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#NoMore Movement makes West to reassess approaches

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - #NoMore Movement has brought about a paradigm shift in mobilizing Africans to stand in one for continental issues, a veteran politician said, adding it has also shocked Western nations especially the U.S. and made them reassess approaches.

Speaking to HoA TV, the veteran diplomat Prof. Mohamed Hassan stated that the West is 'concerned' by Africans' cooperation for mutual goals and the first stance to work together. The campaign has exposed their divisive rules and brought Pan Africanism tendency among Africans.

The veteran diplomat further noted that the state of the mind of people has been changing and the issue has been becoming a mass movement. However, the westerns particularly the U.S. is working to freeze or to control the mass movement using various

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Prof. Mohamed Hassan

U.S. gives thumbs-up to gov't efforts providing aids to Tigray

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - The United States State Department has appreciated the continuing humanitarian supply to Tigray and urged the government of Ethiopia and all parties to take part in an inclusive political process of resolving the existing conflict.

In his latest tweet, the U.S. State Department Secretary, Antony Blinken has stated that:

"The United State Welcomes actions taken to lay the groundwork for an end to the conflict in Ethiopia. We support an inclusive political process to heal the country's division and provide peace and security for all who live in Ethiopia."

Spokesperson of the State Department, Ned Price has also tweeted that the U.S. government is encouraging deliveries of much needed food aid to continue to flow to

communities throughout northern Ethiopia. "We urge parties to ensure sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access to all in need."

The United States remains committed to a unified, prosperous, and sovereign Ethiopia and to supporting an inclusive political process to heal the country's divisions and provide peace and security for all Ethiopians,

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Ataklti Haileselassie

Terrorist TPLF misuses food aid in broad daylight

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

ADDIS ABABA – The terrorist TPLF has been feeding its fighters with the food aid sent to Tigray in the name of the needy, so said Ataklti Haileselassie, former mayor of Mekelle.

Speaking to local media, Ataklti stated that the people of Tigray have not obtained food

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News



Journalist Hermela Aregawi

Some western media support terrorist TPLF lies, reject truth: Journalist

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - A journalist elucidated that some western media and U.S. officials have supported terrorist TPLF accepting its fabricated ethnic division narratives at the expense of the reality on the ground in Ethiopia.

Having a stay with RemiX Morning Show, Journalist Hermela Aregawi said that the northern conflict in Ethiopia has been erroneously reported by some western mainstream media setting the truth aside. Based on this, the CNN, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch accused the government of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people of doing wrong standing by the side of the terrorist group.

According to the Journalist, these partisan western media and their governments have been supporting the terrorist though they know that the conflict was purely provoked by TPLF itself attacking the Northern Command base in Tigray from the outset.

She further stated that the terrorist TPLF and its allied media have been accusing the government of committing genocide in Tigray, but it is quite far from the reality.

“TPLF is an ethno-fascist group and ethnic-oriented gang born in 1975 to overthrow the communist government (Derg) with the help of the U.S. and mercilessly ruled Ethiopia for close to three decades as a lot of voices were muffled. That is why the terrorist group has had strong relation with the State Department and the Head of the WHO member,” she added.

She succinctly requested saying, “Does any country graciously accept when extraordinary inhuman activities performed in its territory? The answer is straight forward, No! So, any nation has to stand by the side of the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments, and the respective citizens of the two.”

“The CNN and the New York Times and others know what the truth in Ethiopia is, but they do not want to face the reality. Especially, a nation that houses close to 115 million intertwined people is not an easy country and isolating the people using ethnic division is very unacceptable,” the journalist underlined.

Scholar underlines media's constructive role in fruitful Nat'l Dialogue

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA - The mass media are expected to play constructive role in due process of conducting a National Dialogue through surpassing the impact of social media thereby alleviating irregularities the latter would bear, so said a lecturer.

Addis Ababa University Lecturer Prof. Admasu Gebeyehu stated that the influential power of mass media have to surpass that of social media as the latter would adversely affect the National Dialogue. Hence, taking this crucial concept into consideration, mass media should operate through scrupulously planning activities towards successfully attaining the goal of the National Dialogue.

He stressed that the goal of National Dialogued is to sustain peace and stability through strengthening fraternity between nations and nationalities. However, this

fruitful goal will not successfully achieve if the public cannot get updated and relevant information concerning the dialogue.

He further noted that anti peace elements may create chaos and disturbance using different destructive social media outlets to deter the dialogue. Hence, mass media should plan to reduce the impacts of such disparaging social media.

Though the country has planned to undertake inclusive National Dialogue, the number of people participating in the dialogue is minimal compared with the total population of the country he said adding that as the dialogue would benefit all citizens of the country, everyone needs to be provided with updated and real information about it. To this end, mass media are expected to work hard to fight against irrelevant information and feed the society with appropriate and reliable information, he added.



Prof. Admasu Gebeyehu

He called on all citizens of the country to sieve the real from the fabricated information disseminated through social media.



EU-IGAD partnership crucial to counter COVID-19 pandemic

BY TEWODROS KASSA

ADDIS ABABA - The European Union (EU)-Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) partnership plays a fundamental role to ease the COVID-19 pandemic socio-economic impacts in the region, IGAD Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu (PhD) said.

IGAD yesterday handed over three ambulances, mobile laboratory, nitrile gloves, and other COVID-19 protective equipment to the Ministry of Health.

On the handing over ceremony held at the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), Workneh said that the partnership is critical

not only for arresting the spread of the virus throughout the region but also safeguards livelihoods.

As to him, IGAD will continue providing basic COVID-19 protective equipment to its member states towards expediting the country's efforts of recovery from the pandemic.

In addition, a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministries of Health of Ethiopia and Djibouti and IGAD.

Accordingly, the signed MoU addresses the access to vaccine in general and the vaccination of COVID-19 vaccine for cross-border truck drivers in particular between Ethiopia and Djibouti.

In addition, MoU was signed between Ministry of Health, University of Gondar, Jijiga University, and IGAD for research and surveillance and Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) in cross-border areas.

On her part, Health Minister Dr. Lia Tadesse said that undertaking effective regional COVID-19 protection helps to maintain safe cross-border travel and trade.

New and existing partnerships among member states, IGAD, and the EU is very crucial to facilitate the on-going responses to the pandemic, she said.

The partnership also enables member states to offer latest health services to the communities, according to her.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Botched attempts to drive divisive wedges on resilient Ethiopia

One of the salient features of Ethiopia is cruising safe from deep waters, posed by trouble mongers aiming at reaping benefits at the cost of harm of those in the clear.

Numerous attempts were made by revolution exporters that plan tranquilizing Ethiopia as well as by self-seeker dissenters to disintegrate the nation along ethnic lines in vain. Despite orchestrated blood shades, here and there, the country has kept its territorial integrity intact and citizens their time-old chemistry to the chagrin of the mischievous. The nefarious dream of the diabolic could not come anywhere near success.

As a last ditch effort or a futile bid, zooming their attention to dividing Ethiopia along religious lines the impish mentioned above have begun hallucinating about bringing down a great nation that stands out for its precedence in embracing major religions – Christianity, Islam and Judaism,...

In a recent attempt they have tried to put Muslims and Christians at loggerheads unwilling to remind themselves the faithful from both religions help each other out in the construction of mosques and churches out of considerateness to each other and fraternity. The heinous proved oblivious to the fact that the well-wishing gestures the Muslim and Christian faithful exchange during each other's holidays. The wicked proved myopic that as evidenced in Lent and Ramadan both fast for the serenity and prosperity of the country. Also both dole out aid to the needy irrespective of religious background. The aforementioned peculiar features are ascribable to why Ethiopia cuts a special place as compared to other countries of the world.

As the time-old sentiment of peaceful coexistence has sent down roots in Ethiopia, hacking this social fabric could be but gibberish.

We could tap such peculiar features to draw researchers and

tourists to Ethiopia. It is not many that know about the fact that Ethiopia takes precedence in Embracing Islam, which came to Ethiopia before Medina. This is known in Arabia and Africa and Islamic world though not to the required level. Surprisingly, those who brought the faith to Ethiopia are directly connected to the prophet Mohammed, who referred to Ethiopia that served a safe haven to his followers in bad time saying "Don't attack Ethiopia unless attacked." Here, it worthwhile to pose a question that 'do conspirator-revolution exporters assume themselves Muslims plotting against Ethiopians that allowed a green light to Muslims the exercise of the faith at its embryonic stage?' To bring the religion to the forefront there is no problem among the citizens though we may not hide the feeling among some leaders, according to experts in the field.

