



The Ethiopian Herald

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Guardian follows suit of telling lies about Ethiopia

BY YESUF ENDRIS

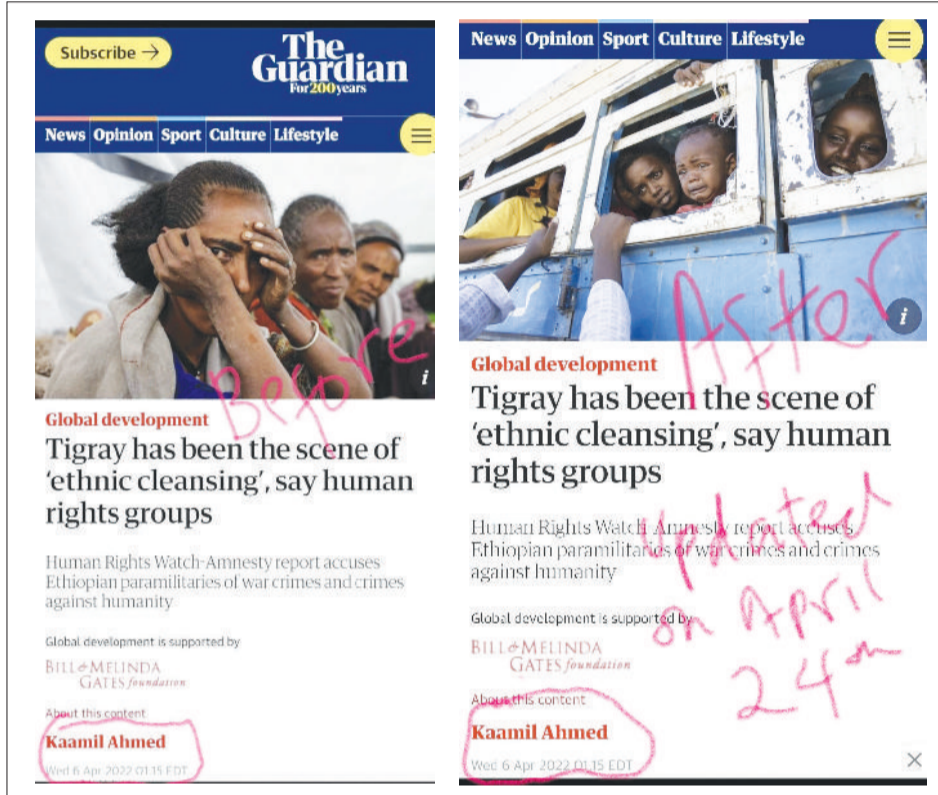
ADDIS ABABA- The Western media keep on misrepresenting the current situation of Ethiopia, the Ethio-American Development council said, mentioning The Guardian's usage of an unrelated and misleading image to blame the government for the pseudo 'Tigray Genocide.'

The Guardian posted a photograph showing morose mothers to illustrate the news article written about Tigray until it has been silently edited.

The Ethio-American Development Council called-out for "the dishonest and unethical misuse of images that The Guardian has once again resorted to silent edit. The Guardian is using plagiarism photos to turn victimizers into victims."

"What's more cruel than using pictures of Amhara survivors of ethnic cleansing by

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Fruit producers, exporters express discontent over new forex allocation

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Photo: Hadash Abraha

AAU Pres. (L), City Culture, Arts and Tourism Bureau Head (M), EPA CEO (R)

EPA hands over books to Abrhot Library surpassing 5,000 target

• Diaspora urged to contribute books as Nat'l campaign starts soon

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) handed over yesterday books to the grand Abrhot Library collected in a five-day campaign targeting to collect 5,000 books in a memory of its published authors.

The event also marked the announcement of a national campaign to collect one million books to the library that lasts a month—

May 6-June 6, 2022; in which the Diaspora is urged to participate hugely.

Speaking at the handing over ceremony, Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) Chief Executive Officer Getnet Tadesse said EPA staff members and candid personalities who backed the noble objective contributed books including rare ones.

There were people who sent book

contributions from miles of distances as well, he added.

The EPA could be regarded as one of the oldest pan-African media house conceived and established by Africans nearly a century ago, Getnet said. And he broke the news of yet another innovative round of campaign to collect books matching EPA's 81 years of

See EPA hands... page 3

News

6,000 Children become orphans by TPLF war in Afar, Amhara

BY MULATU BELACHEW

ADDIS ABABA- At least 6000 children are said to be orphaned in the Afar and Amhara states as a result of terrorist TPLF military occupation of large parts of the aforesaid states, the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman said.

The institution further stated that this happened between August and December 2021.

It was learnt the institution has recently released the result of a preliminary result of investigations in the Afar and Amhara states.

Speaking to VOA Amharic service, the institution Chief Ombudsman Endale Haile (PhD) said that civilians were targeted and executed on alleged grounds of being a member or supporters of the ruling Prosperity Party.

The institution deployed a 16 members team of researchers in the states. Data, from the DW Amharic report, were collected from local levels of administration, namely district and kebele levels.

Most of the orphaned children are in the Amhara state. Over 4,587 children lost; at least one of their parents as a result of the



war, and 591 of them are from the Afar state. The Ombudsman also remarked about rape cases related to the war, 1,252 victims are from the Amhara state and 37 are from Afar state.

In terms of the destruction of social infrastructures, including health and educational institutions, the cost of the damage is said to be over 29 billion Birr. According to the report, the TPLF

deliberately targeted social service delivery infrastructures.

Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and Ethiopian Human Rights Council are yet to remark on the preliminary report.

Physician says TPLF oversells looted medicines to people

- Assigned professionals to plunder Amhara, Afar hospitals

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- Tigray people are suffering from lack of medicines since the medicines sent to the poor are hoarded and sold expensive in newly and illegally established pharmacies, a medical doctor who escaped from the faction gave testimony.

Speaking to local media, a doctor goes by the name Aregawi Hagos, who was working for Ayder Hospital, Mekelle, said a number of new pharmacies are opening and start selling expensive medicines amidst the people who are suffering from dire supply. "If truth be told, greedy individuals and TPLF officials like Tedros Adhanom (PhD), affiliates and leftovers are using all the aid for political consumption, not for the sake of poor lives."

"I fled to Addis Ababa refusing the atrocities perpetrated by TPLF. The living situation in Tigray is very devastating and unbearable as the clique doesn't care about the people," he added.

As to Dr. Aregawi, when TPLF leftovers planned to plunder Amhara and Afar states, they organized staff in every field like engineering, medicine, factory worker so as to systematically loot potential items. Hence the medicine looted from Amhara and Afar health

institutions were stored in Tigray in such a theft style.

Public hospitals are devoid of medicines and medical supplies. The prescribed medicine are found outside of government institutions as a number of private pharmacies are born, and only their close cadres and those who have fattened pockets afford to buy medicine.

"These people have not well comprehended what they are doing as their actions are pretty paradoxical. They are heard shouting that Tigray people are suffering from lack of medicines on the one hand and they themselves have plundered medicine and are selling them at their own private pharmacies on the other, at the expense of the entire community."

The medical doctor further claimed that the people of Tigray have no idea about the whereabouts of the aid sent in their name. "Why don't religious leaders and TPLF officials like Tedros prioritize the people instead of attaching due emphasis to political mission. Do they really care about the people? I doubt it."

"The body administering the state could hardly manage conditions and it is busy orchestrating attention diversion schemes, which would never address the heaped challenges of people in the state.



Aregawi Hagos (MD)

For instance, the majority of the people are requesting TPLF saying, "Where are our children?" and it has used various means to get their voice muffled and buried saying "It is not time to ask."

"Not only has the group given hard time to Tigray people but it is also attempting, though failing, to create enmity with states like Amhara and Afar and with countries such as Eritrea. These odd behaviors of TPLF must be well revealed and rife all over the world as it has been doing what all notorious terrorist in the world do not dare try. The group must learn that the people of Tigray are fleeing into the Amhara State despite all the attempts to give a picture of hostile neighbors," he emphasized.

Council recounts WHO Director's crimes against humanity

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA— Ethio-American Development Council (EADC) exposed that the WHO Director General, Tedros Adhanom (PhD) was engaged in depopulation of ethnic Amharas through injecting infertility while he was Ethiopian Health Minister.

The Council stated that Tedros has been exerting maximum potential in exterminating ethnic Amharas and denial of Cholera outbreak when he was appointed as health minister by TPLF leader, Meles Zenawi since 2005.

