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Col. Demeke speaks of TPLF's cruelty, contempt in Welkait

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

ADDIS ABABA – Apart from perpetrating all kinds of heinous atrocities in Welkait Tegede and Humera for about forty years, the terrorist TPLF had been treating ethnic-Amaras with contempt and cruelty, said Col. Demeke Zewdu, Deputy Administrator and Head of Peace and Security of the area.

Meanwhile, Col. Demeke called on the international right groups and media organizations to observe the atrocities in person and report it to the international community.

Col. Demeke told Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that since the annexation of Welkait Tegede and Humera by the TPLF in 1980, the group massacred tens of thousands of ethnic-Amharas for refusing to denounce their identity and accept an ethnic Tigray identity.



Photo: Tsehay Neguse

He also stated that when the group was in power for 27 about years, it was displacing, torturing, killing massively, and forcing

ethnic-Amharas to denounce their identity in an attempt to wipe out ethnic-Amharas from earth.

As to him, within the past forty years, many ethnic-Amharas had been tortured in prisons and also suffered excruciating pain because of their identity. And also, there are still many ethnic-Amharas whose whereabouts are still unknown.

After the areas were liberated from the group in 2020, several mass graves were discovered; he said adding that over 90 mass graves were found at Humera Airport alone.

It is to be recalled that University of Gondar's investigation team has recently discovered twelve mass graves in Welkait Tegede and Telemt areas. The investigation team disclosed that over 60,000 ethnic-Amharas were killed in these areas by TPLF

See Col. Demeke speaks... page 3



Debebe Zewde

Terrorist invasion leaves 1.3 million citizens in Afar to food aid

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA-The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) said the terrorist TPLF invasion of the Afar State left more than 1.3 million citizens to immediate food aid.

NDRMC Public Relation Head, Debebe Zewde told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the citizens in need hail from 21 districts while more than 645,000 were displaced from their living areas due to TPLF's belligerence. Out of the total displaced of 645,000 citizens, 336,000 of

See Terrorist invasion... page 3

TPLF massacres, displaces Welkait Amharas to create 'Greater Tigray'

• AI, HRW deprive evidence

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA- For the past three decades the TPLF terrorist group has systematically and deliberately killed, massacred and displaced ethnic Amharas from Welkait area with a vision of establishing 'greater Tigray,' chairman of the societal group said.

Addressing the Ethiopian American Public Affairs Committee and Global Ethiopian Advocacy Nexus recently, Chairman of the Victims Abiyou Belew stated TPLF forcefully incorporated the Welkait area into Tigray and designated ethnic Amharas as enemies simply because of their ethnic identity.

As to him, the identity, history and culture of the people of Welkait was forcibly eliminated by the TPLF forces; widespread and arbitrary killing and displacing of ethnic Amharas were committed as part of creating 'Greater Tigray'. Amhara's ancestral lands of Welkait, Tegede and Telemt were labeled

See TPLF massacres... page 3



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News

AI, HRW fail to meet universally recognized standards: NAMA

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA- The recent joint report by Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) is methodologically flawed and has produced biased conclusion and recommendations, National Movement of Amhara (NAMA) said.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Deputy Chairperson with the Party Melkamu Shumye said that the methods used in producing the report lacks to meet international standards.

Melkamu stressed that the intention of the report shows as it weighs more on achieving political goal than human rights issues.

NAMA released a Statement on the Joint Reports of the Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) on allegations of Human Rights Violations in Wolkait “Western Tigray” in which it said “the report is severely short of universally recognized standards of investigations in its data collection methods, presentation of facts, analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations. It is an “investigation” entirely relied on hearsay, with no relevant documentation, lacks material evidence and is full of unverified wild statements that would have been rectified had there been a little good will and diligence.”



Melkamu Shumye

The report is directed towards enabling the aggressor, suppressing the victims and a substitute to achieve a political goal which TPLF failed to materialize through violence and war, the statement says.

On the heels of government ceasefire last year, the terrorist group had killed and displaced ethnic Amharas while ransacking public and private property, the deputy chairperson said, noting that the report has nothing reflect on these egregious crimes.

He said that in the past 30 years the terrorist TPLF had been committing genocide and crimes against humanity against ethnic Amhara who live in the wolkait and forcefully incorporated the area into Tigray state. A recent report has also shown that over 60,000 Wolkait Amharas were massacred, he added.

NAMA’s statement has called: on the

government to denounce the “Investigation” report and officially reject its findings and recommendations; Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to withdraw their “Investigation” report released on the 6th April 2022, and use a universally recognized standard of investigation in their future fact finding missions’ data collection methods, presentation of facts, analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations; the African Union not to recognize the report as valid and reject its findings and recommendations.

It has also urged: the United States of America State Department and the European Union not to recognize the “Investigation” report as worthy, discard its findings and recommendations; and United States of America Senate and Congress not to base any of its decisions on the findings and recommendations of the joint “investigation” report as worthy, discard its findings and recommendations.

It has also urged the joint investigation of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to expand their scope; and, investigate Crimes against Humanity, Ethnic Cleansing and the Crime of Genocide against the people of Wolkait Amharas in the thirty plus years where TPLF forcefully annexed and ruled over the territory.



Senator Kim Jackson

Ethio-Americans unmask TPLF’s true nature to senator Kim Jackson

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Community Leaders and members of Ethio-Americans in Atlanta said that they were disheartened and disappointed by Georgia Senator Kim Jackson’s TPLF support view and misinformation.

Recently, Atlanta community leaders and members have discussed with the Senator about the event of March 31st siding with TPLF. They had explained the true nature of TPLF, genesis of the conflict and the devastating impact on all Ethiopians for State of Georgia Senator Kim Jackson.

Atlanta Ethiopian Diaspora Leader Ebba K. Ebba (PhD) said that Ethiopian-Americans have been dismayed and disappointed that elected officials that were created around that event of March 31st didn’t verify the fact and the veracity of the information. That was the disheartening part.

What makes the U.S is not vast military wealth or map rather it is freedom of expression and the rule of law. Senators’ ability to express their views regarding the current conflict in Ethiopia, they have every right to do. The other reason for our pain is not just people’s good will, intentions are misinformed. The group of entities is deliberately misinforming the public in general. The mainstream western media are deliberately misinforming the public at large telling one sided narrative. What their intentions are only God knows.

As to him, Amnesty International publishing’s since November 2020 especially 23 articles are against the atrocities and actions of the TPLF. The pains and sufferings of every Ethiopians whether on Amhara, Tigray, Benshangul, Somali and others pains of his own.

Atlanta Community Leader Prof. Tsehay Alemayehu for his part said the story of weaponizing the hunger associated with conflict driven famine of the 1980’s with the presidency conditions addressed in the resolution. Senator Kim Jackson and her colleagues spoke about history repeating itself. During the famine of 1980’s, the TPLF forced ethnic Tigray people to stay away from feeding stations eastern and southern Tigray. Instead it forced hungry people to march thousands of kilometers to Sudanese border.

It converted food aids into weapons. In 2010, the CIA declassified its reports of the period. Media outlets confirmed that hundreds of millions of Ethiopian family aid was traded for weapons by TPLF, he added.

Diasporas in New Jersey call protest campaign to cancel H.R.6600, S.3199 bills

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The Ethio- American Development Council (EADC) announced that members of Ethiopian and Eritrean Diasporas living in Harborside JC, the Jersey City of New Jersey will organize a rally tomorrow on April 20,2022 to decry senator Bob Menendez for preparing S.3199 bill.

As to EADC, the protestors will be carrying out the demonstration campaign in Jersey at the Office of Senator, Bob Menendezl. These sanction directly affected the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Therefore, the Ethiopian and Eritrean Diasporas who have been living in the city are expected to show their solidarity and speak out the fighting against the unfair heading of the bills to protect their people from any starvation.