We should not fail to foreground such history of ours say Nejashi given countries like Turkey have named their mosques, charitable organizations and streets after the king that hosted the Prophet Mohammed's followers. Pilgrimages to Mecca can drop in at Al Nejashi Mosque. Besides, Ethiopia boasts numerous worth-visiting heritages like Shonke, Harar, Dire Dawa, Bale, among others. Tragic as it may sound, we Ethiopians are foreign to our priceless heritages well known to foreigners. We have also religious elites well-known elsewhere but who have not basked under our attention.

Especially, there is a call for Ethiopians towards further cementing the culture of sharing that serves as a safety net. In the other parts of the world crime rates are directly proportional to inflations. But in Ethiopia this doesn't work. Elsewhere, for want of food, the destitute are seen forced to sell their organs but here there is not such a thing as citizens are considerate to each other. It is such Ethiopia we must bequeath to the coming generation circumventing hurdles pestering the country.

Opinion

No room for conflict entrepreneurs in Ethiopian religious institutions

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Ethiopia is the earthly heaven for all religions and all religious followers since the ancient time. Ethiopia accepted all religions and pilgrims peacefully. All religions enter to Ethiopia peacefully during the early periods of the religions expansion. The history of the dominant religions in Ethiopia currently, Christianity and Islam, tells us the reality.

Both religions came from the Middle East during their early period of establishment during the Axumite Civilization. They expand easily across the country and have now tens of millions of followers throughout Ethiopia.

These religions are not simply religious institutions in Ethiopia, but also contributed indispensable role in the nation-building process of Ethiopia. In addition to its ancient nationhood, the religious values contribute their own share in shaping Ethiopian values. Ethiopian religions are the bases for social, moral and societal values that respect and promote tolerance, harmonious coexistence, peace and solving differences through peaceful means.

The most ancient mosques, churches and monasteries in Africa founds in Ethiopia. Al-Nejashi Mosque of Ethiopia is the first and the ancient Mosque in Africa. The followers of these two and other religions in the country peacefully coexist for millennia. No earthly

reason has power to disturb or to separate the unity, harmonious living and tolerance of Ethiopian religious followers.

Both the society and the state recognized their diversity and are enjoying the diversified identities. These religious institutions are both cements and stones in building the values, principles and social norms that helped the nation-building process and societal values. These religious institutions have their own finger prints in shaping the national values of Ethiopia and in creating strong, valued and respected state.

Ethiopia is a diversified country culturally, politically, religiously and ethnically. Everyone knows respects, protects and honored these identities in Ethiopia. As a heterogeneous country, the diversified society religiously, ethnically and linguistically developed the real culture of tolerance and harmonious coexistence since the early ages of its existence. The culture of tolerance, harmonious consistence and peaceful neighborhood that driven from the real commands of religious instructions are undeniable and inviolable within the Ethiopian society.

Recognized its diversity, Ethiopia under its constitution clearly declares freedom of religion and guarantee to practice religious activities without any intervention from the government or from any other actors. It is legally, morally

and ideally prohibited to disturb any religious institution or the followers of any religion in Ethiopia. Religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence is a both a societal norm.

Though this is the reality on the ground that makes Ethiopia among the world exemplary states that provide religious equality to its citizens and harmoniously live its religious followers, not only today but also since the ancient period, conflict entrepreneurs tried to use this diversity as a means to create violence in the country in different periods. The internal and external actors with different intentions behind it, tried to disturb the peaceful coexistence of Ethiopian religions and their followers.

The conflict entrepreneurs never achieved their target and no conspiracy disturbed the harmonious coexistence of Ethiopian religions. Ethiopians enjoys the diversity for thousands of years. No conspiracy, spreading of emotional hatreds, sensitive discourses has no power to disturb the thousands years peaceful coexistence of Ethiopian religions and followers of these respected and loved religions.

The societal norms and religious beliefs of Ethiopian society allow religious based conflicts and hatreds. Ethiopian religious institutions and their followers are not suitable to use them as a means to create conflict or to disturb their peaceful country. Ethiopians never

allow any actor to use them or their respected and loved religions to achieve any group or individual interests. Everyone must know this and the ill investment to disturb the peaceful coexistence of Ethiopians is unachievable.

There is no room for conflict entrepreneurs in Ethiopian religious institutions. Ethiopian religious followers are not ready to emotionally respond to intentional conflict fabrics by political and conflict entrepreneurs. There are signs here and there to destabilize Ethiopia's internal peace and stability by investing to create tensions and conflicts among religious institutions, but it never become successful. It is dead on arrival!

I want to tell the actors behind these tensions to divert their ill intention and to invest on other businesses. You have no place in Ethiopian religious institutions. There is room for violence, hatred and conflict but for love, peaceful coexistence, tolerance, respect and supporting each other among Ethiopian religions and religious followers. No one allows you to practice any evil conspiracy by investing in spreading emotional and sensitive discourses in Ethiopian religious institutions!

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

News

#NoMore...

techniques. They are trying to stop the campaign considering it as dangerous.

As to him, the expansion of #NoMore and other movements have forced them to worry. It should be continued in an organized and strengthened manner mobilizing global communities particularly Africans and friends. “The key battleground states during election in the U.S. have doubts about their re-election. Due to this, they fear it, but we can strategically bargaining.”

Donor groups and others have fabricated and spread fake news to control the Horn region and they are making the people think they couldn't live without aid.

The Horn of Africa became one of the most strategically important regions in the world after the opening of the Suez Canal Egypt as it has reduced the distance of over 9,200 kilometers transportations. Due to this, the Horn became an important strategic region for the economic, political and strategy of Western states. It also has big resources. They are so eager to control the region.

Mohamed pointed out that unexpectedly, Ethiopia and Eritrea have started a new beginning in the Horn. New Horn of Africa working to be the center of cooperation in military, economy, social, political and other issues. In 2018, Ethiopia and Eritrea had agreed to work together solving their differences peacefully. The agreement of both has shocked them.

“As TPLF was the agent of western countries, they were supporting it via humanitarian, weapon, false information or propaganda and others. In my point of view, TPLF would start the third round of aggression. The government should be prepared for this to defend the country and its people.”

Ethiopians wouldn't negotiate and live with the TPLF group. The priority should be given to dismantle the faction and this will enable to strengthen and sustain peace and stability in the new Horn of Africa, he emphasized.



Image credit: Jemal Countess - used with permission

Despite west continuous misinformation, Tigrayans fleeing TPLF

BY MULATU BELACHEW

ADDIS ABABA - The Director of the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Canada and a Senior researcher, Ann Fitzgerald has said that western media are still casting TPLF insurgency in role of plucky “heroes” against a sinister Ethiopian state though Tigrayan themselves are fleeing their home state for nearby Amhara and Afar states.

In her recent commentary blog posted on Canadian Global Affairs Institute, she has stated that Tigrayans are fleeing the TPLF but, their opinions have been ignored within today's most misunderstood war.

“... [] Americans and Europeans barely know about, in Ethiopia. And what they're told by much of the mainstream media fails to reflect reality on the ground. *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* and *CNN* have often

cast the Marxist Leninist Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) insurgency in the role of plucky “heroes” against a sinister Ethiopian state, portraying Tigrayans as a persecuted minority “blockaded” and “sieged” by federal forces.”

People fleeing Tigray have horror stories to tell about their so-called TPLF liberators... [] speaks volumes about the greater truth ignored by most west media, she stated.

According to her, TPLF officials based in both Washington and Geneva have been speaking for Tigrayans but hardly ever letting journalists and others speak with Tigrayans away from TPLF intelligence operatives. She added: “Thousands are now fleeing to the relative safety of Amhara and Afar states.”

“It is reasonable to ask why they would do this if the Amhara are allegedly their most

dreaded enemy. It turns out that they have the most to fear from the TPLF itself,” she opined.

As to her, Twitter is being employed for western indignation over Tigray supposedly being starved by the Ethiopian government.

Describing about the TPLF administration in Tigray, she has narrated that “many Tigrayan IDPs have been interviewed and said that only small amount of aid sent to Tigray has ever been made available by TPLF authorities to ordinary people—going first only to those families who contributed fighters to TPLF under a “one fighter per family” TPLF policy”.

U.S. and European policy makers would do well to consult Tigrayans directly in the camps rather than rely on the TPLF leadership and their paid lobbyists in Washington and Geneva, she remarked.

U.S. gives...

the State Department announced.

Lately, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen has had a discussion with World Food Program Country Representative to Ethiopia.

During the discussion with WFP Country Representative Claude Jibidar, has said that the federal government is exerting efforts to support the more than 20 million Ethiopians who have been affected by conflict and drought, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In related news, Government

Communication Service Minister, Legesse Tulu has also said that the government is working hand in hand with international and domestic humanitarian organizations to rescue war affected communities.