According to the Council, scores of Amhara women and girls were given injected contraceptives and got sterilized without their knowledge, while his ethnic Tigray people received excellent neonatal care which contributed to population fertility.

"Most recently Tedros has been criticized and not to be reelected for second round WHO director hood since he has done wrong doings which are not expected of a person holding a greater global status, and cannot be the only candidate for the post," the council remembered.

Similarly, the council stated that WHO and Tedros's response to a pandemic claiming the lives of at least five million worldwide, the rife of the sex exploitation as well as Ebola pandemic abuse in Congo, COVID 19 feedback have to be cited other important factors to refuse his second nomination.

However, the World Health Organization only declared the corona virus outbreak a pandemic in March 2020 after it had spread to more than 112 countries and killed thousands of people. In this regard, Tedros's loyalties to terrorist TPLF have affected his response for the mainstream he has been appointed, the council stated.

News

Nat'l Dialogue commission's initial activities encouraging: Lawmakers

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

ADDIS ABABA – The initial activities that have been carried out by the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) within the past two months are encouraging and promising, according to House of Peoples' Representatives.

ENDC Commissioners and Chairpersons of the standing committees of the House held discussion yesterday on commission's plan and its performance report since its establishment, last February.

During the discussion, Chairpersons of the standing committees repeated that the commission has done many inspiring works: organizing office, hiring manpower, reaching potential stakeholders, creating common understanding about commission's establishment proclamation, gathering and documenting research papers on indigenous knowledge, as well as compiling experience of countries that have implemented national

dialogue, among others.

Among the standing committees' Chairperson, Christian Tadele – Chairperson of Public Expenditure Administration and Control Affairs Standing Committee, and Dima Negewo (PhD) – Chairperson of Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee have praised the commission's activities.

They also urged that the performance that has been showed during the preliminary phase should be repeated in the remaining phases.

Christian further urged the Commission to prepare a roadmap, communication strategy, code of conduct, and other guidelines in accordance with its establishment proclamation.

He added that the Commission needs to be precautionary while involving various associations during the dialogue process, and has to evaluate the inclusiveness and



Photo: Eyob Tefert

impartiality of these associations.

Dima on his part stated that the Commission should strengthen its capacity to ensure that its activities are free from any interference.

Addressing Christian's and others' comment, House Speaker Tagesse Chaffo said that Commission's communication strategy, roadmap, code of conduct, and other manuals are being prepared.

He added that potential stakeholders' participation is very important for the

successful completion of the National Dialogue.

Tagesse also promised that the House will provide all necessary support for the success of the Commission.

Meanwhile, ENDC Chief Commissioner Prof. Mesfin Araya noted that the support of the general public, government, contending political parties, civic societies, and other stakeholders for the Commission is encouraging and inspiring for better work.

Fruit producers, exporters express discontent over new forex allocation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA- Fruit producers and exporters expressed discontent that the new directive set on exporters' share of foreign currency could impact the quality and international competitiveness of exportable items, whilst the Ministry of Agriculture said it is ready to address problems arising from the measure.

In January 2022, the government reversed the former 70/30 foreign currency allocation arrangement that permitted fruit exporters to take up to 30 percent of export revenue in USD to a new 80/20 scheme that reduced the latter's foreign currency share by 10 percent.

Commenting on the issue to The Ethiopian Herald, Abyssinia Flowers Private Limited Company Coordinator Bas Terlow said the directive has its own impact on importing

• Gov't says ready to address problem

fertilizers, chemicals and other inputs necessary to produce quality flower products that fit international standards. If things continue in the current condition, the company's ability to import agricultural input will be significantly harmed.

Noting flower and fruit growers are working tirelessly to reverse the new directive, Bas indicated the new dollar distribution formula is a major challenge for investors in the sector.

Joost Heij, a private equity manager who specializes in adding value to avocado products, shared the above argument. "I think the government is well aware that such directives are challenges, especially for producers and exporters. Of course, most traders in Ethiopia are interested in exporting coffee, sesame and other commodities and earning dollars for their imports."

Ministry of Agriculture's Horticultural Investment Section Director Mekonnen Solomon who noted the new directive is a temporary measure, highlighted that the problem may need to be carefully investigated and complaints would be properly addressed. To this end, florists must provide accurate information about the amount of foreign currency they generate from exports.

"The Vegetable Growers and Exporters Association has not been providing us with enough information. In this regard, some complaints may arise. If there is accurate information, it is easy to put in place viable measures."

It is to be recalled that the amended directive was issued by the National Bank of Ethiopia and came into effect on January 6, 2022.

EPA hands...

uninterrupted existence to collect 100 best books representing each of the years.

EPA Board Member Deacon Daniel Kibret who spoke at the event said the campaign is meant to install the culture of donating books.

"We're doing this due to the fact that we know that books contain a refined knowledge with edited and peer corrected content."

It is in this way that knowledge can be made intergenerational, he said.

Problems arising here and there in Ethiopia can only be tackled through knowledge and that is the reason the library is built, he added. "Look, we've built the largest library, its pillars, gates... are huge as you

can see them. All what you see here are metaphors signifying the fact that we value knowledge."

The library is also a means to disseminate knowledge. Books that are surplus here will be given to libraries in regional states. City administrations and regional states will also emulate the lesson and build similar libraries for themselves.

For his part, Addis Ababa University President Prof. Tassew Weldehanna said people ranging from 3,000-5,000 are using the library resources day in, day out and this shows the extent of the demand for similar facilities at every sub-city in Addis and in every state in Ethiopia.

He also hailed the EPA for the initiative in the name of the famed writers. "I don't

think there exists a person here who is not influenced by the books authored by the accomplished writers of EPA."

Similarly, Addis Ababa Culture and Arts and Tourism Bureau Head Hirut Kassaw (PhD) who attended the event said the Abrhot Library is meant to be a hub of knowledge. Hence, the EPA's contributions in this regard are tremendous. She said the key to undo many of the problems seen is through promoting the supremacy of ideas.

The EPA initially set a target to collect 5,000 books in five days but was able to surpass it.

It is to be recalled that the media house has incubated published authors including, but not limited to, Haddis Alemayehu, Ba'alu Girma, Abe Gubegna and Sebat Gebre-Egziabher.

Guardian follows...

Tigrayan forces to shove their debunked Tigray Genocide, how low can The Guardian go?," the council tweeted.

A foreign journalist, Ann Garrison also tweeted that she was there when the cameraman took that picture. "One picture can tell 1000 words, or a 1000 lies. I was with Getty images Photographer, Jemal Countless when he took this Photo at Sekota, Amhara State IDP camp for Amhara fleeing TPLF. The Guardian is using it to illustrate a Tigray 'ethnic cleansing' story based on Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International's report."

The image has been taken in Sekota, Amhara State from January 2021, *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

Since the beginning of the northern conflict, the West's corporate media have been highly engaged in information warfare and employing unrelated and misleading content. A few days right from the start of the war, the New York Times used a surgical image showing wounded civilians. But, it has been later exposed that the so-called civilian in the picture was a soldier in the warfront.

Last year, Aljazeera maliciously disseminated fake news saying that "at least three people killed in an air strike in Mekelle" while using a fake image which has already been used by the AFP for another news story.

BBC has also used pictures of chemical weapon attacks even though it has admitted that the picture was taken in Syria. By the same token, CNN has been used to disseminate fake news in support of the TPLF since the war started.

Opinion

The rise of ethnic extremism in Ethiopia is an opportunity for failure

From GETFACTet

Do the current boxes of ethnic regions represent the diverse nature of Ethiopians' identities? Thousands of identities are possible if we explore the three-generation family tree of Ethiopia's population. While the unity within this diversity of Ethiopians has overcome generational challenges, including the victory of Adwa, tribalistic agendas continue to thrive at home and in the diaspora today, making the nation vulnerable to internal terrorism and foreign interest.

