Mogadishu for negotiations.

After all Galmudug was formed in violation of the interim constitution and the federal government heavily invested in its creation in the hope that it will prop up President Hassan's ambition to extend his term in August 2016.

Despite this political failure, the regime is now moving heaven and earth to get term extension through corruption by creating further chaos in stable federal states. A typical example is the ongoing conflict in Galkaio, the capital city of Mudug region. The regime had created a State called Gulmudug State in the Central regions in contravention to the adopted national charter and had installed an own-man just to create a stalemate that will enable the ruling Group to cling to power after the end of its mandate.

The Damjadid Group has strategy scheme to cling to power. The tried but unsuccessful 4.5 power sharing scheme is their mindset. The dreaded 4.5 power sharing formula has proven to be like opening Pandora's Box, resulting in the continuation of the status quo and the denial of an opportunity to move Somalia along a democratic path. The Somalis will remain on that thorny path unless the adopted constitution is respected and the erring leaders be banished from standing for a high national posts.

The country needs to grow out of the blinkered scope of creating clan-based hostilities in pursuance of vested interests and the save the country from demise by banishing these inward thinking politicians from accessing powerful posts. This is crucial for the salvation of the country.

The preliminary understanding adopted by the clan elders, which consists of four points, needs to be respected as the basis for an initial dialogue. The four points are

- a. Adopt ceasefire
- b. Pave the way for the displaced people to return to the city
- c. Retreat the combatants to pre-conflict positions
- d. To continue the dialog for comprehensive reconciliation

This is a good beginning if sincerity and good faith are involved. This will come from within than being imposed by the delegates from outside. The so-called federal government which has reneged its mandate should be pressurized by the international stakeholders to show non-partisanship and neutrality.

If the situation deteriorates further, the deviant groups like Al-Qaeda related Al-Shabab and ISIS affiliates who are now in the process of establishing themselves in Puntland and many other parts of Somalia will cash in on the situation and entrench themselves well in Somalia.

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