Likewise, the Washington Task Force for Peace and Unity for the Ethiopian Association has also announced that Diasporas carried out protested campaign in Washington D.C., America to combat the H.R.6600 and S.3199 on Monday 18, 2022.

The demonstrators said sanctions is kills, the H.R.6600 and S.3199 are anti-Ethiopia,



Eritrea, and America. Therefore, it should be canceled and condemned. In this regard, the demonstrators showed the slogans that the sanctions are highly affected the Ethiopia and the U.S. historical relationship.

According to the Association, the campaign to

fight H.R.6600 and S.3199 is to be taken place every week in front of the Whitehouse.

Ethiopian origins that have living in the U.S. are striving to cancel the H.R.6600 and S.3199 through communicating the senators and members of congressman, writing a letter, carry out demonstrating campaign, collecting petitions, and social media campaign, association added.

By the same token, Ethio- American Development Council disclosed recently that the members of Ethiopian and Eritrean Diasporas along with other friends of Ethiopia denounced congressman Brand Sherman for supporting H.R .6600 and S.3199 bills during a rally in front of his office in California, Los Angeles. The demonstrators echoed slogans such as “H.R. 6600 and S. 3199 bills hurt Ethiopia and Ethiopians”

The protestors said “The U.S. and western powers need to support the democratic elected government rather than standing with the terrorist TPLF destructive group. Sanction does not bring any significant change rather than suffering people more,” the council underlined.

Sanctions drafters urged to refrain from destructive acts

ADDIS ABABA - Colorado Republican Party Vice Chairperson Priscilla Rahn has called on drafters of HR 6600 and S3199 bills to listen to the voice of the Ethiopian people and realized the languages of the bills are outdated.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, she urged the drafters of the bills to listen to the voices of the people who are saying that they don’t need the bills as they are unfair, and they can take care of themselves.

The Ethiopian community is telling the drafters to leave them alone, the vice chairperson added.

“My message to the drafters of the bill is to listen to the people who are (saying) that we don’t need these bills. They are communicating daily to say the bills are unfair. We can take care of ourselves and be left alone. That is the message the Ethiopian community is giving to the drafters of bills.”

Rahn noted that Prime Minister Abiy has declared humanitarian truce to make sure food and supply are getting to the people of Tigray. He has also made a lot of positive steps to bring peace in the region. That needs to continue without the U.S. interfering.

See Sanctions drafters ... page 3



Priscilla Rahn

News

KOICA completes Oromia MNCH project

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA— Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has successfully completed a project that was entitled: “Promoting Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) service in Arsi Zone of Oromia State with a budget of 10.63 million USD for five years.

In its press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald, KOICA stated that on 29 March, 2022, its Ethiopia Office participated and celebrated successful Completion of the Capacity Building component of one of the main integral activities of the project.

Since 2017, with close partnership with the Project Management Consultant Good Neighbors Ethiopia, the project successfully increased the number of births by trained personnel, created greater demand for family planning services, improved the quality of primary health centers and initiated community-based newborn management systems, the release added.

Postnatal visits have increased from 40% in the baseline to 81.9% in the end line, and antenatal visits have increased from 47.2% in the baseline to 61.5% in the end line and the percentage of expectants giving birth at health facilities have increased from 57% to 84.8%, indicates that health services are not only more accessible, but there is also



greater awareness in the safety of giving birth under the supervision of trained personnel.

Moreover, over the course of five years, the project constructed maternal waiting centers in five woredas and implemented patient-based innovative system and management in health centers, focusing on empowering health extension workers, improving health systems through the provision of youth-friendly services and expanding programs on immunization vaccination, it said.

At the Completion Ceremony, Choi Hyejeong, Deputy Director of KOICA stated that: “Despite the COVID-19

pandemic and political instability, we have joined strength to come together under a common goal, proving the power of partnership and cooperation and praised the efforts of implementing partners and community members.”

Beyond completed the project, construction of a primary hospital is undertaking at Hitosa Woreda of Arsi zone and is expected to finish next year. Following the construction of such hospital, KOICA intends to strengthen sustainability and create greater synergy to improve local health infrastructure through awareness campaigns and procurement of hospital equipment.

TPLF massacres,

by TPLF as Western Tigray to instrument its vision of seeding from the rest of Ethiopia.

“Right after the outbreak of conflict in November 2020, the TPLF forces massacred 1,100 ethnic Amharas in a small town called Maikadra. The government needs to hold them accountable for all those responsible for violations of human rights.”

Abiyu further noted that Welkait is not only home to the Amharas but it is a crucial area to secure the territorial integrity of the country and also saving Ethiopia from TPLF’s evil dream of dismantling the nation and it is critical to protect Ethiopia’s sovereignty.

Language and cultural replacement,

resettlement, forcefully displaced ethnic Amharas, systematic killing and massacre are among the core things that were committed by TPLF forces in Welkait during its administration. Still today, the TPLF terrorist group is preparing to occupy the area and inciting conflict here and there.

Speaking on the occasion, Balsillie School of International Affairs Director and Political Science Professor Ann Fitzgerald said the joint report by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch lacks credible data. The information is gathered from the camp residents in Sudan, anonymous interview; telephone interview of Samri youth group which fled the country committing gruesome crime in Maikadra

and other irrelevant groups.

It’s quite clear that the allegation and accusation of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch is clearly far from the truth, lacking basic research methodology and “Ethiopia does not need peacekeepers, what Ethiopia needs is truth tellers.”

The content of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch’s report is politically motivated and contradicts the reality on the ground. It makes allegations of ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. They didn’t mention about the displacement, mass graves of people killed by the terrorist TPLF over the last three decades in the area, the scholar emphasized.

Col. Demeke

since August 1980.

Head of the investigation team Geta Asrade previously told EPA that the finding of the investigation that the team conducted has shown as the number of people massacred, displaced, and made to disappear is equivalent to 75 percent of the total population in the areas.

“We have found that the whereabouts of 19 percent of family heads are still unknown after TPLF took them to prisons,” he said, adding that 25 percent of ethnic Amharas were also killed while 29 percent of them were forced to leave their homes.

Terrorist invasion

them have been living in 16 refugee camps while the remaining ones are living in the community.

Debebe further noted that the rebellious group has caused immense damages in six districts, namely Aba’ala, Megale, Koneva, Dalol, Erbiti, and Berhalie of Kilbeti of the Afar State. Particularly, the flaring up of sporadic conflict in Aba’ala and Erbiti districts are the main causes of increasing the displaced citizens.

“The conflict is not only increasing the displaced citizens but also the main hindrance to providing the necessary humanitarian support to the needy.”

90,200 quintals of food items were distributed for 538,000 needy citizens in the first

path. In the second path, 20,630 quintal food was distributed for 126,000 citizens while providing food has continued for the remaining ones.

As to him, the commission distributed 4,031 nutritious food to address over 7,000 IDPs in Semera town while 10,500 additional food was distributed for 70,066 beneficiaries in zone two. Equipment for food preparation, dining and waste disposal collected from the government and partners have been provided for 58,597 beneficiaries.

Currently, there are 19 water tankers in different areas to provide potable water for the displaced citizens. About four nutritious partners and 30 movable health and nutrition groups have been working in the area, the head remarked.

Sanctions drafters...

She advised the U.S. politicians to be very careful about how they try to control other countries, while they have shown difficult situation in controlling issues at own borders, safety issues, and a lot of other issues in America. And yet they are touring around and trying to dictate how other countries should be governed.

According to her, everybody agrees the intention behind the bills focusing on humanitarian aid. The Ethiopians, Eritreans and everyone wants to end atrocities and they want make sure humanitarian aid reaches the people.

But the problem with the bills they are in favor of the party other than the Ethiopian government, Rahn pointed out, adding that they are also unnecessary at this point because the languages of the bills are outdated.

A lot of issues that were brought to the prime minister have been addressed and also need to talk about.