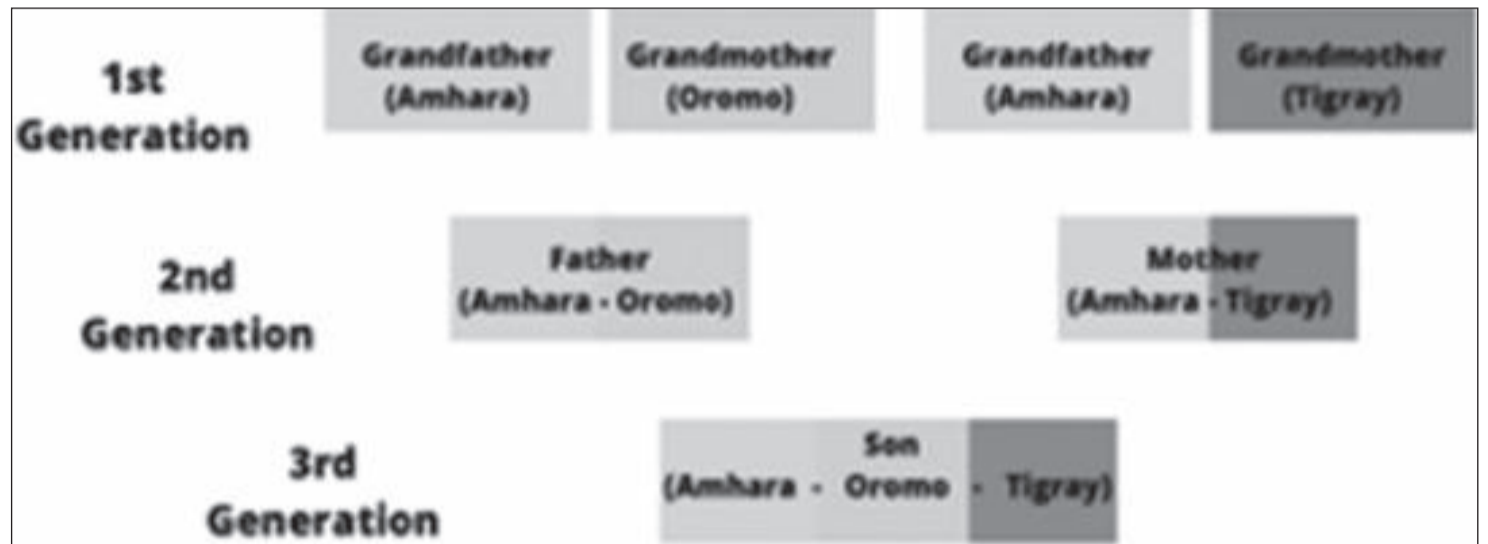
Several scholars have raised the danger of tribalism and ethnic extremism in modern nations. Although Ethiopia is a melting pot with thousands of identities that coexisted for centuries, tribalistic ideological movements with the name of "liberation" have been on the rise since the 1950s. Tribalistic movements started shaping Ethiopia's politics as different groups claimed their fight for specific ethnic groups' rights, including Tigray, Eritrea, Oromo, etc., against Emperor Haileselassie.

In the 1980s, the armed struggle of Tigray People's Liberation Front dominance with Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) allegiance took the political window by overthrowing a communist regime in Ethiopia that opened doors for ethnic federalism to be formally institutionalized in the country.

Following a TPLF-dominated regime taking over power in Ethiopia, internal ethnic boundaries were constructed, and an ethnic-based constitution was enacted in 1994. The constitution only recognized Ethiopians with their ethnic group and ethnic rights rather than individual rights. As a result, Ethiopians were forced to have state IDs with their ethnic identities displayed.

While TPLF is a minority, at the same time, a supremacist group within Ethiopia, it designed ethnic-based federalism to subjugate, divide and rule Ethiopians and secure political and economic power for generations to come. Even though the claim of constructing internal boundaries in Ethiopia was to give the different ethnic groups self-ruling privileges to the extent of self-determination, it denies more than 90 percent of the Ethiopian ethnic groups such rights.

In the current regional structures in Ethiopia, there are eleven regions; only the three regions, Gambela, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, and South West Ethiopia Peoples' regions are not named after an ethnic group. However, the remaining eight regions (Oromo, Amhara, Afar, Tigray, Somali, Sidama, Benishangul-Gumuz, and Harari) use ethno-linguistically driven regional names. Furthermore, the remaining ethnic groups, 75 of 83 ethnic



$$C(n,r) = {}^nC_r = {}_nC_r = \binom{n}{r} = \frac{n!}{r!(n-r)!}$$

groups, do not have regions based on their ethnic names.

Although these eight regions use regional names that are ethnic groups, millions of Ethiopians from different ethnicities and identities exist in these regions. One may ask why these regions are named after a specific ethnic group and exclude other ethnicities and identities within them?

For generations, Ethiopian identity and ethnicity have been mixed through marriage, economic relocations, harvesting reasons, etc. The identity definition TPLF instituted in Ethiopia still uses ethnic boxes or a binary form that denies the reality on the ground.

For example, looking into two generations of a family tree with a grandfather (Amhara) and grandmother (Oromo), their offspring become a father with an identity of (Amhara - Oromo). Similarly, a mother with the identity of (Amhara - Tigray) from a grandfather (Amhara) and Grandmother (Tigray) could marry a husband with an identity in the previous scenario (Amhara - Oromo). The two could have a son with an identity mix of the three ethnic groups (Amhara - Oromo - Tigray)

Within the TPLF institutionalized ethnic federalism of the past 30 years, every individual is required to have an ethnic identity or choose an ethnic affiliation to have civil protection in a region. Thus, in the example above, what is the ethnic identity of the son? Is he an Oromo, Amhara, or Tigray?

The answer is that this person has all the above identities, given his family taught him about those ethnic cultures. As a result, a new identity is formed to accommodate the three ethnic and religious cultures.

Such scenarios in Ethiopia are common;

perhaps more than half of the Ethiopian population has a family with two or three ethnic background. Based on the mathematical concept known as Combination, we can estimate the number of identities (ethnic combinations) someone with two ethnic backgrounds could have in Ethiopia.

Where $n = 83$, where n is the total number of ethnic groups in Ethiopia, and $r = 2$, where r is the selected ethnic groups someone can have within three generations. The result is mind-blowing; more than 3,400 possible identities could exist, and most Ethiopians could have one of these identities. This tells us that eight ethnic boxes will never represent Ethiopians' intricate ethnic web and identity.

Clearly, Ethiopia is home to several ethnicities and thousands of unique identities that bring cultural diversity with significant values to its existence. While recognizing their rich cultural diversities, strong national pride has always existed in the mind of Ethiopians from all ethnic backgrounds.

So, why is ethnic extremism in Ethiopia, perpetrated by some political mercenaries that deny these facts, on the rise? Their push to undo the diverse settlement of Ethiopians in different parts of the region is worrisome, and it's against the idea of a nation-building process. What TPLF sowed 30 years ago, now the new generation of Ethiopians is reaping it for the past 15 years— ethnically targeted displacement, a notion of cleansing a region as if a region is for only a specific ethnic group.

To make matters worse, some groups in the diaspora who live thousands of miles away from Ethiopia, are creating groups in the name of Tigray, Oromo, Amhara and so on, followed by Association, Libration,

Front, etc., and continue their rhetoric that they are defending a particular ethnic group. The same group blames the ethnic-based constitution for existing issues in Ethiopia. At the same time, they continue their tribalistic organization in the diaspora and weaken the fabric of Ethiopian unity that has survived for generations.

In addition to their attempt to break the long history and fabric of tolerance between different ethnic groups, some are setting a time bomb by suggesting arming each ethnic group to protect themselves as a temporary solution for internal displacement. However, the long-term impact is crystal clear. Creating rivalry and armed ethnic groups is the path to self annihilation with the rise of ethnic extremism.

Therefore, building a strong Ethiopia that values and cherishes national diversity would give protection to all Ethiopians and their ethnic identities. Undoing the tunnel vision of ethnic-based politics is a challenge that this generation must face.

Ethiopians, at home and in the diaspora, should support the ongoing national dialogue to identify frameworks for embracing individuals' rights and appreciate all ethnic backgrounds - perhaps, disarming organized ethnic groups in Ethiopia such as TPLF and OLA and banning ethnic-based political parties that tend to deepen differences between ethnic groups and inflame conflicts.

As the TPLF continues its effort to subdue Ethiopians by force, the fight against TPLF tribalistic agenda and its supremacist endeavors should continue. TPLF is preparing for another round of attacks in Welkait, Humera and other parts of northern Ethiopia; unity is the only viable solution to overcome this insurgency and terrorism campaign that is threatening the nation's sovereignty.

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

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The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Why int'l community remains mute about seized aid trucks?

Hundreds of aid trucks are not still returned from Tigray following the delivery of food and non-food items. Most of the trucks were observed transporting TPLF militants as the group opened war in many fronts quite a few months ago.