Humanitarian supply to Tigray has been continued with no any restriction even though TPLF is still hindering the safety of transportation to Tigray via Afar routes.

Ove 36.5million Birr worth medical supplies have been delivered by the Ministry of Health and its partners to Tigray since the latest truce declared.

Adding, 1 metric ton of medical tools have also been delivered by the World Health Organization. UNICEF, World Vision, International Medical Corps and UNHCR have also supported 50 metric tons of medical aid. Now, we are discussing to back Ayder Hospital in reference with its request sent to the federal government, Legesse said.

Following the humanitarian truce declaration by the federal government, 135 food aid-loaded trucks and 10 gas tankers have entered Mekelle, according to him.

Terrorist TPLF...

aid since June 2021. He added that the humanitarian aid which is being sent to Tigray by trucks and plane is not being distributed to the needy.

He, therefore, said that a large number of ethnic-Tigray people are fleeing to Amhara and Afar states, he said adding that the people of the aforesaid states have been showing their friendliness to their brothers

and sisters from Tigray.

He also opined that the TPLF has never been concerned about the people of Tigray since its foundation.

As to him, the group is now getting ready itself for another destructive war, and forcing youths to join the group and threatening their parents.

He further stated that the people of Tigray are no longer accepting the TPLF's belligerence as they are always urging the group in various discussion forums for a peaceful solution to the problem.

According to Ataklti, a large number of youths who took part in the war were died and their parents are now demanding their whereabouts on daily basis.

Opinion

Notes from War torn Ethiopia: Crimes of the Tigray People's Liberation Front

BAR Contributing Editor Ann Garrison reports from Ethiopia.

I'm writing from Ethiopia, where the war that began in November 2020 continues, with the US backing their former puppet, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), who ruled Ethiopia with an iron fist from 1991 to 2018, when they were finally overthrown by a popular uprising.

The TPLF started the war by attacking the national army's five Northern Command bases in Tigray on November 3rd and 4th, 2020, but the West's dominant state and corporate press narrative quickly became that Prime Minister Abiy had started the war by sending troops into Tigray, alleging the attack as his excuse. This was one of many early indicators that the US, the NATO nations, and their press were backing the TPLF.

I've been here for eleven days. For most of this time I've been traveling with American photojournalist Jemal Countess, who went home yesterday, and Ethiopian American multimedia producer Betty Sheba Tekeste. These are my observations about the first leg of our trip.

Lalibela: Churches, water, electricity, and a surgical strike

After landing in the capital, Addis Ababa, I flew directly to Lalibela, in Amhara Region, site of the rock-hewn Ethiopian Orthodox churches built by King Lalibela in the 12th century. The churches are a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and tourism is Lalibela's lifeblood. It was hit hard when tourists stopped traveling because of COVID 19 at the end of 2019, then hit even harder when the TPLF occupied the town for five months, from August to December 2021. Tourists were beginning to trickle back in while I was there.

After seizing Lalibela in August 2021, the TPLF negotiated with the clergy at the churches to protect them. Damaging the churches would have been devastating PR for any parties responsible. The national army, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), was also committed to protecting the churches, so almost all of the fighting took place outside the city until the national army prevailed.

A Chinese firm had been paving roads in and out of Lalibela and beyond but the TPLF drove them away, stole all their equipment, and occupied their base. I was praising the Chinese whenever we were riding on the sections of the road they had paved, and cursing the TPLF whenever we were bouncing up and down on gravel roads including all sorts of hazards.

Hotels abound in Lalibela since tourism is the sole industry of any significance. The TPLF looted and damaged many of them,



Photo: Jemal Countess

Internally Displaced Person camp in Ethiopia

leaving others owned by TPLF members or sympathizers in place. We were told that the TPLF had looted the hotel we stayed in, the Mezena, but that the computers and television screens had been replaced.

There was no electricity in Lalibela—unless you had a generator—because, we were told, the TPLF had blown up the substation in Alamata, a town further north, just across the border of Amhara and Tigray Regions. Hadn't they shot their own foot by doing so? Jemal Countess said he thought so, but I wondered whether they hadn't simply disabled the 285-mile high voltage transmission line that the Chinese had constructed to transport electricity from Alamata to Legetafo in central Ethiopia.

The Chinese are building roads and electricity infrastructure, the first steps toward development, while US policymakers sponsor the TPLF, who chased the Chinese off and incapacitated the electricity and thus the plumbing for nine poor towns. Sometimes I think that Samantha Power, Antony Blinken, Susan Rice, and other US policymakers must have secret investments in China since they keep doing their best to push Ethiopia and other African nations into its arms.

We couldn't travel to Alamata because it's under TPLF control, but whatever they had done to the substation or the transmission line, there was no electricity for anyone without a generator in the nine cities south of Alamata on the road that goes in and out of Lalibela. The hotel we stayed in has a generator that they turn on from 7 pm to 10 pm, so that guests can enjoy the evening and charge their electronic devices. They only do so, however, if there are enough guests to justify the fuel expense, so we were lucky that a dozen or so Spanish tourists arrived

just as we did.

Because there was no electricity in Lalibela, there was no plumbing—again, unless you had a generator. Our hotel managed to keep the water flowing during the day, but hot water was available only for a few hours at night while the generator was also keeping the lights on.

Many families had one spigot in their homes but those were now dry. Instead people lined up at water tanks with jerry cans or carried them to streams even though it's the dry season so the water was very low.

We drove north of Lalibela—on those partially paved, partially gravel roads—to Sekota to see the three IDP camps there. Along the way we were stopped at several checkpoints where national army soldiers asked for our passports. Just past the entrance to Sekota, we passed a college now serving as an area command base for the national army. Jemal said we were near the front line, but we didn't see any fighting.

From there we drove on to three IDP camps populated by Amhara IDPs who had fled their homes very near Amhara Region's northern border with Tigray. One after another told us that the TPLF had taken everything they had until they finally fled for their lives. In the first camp there wasn't nearly enough water or food and people were cooking on open fires inside large tents delivered by the UNHCR, some of which were sheltering a hundred or more people. Some people did have thin mattresses to sleep on. If there were any sanitation facilities besides the open space surrounding the camp we didn't see them.

The second IDP camp was even worse, with hundreds of people all gathered in one tent,

sleeping on the floor without mattresses. Food and water was again in short supply, some people looked desperately thin, and those with food to cook were doing so on open fires where they lived. We talked to one young woman who said she wanted peace, she wanted to go home to whatever was left there, but if she couldn't do that, she wanted to put on a uniform and fight with the national army.

The third camp, on the edge of Sekota, was even worse, with hundreds of people living under the most rudimentary shelters, tarps stretched overhead but without sides. Again, food and water was scarce, and people were cooking on open fires in the same space they lived in, and here, animals mingled with people and it was evident that there were no sanitation facilities.

As much as I hate the pattern of US proxy wars with all the big NGO businesses following in their wake, I couldn't leave such misery without hoping that the UN and NGOs would arrive soon and/or do more for these people. Better yet, the government, but the government has twice declared unilateral ceasefires that the TPLF has not respected, so its resources continue to be drained by the war.

The surgical strike

My last observation about Lalibela and the surrounding region for now is that we went to visit the site of a surgical strike that ended the TPLF occupation. I have to admit that I've never thought such a thing was possible, but the Ethiopian national army hit the hotel taken over by the top TPLF officers with a drone strike that destroyed the hotel and killed the officers without damaging the rest of the community, and that was the end of the occupation.

The site wasn't pretty. There were large bloodstains left where officers had died in pools of blood and the hotel walls were pocked with pellet-sized indentations that suggested the use of anti-personnel weapons. However, this strike ended the occupation and freed the people of Lalibela. And it belied accusations that the national army is just drone bombing indiscriminately.

Ann Garrison is a Black Agenda Report Contributing Editor based in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2014, she received the Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza Democracy and Peace Prize for her reporting on conflict in the African Great Lakes region. She can be reached at [ann\(at\)anngarrison.com](mailto:ann(at)anngarrison.com).

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

Business & Economy

Organic fertilizers: Preferable for affordability, environmentally friendliness

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

To date, apart from the conflicts throughout the world, the concern of getting fertilizers has become one of the most challenging issues for many countries. As the rainy season is about to come, countries like Ethiopia need fertilizer gravely.

In the past three or four years, the price of fertilizers is raised by many folds. Such price hike is challenging import dependent countries' purchasing competence. The present situation shows that only those economically powerful countries can afford the price of fertilizers and provide as per the need of their farmers. Most African countries might be unable to compete in this market as a result of foreign currency deficit.

