

Ethiopia blasts US human rights report as "full of hearsay"

Text of report in English by Ethiopian news agency ENA website

Addis Ababa, 13 March: The report released by the US State Department regarding human rights situations in Ethiopia is full of hearsay, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

In a press statement it sent to the Ethiopian News Agency here on Monday [13 March], the ministry said the department has simply released the report of the of Ethiopian Human Rights Council and others, which have their own political agendas, without verification, and considering as its own.

The report released by the State Department recently focuses on the situations of human rights of several countries, including Ethiopia, the statement said.

According to the statement, the report says the national elections held on 15 May 2005 in Ethiopia has generally got acceptance as confirmed by local and international observers though there were minor irregularities. However, its (the report's) allegation concerning the human rights violation was totally groundless, it said. The Ethiopian government gives special attention to respect of human rights as enshrined in the national constitution, the statement said. The government has been mobilizing the entire governmental bodies and institutions as well as citizens with a view to implementing human rights conventions practically, it added.

The government has also strived to minimize human rights violations that may occur as a result of dangerous strategy formulated by opposition parties, the statement said. It said it is obvious that the violence instigated by opposition by capitalizing on unemployment in urban areas aimed at dismantling the constitutional system by force had claimed the lives of members of the police and citizens. Had [it] not been to the efforts of the government launched with an intention of containing the violence in a sense of responsibility, its consequence might have been immense.

Be[ing] this the fact, however, the endorsement of the report by State Department through its Human Right Bureau which did not base on facts, and without verifying complaints submitted to it with the intention of political gain makes it questionable, the statement said. The statement said the State Department has not attempted to verify the positions of those bodies and the government, in particular regarding the complaints, which it said, is unethical.

It said the report prepared with this situation regarding the situation of human rights in Ethiopia does not have any benefit, at all, both to ensuring human rights and development of democracy in the country.

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