The Colorado Republican Party Vice Chairperson said if the Biden Administration is leaning in favor of the past regime, then we need to understand why and question our government treat Ethiopia with as much respect possible.

“It raises some questions about why we are interfering in Ethiopia and the democratic process. This means that there are probably some relationships that are there from the past regime of TPLF between this administration and the former regime that we don’t fully understand. So, that needs to become transparent because there is a new government now and that needs to be respected.”

As there are untold stories, if the drafters of the bills want to get complete and comprehensive view of what is happening, she advised, adding that they should go to the common everyday people. Not just talk to diplomats, government officials, but talk to the people on the ground and get a bigger picture of what is going on.

She further observed that Ethiopians in America are organized and saying NoMore to control, NoMore interference, NoMore war and one-sided propaganda.

Rahn forecasted that “we are going to see a big impact in the voting here in America where more republicans are going to be elected and we are going to be partners with the Ethiopian community and listen and work together to bring about peace in our country and the country of Ethiopians.”

The government of Ethiopia is independent and has been elected to govern, she elaborated, stressing that Prime Minister Abiy has already proven he can bring peace, he has already proven up by bringing peace with Eritrea, and has proven to be a great leader by building the economy in Ethiopia.

The premier deserves to govern his own country and bring his people to peace.

The vice chairperson also appreciated Abiy for the balanced cabinet of men and women.

Rahn underscored that “we should keep in mind that President Biden is the first US president to threaten Ethiopia with sanctions. That has never been done before. So, that raises a lot of questions in the minds of Ethiopian Diasporas and the people of Ethiopia.”

Asked about the impact of the bills on the relations of Ethiopia and USA, she mentioned the last election in Virginia where the Ethiopian community came out in droves to elect republican government.

The vice chairperson expressed her belief that “this will pass once we elect a new president. Our relationship between USA and Ethiopia will be restored back to normal as it is making a very negative impact in our relationships.”

She finally recommended to the Ethiopian community in America, at home and around the world to consolidate their effort against the bills.

Opinion

Run, Herschel, run! Just like the Ethiopians, and win Georgia 11/8/22!

BY ALMARIAM

PART ONE

So, when I ask all my friends and supporters in Georgia to elect Herschel Walker to the US senate seat on November 8, 2022, I do so with the humility of a man who got his start in Georgia over one half century ago and left to make his mark on the world."

Message to Herschel Walker from Ethiopian American voters: "If you roll with us, we'll run with you and make you the next US Senator from Georgia!" Alemayehu G. Mariam

If you roll with us, we got your back running for the US Senate

The advertising slogan is, "Nothing runs like a Deere." That may be true for farm equipment and construction machines. But when it comes to human beings, nobody runs like Ethiopians. Ethiopia first participated at the Summer Olympic Games in 1956 and has since won 58 medals (23 gold, 12 silver), all in long-distance running events.

Ethiopian distance runner Haile Gebrselassie broke 27 world records in 13 distance races. Haile is arguably the greatest distance runner of all time. Ethiopia is set to have a banner year in 2022. They are already racking up gold medals around the world like cheap jewelry at a flea market.

Herschel Walker, the presumptive republican senatorial candidate in Georgia, has a lot in common with Ethiopian runners. He is a former American football running back. In American football, the running back is the hardest working/playing man on the field.

He played college football for the University of Georgia and became "All-America" three times and won the 1982 Heisman Trophy awarded to the most outstanding player in college football.

Herschel is undoubtedly one of the greatest college and professional football players of all time. Nobody ran like Herschel on the football field. His movements were simply tornadic. Ethiopian American voters in Georgia MUST run and win with Herschel. Ethiopian American voters MUST be the wind behind the back of the greatest running back of all time.

Electo-mageddon for democrats in November 2022

National electoral annihilation—electoral Armageddon—awaits the democrats on November 8, 2022. The Cassandras of the Democratic Party are already prophesying it. The poll tea leaves are affirming it.

N.Y. Congresswoman and the Cassandra democratic firebrand Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has warned Biden and his "backroom dealmakers" they should prepare for electoral annihilation at the hands of Republicans in November 2022.

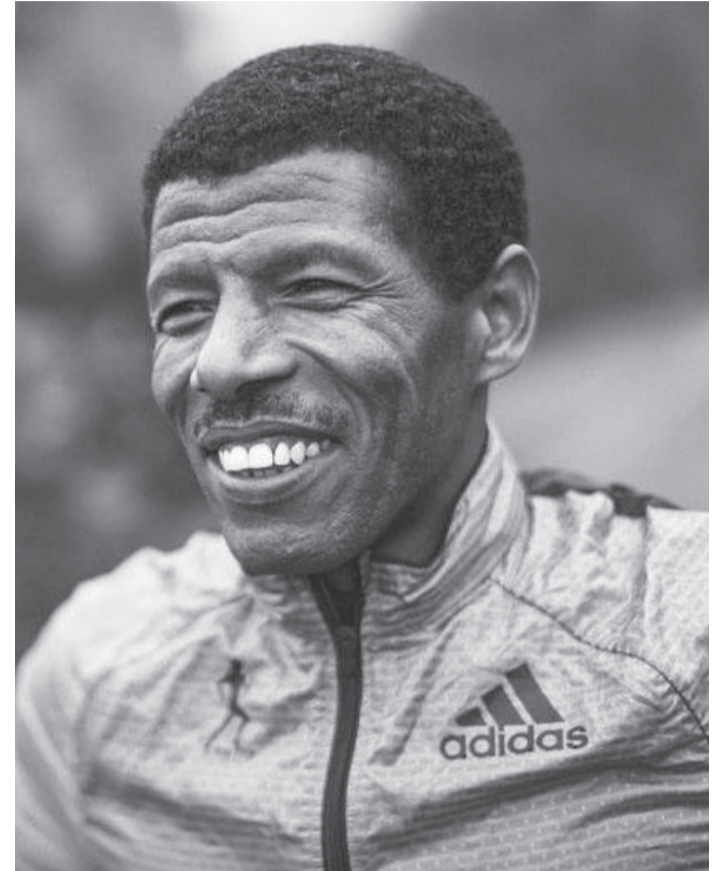
AOC said, "We need to acknowledge that this isn't just about middle of the road, an increasingly narrow band of independent voters. This is really about the collapse of support among young people, among the Democratic base, who are feeling that they worked overtime to get this president elected and aren't necessarily being seen."

Support for Biden and the Democratic Party among Ethiopian American voters over the past year has vanished like the morning dew.

The reason: The Biden administration's



Herschel Walker



Haile Gebrselassie

support of the terrorist group in Ethiopia known as the TPLF. The democrats are not just in trouble. They are swirling in the vortex of political oblivion.

The democrats in 2022 are divided, demoralized, disoriented and defeated. The left wing of the Democratic Party is angrier than a striped snake over Biden's backroom deals and depraved indifference to their agenda.

African American voters, and especially "Black women [who] saved the democrats in 2020" don't want to touch the Democratic Party with a ten foot pole wearing Nomex gloves.

Young voters are saying "I voted in the 2020 election for Biden and nothing really has been done for me." They will not show up in November 2022 to save the democrats.

Hispanic voters, who are growing as a portion of the electorate, are moving toward the Republican Party.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, party support flipped as Republicans made gains, from 44 percent to 47 percent and Democratic affiliation fell from 45 percent to 42 percent.

A new Gallup analysis reports findings that indicate momentum for Republicans heading into this midterm election year. The polling tea leaves are predicting a wipeout for democrats nationally in November 2022.

Biden entered office with higher approval (55 percent) than Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton or George W. Bush did, but a year and 4 months later Biden's approval rating has nosedived.

An April 14, 2022, Quinnipiac University poll shows Biden's approval rating has hit a dismal 33 percent (that means only 1/3 of Americans approve of how Biden is running the country.)