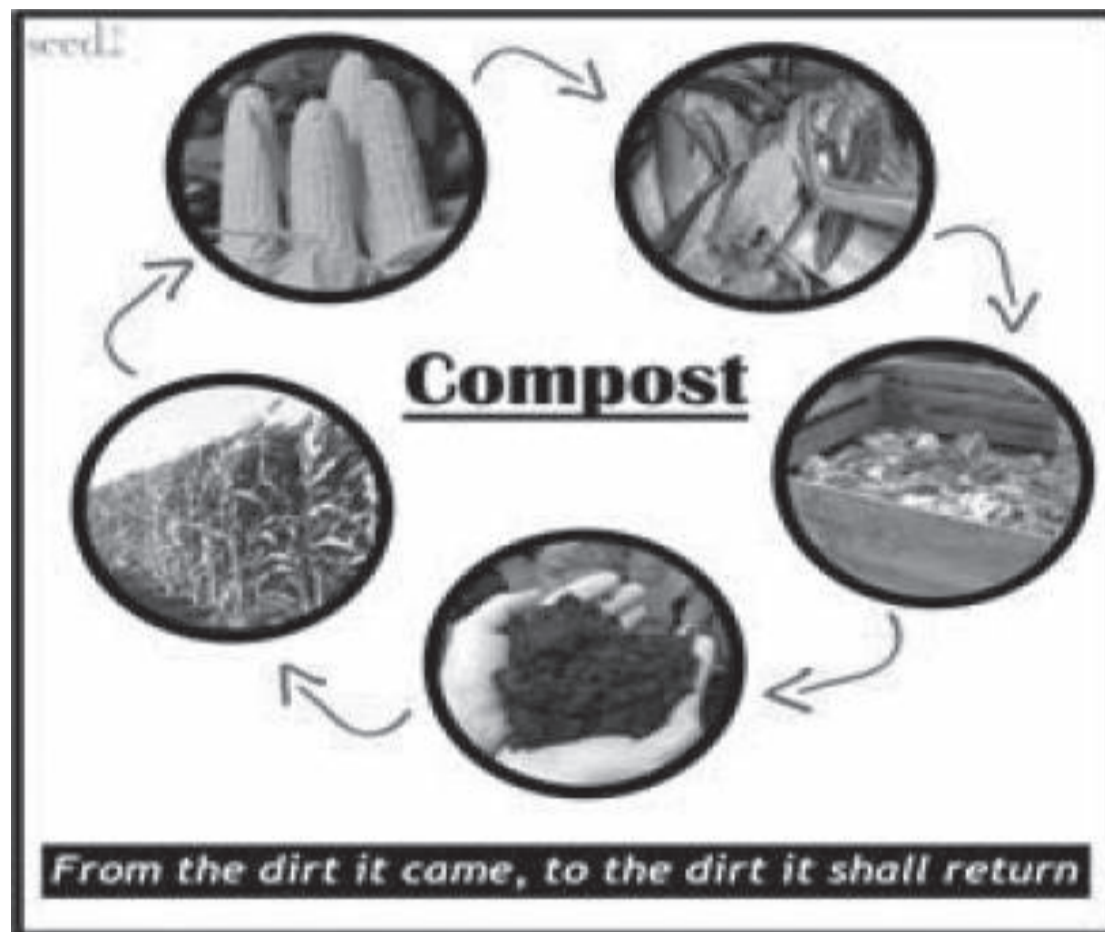
Though there are a number of challenges that the government of Ethiopia is experiencing, it did not hesitate at least to answer the queries of farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture said more than seven million quintals of fertilizer has been distributed to farmers for the 2022 cropping season. Adding it said 112,000 quintals of improved seeds have been provided and 105,000 quintals have been distributed to farmers.

The basic question that the government of Ethiopia should answer is that how long can the country resist the pressure the price hike of fertilizers in the world market? Ethiopia, unless there is an alternative, will no longer be the part of the world market to import fertilizer.

For so many other reasons, the government of Ethiopia should work on ways to replace the import substitutions. Apart from importing inorganic or chemical fertilizer, the government should motivate its citizens to focus on resources at hand.

Every society has its own ways to achieve things. In Ethiopia's long history, farming has been the source of food. Again, Ethiopians have had their own ways to develop organic fertilizers. Rather than depending on imported materials, the government should give a glance for other options.

Having stayed with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Teferi Tadesse, a PhD Candidate in soil science and lecturer at Haramaya University, has disclosed that he is experienced in researching and working on organic fertilizer many years. Teferi adding said that at this moment the health and fertility of soil is at risk for the reason that chemical fertilizer does not help to keep the soil's health and fertility except for a short term. Thus, using chemical fertilizer puts the soil at risk. The only way to preserve the soil healthy and fertile is using organic fertilizer and natural ways. This is the idea



to be underlined. While chemical fertilizers are utilized as a short term solution, organic fertilizers are preferable as lasting solution.

"I believe," Teferi noted, "Our farmers used to apply traditional ways to protect the soil's health and fertility. But at this moment, they are misguided by the promotion of chemical fertilizers, thinking it might help them preserve the health and fertility of their soil just like before and give them long lasting advantages. The sole choice ahead of us is we have to work aggressively on organic fertilizers development."

According to the researcher, there are a number of ways for using the organic fertilizers. For instance, compost is one of the many ways to use on the soil. Byproducts of Bio- gas and agro- forestry are among the alternatives. However, the reality indicates that there is a big gap in using such resource effectively; so that it can be said that the employing level of these organic alternatives is almost none except some traditional practices from the farmers' indigenous knowledge.

In relation to using other alternatives to replace chemical fertilizer, the sky rocketed price of it in the world market can be used as a good opportunity but if used properly. The lecturer mentioned that it is not a big problem because the country is endowed with the biggest resource that can be used as input for organic fertilizer processing. Among these is animals' waste that Ethiopian farmers have used as a fuel for ages.

Intermingled usage of both chemical and organic fertilizers is preferable to harvest

better production. Mixed use of the two fertilizers is also beneficial in other way that it drops off the amount of chemical fertilizer the farmers use in their farm. The mixed use will also protect the health and fertility of the soil at the same time. Above all, it is the best cure to fight back the price hike of fertilizer, the lecturer highlighted.

Based on experience, Teferi mentioned that the government of Ethiopia has allocated billions of Birr for chemical fertilizers importation so far, but it has given less attention for developing organic resources. In the process of organic fertilizer development, Haramaya University takes the lion share. It has achieved numerous results from its projects. Outcome of the project has reached many farmers across the country. Farmers are also got involved in the study so that they will teach others. Furthermore, farmers like the ways the University is doing things. They have also created other centers in different Universities in order to make nearby farmers beneficiary. The University has developed compost called Vermi- compost which the farmers like it a lot. Knowledge transfer among farmers bears tangible outcomes. Currently, the University is working on how to expand the accessibility of the project, the lecturer also pinpointed.

Moreover, Teferi added that products from the organic fertilizer are healthier than those from chemical ones. It is the fact that products from organic resources are more expensive than chemical or processed ones. When the soil is healthy, the plants are also healthy. When a land is assisted by organic supplements, plants are healthy; humans

also secure their health. Even, the environment, the water resources, and also the air will be healthy. Everything is interconnected at this point. "This shows that the skill and the knowledge we need is at our hand."

Therefore, Teferi said the government coupled with the responsible stakeholders should work hand in glove to empower the whole project to address farmers. The outcome could be observed in short period of time. No need to forget that every step should be taken scientifically. It is better to work with role model farmers to aware the rest of the community. Especially, it is essential to educate and aware agriculture professionals effectively. Using daily wastes of animals as precious resources and

changing them in to organic fertilizers ought to take the upper hand in this regard. This will also create job for many.

Though Ethiopia is one of the resourceful countries in livestock, owners of the animals have not gained meaningful benefits from the livestock's wastes. Now is the time to introduce bio gas to the farmers so that they get the necessary supplement from their livestock. They can get the energy they need in their day to day chores. Again, the remnant from the bio gas is the best organic fertilizer for their farms. If there is the will, there is a way. It is the best thing to practice throughout the country. All what needed is commitment.

As to Teferi, at this time, the government and responsible offices like the Ministry of Agriculture have been practicing in different activities to protect soil fertility. Even, a manual for ten years plan on soil fertility has been prepared, and it has been implemented by the regional governments. Teferi said he believes that these actions should be taken in a more advanced implementation ways. Especially, a manual titled 'Soil Health and Fertility Strategy' incorporates many valuable ideas and many experts were participated. "We need to implement things in a more synchronizing way," he suggested.