The International Community (IC) however has remained tightlipped when it comes to pressuring the criminal group to release the aid trucks. If the real concern is about unfettered delivery of humanitarian aids for citizens in Tigray, then one of the reliable means to do it is using the trucks.

On Sep. 16, 2021 UN Ethiopia tweeted its concern about the trucks saying: "We need trucks to deliver lifesaving assistance to people in Tigray." It has admitted that only 38 out of 466 trucks that entered Tigray since 12 July returned. But after this, we heard nothing about the trucks but we have seen them being an instrument to transport the TPLF fighters. The crux of the matter is several hundred aid trucks are still in the hands of the TPLF.

This raises the question as to "Why did International Aid Organizations fail to ask for the missing trucks? Are they indirectly supporting the mean purposes of TPLF by providing trucks for war or what?"

It is proven several times that though the Ethiopian government was looking for a peaceful solution for the conflict, the TPLF junta has drowned in the mud of its war-mongering character and it is still beating the war drum at the expense of Tigrayan youths' precious lives.

Besides conscripting forcibly innocent Tigrayan youth for war, the

TPLF is also using humanitarian aid and is hijacking trucks that are used to transport aid for its destructive purposes. However, none of the International Aid organizations or others is concerned about the aid trucks.

Unless it is checked timely, the group commits any crime using the humanitarian delivery as an opportunity to achieve its destructive ends.

As it was recently disclosed by Tigray Democratic Party, foods and medicine that entered Tigray are being used by TPLF militia. What is more, despite shortage of medicine for civilians, new private pharmacies have been opened in Tigray and the medicines that should have been distributed to the needy are diverted to these pharmacies to fulfill the iniquitous purposes of TPLF.

TPLF is still gambling with the lives of innocent civilians and is trying to deceive the international community and most of the Tigrayan diaspora. The Tigrayan people have been suffering at the hands of the TPLF for decades. After it has lost its tight grip on power, it is still suffocating the people of Tigray through its propaganda and its war drum beatings. Using the people as its hostage, the clique is also intentionally blocking the food aid and medicine sent by International Humanitarian organizations.

Over and beyond, the people of Tigray should fight the TPLF more than ever by clearly understanding that the group is deliberately starving them. And the international community as well must hold the TPLF accountable for what it has been doing on innocent civilians. Still there must be a transparent system to ensure whether the humanitarian delivery is being distributed to the people only.

Opinion

African economic integration a viable path for economic independence

PART I

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The current war between Russia and Ukraine is making a greater socio-economic impact in the world and its current and future impact on Africa is quite obvious. Instead of putting their hopes on western countries and donor agencies, African countries are expected to solicit for a viable economic solution as the current crisis seemed not to spare even the so called developed countries.

For instance, according to a recent publication from Business Africa, Russia and Ukraine are major wheat, sunflower, aluminum or nickel producers. Both countries play key roles in the world's supply of raw materials destined for industrial and food sectors. This episode of Business Africa focuses on the long and the short-term consequences the crisis may have on African economies.

Since the crisis between Russia and Ukraine erupted, the global prices of wheat, sunflower or oil crude have reached unprecedented levels. African nations, which have been trading with Russia for years, could be left short of supplies. It is particularly the case for Maghreb countries which rely on Russian and Ukrainian wheat, with imports accounting for more than 50%.

Many African countries have rich natural resources that they can jointly utilize for the common development of their respective countries. The best solution for making

African countries self-reliant in their economic endeavors rests on their efforts in promoting a viable economic integration. The ideals of African economic integration were outlined by the forefathers of Africa who established the former OAU. Now the AU has incorporated the concept of African economic integration in the strategies envisaged in Agenda 2063 and other documents produced by the continental organization.

After independence, a number of regional integration schemes were established including African Financial Community (CFA) zone, comprising the West African CFA franc and the Central African CFA franc. The West African CFA franc was ultimately integrated to the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) in the territory of ECOWAS, while the Central African CFA franc is set to join the envisioned Economic and Monetary Union of Central Africa (CEMAC) in the ECCAS region. Likewise in Southern Africa, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) with its associated monetary union – the Common Monetary Area – is set to be integrated to the SADC constituency. (ECA).

With the establishment of ECA by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in 1958 with the primary goal of providing technical assistance by conducting research and policy analysis to strengthen the capacity of institutions driving the regional integration agenda, including the African Union, regional

economic communities and member States.

Furthermore, in the early sixties, the Heads of State and Government of 30 of the 32 independent African nations gathered to establish the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at the Conference of Independent African States on 25 May 1963.

The main objectives of OAU among other things were to promote unity and solidarity among African States; to organize and strengthen cooperation for development on the continent; to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its member States; and to encourage international cooperation as outlined by the United Nations.

The Lagos Plan of Action which was adopted in 1980 at the OAU Extraordinary Summit in Lagos, Nigeria, where it was launched as a special initiative of the Organization set a landmark in a comprehensive effort to promote economic integration of African countries. The Lagos Plan of Action itself, followed by the Final Act of Lagos, was borne out of the necessity for continental and national self-sufficiency and the creation of a self-reliant continental economy.

Formation of African Economic Community and the strengthening of existing regional economic communities and the creation of others to cover the continent as a whole were set in the agenda of Lagos Plan of Action. ECOWAS already existed among the West African countries. Southern Africa also had a socioeconomic cooperation arrangement, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference created in the

1980s, which was later replaced by SADC in 1992. Similarly, Southern and Eastern Africa had established a Preferential Trade Area in 1981, which eventually became COMESA in 1993.

In Central Africa, ECCAS was created in 1983 by the leaders of the pre-existing Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa. The abovementioned arrangements were expected to function under the framework of the Lagos Plan of Action. The commitments in the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos were translated into a specific agreement in Abuja, Nigeria in June 1991, when the OAU Heads of State and Government signed the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. The remaining regional economic communities – IGAD (formed in 1986), AMU (formed in 1989), CEN-SAD (formed in 1998), and EAC (formed in 1999) – were all recognized as regional economic communities after the Abuja Treaty.

The Abuja Treaty which is the most important agreement as regards economic, social and political collaboration, coordination and convergence in Africa as it lays out the future of the continent with the establishment of an African Economic Community.

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Wise utilization of Franco - valuta with the account of its merits and demerits

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Aiming to stabilizing the macro economy, the government of Ethiopia established National Macro economy Committee on April 2021 last year. In order to carry out its objective of stabilizing the distorted market posed by shortage of supply of commodities and hard currency in banks, the committee recommended the introduction of utilizing Franco-valuta in which importers to be allowed to import selected basic commodities such as edible oil, rice and children nutritious food worth of 250,000 Dollar by their own foreign currency.

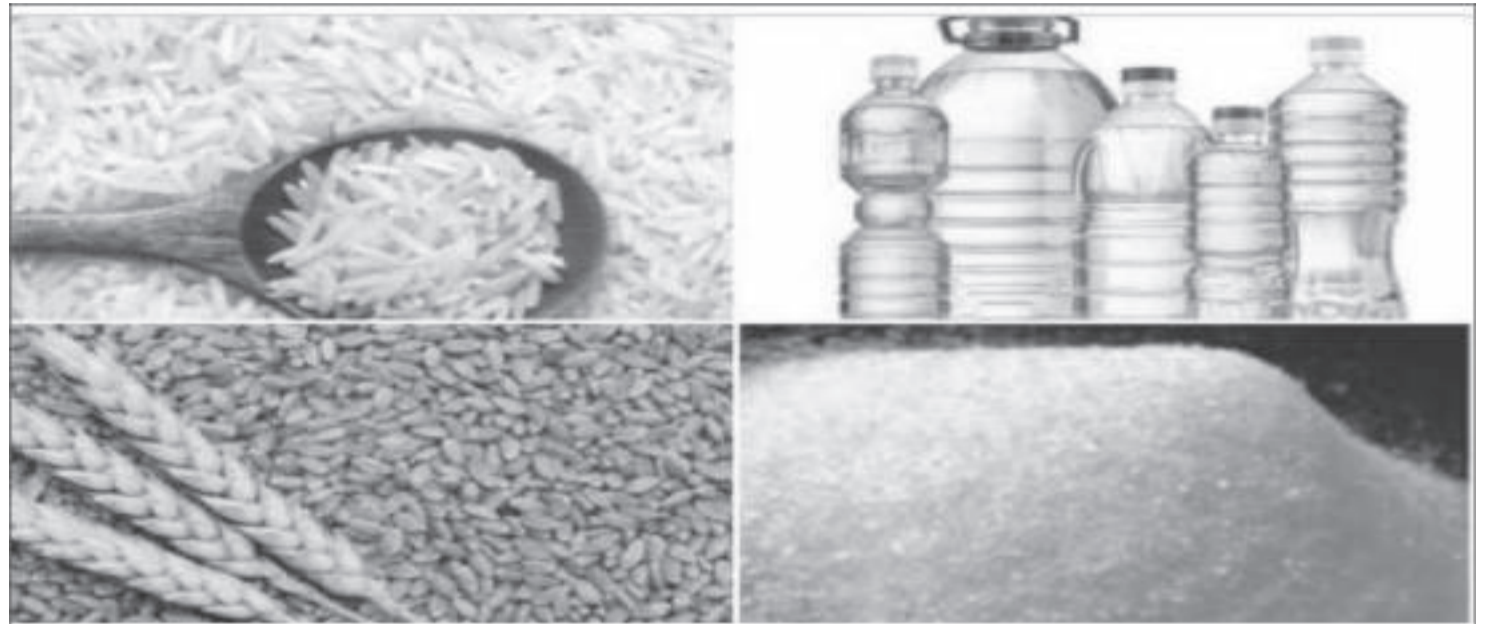
The macro economy committee reached to such decision because of the gap occurred between supply and demand of basic foods in the market.