Under the Biden administration, America is going to hell in a hand basket. Check out the price increases under Biden's watch:

Fuel oil 70 percent; Gas 48 percent; Used cars 35 percent; Hotels 29 percent; Airfare 24 percent; Utility gas 22 percent; Bacon 18 percent; Oranges 18 percent; Furniture 16 percent; Beef 16 percent; Chicken 13 percent;

Milk 13 percent; Eggs 11 percent; Coffee 11 percent; Food at home 10 percent; Rent (Owners' Equivalent Rent- OER) 4.5 percent.

Under Biden's America, nearly two-thirds of Americans (63 percent) live paycheck to paycheck. Check out the crime statistics under Biden's watch:

In the first three months of 2022, there have been 136 mass shootings (January 41 (39 dead); February 43 (40 dead); March 52 (47 dead).

That is more than 1.5 mass shooting per day! Homicides in major American cities continued to rise in 2021, with a 5 percent increase from 2020 and a 44 percent increase over 2019. In March 2022, annual inflation hit 7.9 percent, the highest rate since 1982.

Gasoline prices have raised at fastest rate on record and consumer prices jumped to 8.5 percent under Biden's watch. Big government spending is fueling inflation and runaway consumer prices.

Biden sent "The U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021" to Congress to address the longstanding problems of immigration policy but promptly forgot about it after the photo op sessions.

U.S. foreign policy is in tatters under the Biden administration. US withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021 under the most ignominious circumstances.

The world saw the mighty US armed forces being chased out of Afghanistan by a bunch of terrorists because Secretary of State Antony Blinken and the Biden administration managed the withdrawal with gross incompetence.

In the Ukraine crisis, the Biden administration is flapping its lips, chasing its tail and leading NATO (a/k/a the "gang that couldn't shoot straight") on Quixotic errand.

In Ethiopia, the Biden administration has openly and publicly supported the TPLF terrorist group which unleashed genocidal acts in Ethiopia's Amhara and Afar regions.

Suffice it to say, under the Biden administration, America is going to hell in a handbasket.

Fear and smear: the democrats' long knives are out to get Herschel Walker

The democrats' disinformation and fear and smear campaign against Herschel is in full gear. Democrats in Georgia and the national democrats party are scared ****less their cleric-cum-politician senator is going to get an ass kicking by the republicans in 2022.

They have good reason to be scared. They have put their liberal fake news press-titute media in high gear to unleash a massive fear and smear campaign. They say Herschel is involved in all sorts of "shady business practices." They say he took PPP money while criticizing others for taking PPP money. They say he has mental health problems. They say he threatened to beat up his wife. They say he has a "lot of baggage that's starting to come out" that could "alienate independent voters."

CNN a/k/a Fake News accused Herschel of lying about graduating from college and being a good student. Democrats have filed a complaint against Herschel for violating campaign law.

They say he has never been a candidate for public office before (neither has the current democratic occupant of the seat). They say he cannot debate his opponent.

Yada! Yada! Yada!

The liberal media went ape**** when Herschel made the following statement:

... [W]hat's strange about it is he's not telling everyone that the Democratic Party has left Brown and Black people behind... They forgot all about us, and they not just forgot about us, you look at the policy that's going on, which has nothing to do with color... What it has to do with is these policies are not suitable for the people of Georgia. They're not suitable for the people of the United States of America.

Did Herschel lie about the Democratic Party? No, he spoke truth to democrats who have been commodifying and monetizing black votes for decades!

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

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Editorial

Undependable report favoring felons

Some international human rights organizations and their wrongly editorialized media outlets have been marching against Ethiopia. The blemished and entirely partisan report produced by Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) intentionally targets to attack Ethiopia favoring the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) attests this fact.

These bodies had to collect solid evidence to confirm when, where and by whom the so-called massacre was committed before making such a big allegation against the government of Ethiopia.

Nowhere does the report mention the extreme sufferings, genocidal crimes and scourge of Amhara during TPLF's 27 years of oppressive regime.

Did they conduct a serious human rights affairs investigation or a harmless academic research using a remote-telephone and presenting the suspect criminals as witnesses? Where is the world heading? If representatives of over 7 billion population and internationally recognized organizations are confidently present such unjustified evidence and provide people with distantly gathered information to unveil the matter of life and death, what makes people surprised if individuals produce and dispatch big lies?

In principle, such hard information can be credible when it is conducted on the spot as much as possible contacting families of the deceased, neighbors, residents, responsible officials and war victims themselves, not suspected criminals and wrong deed accomplices. The report relies on remotely-made telephone interview contacting individuals fled to Sudan, a cross-boundary investigation far from actual area and absolutely detached from the criteria of a feasible research.

How on earth individuals suspected of having involved in certain serious crime can be testimonies for the issue they would be liable after verification? This is the deed AI and HRW did earlier as they

telephoned 'Samri' fled to Sudan and jointly concluded that war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed.

It is important to recall that AI's own report of 9 November 2020 revealed and later confirmed by the Joint Investigation Report of the UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission that ethnically-targeted mass killings were committed by a Tigrayan informal militia group called 'Samri', which massacred hundreds of ethnic Amharas within the first few days of the conflict.

The same group is now cited as source of evidence for the joint investigation. If organizations like these are actively operational and driven by lies and bias, it is seemingly difficult to be properly adjudicated globally. They purely released paradox report as it stated that the Amhara forces were blocking the routes to Sudan for fleeing Tigrayans, at same time claiming Tigrayans were forced to leave the Welkait, Kafta Humera, and Tegede districts into Sudan and Tigray.

Who are these organizations fooling? It is surely the international community, from where they have come of course. If situations keep at the same rate, where is justice, how is fairness ensured?

Are all nations expected to be submissive to the chauvinistic orders and illegitimate interferences of the US and some European nations? This fashion has to be reined somewhere for good if the world is to be a just one.

Why the international community does simply blow in the direction of lie and misinformation winds? It has to sieve the seed from the chaff especial when it encounters such a double-crossing matter.

In sum, the partisan gesture AI and HRW exhibit is really a clear manifestation of their sham mate merely to ink Ethiopia's prestige in black and instigate bodies to lock their interest for helping Ethiopia. In so doing, AI, HRW and other media organizations like CNN fell short of trustworthiness and dependability.

Opinion

The need to promote regional security cooperation

BY STAFF REPORTER

Recently East African military intelligence institutions have agreed to work together on the security issue in the region, according to Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) report. East African Defense Intelligence Forum was held in Addis Ababa with the participation of Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia and Djibouti.

The countries agreed to work together on border protection, cyber, social media, social issues as well as environmental protection, youth and unemployment, and fighting terrorists and anti-peace forces with a view to building peaceful and stable Africa.

The horn of Africa region is one of the most volatile regions of the world. Security issue has been a main agenda for decades. Hence addressing the issue with concerted efforts is commendable stride.

Experiences of other regions of the world also show that security alliance is helpful in discharge a shared responsibility of peace building. In international studies and practice, military alliance is viewed as the most important form of international cooperation created by governments in

order to deal with threats to the security of states.

Some institutions, such as NATO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), are explicitly and primarily security organizations. Most of the general-purpose regional organizations—such as the Arab League, the AU and the OAS—have significant security dimensions, as do a number of other smaller regional (or sub-regional) groups such as, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Many regional and sub-regional organizations bridge the gap between traditional definitions of security and wider concepts of security involving democracy, human rights, and economic and environmental issues. Although many regional institutions are primarily economic and have no explicit or direct security role, even these are often implicitly designed to promote stability, conflict avoidance and the collective viability of their communities—important factors for security—by encouraging integration among their members.

The UN Secretary General's report on peace building and sustaining peace from

2018 explicitly highlighted that sustaining peace is a collective effort that requires the active involvement of all relevant actors including regional organizations, civil society, women's groups, youth groups, and the private sector.

In particular, regional and sub-regional organizations provide resources for peaceful action such as preventative diplomacy, confidence building, mediation tools, local knowledge, networks, and analytical capacity. Countries and organizations within a region often have intersecting or similar visions for the future which can serve as the foundation for collective efforts towards sustainable peace.