To wrap up the ideas, the government of Ethiopia has introduced various ways to give response to the goal of food security in the country. Going back to nature becomes the best cure for many obstacles these days. Working on organic fertilizer will bring better solution for the problem the world faces.

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's rich salt potential

BY STAFF REPORTER

Evidence suggests that human beings have been using natural resource available in surrounding areas so as to sustain in life. Salt is one among many resources that is used for seasoning, animal fating, and even as a skin softener. Apart from being used as a seasoning, experts have made various scientific experiments on salt and have gained important findings. For example, some people are using it to prevent discoloration of clothes, treat pains, extinguishing oil spills, identify spoiled eggs, and preserving foods for a long time. Such findings are supported by both culture and scientific studies.

Potato chips, popcorn, pretzels, nuts, popular foods, all have something in common—lots of salt. Many people find a salty taste pleasant, but salt does more than simply add saltiness. It can also enhance sweetness and hide unpleasant metallic or chemical flavors, rounding out the overall balance of flavors and improving the taste of food. Flavor can also be enhanced by adding herbs, spices, and vinegars, but adding salt is a cheap and easy way to make food taste good.

Unfortunately, taking too much salt has been associated with high blood pressure, which can damage the heart and blood vessels and increase the risk of a heart attack and stroke.

There is also debate about the dangers of salt in connection to human health. Scientists suggested that salt is a precious gift that should be carefully treated and used. Though the suggestion is good, eating any type of food without salt has also side effect in health. According to historical sources, it was used as a valuable spice in China, Greece, the Middle East and others countries.

According to Jamal Ahmed, a professor of geology at Semera University, like underground fuel, salt is classified into two: as geothermal energy, and other geological resources. Bar and the lake are the sources of lake. The resources are divided into upper and lower. As it differs in its natural appearance, salt is used for different purposes. In this regard, it is imperative to mention Potash salts that are used for industrial inputs. The other rock salt is found in Dallol, Afar State.

In ancient times, it was called a bar. Bar salt is dry. It is shaped like a square by traditional salt producers. As to the scientists, there is a huge amount of accumulation. Only in the upper part, salt is found when you go down to 180m. Another type of salt is found in lakes. It is produced through evaporation.



Even though it has given huge benefit for the people, special concern has not yet given for salt production

The salt left over from the well is used for man-made drilling and extraction with traditional labor. About 95% of the country's salt is sourced from Afdera of Afar state.

Jamal explained the lake in Afdera area is a source of salt. The soil around it is also salty in itself. The surrounding tributaries wash away the area into the main lake and contribute to the salt reserves when it rains. All of these factors make the area salty. According to Jamal, in the current situation, it is unlikely that salt wealth will diminished. The presence of Tributary River reduces the risk. There are about 750 small and large scale producers in Afdera.

Salt producers draw a lot of water out of the lake to produce salt. The lake is more likely to have salt water. The salt water is also found underground. As long as there is a lake feeder river, the source of wealth will continue.

According to Professor Jamal, this salt resource that is included in geology has industrial minerals such as potash, salt, and gypsum. Although he is not sure about the wealth is found in other parts of Ethiopia, he sure about the fact that the presence of salty lake is not the only source of salt. According to sources, the production will take place in the Somali region outside the Afar region. Jamal does not believe that this salt wealth, which is historically important, has been given as a national priority.

He said that even though it has given huge benefit for the people, special concern has not yet given for salt production. In this era of science and technological innovation, salt is produced in Ethiopia in traditional methods.

According to him, Semera University has conducted a survey of salt resources at three major locations in the region, including Afdera. The findings were presented at a forum attended by relevant government officials and stakeholders. They do not think that salt has any economic value.

According to him, salt has never been used as a seasoning. Salt is one of the most widely used chemical industries in the world. Sodaash is a product of salt inputs used by factories, such as soap. Leather factories are

also in dire need of salt. Other parts of the world that is prone to frostbite also use salt as a means of dissolving asphalt. In addition to using this salt resource domestically, it is possible to grow the country's economy by earning foreign exchange as one of the inputs in foreign trade.

The Middle East, in particular, is in dire need of resources. It is possible to benefit from the salt increasing its quality starting from production to marketing phase. Taking this into consideration, Semera University has displayed pilot projects and makes it accessible both for producers and the community in the sector. The university will implement the project with the relevant executive institutions of the region.

According to Jamal's description, salt is important in many areas, but it is a resource almost neglected. It is safe to say that the country as a whole has benefited from the fact that the manufacturing process has not been updated and its benefits have not been properly utilized.

Evidence suggests that salt products for industrial use are purchased in foreign currency and used locally. It is safe to say that the country as a whole has benefited less from the sector as the manufacturing process has not been updated to make it properly utilized. Higher learning institutions have to conduct various researches and bestow findings to policy makers so as to tap the resource at hand. Much is expected from executive bodies of the government in changing findings into tangible results.

Art & Culture

Explicating Before departure

BY ALEM HAILU G/K

Before departure

(poem By Salomeja Neris)

The blackness of the night-bound sea

With lights will go ablaze.

Mists will be cut by songs of dawn

Which herald future days.

The sails before the sturdy wind

Become as strong as steel.

The seagulls seeing off our ship

Like windblown snowflakes reel.

Ah, will I see you soon, my love,

Or will the wait be so long?

Or will the mermaids of the sea

Bewitch you with their song?

A mourning seagull, snowy-white,

Above the waves I'll cry...

The sea will tell me tales until

The light of dawn draws nigh.

The agonizing pain of pining for the beloved could one day get resolved by the reunion of lovers, whom distance and time put asunder. A reunion strikes forgotten and deferred cords. Notice that songs of dawn, songs of birds, are taken as harbingers to the dissipation of darkness by light, or parting by reunion.

Notice that the title 'Before departure' lends the key for decoding the poem. The whole of the first stanza, which seems to talk about darkness and the coming of dawn and hence the dissipation of darkness by rays of light, is implicitly and metaphorically relating about vested hope in the future and a reunion with somebody terribly missed.

Hence, the duplicity of meaning the poem exhibits renders it a touch of refinement. The poetical extracts that conjure up a sad image or the images and metaphoric expressions with which the poet with word alacrity shows a moment of parting and sorrow are: Departure (the title), seeing off, blackness, the night-bound sea, mists, sturdy wind, no light, wait, strong, black, abyss, cracked, dead, tempest, bending, breaking, mourning, wave, cry.

Notice also that the extracts jointly establish a minor theme of misery that attends separation. They show the chilliness of parting, which grows unbearable as time advances. Observably, the narrator is a member of the fair sex for she refers to herself as a seagull, a bird, a symbol for woman. Add to that a bird snow white, it



bars a room for doubt.

The opposition of imageries are between seagulls and mermaids; night and light, departure and reunion. The last two lines in the second stanza talking about seagulls show the persona's acquaintances were in attendance at the farewell party. The imageries of optimism With lights will go ablaze, songs of dawn, herald future days and light of dawn draws nigh underline the narrator's hope of reunion.

Together with their matching meaning, the word images in this set form a minor theme on the hope of a reunion. An additional theme which is a tributary to the central one is the whole of the 4th stanza comprising the imageries (black abyss, dead, tempest, bending & rampant, overhead) show perseverance subjected to various tests. It shows, contrary to the passage of time, the loneliness and helplessness of parting become heavy. The word wait and the simile strong as steel amplify the perseverance of the persona. The phrases: Will the mermaids of the sea & bewitch you with their song? (Both on the 3rd stanza) and also the ones on one of the closing lines: The sea will tell me tales, Above the waves I will cry, a mourning seagull show the chilliness of parting becomes all the more unbearable. It becomes all the more unbearable especially when the doubt that the departed love partner could get swept away lured into the vortex

of passion's wind assails the one seeing off the departing partner.

Keeping tuned to rumors and simply looking forward to the arrival of a terribly missed partner, the persona can but wait for what fate unfolds. Mermaids are imaginary creatures of the sea fabled to have a woman's head and upper body as well as a fish's tail. Why the metaphor seagull is chosen maybe because of its whiteness as a dove, a sign of innocence, the other seagulls, suggests acquaintances, who accompany the lover that sees off her beloved. Another figure of association is between birds of different making, mermaids, indirectly mentioned as capable of luring and enmeshing in their tentacles the beloved's lover. Speculating mermaids could lure away her lover the persona depicts her, anxieties, melancholic mood and deplorable situation. From her tone it is easy to figure out the persona is smote by anguish and jealousy, though she expresses it indirectly. Here mermaids serve as a metaphor for women of other brand or bad reputation potent of seduction. But the persona metaphorically expresses herself and her acquaintances with seagulls, snowy-white. The two analogies are meant to show her chastity and faithfulness in contrast to those members of the womenfolk indirectly mentioned capable of seducing her lover. It is easy to discern from this, the persona suspects her lover of yielding to the temptation of infamous women. The

persona shows an attitude of jealousy. It is a paradox eagerly awaiting a reunion with a lover, suspected of some liberties. The two question marks, on the third stanza, meant to give emphasis, further show the persona is assailed by the doubt of losing her lover to others.

