

ION: A litany of false stories



In its latest publication (No. 1474) of 18 May last week, the Indian Ocean Newsletter floats a litany of wild stories on Eritrea on the basis of innuendos; apparently without minimum verification. To highlight some of its outlandish assertions:

1. In reference to MOI's press release of 14 May this month on joint Ethiopian-Sudanese agreement to continue supporting what they term "Eritrean armed opposition groups", the ION claims, quoting unnamed "sources in Addis Abeba" that Eritrea's President "has reacted by mobilizing his troops to counter any potential threats, calling up reservists and young conscripts".

This is utterly false and ludicrous. Eritrea has not, and does not need, to mobilize troops to counter inconsequential acts that have been going on for many years now. The MOI Press Release on the subject indeed underlined that the scheme was "neither new, nor surprising";.. and its "futility hardly needed emphasis".

2. In a separate article on Djibouti and the Bab-el-Mandeb in the same publication (page 4), the ION claims that "the head of the African Affairs bureau at the State Department, Donald Yamamoto, raised the issue of... demilitarizing the Obock region, with President Issayas Afwerki during his visit" to Asmara in April. The ION continues to assert that "the President responded by saying that it will not be possible to reach a solution without an accord with the **FRUD arme**".

Again, this is utterly false. A subject of this nature was not even mentioned, let alone discussed, in the meeting between the President and the visiting US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa.

3. In a third article in the same publication, the ION alludes to some "hotspot" in Djibouti that would "serve as a centre to process the claims of Eritrean migrants". The ION then proceeds to tell us that "discussions on the issue which are being spearheaded by France and the European Union, seem to have been positively

received so far by both Ismail Omar Guelleh and Issayas Afeworki”.

These fictitious stories are too crass to merit substantive response. But, for reasons better known to itself, the ION seems to relish disseminating or recycling wild and hoax stories on Eritrea these days. This has indeed become its trade mark in the past months.

As we pointed out in a previous Press Release, the MOI urges the ION to show some respect to its readers and desist from disseminating hoax news on Eritrea for trite reasons of sensationalization or other sinister agendas.

Ministry of Information

Asmara

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