The Secretary-General also said that focusing on the need to switch from responding to conflict to preventing it in the first place. Regional organizations are key to prevention because they are close to the problem and have knowledge of local dynamics. Regional organizations can take action earlier while situations are just beginning to deteriorate. The Secretary-General emphasized that "conflict prevention is a responsibility that we all must shoulder" and "must be at the heart of all our collective endeavors."

The message throughout the meetings indicated that the UN is underutilizing

partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations, which could drastically improve the effectiveness of peace and conflict prevention. Even though each organization has a different purpose, the Secretary-General insisted that these ongoing partnerships intersect on key issues like peace and security, sustainable development, humanitarian action, human rights, and rule of law.

Looking forward, the Secretary-General seeks to increase efforts where a number of organizations are working towards a similar goal. Furthermore, he suggested that partnerships use the 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals as the frameworks for cooperation.

In general, the formation and consolidation of regional security alliance can be taken as a great step forward in addressing the longstanding challenges of the Horn of Africa region. It also needs due attention and support from all relevant continental and global institutions that care for the peace and stability of the region.

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

Business & Economy

Fostering suit atmosphere for import substitution

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Forsooth, setting the scene for creating all round environments for import substitution will open the trajectory for booming the national economy. Thus, every sector in the country is striving forward for exploiting their potential in import substitution. As many of economic development sectors need construction inputs, it is of paramount importance for the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation (ECWC) to engage in such activity.

Not only the corporation but also any development endeavors including infrastructure construction engagement need close collaboration among various stakeholders and partners to its success. Cognizant of this fact, ECWC has been able to overcome many problems in the past years by implementing three phase of construction management reform step by step.

According to the document that obtained from the Corporation; implementing organizational reform including cost reduction activities; solving 16 key problems which were identified by research as well as building industrialized and IT based construction management are the three phases which have been implemented by the corporation.

On top of that the corporation has recently disclosed that it is getting ready to seemingly work on creating atmosphere to foster import substitution upon various areas of the construction industry with a view to stabilizing the national economy.

During the discussion forum held recently with Rising Hongfa Group of Indian Company and the Corporation to work in collaboration, the corporation announced that it has been given due attention to its endeavor to implement its industrialization.

Delivering Ayisha Mohammed, Minister for Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands' remark, Wubshet Jekale (Dr.-Eng.) said that the discussion will put a platform to the corporation to play its significant role in import substitution mechanisms.

He further pointed out that the corporation should work beyond building and constructing different buildings. But it would rather play its substantial role in mitigating foreign currency problem in the country through applying different import substitute mechanisms.

Retan Singh, Director General of Rising Hongfa Group, elucidated that this cooperation will have unceasing economic benefit for Ethiopia as well as the African continent. Acknowledging Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's (PhD) motive to make Ethiopia the leader of economy and technology from Africa, the Director further underscored that Ethiopia can also simultaneously engage in exporting construction items for the rest of African countries.

The Director General further accentuated that the company has extensive experience in the field of construction inputs, recycling fabric materials, aluminum inputs, concrete



ECWC agrees to work in collaboration with Rising Hongfa Group in import substitution

As import substitution is an approach that substitutes externally produced goods and services with locally produced ones, local communities can put their money to work within their country

wall panels and pipes. In addition, the company will share extensive experience with roof tiles as well as road painting and other related construction inputs production, he said, adding that they will work together to create opportunities for technology options. He also said that the construction of factories is very important as Ethiopia has the resources to produce a lot of construction inputs.

Rising Hongfa Group is an integrated science and technology enterprise, undertaking pioneering work in technologies development and machinery manufacturing, and to utilize the same in relative fields, it was learnt.

Exclusively to *The Ethiopian Herald* Engineer Yonas Ayalew CEO of the Corporation for his part explained that his office with more than 15,000 employees has already built the fabric around Kality area in Addis Ababa which is ready for producing construction inputs locally.

Mentioning that more than 60 percent of the government's budget is granted for the construction of which the import market took 50 percent of its sum, the deal between the corporation and the Indian company is of paramount importance to reduce the total expense of the country.

As to him, after purchasing and installing

the machineries within not more than ten months, the CEO revealed that the fabric will start its operation by the end of the next Ethiopian fiscal year.

As part of ECWC's endeavor to implement its industrialization reform, Yonas explained that due attention has been given to the center and milestone achievements have so far been registered. In this regard, modernization of the work process, introduction of new products, scales up of the market shares are among the major achievements to be mentioned.

For the quick realization of the center's initiatives ECWC is committed and will continue to do whatever at its disposal to collaborate and work closely with firms that have distinguished success in the areas of construction inputs production.

Cognizant of the reason that the corporation is working keenly to build resilient institution in the construction field, it is adopting new technologies coupled with working with the Rising HOGFA Group in import substitution activities, Yonas noted. "In this discussion with the group, we have already identified what kind of construction materials and manufacturing inputs are needed. As a result we are getting ready to make some investment on recycling used tires, installing aluminum and various concrete factories locally in order to avoid imported inputs and to enable us to complete constructions before or even on the deadline," he remarked.

As to him, the main focusing areas of interests are to work together and find ways to substitute the imported construction inputs locally, thereby availing inputs at a reasonable price. And the purpose of the discussion is to align with ECWC's reform efforts of industrialization and digitalization intentionally, whereby significant successes were achieved in the past couple of months, he mentioned.

"It is my great pleasure to announce our milestone achievements and hopes for the upcoming breakthroughs of the ECWC. One of the giant construction companies of Ethiopia, ECWC constructed several dams, airfields, roads, bridges, dry ports, buildings, water supply systems, deep water wells, reclamations, river diversions, and manufacture building materials throughout the country," he said.

The ECWC is established with a mission to deliver quality construction works both domestically and overseas, assemble construction machinery, equipment, and manufacturing spare parts as well as acquire, own and administer dams constructed by the government.

With a great energy and caliber ECWC envisioned entering the East and Central African market, taking its long years of experience in the construction sector, expertise knowledge, technology, machinery, and quality works as a competitive advantage. It's also noted that, the corporation gets recognition and appreciation from its esteemed customers; achieves various awards in response to ECWC's relentless struggle for change, ISO 9001:2015 among others, the CEO underscored.

According to MekonenAbera, an Economist, import substitution industrialization is an economic theory adhered to by developing countries that wish to decrease their dependence on developed countries. As to him, the construction sector plays a key role in the functioning of economies, accounting for considerable share of GDP and employment opportunities. It generates a significant economic activity through linkages with other industries.

The nature of the construction business requires local production, high labor and material intensity, and this helps to explain why the industry should mainly be oriented towards domestic markets, he explained. As import substitution is an approach that substitutes externally produced goods and services with locally produced ones, local communities can put their money to work within their country, he mentioned. Import substitution policies may be considered to be technically successful if they result in a reduction of imports and an expansion of domestic production.

As robust economy requires both the availability of capital and money circulation within the country, local economic development often focuses on attracting business to allow capital formation, and the employments generated by businesses will boost local income. Therefore it is a good opportunity for the country to increase its foreign currency earning through import substitution activities, the economist pointed out.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy

Drag the TPLF in front of the International Criminal Court!

BY JEFF PEARCE

I've been swapping emails with the University of Gondar this week. It's sent me a few details of their horrific findings over the mass graves of TPLF victims discovered in Welkait, where Jemal Countess and Betty Sheba Tekeste spoke to witnesses and survivors.

For the now infamous site called Gehanem ("Hell"), I was told "this was the place where the TPLF did mass detention and mass killings from 1982–1992." A decade worth of barbarism before the terrorist group had even started their vice-like control over the whole country.

TPLF operatives had mass graves dug around the Kalema River, and they would "systematically excavate and add the victim bodies to the river during the summer season when the water volume was at a maximum level. Other witnesses in the area also reported that finding human bones along the of the Kalema River downstream was a common experience."