The tension that result from thematic opposition in the poem is the coming back or the leaving for good of the beloved, hope and hopelessness, chastity and infidelity. The tension produced by opposition of imageries also adds to the complexity and refinement of the poem. The binary opposition is parting and reunion. The rhyme and rhythm, the perfect ordering of the words in the poem together create a special path towards the organic unity of the poem. For clarity's sake let us enumerate some of the paths; blackness, songs, days, lights, abyss, fires, waves, tales; tempest, rampant; steel, reel; long, song; cracked, dead; cry, nigh; The tributary themes that contribute to the central theme are: a rosy future of reunion, a hopelessness that springs from distance and time as well as, temptation, perseverance, unfaithfulness and chastity. The figurative speeches below supply the proof. Blackness, night bound sea, mist, No light above the blue abyss, the tempest, All fires have cracked dead, A mourning seagull, snowy-white and above the waves I will cry.

Society

The miracles of holiday

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

Early this week, Ethiopian Christians have concluded their long fasting season of lent and began celebrating the Easter holiday week. And likewise, Muslims are wrapping up next week the Ramadan fast to celebrate *Eid al-Fitr*. Regardless of their economic condition and their wallet thickness, Ethiopians celebrate their holidays with devotion as best they can. On holidays, they dress better, eat better, rejuvenate their spirit, strengthen their social bond, and try their best to share their holiday happiness with their neighbors and even strangers.

About two decades ago, Getachew and I were eligible bachelors, next-door neighbors, and working at the same factory in the middle of nowhere in a remote corner of the Tigray region. Despite being thousands of kilometers away from home, we have never felt homesick during major holidays like Easter. We were rather busy keeping up with our tight schedules of invitations for feasts starting from our landlady, Emama Abrehet. One could be alone but could never feel lonely on Ethiopian holidays unless he wants to. That is one of the miracles of Ethiopian holidays.

Emama Abrehet hears a little Amharic; and we hear a little Tigrigna. That was just enough for us to communicate. That was when I realized how similar the two languages are. But her granddaughter, Marta, who was in her late teens, speaks fluent Amharic. At our landlady's home, on holidays like Easter, we enjoy the exquisite taste of mouth-watering *Injera* foods and bread followed by a special *Tella* [traditional beer], its recipe seems to be a secret of Tigrayan ladies. When they describe the superb quality of the *tella*, they say it is as clear as a chicken's eye. But beyond its appearance, it is its taste that should have gained more praise and acclamation.

Actually, *Tella* was not a luxury treat we enjoyed only on holidays like Easter. It was rather part of our weekdays evening routine to sip a few glasses of *Tella* to cool our body off, which seared in the vapor-filled factory building under the desert-like daytime weather.

I won't forget the courtesy of the hosts and customers of the village pubs. They usually rise to greet guests and elders who had just entered the pub and could even give up their comfortable seats for them. They would crack a small talk to encourage the newcomers to join the '*Tella* talk'. When I reminisce about the civility and the compassion of the people in Tigray I encountered in those days, I often wonder how such an uncivilized and cruel group of thugs called TPLF originated from that part of the country. My quest for an answer has brought me to one conclusion - the diabolical and racist ideology and deeds of TPLF can never represent the cultural norms and values of the Tigray people.



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lainties of the two most
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and try their best to do
their religious duties.**

Though we enjoyed attending the conversations inside the pub, Getachew and I usually prefer to sit outside to enjoy the view of the star-studded sky and the faint breath of the wind. There, we spend an hour or two discussing and debating our passion-the current affairs news. At that time hottest world news topic was the outbreak of the Iraq War [Americans led a war that decimated Iraq], and Ethiopia was in the firm grip of the TPLF dictatorship and a devastating drought that threatened the life of over 13 million citizens.

When the clock ticks 9.30 pm, it is time for Getachew and me to leave the pub and hit

the road back home. Being a management pro and more time conscious, it is usually Getachew who declares the adjournment of our inn session until the next night. He would suddenly spring to his feet, glancing at his watch, and used to say this: "Let us go home and fall like the Derg, and We will rise like Jesus Christ in the morning."

The resurrection of Jesus mentioned in Getachew's words of simile is the greatest miracle of the Christian world. It is the cause for one of the biggest holidays in the Christian calendar-Easter-a holiday for Christians that celebrate the defeat of death and the hope of salvation.

Close to three-quarters of Ethiopian Christians celebrate Easter week in accordance with the orthodox 'tradition'. When such major holidays like *Meskel*, *Genna* [Christmas], and *Timket*[Epiphany], emphasize dressing to kill, songs and dances, outdoor processions, and bonfires, Easter is a relatively quiet holiday marked by a lot of fasting, praying and of course preparation of specials foods from *Gulban* [boiled mixture of wheat and beans] to *Dorowot*. When Western Christians celebrate Easter with chocolate eggs, Ethiopians celebrate it with chicken.

Regardless of their economic status, almost every Ethiopian Christian household would get at least a chicken, an essential ingredient of the delicacy, *Doro wot*-the food served as the most important meal of the holiday-the late-night dinner near the dawn of the holiday.

In Orthodox Ethiopia, Easter is not a festive event of just a single day. It involves spiritual, social, and logistical undertakings

that could span as long as two weeks, from Hosanna Day [the week before Easter] up to *Dagma Tensae*[The second Easter], a week after Easter day].

It is the time of the year when family members and neighbors circle a big dinner plate, *gebeta*, to share the midnight feast with the uniquely Ethiopian cuisine, *Doro Wot*, breaking the marathon fasting season of lent [*Hudade*] of about 2 months. It is their religious and social duty for people to invite the lonely, the stranger, the destitute, and the priests and monks in churches and monasteries who are unable to prepare the holiday feast for themselves.

Late night dinner signals the beginning of the Easter holiday and is preceded by an evening mass service in churches that went through night until around 3:00 am, the time around which Jesus was believed to have risen from the dead.[of course, the bible does not specifically mention the time of the night Jesus resurrected.]

It is heartwarming to see the age-old culture of sharing food during the holiday has continued to this day despite the growing trend of individualism in our society. It is now common to see self-motivated youth in several towns engage themselves in collecting food and goods donations to give away to the economically disadvantaged section of the society like street dwellers, the elderly who have no caretaker, and the mentally challenged.

During Easter week, in-laws exchange visits to each other's homes carrying homemade bread loaves, liquor bottles, and other presents, cementing the family extension with gestures of love and care, setting aside the family politics at least for the time being. Elders use the peaceful atmosphere of holidays to bring adversaries together to resolve their disputes.

We are in a season of the year where the lainties of the two most popular religions remember their creator more often than usual and try their best to do their religious duties. Last Thursday, I saw a young man, dressed in white from his jellabiya up to his skull cap [taqiyah], standing in front of a dozen street children, who were enthusiastically devouring food from a takeaway plastic bowl each holding in their hands. The children were intermittently throwing words of gratitude at the young man. And on the morning of Good Friday, I saw an old woman and a young man distributing used clothes to an army of beggars, young and old, lining up at a church's main gate. Feeling excitement and a big smile is visible on the beggars' faces-a contented smile on the faces of the poorest of the poor thrown into a dustbin of society-that is another miracle of an Ethiopian holiday.

Law & Politics

Gibberish conspiracies cannot wash away age-old religious co-existences

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is worth mentioning that Ethiopians regardless of differences in religion, political standpoints, racial backgrounds, gender, and other denominations have been residing under the umbrella of Ethiopia with tolerance, respect, and love since time immemorial.

As the various Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia possess their dealings with predicaments, they have been resolving their socio-economic and political conundrums for an extremely long time. Above and beyond, they do not give room for conflicts and hatred except nipping them in the bud whenever problems come into being.

Whenever something that can wash off the social cohesion of the people comes to pass all without exception moves heaven and earth to get to the bottom of the problems putting their differences aside and placing emphasis on harmony.

During its three-decade rule, the terrorist TPLF group embarked on sowing the seeds of hatred among the various Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia and pouring cold water on the strong bond of the people by plotting layers of conspiracies in many instances. In the face of the group's effort to destabilize the country putting a vast number of strategies into effect, Ethiopians left no stone unturned to defend against pressure to maintain the status quo.