After the introduction of the directive in the last 6 months, the Ministry of Finance announced that, the tax law imposed on the commodities amended and permitted importation of wheat, edible oil and rice made free of tax but duty and vat tax was imposed on imported pasta, macaroni and egg.

Recently again the Ministry of Finance in order to stabilize the ever growing price hike announced that it allowed that Ethiopian Diaspora who have green card in their residential country to import commodities such as edible oil, wheat, sugar and children milk through Franco valuta directly under the auspicious of Ethiopian customs commission.

According to Wasihun Belay, a financial economist, who is working for various firms as consultant, Franco valuate enables a trader to import commodities by his own foreign currency without buying the currency from Banks. This trading system can serve as a provisional but if not controlled, it strictly stipulates the money to be legally obtained. Thus, such type of trade is one option and does not bring a long lasting solution for the pervasive market stability and to mitigate the problems other solutions should be forwarded.

As to him, as the utilization of Franco valuta has its own positive role while there is a threat that it might bring a negative consequence on the economy unless it is cautiously managed. The Ministry of Finance gave the managerial mandate to the National Bank of Ethiopia to scrutinize the source of the foreign currency used for Franco valuate though the question how the Bank is going to inspect the source of the money relies on it. This question needs its own answer. Some economists argue that certain illegal traders might engage in the importation of commodities by purchasing the Dollar from black market and such practice might strengthen black market and aggravate illicit financial transaction.



Companies allowed importing commodities with Franco valuta license

It is not clear how the National Bank could trace whether the diaspora hard currency deposited in foreign country legal or not. The need for legal frame work is due to possibility of negative consequence induced as a result of positive intention to use Franco valuate for importation of commodities.

Others also argue that the instruction which allows traders to utilize Franco valuta does not go in line with instructions introduced to contain black markets. Therefore, there should be compatibility between the two instructions.

Solomon Zegeye is also an economist who is working as advisor for various firms. As to him, in the previous time, no one did conduct study whether the utilization of Franco valuta has brought positive impact on stabilizing the economy or not.

In the past, though the mandate with regard to using Franco valuta was given to the National Bank of Ethiopia, traders used to forward their request to the Ministry of Finance to get permission. But the issue whether the importers have brought market stability is not known and needs further study.

However, as to Solomon, it is undeniable fact that had there not been the introduction of Franco valuta, the price hike would have been exacerbated. But questions such as whether the market is stabilized or not, inflation is reduced or not, the role of local producers in increasing production, and how they satisfy the local demand should be addressed.

As to Solomon, reducing tax on commodities solely does not bring market stabilization. Therefore, increasing supply of commodities should be taken as a viable solution. In addition, the measures that have been taken by the government to supply commodities to the lower segment of the society should be strengthened.

As to Wasihun, two years ago, new currency of Birr was injected into the market and this insists one to ask essential questions

like what was the outcome; what did it do in subsidizing oil price; did the macro economy stabilize; how lower income groups benefited from subsidies; and does production and productivity enhanced, these and other questions should get answer. The merits and demerits of the permission of Franco valuate should be verified and evidence should be provided.

For example, if a person imports 1000 tone wheat through Franco valuta and distributes the product to few people, it is fair to say that the importation helps stabilizing the market. Therefore, its value should be explained in such objective way.

The Ethiopian economy is still challenged by consequences of the war broke out in the northern part of the country which is lasted for the last 16 months. Though the advancement of the terrorist TPLF was reversed from Northern Shewa, the farmers were strictly hampered to the extent to be unable to plough their lands. In addition to these, in the western and southern parts of the country, farming was disrupted by insurgents, the drought plunged in the southern and eastern regions of the country also critically affected the pastoral lively hood.

Moreover, the economic sanctions imposed by the western countries and their allied financial institutions triggered the inflation rate to rose up to 50 percent and had there not been the government subsidy, the economic crises would have been more than currently witnessed.

In general, the policy intervention and the introduction of Franco valuate played their own positive role in containing the price hike. To create trust, traders involved in Franco valuta should provide evidence where did they get the money and their capital amount. It should also be checked whether they imported extra commodities that are not officially enlisted to be imported.

As to Wasihun, taking Franco valuta as option to close the gap of the demand and

supply of hard currency by the government clearly shows how it is in a stressed situation hence, it should be understood that the importation of commodities through Franco valuate must continue only for the time being and looking other options to garner foreign currency is essential and the practice should not be continued for more than two years.

The government should strengthen the institutional system because when institutions become weak they would become personalized. The current trend witnessed in some banks that creating personalized relation with illegal traders for their own personal gain should be punishable. When things go wrong black market also will be rampant and the gap in the dollar -birr exchange rate between official and parallel market will be widen which in turn harms the nation's economy at large. When the government faces hard time and challenges, it is forced to take harsh measures and the permission of the utilization of Franco valuta can be categorized as bold measures.

But as to Wasihun, government officials and their advisors should recurrently evaluate the practice. Nevertheless, if the utilization stay for long, it might further aggravates the government budget deficit because of the reduction of the government revenue.

On the other hand, to stabilize the economy, the government should look reduction of its expense as better option. For example, if car owners utilize oil uneconomically, it should ban the importation of second hand cars.

When black market is expanded the price of the imported goods and commodities will be increased. Therefore, importers should be restricted to import only basic commodities.

The other practice which pose price hike is corruption in government offices such as in revenue authority. When revenue officers unnecessarily impose tax the importer transfers the additional price to the consumers in which ultimately the ordinary citizens will be affected.

Art & Culture

Easter's Vibe

BY SENAIT GEBREHEIWOT

Easter is a widely celebrated holyday in Ethiopia. It comes with the sentiment of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Christians celebrate this holyday colorfully each year. Jesus Christ came to earth to pay for our sins. The orthodox Christians celebrate Easter after a 2 month fasting session called the *AbiyTsom* or 40 days fasting (lent) to remember what Jesus Christ went through during these times. He spent these 40 days fasting and lastly praying confronting the devil to teach humans a lesson. The devil tested him at one point saying "be my servant and I will give you the whole kingdom... showing him the world in gold... all of this will be yours" he said.

"Man shall not live by bread alone but by the word of God," Jesus replied.

Almost 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ taught the people of Jerusalem many lessons and in the end the people turned against him until his crucifixion on Good Friday... they buried him that day and on Saturday midnight he rose from the dead. Saturday past midnight the grave area of



Christ rumbled and the soldiers around him got buried, and he resurrected. He forgave all the people that betrayed him, seconds before his death. His famous quote was "Forgive them father, for they don't know what they are doing". This showed the extent of his kindness, for he forgave the people that put him in his grave. He told his people to forgive

others like he did. This lesson has been a crucial part of Christianity. During the fasting session Christians avoid meat and dairy products (energy giving foods that allow the flesh to thrive and by defector the soul subdued)... they basically become vegetarians. The fasting ends the day Christ resurrected i.e Saturday 3:00 P.M. After that, people start the feast of Easter by

eating all kinds of the aforementioned foods. Theologians say the fasting period makes Christians submissive to their God by teaching them how to restrict themselves from their fleshly desires. The fasting for some orthodox Christians goes to the extent of fasting without any food and drink 2/3 rd every of the 40 days (some additional 15 days). Christians spend the day of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ by worshipping him. It is commonly known as *Segdet* meaning worshipping God by standing on the knees, prostrating and then standing erect several times.