Because the figure of "59,000 people" has been circulating around social media posts, I wanted to check the number. The researchers reported back that the number was confirmed by two witnesses who overheard a radio communication of TPLF leaders sent from the concentration camp to their superiors.

But what is to be done about this? Last time I checked, not a single mainstream media operation in the West has given this story any attention, even though the discovery was made by a research team of a fully reputable university. Instead, in between the wall-to-wall carnage of Ukraine, the Western media did find time to devote space to the joint Amnesty-Human Rights Watch report over alleged Ethiopian and Amhara war crimes in Welkait — what TPLF kingpin Getachew "Jabba" Reda and useful idiots at the Guardian and the New York Times keep mislabeling "Western Tigray."

And the timing of the joint report sure is damn interesting. We'll get to the possible why in a moment, but the report itself will hopefully one day be an exhibit in a court case that proves what sham operations both Amnesty and Human Rights Watch are. Consider that the guy taking point on the report for public chats and promotion is Fisseha Tekle, who is reportedly the son-in-law of TPLF founding father Sibhat Nega, who was released as a political prisoner in January.

And of course, we've all seen this cozy, conflict-of-interest reunion, in which the top propagandists have a Zoom meet with Amnesty and HRW big cheeses.

The bias in the work is so shamelessly on display, you got to wonder how they ever



expected anyone to take it seriously. For instance, in the report's Recommendations, the Ethiopian and Amhara regional authorities are asked to "immediately demobilize and disarm all abusive irregular forces present in Western Tigray since November 2020 such as Fano and other militias." The language for the TPLF is noticeably different: "Direct Tigrayan forces to immediately cease all abuses against civilians and captured combatants and adopt measures to deter and appropriately punish commanders and fighters who have committed serious human rights abuses." Notice that there's no equal call for them to disarm. Why not?

But let's circle back to the question of why all this attention is suddenly on Welkait. Well, it can't be accidental, and it isn't. According to a trusted source, the TPLF have retained two different international law firms to help it try to launch a case against the Ethiopian government in the International Criminal Court. If successful, this will make a hell of a spectacle — a terrorist organization manipulating an international court into trying its victim.

But Ethiopia — just like the United States — is not a signatory of the Rome Statute, the treaty that gives the ICC its jurisdiction. Does the TPLF and its allies care? Not at all. Because this is yet again another public relations exercise for the terrorist group to get its hands on what it wants. And since it's no longer in a position to gobble up all of Ethiopia again, it'll settle for taking Welkait as compensation for "war crimes," getting what regular Tigray doesn't have in abundance — fertile land — plus the opportunity to cause yet more border havoc.

There is one way to fight this. Do exactly

the same thing.

There is certainly an abundance of evidence — genuine evidence, as in survivor testimony, witness statements, the skeletal remains which will surely tell their stories further through forensic study — for a case of war crimes to be made against the leaders of the TPLF.

Consider that we already have the true story behind the Mai Kadra massacre, which has also been meticulously put together by researchers at the University of Gondar.

We have the wanton destruction of hospitals and university campuses in Wollo, which I have seen for myself and reported on.

We have the TPLF occupation of a world heritage site, Lalibela, and their forces putting it at risk by stationing forces and artillery nearby.

We have the use of child soldiers shamelessly advertised and promoted by a callous Western media, including the New York Times.

And on top of all the other crimes — the rapes, murders, destruction of schools and monasteries — let's not forget the thousands of soldiers murdered by the TPLF in the November 3, 2020 attack on army bases — especially now that the TPLF's thesis of having been "surrounded" just prior to their Northern command attack has been debunked.

I mentioned above how Ethiopia is not a signatory of the Rome Statute. Neither for that matter is the TPLF, which will surely use a sponsor nation, perhaps even more than one (my money is sadly on Ireland to be its dupe here), to push and promote its case before the court. But the institution of a war crimes tribunal, going all the way

back to the Nuremberg Trials, was never conceived to be a blunt instrument for the political agenda of a single nation (or organization for that matter). The goal was supposed to be to exact justice on behalf of humanity.

Where is the humanity in letting a terrorist organization — which in its own founding document labeled one ethnic group its sworn enemy — get its way in the highest court of justice in the world? Where is the humanity in a terrorist group using vast financial resources, media manipulation, and the economic and legislative power of the United States acting on its behalf to try to exterminate a sovereign state? We can't let this happen.

Decades ago, bones in Afar confirmed it was the cradle of humanity. Today, the bones found in Gehanem confirm that the TPLF will do anything to destroy the values of humanity.

We need a major groundswell of ordinary supporters, high-profile public figures and respected academics behind this initiative. For far too long, our "army" of supporters trying to rescue Ethiopia have been put on the defensive, forced to react to every stunt the TPLF pull. It's time to take the public relations fight to the enemy and keep it there. They want to hire lawyers? Let's get our own. They want a trial? Let's give them one, with Debretsion and Getachew and the others in the dock. Finally answering for the crimes they committed, not only in this war but for close to thirty years while in power in Ethiopia.

Forget just starting a clever hashtag and posting on Twitter. File the damn legal briefs. Get it done. Let's see them in court. But on our terms, not theirs.

Law & Politics

T A promise fulfilled

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

In the aftermath of the humiliating defeat of the terrorist TPLF group by the allied Ethiopian armed forces, the group was forced willy-nilly to push back to the Tigray region. However, through the passage of time, the ragtag group embarked on launching a fresh attack in Afar and Amhara states and partaking in extreme looting, property distraction, and displacing thousands of noncombatants from both areas.

Dejectedly, as the broader international community remains passive and turns a blind eye to the grave atrocities perpetrated in the Afar and Amhara states, the terrorist TPLF group has been upending the lives of noncombatants residing in the aforementioned areas. In the same way, with an eye toward casting doubt on the Ethiopian government, the group has been getting itself involved in blocking humanitarian corridors from different corners.

However, to ensure unfettered access to the much-needed humanitarian access to the people of Tigray, the government of Ethiopia ordered its forces not to enter to Tigray region. As a matter of fact, the planned barricade of emergency support by the terrorist TPLF group within the confines of making use of malnourishment as an instrument of war has also led to the starvation of the Tigray people.

Lately, the government has also declared a humanitarian truce that drew commendation from the international community. The government's words have been translated to action with more trucks carrying humanitarian items arriving at Tigray regional capital.

The rationale behind the government's good gesture is to help the communities in need of humanitarian assistance.

The government passed the decision as the situation in Tigray state warranted urgent measures to ensure that those in need are able to receive aid in their localities. Alleviating the plight of those affected by the conflict is of the utmost priority and a responsibility that the government takes seriously, said the government upon declaring the humanitarian truce.

With the indefinite humanitarian truce, the government of Ethiopia has been taking measures to expedite the provision of humanitarian aid to people in need in the Tigray region.

On the heels of the humanitarian truce, a convoy consisting of some 20 trucks arrived in Mekele on 1 April with 500 tonnes of food aid. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) noted that a second convoy to Tigray this month carrying medical items, emergency food, and water treatment supplies along with essential household items arrived in Mekelle.



More trucks carrying humanitarian items arriving at Tigray regional capital

The World Food Programme (WFP) said it was pleased to announce the resumption of road convoys to Tigray on 1 April following the announcement of a “truce” between the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebels in late March.

In its presser, Government Communication Service stated WFP50 trucks, 47 of which have carried food items and 3 fuel tankers departed from Semera, Afar state on Thursday and headed to Mekelle, Tigray.

In addition to this, other 50 trucks carrying food items have also departed from Semera town and arrived in Mekelle in the past two days, the office said.

“The federal government is facilitating daily air transportation to the state for the delivery of pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, and nutritional supplements.