Though several conspiracies have been designed to cut off the strong ties of the people along ethnic and religious lines, the people of Ethiopia kept on foiling the hidden agenda of the terrorist TPLF group by standing in unison.

However, over time, on the heels of the popular protest, the terrorist TPLF group was toppled from power willy-nilly and the dream of the group went ashtray at the earliest possible time. Dejectedly, from that moment onwards, the terrorist group set in motion orchestrating collusions in every nook and cranny of the country working in close collaboration with rights groups, activists, and other internal and external actors to come to power and destabilize the country.

As another means to come in to power the terrorist group jumpstarted backing, training, and arming its cliques residing in various parts of the country to halt the democratic transition surfacing nationwide and bringing about conflicts along ethnic and religious lines more than ever before.

It should be borne in mind that the terrorist TPLF group partook in dreadful delinquencies that took place in various parts of the country such as Western Gondar, the destruction of the town of Shashemene, the exterminations of blameless noncombatants in Arsi, Bale, Benishangul, Gura Ferda and other parts of the country.

As the people of Ethiopia know the art of living in peace and harmony and the heinous



deeds of the terrorist TPLF group like the palm of their hand, they threw cold water on the evil endeavors of the terrorist group by residing in harmony forgetting the past and getting back on track.

Even though the terrorist TPLF group spared no effort at different points in time to instigate clashes along with religious beliefs, Ethiopians managed to thwart the infamous mission of the terrorist group at the earliest possible juncture.

Notwithstanding the fact that the incumbent government moved heaven and earth to resolve the predicament in an atmosphere of calm, the terrorist group kept on recruiting, training, bankrolling, arming, sponsoring, and directly executing acts of violence against innocent Ethiopians in various parts of the country with a focus on turning its hidden agenda into a reality.

In the fullness of time, when all the efforts of the terrorist TPLF group went for nothing, the group plunged into plotting other conspiracies to move the country into uncharted territory and back the county into a corner placing the accent on instigating religious violence.

Lately, something unexpected that broke the hearts and minds of everyone happened in Gondar on the grounds that Muslims and Christians have co-existed peacefully in the area remote ages. There was a reported violence in the town incited by some extremists who were later apprehended by law enforcers. Using the problem as an opportunity, some anti-elements have been making an effort to add fuel to the flames instead of pulling out all the stops to solve the problem and moving the country into uncharted territory.

Gondar's coexistence was exemplary of other religions in many parts of the country. However, as Ethiopians know the nuts and bolts of what the anti-peace elements have been doing behind closed curtains, they have been foiling their hidden agenda.

In his recent social media message, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed urged Ethiopians not to try to aggravate the existing problems in the country, but condemn the perpetrators

and stand with the victims, according to information obtained from ENA.

"We condemn the perpetrators and stand with the victims, but should not try to aggravate the problem by responding an evil act with another. None of us will benefit from havoc in Ethiopia, but from peace," the premier twitted.

Ethiopians as a people have embraced their differences and lived together for many generations, Abiy noted.

He added that "tolerance is one of the most important factors in our commonality."

Ethiopians, as a nation, must not therefore allow those who want the destruction of their country; and refrain from being their agents.

He also strongly underlined that any attempt to destroy anybody in Ethiopia is against all of us Ethiopians.

Abiy finally urged Ethiopians to "seek the minds of the discerning peoples in our society and work to bring them closer instead of highlighting differences. Because the humanity we share compels us to do this."

The Inter Religious Council of Ethiopia (IRCE) has also condemned the recent killings of civilians by some extremist and anti-peace elements in Gondar town of the Amhara State and vowed to promote and maintain the longstanding religious co-existence.

In a press briefing he gave here on Thursday, the IRCE Secretary General Tiguan Kesis Tagay Tadele said the incident that happened in Gondar is against Ethiopians much-cherished peaceful coexistence, societal ethics and moral value and it also contravenes the teachings of any religion.

Regardless of religious and ethnic differences, the public should work hand and glove with the government to nullify the efforts of some groups working to realize their political motives at the expense of innocent people and damaging property.

As to him, the destructive act of these forces is unacceptable as they are not only attempting to impose their will on the public violently and to obstruct the peace, but also disturb the peace of the country. All actors including religious fathers, the federal and Amhara state officials and the community should work in unison to fight those anti-peace elements which have been working to disrupt the peace of the country. "It is evident that they are a group of people who want to undermine the peaceful relations between the two religions."

Noting there have been attempts by some

individuals and groups to fuel the unrest, the secretary general advised them to refrain from such kinds of acts which otherwise further exacerbate the situation and result in more destruction. "The incident was carried out by some interest groups who are working to present the country as a place of religious strife and disrupt the peaceful balance that has existed between religions. Any religion has never been a source of conflict and disagreement; rather it is a source of harmony and those groups can not represent any religion or ethnicity."

The federal and state governments alongside with security forces, religious leaders, elders and the youth should make active involvement to bring individuals who took part in crime and expand the conflict to justice.

"Ethiopian Christians and Muslims had built and preserved a culture of tolerance and peaceful co-existence for millennia and the tolerance between all religions needs to be strengthened more than ever. Individuals have been killed, resources were looted by unknown extremist groups and the council expressed sympathy over the passing of the individuals, urging the government to apprehend the perpetrators and hold them accountable," Tagay emphasized.

Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council has appealed to Federal and local government officials to take swift measure in response to the "extremists' attack" against the civilians in Gondar city earlier this week.

Local as well as the federal government should proactively engage in averting such incidents, said Council's President Mufti Haji Oumer Idris in a press conference held on Thursday.

Local administrators, zonal and regional officials should take responsibility to rescue civilians during attacks.

"As we've heard, civilians have been killed. Mosques and assets of the Muslim community have also been burnt down. I would like to firmly urge all government officials working from Kebele to the Prime Minister to respond to the issue as practically and promptly possible," he remarked.

He further elaborated that as Muslims and Christians have long rooted relationship, the existing problem in Gonder and its environs is not Ethiopia's indigenous value.

"We have a history of togetherness. But, the growing extremism across the country is becoming mind boggling issue. Within the last few years, we have seen that a number of mosques and churches have been burnt down by attacks. No one can win in such way; instead ruined together," he added.

He has also conveyed his fatherhood message to all Ethiopians to be collaborative in fighting against attackers who are using fake religious cards.

"Our organized committee will investigate the total human and property damage and reveal the findings based on facts," he said.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

“Get off my street!”

About a year or so back this friend of mine was part of a group dispatched to ask for the hand of someone's daughter for one of his young relatives who decided not to wait any longer to tie the knot. Like is the case during such 'missions' (they're missions, aren't they?) all of them were impeccably dressed suit, tie and all that Sunday as they've every plan to impress their hosts. And yes, they were clean-shaven too, if only not to give away their little secrets; the four of them, under the pretext of discussing what to say and not to say have been and about the previous night so late the wives must have faced 'the opposite' wall the whole night; just speculating! Once the pass through the gates of the compound and were approaching the front gates of the small villa someone comes rushing out of the house as if a whole colony of baboons were after him.

The group may have thought the girl's family was so sager to meet them the man couldn't just sit down wait for them to come into the living room. Had they though as such they were in for the surprise they least expect. It looked as if two FIFA World Cups have come and gone since he last smiled. The man says, "Return in two weeks' time." No greeting, no nothing just that. And the way he said it, so my friend tells us was anything but friendly. He didn't even have the decency to say address them as they should have been treating them like a troublesome group of village urchins. The group, all of them family men wives, kids and all that were genuinely offended. They weren't even offered some thirst-quenching water!

Though theirs was far from being a group of the blessed and cultured, they just leave. I mean despite being in their prime they sometimes could act like the Tyson fellow who recently punched a plane passenger sitting behind him; even in his fifties those fists of him seem to crave for the next chin to land on. Anyway,

after the group leaves, they later learned the guy who literally shooed them away was the girl's uncle known within family circles for his primitively conservative and largely unsocial behavior. The girl apologizes to her Romeo that she should have warned them earlier.

The group returns two weeks later to face a replay of the original scenario. The same uncle tells them to return in another two weeks. This time one among the group explodes with something like; "What do you think we are, beggars? We're here respecting the family and tradition. Do you think...?" He was so angry he had to be restrained by his comrades. I told theirs wasn't anything close to a blessed group when push comes to shove! The uncle meanwhile was unmoved; he goes back into the house without as much of a gesture let alone words.

Now the story was that there was some disagreement among family members as to whom their kid should marry. The uncle and her dad had someone else in mind so they say; You know one of those guys who seems to have hit the 'gold road' quit early. (Sorry to say it but it's disgusting that some parents these days seem to commercialize their children's future!) Mom and the other relatives think it was for the girl to decide. Well, he close family and friends would have said, fortunately that was what happened; a few months later the young couple let it be known they were married in a private ceremony.