Easter in Ethiopia is known for the widespread shopping days before its coming. People usually buy chickens, sheep, and oxen for their meat supply. During Easter they gather around wearing cultural clothes. They feast on cultural foods like Doro wet (A chicken soup made of chicken meat, Red pepper, spices and butter) which is a famous meal during Easter and spend a fun time together embracing their culture to remember this special occasion i.e the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

HAPPYEASTER!



A Ramadan Poem

BY DONNA SIBAAI

The holy month of Ramadan

For all Muslims has begun.

Praising Allah through the day,

From dawn to dusk we fast and pray.

We pay zakah (charity) for those in need,

Trying hard to do good deeds.

When the sun has set, and day is done-

I'll break this chain, but only one.

By the end of Ramadan,

this whole chain will be all gone!

It's time for Eid and lots of fun!

The Gatekeepers verses the Trendsetters (A Short Story)

BY ALEM HAILU G/K

Three decades back "You know Albert Einstein is like Paulo Rosie," said a veteran lecturer delivering a course on modern physics at Arat Kilo campus' stadium-like lecture room packed by physics and mathematics students.

"How come?"

Fikru, a semi-bald classmate of mine, tried to read the answer from my face. He posed a raised brow on his long face by way of challenging the flaw of likening a physicist and a footballer. As I outright figured the analogy I got closer to his ear and said "Both lent a finishing touch to the entire process that tasked the dabble of many."

"Once I heard the famous Ethiopian footballer who later became CAF's President, Yidnekachew Tesema acerbically commenting 'I do not that much likes Paulo Rose. You don't see him playing but he surely scores. I rather like Conti the flanker.' Yidnekachew made this remark asked about his favorite player in 1982 FIFA World's cup," said my picky classmate Fikru with whom I mostly attended classes as we liked discussing concepts of such courses and at times chitchatting with a muffled voice. I recollect for this reason we favored the back benches.

With warm smile I nodded YES and said

"I too remember that interview with Yidnekachew!"

"While Italy beat Brazil 3 to 2 Rosi surprisingly made a Hatric," he reminisced and added "I heard on ETV's Sport news a famous newspaper editor in Roam preferred the title 'Rosi,Rosi,Rosi' to garnish his paper."

"I do not forget one of Rosi's goals. With a flying tackle he kicked the ball eastwards that was rocketed westwards by his teammate. Flying westwards the Brazilian goalkeeper was on air to catch it. Diverting the direction and duping the goal keeper he scored a goal," I turned wistful.

"Making a paradigm shift pays off," Fikru seconded me thumbs up.

"Yes. That was what Ernestine did. His



predecessors in the study of Quantum Physics were amiss on the nature light travels. Adding this concept he gave the finishing touch to the sought-for formula," His face became sunny by way of saying I unraveled the analogy.

As other classmates joined us the conversation continued long after class was dismissed.

"Einstein said what I got from Dostoevsky exceeds what I acquired from predecessor Scientists.' I think he was alluding to Dostoyevsky's saying there are two types of people in this world those that preserve things that were there and those that create new things—things worth to crow about. The former are gatekeepers that help preserve old trends, while the latter are trendsetters that transform the world," a tomboyish classmate Tseday who never missed novels from her hands and who liked to read fictions even in the afternoon sitting on campus's garden benches cut in.

"I see conservatives and mavericks. There is a need to balance things .Not to lose past gains and to add new off shots," Fikru giggled.

"Special attention should be given to creative youngsters. Abroad, checking children's IQ, such individuals are allowed to join special schools furnished with the necessary facilities to tap the maximum potential out of them for nation's benefit," she added.

Lately I recollect this conversation when I heard news about Ethiopian creative youths that came up with a drone, a rocket and airplane without much support. As most of them are from universities I reflected, unlike the past, our researches are turning target-oriented that troubleshoot nation's problem.

Not encouraging such individuals is an outmoded trend. All creative individuals deserve a proper hearing.

Once in my journalistic engagement I saw a scientist who practically demonstrated a crop that bountifully grows for 3 to 4 years on end without another round of sowing. To my chagrin the trendsetters and the gatekeepers could not come to terms.

As for me, both should be given due attention but the mavericks should enjoy more latitude as the history of creativity amply substantiates this fact.

I also recalled what Tseday said "Wolfgang Pauli didn't like Albert Einstein. Pauli said there is no need to exaggerate things,fort other individuals were sure to get what Einstein got. But others told Pauli what matters is taking the lead.

We could have forgotten Pauli's remark had he not disproved Einstein about the uncertainty theory. Max Born thought that Pauli was, perhaps, an even greater scientist than Einstein. "But he was a completely different type of man," wrote Born, "who, in my eyes, did not attain Einstein's greatness." When Pauli received a noble prize in 1945 .I will never forget the speech about me, and for me, that he gave at Princeton in 1945 after I got the Nobel Prize. It was like the abdication of a king, installing me as a kind of elected son, as his successor," Wolfgang Pauli reminisced in a 1955 letter to Max Born. Of course the king here referred to is Einstein"

Thinking about this when I was trying different Utube news I became delighted learning about a young gifted- Ethiopian -mathematician who do arithmetic beyond the digits computer accommodate was taken up by INSA. I also learnt the PM had once gifted him. Happily, the PM has facilitated the establishment of a center that embraces such youngsters with a creative knack. A ministry to such effect is established. A lot is required from it.

Something from inside compelled me to search for the phone numbers of Fikru and Tseday to once more discuss the issue.

Global Affairs

Africa faces hard knocks as rich countries take manufacturing back home

The global economic crisis triggered by the outbreak of the COVID pandemic in 2020 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February this year has intensified the risk of declining trade integration between countries. A process referred to as the deglobalisation of trade.

The pandemic sent shocks through supply chains across the world. As a result, companies in some advanced economies have started to prioritise bringing production that was previously outsourced to Asia back home – or closer to home. The expectation is that this will avert ongoing – and future – supply-chain disruptions, ensuring a steady and reliable supply of goods.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has exacerbated global supply shortages after the pandemic. It is also further fuelling expectations of major reduced reliance on global supply chains by businesses. This is particularly true of companies in Europe and the US.

This trend risks adding additional strain to economies in Africa on top of the current economic pain from soaring food and fuel price inflation imposed by the war in Ukraine. A deglobalising world poses serious risks for Africa. This has been confirmed by findings in a recent World Bank report. It shows that reversing globalisation through reshoring of value chains has the potential to push an additional 52 million people into extreme poverty.

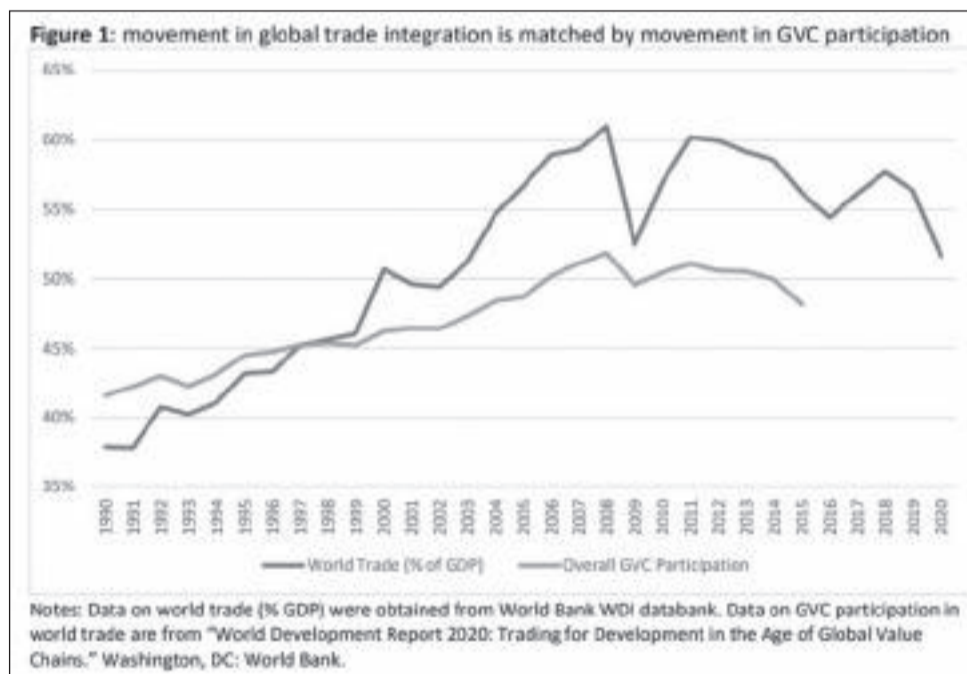
Those living in Sub-Saharan Africa would be the hardest hit. It would make Africa a poorer place. As shown in Figure 1, global trade integration (trade's share of global GDP) sped up after 1990, and then slowed down after reaching a peak in 2008 when the financial crisis caused an economic downturn. The remarkable rise in global trade integration during the 1990s and 2000s is intimately tied to the rapid growth in global value chain trade.