The government urges the international community to put pressure on Tigray militants to withdraw fully from the areas they occupy in the Afar and Amhara states to pave the way for a smooth aid delivery for those in need.

According to the statement, the federal government is facilitating daily air transportation to the region for the delivery of pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, and nutritional supplements.

The statement went on to say, “In a recent development, the Ethiopian government facilitated the movement of 60 trucks carrying humanitarian aid in the past two days. This action came in accordance with building on efforts to ensure humanitarian assistance to reach the intended beneficiaries in the region.”

“50 trucks, 47 of which carrying food items and 3 fuel tankers departed from Semera, Afar region on April 14, 2022, have passed Erebiti town heading towards Mekelle. In addition to that another fleet of 10 trucks

carrying food items departed from Semera town in the past two days.” the statement added.

The Ethiopian government reaffirms its commitment to work closely with the international community and other stakeholders to ensure proper access to humanitarian aid.

The government also urged the international community to put pressure on Tigray militants to withdraw fully from the areas they occupy in the Afar and Amhara regions to pave way for a smooth aid delivery for those in need.

Following the government's effort, various nations have been expressing their satisfaction regarding the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The United States welcomes the arrival today of a truck convoy carrying over 1,700 metric tons of life-saving humanitarian assistance in Tigray. We appreciate the efforts of the government of Ethiopia, and Afar regional authorities in facilitating that delivery, according to a press statement by Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State.

The Secretary also commends the United Nations agencies, international organizations, U.S. government partners, and the ongoing efforts of humanitarian organizations across Ethiopia to provide aid to all those in need.

“We reiterate the importance of significant, sustained, unconditional, and unhindered humanitarian access to Tigray—as well as to all communities that are suffering, including the people in Afar.”

The continued commitment of the government of Ethiopia and Tigrayan authorities to a cessation of hostilities remains a critical step toward reconciliation and peace. In that regard, we welcome the withdrawal of Tigrayan forces from Erebiti and underscore the importance of further

withdrawals from the Afar regional state. The parties must continue to build on this progress to advance a negotiated and sustainable end of the conflict added the statement.

Similarly, National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) disclosed that the government is working together with aid organizations to facilitate and follow up the delivery of food and medical items to those in need.

Commissioner Mitiku Kassa said in case of the aid items whether reach or not to the intended beneficiaries hand, the Ethiopian government reaffirms its commitment to working closely with the international community and other stakeholders to ensure proper access to humanitarian aid.

He noted the international aid organizations report to the government as to how many food or medical items are delivered to the intended beneficiaries.

“International aid organizations like WFP, Care International, ICRC, and WFP are operating with the Ethiopian government to deliver the aid items for those in need.

Now the aid organizations supplying items for those in need are not enough as the majority of them are shifting focus to Ukraine- Russia war, as to him. Donors are working to deliver the food and medical items through various means of transportation to various states like Tigray, he said.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia has been elected to the Executive Board of the World Food Program (WFP), according to the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations(UN).

“We look forward to contributing to the work of the world's largest humanitarian organization in its efforts to support countries change lives in difficult circumstances all around the world, including Ethiopia,” the Permanent Mission noted.

Society

Enjoying *Iftar* after months of suffering in Saudi prison

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Ethiopia is among those countries that received the three major religions -Christianity, Islam and Judaism- in the early period. Though they originated in the Middle East, all the three religions have a strong foundation in Ethiopia. The culture of tolerance among followers of the religions is a good indication of this. Religious institutions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, St. Raguel Church; and that of the Muslims' Mosque, the Grand Anwar Mosque, which stood beside each other, are the other good indication of brotherhood among the followers of the two religions.

The culture of tolerance and brotherhood among followers of the two religions is too strong and it is at its purest form. Whenever Christians celebrate their holyday-be it religious or cultural- their Muslim brothers and sisters are always by their side to enjoy the day along with their Christian brothers. The same is true for Muslim brother and sisters. During Muslims' festivals, it is common for to see Christian brothers and sisters getting together at their Muslims friends' house and enjoy the day warmly and happily.

Especially, these days, following the season is being fasting month; followers of the two religions, as usual, have been showing fraternity, togetherness and unity in various



Photo : ENA

Returnees at Iftar program

ways.

Last Friday, an *Iftar* dinner program was also hosted by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to close to 250 Ethiopian Muslims who were travelling to Saudi Arabia illegally; and returned to their homeland. .

On the program, several returnees who were travelling to Saudi Arabia illegally and leading a miserable life there, have taken part. As the returnees expressed to local media, they were suffering badly at the prison cells of Saudi Arabia. However, due to the unreserved effort of the government, they have returned back to their motherland safely, and they are grateful for that.

Amina Mustefa, Tigrean, is one of the returnees who had travelled to Saudi Arabia illegally. As she stated to the local media, even though she had hoped the better in Saudi, the reality abroad is totally different. She said, her plan to move to Saudi Arabia illegally was to get job and improve her

livelihood. However, she ended up in prison where the situation is hostile and the treatment is inhuman.

However, the warm friendly approach she has received from the government and the people at home, after four months of callous imprisonment, has felt her heart with love and joy. Above all, the *Iftar* program that was held at the Palace doubled her excitement.

Hadiya Seid, who said travelled from Woldia, Amhara State to Saudi Arabia illegally; and Halima Mohamed, from Dire Dawa are among the returnees. Both of them have experienced a hostile environment at the prison of Saudi Arabia. The inhuman treatments in the jail have left a lasting scar on their mind. However, due to the commitment of the government, they have returned home safely. Both of the returnees considered the *Iftar* program that was held at the Palace special.

Nurhasan Wodajo and Ibrahim Hassan are the

youths from Tigray State. They are among the returnees from Saudi Arabia. Both of them have paid unnecessary sacrifice to go to Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, the situation out there was not as they had expected. However, when they return home, they are getting treatment from the government.

Appreciating the effort and the treatment they have received, the returnees have urged the government to show the same commitment to those Ethiopians who are suffering in Saudi prison cells.

Foreign State Minister, Ambassador, Birtukan Ayano, on her part said at the event, within the past four years the government had been doing its level best to rescue those Ethiopians who are victims of illegal migration and inhuman treatments in Saudi prisons.

She also said the government has reviewed its policy by focusing on Citizen Diplomacy. She said the *Iftar* program is part of the government's dedication to its citizens.

Kombolcha Town also held street *Iftar* program with the motto "We fast together and *Iftar* together"

As town's Communication Bureau stated, the program was attended by members of the town's Muslim community and other faiths.

During the program, Town's Mayor, Mohamed Amin Yusuf extended his best wish to the entire community of the town.



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Considering alternative for low scoring students from war-stricken areas

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

Over the past four years, anti-Ethiopia entities have been orchestrating conflicts and war throughout the nation. Following the plot and the attack the terrorist TPLF group has provoked against the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), Northern Command placed in Mekelle on November 4, 2020, the country is still in war.

[This, in turn, has strongly impacted the political, social and economic systems of the nation.

The education system is one of the highly affected sectors as the war has devastated the livings of the people. However, the government has tried its best to keep the sector functional and let the students to sit for the annual university entrance exam. But the results of many of the students in the war-torn areas were highly affected that the Ministry of Education was overburdened to assist them in some ways.

Yesterday, officials from the Ministry, all states' education bureaus and City Administration education offices gave a joint statement that disclosed the planned affirmative action. As to the statement

issued by the Ministry, twelve grade students who have been in war torn and conflict areas; but sat for the university entrance exam and did not score the required passing marks will retake the exam as regular students in this year's 12th grade national exam.

Two decisions have been made in accordance with the agreement of all states, with the participation and consultation of concerned bodies. One of the decisions was to distribute additional enrollment capacity from government universities to the four war-affected states fairly according to their population.

The second decision was made to those students residing in war and conflict affected areas and sat for university entrance examination to join a public university in this academic year; but unable to achieve the required results. They will be tested as regular students for the 12th grade national exam in this academic year.