Why being connected matters

Connecting to the global economy is vital for spurring growth and development on the continent. This is because it creates opportunities for firms to specialise in specific tasks. In turn this allows them to integrate into parts of a global value chain even when they lack the competitive advantage to produce an entire product domestically.

In addition, greater participation in global value chains provides African firms with better access to capital, technology and other inputs needed to upgrade products and become more diversified. This is important to point out, given that African firms face significantly higher costs that reduce their capacity to compete in regional and international markets. These costs are particularly crippling for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the backbone of many African economies.

Entry into global value chains is therefore crucial for a number of reasons. Firstly to boost the growth of African SMEs,



secondly to support the African Continental Free Trade Area in advancing regional trade integration, thirdly in diversifying production and export structures, and finally promoting the pick-up of industrialisation.

Over time, these positive economic outcomes will substantially reduce poverty in Africa. This will be reminiscent of the impact of the second wave of globalisation which rapidly accelerated after 1990. This helped some Asian and emerging economies lift millions out of poverty by supporting their integration into global value chains and narrowed the income inequality gap between advanced economies and the developing world.

The shift

A range of companies are relocating their manufacturing plants.

Among them are the motorbike and electric bicycle manufacturer Pierer Mobility. It is building a plant in Bulgaria so that it's closer to its main customers in Europe. The German suit maker Hugo Boss has also moved manufacturing closer to home.

In the US, Stanley Black & Decker has expanded its tool making operations in North America. The aim is to support regional development of its supply chains and enable shorter time leads.

Apparel companies in the US also see supply-chain woes as an opportunity to reconsider bringing their supply chains home.

Governments in advanced economies are also reinforcing moves to re-shore production, mainly for geopolitical reasons. The EU now aims to boost its chip production. It has promised to back chip manufacturers such as Intel Corp with subsidies worth billions of dollars. The US is also planning to invest billions of dollars to bolster domestic chip production. And Japan is allocating huge funds to develop its semiconductor industry.

These substantial expenditures reflect the geopolitical significance of cutting-edge chips, which are vital for current and future technological advancement. The US and Europe chip investments are also motivated by competition with China and a desire to

reduce reliance on Taiwan and South Korea as major suppliers, as they can be vulnerable to supply shocks and geopolitical conflicts in the region.

In addition to growing geopolitical rivalry and tensions between China and the West, the rise of nationalism in the West after the financial crisis of 2008/9 has also dampened enthusiasm for accelerating global trade integration.

In the US for example, former president Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" agenda was anti-global economic integration in nature and specifically promoted protectionist policies focused on reducing trade between China and the US.

Similar nationalist and anti-global moves were also happening across Europe, and were a major factor behind UK's departure from the EU in 2020.

What now?

Globalisation is a powerful engine of global value chain integration that is important for Africa's growth and development. African economies suffered greater scarring from the pandemic. The divergent recoveries between advanced and developing economies in Africa and other regions threaten to reverse gains in poverty reduction.

Absent of any decisive action, reshoring of production implies that trade will be dominated by a few powerful regional blocks in the future. These would likely include an Asian block dominated by China, an American-led block in North America, and an EU block.

If this happens, decades-long progress in global poverty reduction would be at high risk of being further derailed. It would make the world a poorer place and Africa would be the hardest hit by being severed from global value chains. (Source: *The Conversation*)

Law & Politics

Efforts to rehabilitate TPLF demolished facilities, its rocky future

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

On the heels of the terrorist TPLF group's evil actions in the northern part of Ethiopia, millions of noncombatants have been battling humanitarian crises on many occasions. Apart from gang-raping, displacing, looting, and summary execution, the group has put the lives of civilians residing in Amhara and Afar states at risk on the basis of inadequate food supply that may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Following the wicked deeds of the terrorist TPLF group, the northern part of Ethiopia has taken a turn for the worse, for the most part, by virtue of enough food supply. Sad as it may sound, the group has been bending over backward with a focus on backing the country into a corner and intensifying animosities among civilian populations by causing unrest across the country and impeding humanitarian corridors.

In a similar vein, in addition to crafting an artificial humanitarian disaster and turning the lives of civilians into a living hell, the group has been mounting the stalks of its criminal behavior in Afar and Amhara States making use of food as a weapon of war.

Notwithstanding the fact that the government of Ethiopia has been exercising self-restraint, the group at the current juncture has embarked on launching fresh attacks with impunity and hampering access to humanitarian assistance time after time.

To everyone's surprise, despite heightened concerns for noncombatants, the low-rated media outlets have been giving the cold shoulder and pretend not to see the whole thing going on in the besieged areas of Afar and Amhara states specially those battling with hunger. Across the full range of contexts, they do not turn the spotlight on atrocities committed in the two states no matter what it takes and place emphasis on the significance of humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered areas.

Rather than admitting its horrific acts, the terrorist TPLF group has been laying the blame for their evil deeds and humanitarian crises at the doorsteps of the incumbent. As the international community, stooges, rights groups, activists, and other actors work with one accord with the group, they remain close-lipped and spread cooked up stories leaving many staggering with lack of enough humanitarian aid.

Albeit the federal government has been keeping control of itself for the love of bringing peace and tranquility, and smoothing the progress of humanitarian aid, the group has been again and again coming up with layers of conspiracies that can move the country into uncharted waters.

In the present circumstances, as the terrorist



The demolished public properties by TPLF group

TPLF group has demolished healthcare facilities, hospitals, educational facilities, higher educational institutes, and other infrastructures, people residing in the two-state have been going through tough times.

The deliberate destructions of public and private infrastructures have been hampering the provision of social services in Afar and Amhara states. The rehabilitation works of these critical facilities face a rocky road ahead although the government is doing its level best to restore the much-needed services.

In Afar, the damaged hospitals are beginning to offer communities with medical service. Dubti General Hospital is providing Afar community with the required service though it has faced logistics problems due to the conflict, said Dr. Ebba.

The hospital has been taking care of over 800 patients in makeshift wards currently due to the conflict, although it has duty bound to serve citizens with 153 beds.

Established in 1966, Dubti Hospital is one of seven hospitals serving the 1.8 million population of the Afar state, and is the only referral hospital in Afar. MedShare in partnership with Morehouse School of Medicine and Dr. Ebba is running campaign to support Dubti Hospital in Afar.

Recently, the Ministry of Health disclosed that hospitals and health institutions, which were destroyed by terrorist TPLF are reconstructed with a coordinated effort of various partners, have resumed operation.

The Ministry also stated that of the 42 hospitals and several health institutions that were destroyed, 36 and 467 respectively started serving the public. The other six hospitals and health centers have not been reconstructed since they are still found near war zone.

In the present climate, taking the seriousness of the situation in Afar and Amhara states

into account, a number of organizations have been playing a part. As a matter of fact, as the existing situation cannot be resolved merely by the federal government, all stakeholders should do all and sundry they can with the purpose of getting to the bottom of quandaries surfacing in Afar and Amhara states.

Lately, there have been some activities from donors to help the government's rehabilitation efforts, though the support remains far below the needed amount.

America, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing nearly 313 million USD in additional humanitarian assistance to help people affected by the conflict in northern Ethiopia.

In its press release, USAID said the conflict in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray states, has left as many as nine million people facing severe food insecurity and has forced more than two million people to flee their homes.

The new funding will support emergency food and nutrition assistance to meet the needs of nearly seven million people, according to the press release.