According to the joint statement, the number of examinees, compared to the preceding year, has increased. Transportation process of examination materials, examination process, and the transfer of exam papers and answer sheets

were in very problematic and unsecure situations.

Besides, the exams were circulating on social media before and during the exam periods by some people claiming to have exams on their hands.

It was necessary to correct, compile and analyze the exams in order to reach the final conclusions related to the subjects mentioned in the exam papers. Students and parents have been notified through the Assessment and Testing Service on February 23, 2022, the statement added.

Despite the differences in subject and region, out of the 598,679 students who sat for the two round exams, 45 percent or 268,336 students scored an average and above. This means that 268,336 students can pursue higher education (university education) with different options.

As well, the government will provide free scholarships to as many students as possible at regular universities based on the capacity of the public universities that is 152,014 which is still over when compared to the previous year's intake capacity of 147,000.

Regardless of the increase in enrollment capacity, only 25 percent of the 598,679

students who have been admitted to public universities will be admitted to public universities.

Likewise, decisions and statements were made regarding the points required to register for admission to public universities on March 14, 2022. Afterwards, confusions and claims related to cut-off point and general test correction and reporting were discussed.

And except the Civic and Ethical Education, there were no reasons to cancel the results in other subjects; and agreement was reached on it. It was explained that the main reasons for the agreement were that there was a misunderstanding between the two years after the preparatory school.

Despite declining results in most states, students particularly in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, and Benishangul-Gumuz states were affected by the war and insecurity that the Ministry of Education agreed to consider alternatives.

Accordingly, the Ministry has decided to utilize the capacity of the 43 existing public universities to address the problem and it is considering additional admissions from existing universities. And all the four States have identified zones, woredas, schools and students for the re-exams.

Planet Earth

Stockholm + 50: Accelerating 50 years of global environmental actions

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Fifty years have elapsed since the world declared environmental issue, a global multilateral agenda at the first conference on environment in Stockholm in 1972. Now, the world is preparing to organize the “Stockholm +50” event on the coming July to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the first environmental conference.

The Stockholm +50 is an event scheduled to be held on 2 and 3 June 2022 in Stockholm, Sweden to commemorate the 50 years of global environmental actions that aimed to accelerate the global environmental actions by promoting multilateralism and joint actions.

The first conference on environment by the United Nations was held in 1972 in Stockholm, Sweden, that makes the environment sector a major global issue. Following the Stockholm Conference on Environment, the participants adopted several resolutions and principles to act on environment including the Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan for the Human Environment.

The creation of United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) was also a result of the Stockholm conference and the Stockholm Declaration has contained 26 principles that placed environmental issues at the forefront of the international agendas. This declaration helped to start dialogues between industrialized and developing countries on the link between economic growth, air pollution, and the well-being of people around the world.

To commemorate the global environmental actions during the past 50 years and to accelerate the global actions in the sector, 50 + Stockholm conference on environment would be organized in Stockholm on July 2022. This international environmental meeting, anchored in the UN’s Decade of Action, is a crucial event to accelerate global efforts and actions on the environment and climate sector.

Recently a national discussion was organized in Ethiopia entitled “Concept Note for Stockholm + 50 National Consultations” prepared by Ethiopian Environment Authority with partners. A document prepared for discussion at the event stated that the Stockholm +50 aims to accelerate the implementations of the UN Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, the Agenda 2030, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the post-2020 global Biodiversity Framework and encouraging the adoption of green post-COVID-19 recovery plan.

According to the document, the event aims at promoting multilateralism in tackling the earth’s triple planetary crisis- climate, nature and pollution. In addition, the conference also eyes on raising awareness about the importance of protecting the planet and sets a path to overcome the triple

planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity losses, and pollution and waste.

Before the international event in Stockholm, the Stockholm +50 is conducting national consultations within 58 countries between February and May 2022. Ethiopia is one of the 58 countries selected for the national consultation and held its first national consultation last week. The goal of these national consultations is to inform the international meeting through national reports and a global synthesis report that captures key findings, recommendations, data, media coverage, and links national policy frameworks, according to a document prepared for the discussion.

In addition, the national consultations target building a shared global vision to achieve a healthy planet, prosperity, accelerate progress on the SDGs and multilateral environmental agreements through an inclusive green recovery. It also amplifies the voices of the poor and other marginalized groups.

During the national consultation a young Environmental Activist, Yared Abera presented a paper entitled “Meaningful youth engagement on environmental governance.” As a young activist struggling to see healthy environment, The Ethiopian Herald approached Yared to discuss the achievements and limitations of the past 50 year’s global multilateral responses on environment and on what to do in next global multilateral actions.

Yared stated that the 1972’s first UN conference on environment helped the world to establish environmental based institutions and makes the environment and climate change a global agenda. Almost all international and national institutions on climate change and environment are the products of the Stockholm conference; Yared said adding this is the major achievement of the past 50 years.

Following the establishment of these environmental institutions including the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and other global, regional and national institutions, different environmental programs were implemented globally and nationally. “The Millennium Development Goals and the current Sustainable Development Goals are the products of these international environmental institutions and progresses and developments in multilateral environmental global actions are increasing from time to time,” Yared added.

The international initiatives, agreements and responses on climate change and environment are the outcomes of the international multilateral discussions and conferences. The Copenhagen and Paris conferences and the agreements adopted following the conferences are also among the achievements of global multilateralism

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in the environment sector. In addition, the UN institution, UNEP that established following the Stockholm Conference is organizing a universal regular conference on environment every two year that mobilizes the world community to act on environment and climate change.

According to Yared, the initiation of multilateralism in the environment sector also creates a discussion platform between developing and developed countries. Following this platform, financial flow from the developed world started to support the efforts of the developing world on environment actions and to build climate resilient world, though there are practical limitations. The global financial flow in the environment sector is the outcome of the establishment of multilateralism in the sector, he noted.

During the past 50 years of multilateralism responses in the environment sector, Yared identified that limited financial allocation

to the sector and financial shortages, unpractical promises in the finance sector, in accessibility or high bureaucracy in the financial sector for developing countries even after it allocated since the finance is deposited in global institutions and loose trust between developing and developed countries are among the limitations. Hence, Yared stated that during the Stockholm + 50 conference, the world is expected to apply practicable mechanisms in solving the past limitations.

Globally, the conference would accelerate the UN decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 by solving the limitations, Yared stated. In addition, it would also boost the global financial flow and ease the system for developing countries to increase the global actions in the sector. Similarly, a mechanism must also be applied to build trust between the developing and developed world and legal mechanism must also be created to make the promises practicable.

Nationally, Ethiopia is among the top participants and contributors of the multilateral responses and agreements on the environment sector since the early period. Ethiopia’s participation in the environmental diplomacy is satisfactory and its voices at global level are sounding, Yared said. For him, the national responses in institutionalizing the sector, policy and strategy preparation and implementations brings practical outcomes.

“The Climate Resilient Green Economy of the country’s strategy is a sounding response,” Yared underlined adding countries take lessons from Ethiopia’s climate resilient green strategy. Many countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) take lessons from Ethiopia’s strategy. In addition, the Red Plus project and the current green legacy initiative of the country are practical actions that helps in ecosystem restoration and tackling climate change.

Ethiopia also mobilizes Africa in this regard. This indicates that Ethiopia’s role in promoting the development of multilateral environmental action is crucial. Hence, For Yared, Ethiopia should strengthen its efforts in contributing its role for the development of multilateral diplomacy in the sector in the coming 50 years.

During the Stockholm +50 national consultation Ethiopia announced that it identifies national and sector based thematic areas. Nature based solution for reducing vulnerability, ensuring food security and building resilience, environmental pollution and Ethiopia’s response, policies, institutions, legal frameworks supporting environmental sustainability in Ethiopia and knowledge management and communication are the top thematic areas of the national consultation where the second consultation is expected to be organized on May 2022.