It further added the assistance will also strengthen community health facilities and mobile health teams to combat infectious diseases; provide humanitarian protection services, such as support for survivors of gender-based violence, psychosocial services, and child protection activities; and bolster logistics support to deliver aid to people in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

The United States remains committed to helping the Ethiopian people, the release underscored.

Humanitarian partners are scaling up assistance to affected people in Afar and Amhara states, where access has allowed aid workers to reach more than four million people with life-saving food since January,

it was indicted.

At the same time, humanitarian partners are working with federal and local authorities to open up overland road access into the Tigray State.

By the same token, the World Bank has approved a \$300 million International Development Association (IDA) grant for the Response-Recovery-Resilience for Conflict-Affected Communities.

The project will support efforts to address the immediate needs of communities, rehabilitate/recover infrastructure destroyed by conflict, and increase community resilience to the impacts of conflict in a sustainable manner, according to the Bank's statement.

Specifically, the project will help to improve access to basic services, as well as rebuild climate-resilient infrastructure, prioritized by communities. To urgently meet the needs of conflict-affected communities, mobile units will be dispatched to provide key services including in the areas of education, health, water, and sanitation,

The project has a national geographic scope, initially prioritizing support to the Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, and Tigray regions, which have been highly impacted by the recent conflict and host large numbers of internally displaced peoples (IDPs).

The financial institution also said that to ensure rapid and efficient support that is adapted to local contexts, the project will be implemented by federal, regional, and community-based organizations. It will also be implemented by independent third-party entities, particularly in high-risk areas with ongoing conflict.

While the project's main focus is providing quick support to meet the urgent need of conflict-affected communities, it will also support Ethiopia to advance towards a sustainable recovery pathway by investing in institutions, communities, and policies.

Quite for a while now, TPLF criminal enterprise have been wittingly destroying livelihood in Afar and Amhara states, destroying public and private properties and looting what were left of.

To make the suffering of the communities severe, the group demolished infrastructural facilities that were built by scarce resources of the nation. After the clique was pushed back from occupied areas, the Ethiopian government has been trying to rebuild the facilities and restore social services. Despite promising start, the path to rehabilitation is full of difficulties. In this regard, international donors and development partners should join hands and help the national effort to fully rehabilitate conflict-impacted communities.

Planet Earth

The prevailing challenges of rolling back malaria

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

Malaria is one of the oldest health hazards to human beings. Despite the efforts to control it, throughout history it has remained the most challenging public health threat to the world. As a result, the efforts to control malaria are observed every year with specific themes.

This year's theme, "Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives" This signifies the need to scale up innovative efforts to address the longstanding illness that has been hugely affecting the socio-economic progress of the human society especially developing countries.

Some statistics show that Africa is home to 92 per cent of malaria cases and 93 per cent of malaria-related deaths in the world. The epidemic is also one of the leading causes of death in children under 5, taking the life of a child practically every 2 minutes.

According to World vision, nearly half of the world's population, more than 3 billion people, is at risk of contracting malaria. Each year, there are around 200 million cases, and about half a million people die.

Currently, more than 50 per cent of the population in Ethiopia is exposed to the risk of malaria infection, Frontiersin.org



indicates. Despite the range of prevention measures undertaken in the last two decades, malaria remains to be one of the top ten causes of morbidity and mortality in Ethiopia with substantial repercussions for the macro economy.

Ethiopia is one of the most vulnerable countries of the continent for malaria. Malaria transmission in Ethiopia is seasonal, unstable, and often characterized by highly focal and large-scale cyclic epidemics. Areas lying at altitudes between 1600 and 2000 meters above sea level (masl) are in general epidemic prone hypo-endemic zones of malaria although some studies could also detect malaria in areas higher than 2000 masl.

Altitude, climate, environmental changes (e.g., due to dams, roads construction, agricultural projects), and housing conditions are important determinants of malaria risk and transmission in Ethiopia.

In addition to the severity of the disease, the prevention efforts were stalled by the global pandemic COVID 19 during the last two years. Yet some encouraging results were observed recently, according to Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Africa Regional Director. "The past year has seen significant breakthroughs in malaria prevention and control, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Landmark recommendations on the use of the first vaccine against malaria – RTS, S – were released by the World Health Organization late last year. This vaccine will be used to prevent malaria among children aged six months to five years, who live in moderate- to high transmission settings, Moeti indicated.

While this is a groundbreaking advance in the development of new tools to fight this disease, with the potential to save millions of lives, supplies are currently limited. As such, it is important to ensure that the doses that are available are utilized for maximum impact, while ensuring continued availability of other preventive measures to those most at risk.

For example, seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC) campaigns were implemented as planned in 2021, ensuring protection for an additional 11.8 million children. Indoor residual spraying was also carried out, and long-lasting insecticidal nets distributed, largely as planned. Other notable achievements include the scaled

implementation of RTS, S vaccine pilots in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, which reached up to 900,000 children. The ultimate goal is to reduce the number of people catching and dying from malaria.

In this regard, varying levels of progresses are observed in various countries of Africa. For example, Frontiersin.org elaborates that Ethiopia has been undertaking a wide range of policy measures to control malaria, especially, after 2004. Consequently, mortality and morbidity attributable to malaria have declined significantly. To keep the momentum of fighting malaria, however, Ethiopia needs to strengthen its institutional capacity pertaining to domestic resource mobilization, diagnosis by microscopy, vector surveillance, and climate information processing and seasonal weather forecasting. These actions need, among others, to layout and enhance cross-sectoral coordination (e.g., with irrigation, hydropower, and climate change), and cross-border cooperation (e.g., for better surveillance of vectors) mechanisms. Future public budget allocation to fight malaria should factor in these and other emerging challenges.

Therefore, the all-out efforts to roll back malaria that include controlling the natural and environmental factors need due attention until the innovative approaches to the pandemic could be applied effectively.



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

Cancer treatment center: University responsibility to relief community

BY HAFTU GEBREZGABIHER

Among the chronic diseases, the magnitude of cancer is surging in recent times. The experience we have at country level already starts with the only cancer center at the Black Lion Hospital. The terrible and sad thing is that people have been dying while waiting for their line at that sole cancer center in Addis Ababa.

Chief Executive Director of Haramaya University, College of Health and Medical Sciences, and Hiwot Fana Specialized Comprehensive Hospital, Yadeta Dase (PhD), told the pains Ethiopians, especially eastern part, have been through and the importance of the Hiwot Fana Cancer Treatment Center.

A person would get an appointment of eight or six months for treatments like chemo therapy or radiation therapy. When it is time for the appointment and the Black Lion Hospital calls the patients, the person has already died, Yadeta (PhD) recalled.

He noted: "This is the severity of the cancer prevalence in our country. But



Photo: Fuad Ahmed

Yadeta Dase (PhD)

in the recent time, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Universities has decided to expand this service to two different regional institutions. So, one of the institutions is the one which is situated here at Harar owned by Haramaya University under this college in Hiwot Fana Specialized Comprehensive Hospital."

Cancer service requires a lot of fulfillment in order to fully provide the required service. These are professionals and material facilities like some high level automatic machines, which can help for the treatment. That is the very important facility requirement in order to provide effective

and efficient services.

"We have been working very aggressively on producing human resource in order to change the aforementioned reality. At the same time, preparing the platform and the facilities to be used were paid attention in order to provide these services in Haramaya University."

The center is mainly providing chemotherapy and radiation services. These are the two important components to kill the cancer cells. "So, the chemotherapy, we started a year back have been treating more than 1000 cases," he mentioned.

These 1000 cases would have cost life and finance if they were to be treated in Addis. "If you track and just look at the people who are suffering from cancer, they are almost getting into impoverishment. They sold out everything they have and finally left with nothing as it requires repeated treatment for 9 to 10 times, but not a onetime treatment. So that is the big challenge."

The center is now immensely serving, not only the eastern Ethiopia, but also the people from the Somaliland and Somalia. "They are

coming here to get the services and with the support from the Ministry of Health, we are installing and almost finishing the survey for an expensive machine radiation to provide the radiotherapy services," Yadeta said adding that it was about 4 million USD and provides the required radiation therapy service for the community.

As the center is established almost with all the material requirements, and medical professionals besides two psychologists, it will aspire to provide very standard services to the community. All types of cancers are treated. This is a big contribution from the University and a big lift for the community as an element in University community service.

Honestly speaking, it is beyond imagination, because it is changing the fact that some people do die just even before seeing the face of the physician. "So, I hope the progress we are making would really help the community and the nation as well. And the center has 7000 patients waiting to get that service." Yadeta elucidated.