Of course, the unwritten rule was that when such a group goes to the girl's parents' house for the first time they are invited in; and after some refreshments and small talk they're told to return into weeks' time; no offense meant as this has nothing to do with indecision or even rejection. The family wasn't give away

their 'little girl' that easily. Anyone seeking her hand had to work for it!

Look, though some think of such a tradition as being fatally flawed for this age one can't deny it has its own drama. The girl's family poses all kinds of questions about the groom-in-waiting. You know, things like whether he was educated, where he works, if he has his own house, if he makes enough to support a family, if he drinks or smokes and things like that.

"Does he drink?"

"Drink! No, no! He never takes as much as a sip or two of alcohol." Well, one can take that either as an unpardonable sin or an innocent disinformation. The guy drinks like a fish! His bride to-be has warned him over and again that she was not going to live with him if he doesn't stop drinking. But of course as is the case with many such cases she mellows and vows, "You'll see how I'm going to turn him around once we get married." Many a pretty girl has fallen on the wayside thinking she could actually do that! Few, if any, succeed. Anyways once they are provided with the mini-bio of the guy the girl's family give their consent! Isn't that nice?

But things are changing fast, aren't they? In recent years we've seen stories of young Casanovas proposing in the middle of busy streets, at pool sides, at events which have nothing to do with marriage. Especially, as if to give things a touch or two of Hollywood most brides couples happen to be in the show business. I've even seen a Facebook post where some young man proposed amidst the chaos of some nightclub. (Was it Britney Spears who 'married' at the beginning of the night and divorced before by daybreak? that lady really means business!) Anyways, who is anyone to say proposing in busy streets wasn't the right way of asking for the hand

of pretty girls! But then the funny thing is after the theatrics which mostly are caught on camera and shared on the social media, and after million-Birr wedding ceremonies you know what happens... they split! Yes, they say goodbye a few months or a couple of years into the marriage.

"You remember that actress who married with such pomp and color?"

"Of course I do."

"So how is their marriage doing?"

"What marriage? They divorced a few months later."

Such things have become so common the "Oh no!!" "You don't say!" conversation-stoppers have become things of the past. If you asked some young soul, "How did you ever think of proposing in the middle of the street?" he'd probably say,

"I wanted to be different."

Really! Yes, really. That is what's behind at times bizarre marriage proposals. Most of us want to be different, to steal the show, toe in the spotlight any way we can.

I could imagine frustrated drivers cursing and fuming, "You want to propose to her, go do it somewhere else you, you *&^%! (You wouldn't want anyone to call you that!) Get off my street!" In fact, though you wish all the street marriage proposal drama turned into long and love-filled relationships I don't think it is fair to obstruct the flow of traffic and cause all sorts of problems to hundreds of drivers and the passengers. (The term 'passengers' unless it is interpreted otherwise, is meant to put the likes of me into the picture! Well, I told you; everyone wants to steal the show!)

The curse of 'THE PAST!'

I don't know what this bizarre things are happening with such frequency! What the hell is going with us in this corner of the world? What is the point of creating mountains out of molehills as if we didn't enough more than our share of problems to worry about? Just days back I heard of a tight group of friends well into their prime almost going for each other's throats over an issue which is refusing to let us go; The Past! Believe me, these days 'The Past' is no more about memories, nostalgia, missed opportunities and the like. It's about CONFLICT! Yes, I too am finding it difficult to believe I am using that word. Conflict; as if we don't have enough and crave for more. It might sound too broad for comfort but when the past is discussed these days it all comes down to two rather senseless conclusions, "The past is all cursed!" and "The past is all blessed!" And we can add that anyone who thinks in such distinct black and white terms should go see their psychiatrists, or seek the pacifying words of their Godfathers or religious mentors.

This group was talking about the insanely high cost of living. Aren't we all doing that? Aren't we talking like hell and working ourselves to frenzy about the cost of living? This is not about being 'rational' (what!) or anything like that. The 'rational' red line has been surpassed by miles and miles. "Look, the entire world is reeling with high inflation rates and there is nothing new about what's happening here. You people just know nothing but complain." Minus the derogatory "you people..." jab those are nice words, though simplistic to the point of being shockingly ignorant. Yes, citizens who are aware there something called inflation where your hundred birr gets you no more than fifty Birr worth of merchandise could have an idea or two of what to expect. Even people totally ignorant of the 'inflation' economic jargon could understand things in their own way. A house who could hardly read and write tells you, "The birr is so weak these days I couldn't fill a small plastic bag for a hundred birr!" they'd tell you. What more does anyone want!

But then when people talk about the fifteen thousand Birr sheep, the thousand and five hundred Birr chicken, the thousand Birr kilo of butter they know that this is not about inflation, Ukraine or whatever. It's about raw, ugly greed! The more you talk about it the angrier it makes you. How did I get into all this? Oh yes, that group and the storm they created when talking about the past.

It so happened they were talking specifically about oxen which cost as much as two hundred thousand Birr a head. Then a couple of them go into reverse gear and start talking about all those gone good days. Everything was rosy! Compressed into the fewest words possible that actually was what they were saying, everything of the past wasn't only gold-plated but golden too. I was told even those bloodiest events in the history of not only this country but of humanity too, were painted as events not newsworthy. (I mean at the risk of being suspected of taking sides I've to say you can't have nice words for barbarity which cost the lives of tens of thousands of

people on all sides, many of them among the brightest minds the country! But then this 'total support', 'total rejection' mentality is costing us in ways we can only imagine!) My friend says these guys paid such glowing tribute to the military rulers (The Derg) any outsider eavesdropping on the conversation would have wondered, "If that was the case why the hell did, they chase them all the way to the courts and to Harare?"

Others painted that era as some kind of God's curse on all of humanity painting such a grim picture that there didn't seem to be the smallest spec of a good thing done in all those years. In fact, the conversation which by this time has turned into a shouting match slid back to the days of the kings and emperors turning the mild storms into viscous tsunamis.

As I told you the conversation and arguments descended into the foulest of name-calling among men with kids in their late teens and early twenties. Unless we rid ourselves off 'the curse of the past' I don't see how we seriously could look into the future.



**Wishes you
a happy
1443rd Eid
al-Fitr !!!**



Pepsi Cola

International

Africa & regional leaders pay tribute to Kibaki as tolerant, visionary man

At the state funeral and requiem mass at the Nyayo National Stadium in Nairobi on Friday, visiting leaders described him as a great statesman who helped stabilise both his country and the region. African leaders have paid their tributes to Kenya's former president Mwai Kibaki who will be buried this Saturday.

'Great statesman'

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said South Africans admired Kibaki's leadership qualities, equating it to the reforms under Nelson Mandela after apartheid.

The body of former President Mwai Kibaki will this morning be escorted from Lee Funeral Home to State House where a guard of honour will be mounted one last time in the place he called home for 10 years.

At 9am, the procession will depart State House for Nyayo National Stadium, where the state funeral will be held in his honour ahead of burial at his Othaya home tomorrow.

The six-hour send-off programme for Kenya's third President will be a largely military affair.



Mwai Kibaki's body arrives at Nyayo Stadium, Nairobi, for the funeral service on April 29, 2022.

Given that Kibaki was Catholic, the Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Philip Anyolo, assisted by Archbishop Martin Kivuva.

Foreign leaders, including South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa are expected to arrive at 10.20am for the ceremony to pay tribute to Kibaki who died last Friday, aged

90.

"We are collectively here to celebrate the life of a great statesman," saying he hoped Kenyans "remember president Kibaki for what he stood for."

"We drew a lot of lessons for the way he led the people of Kenya."

President Ramaphosa, who took over from Thabo Mbeki in 2018, was one of top African political leaders who attended the ceremony. Others were South Sudan's Salva Kiir and Ethiopia's Sahle-Work Zewde.

Source: The East African

In Pictures

Grand spiritual, cultural events held

BY HAFTU GEBREZGABIER



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, received at his office on Friday (April 29) the World Food Program (WFP) Country Representative to Ethiopia, Claude Jibidar, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister appreciated the WFP's continued humanitarian assistance to people affected by manmade and natural disasters in Ethiopia.

He said the federal government is exerting efforts to support the more than 20 million Ethiopians who suffer from conflict and drought.

Given the gravity of the situation, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister stressed the need for expedited emergency relief support to affected Ethiopians from humanitarian partners like WFP.

The two sides also noted the federal government's encouraging efforts in transforming wheat production in Ethiopia, which paves the way for self-sufficiency.

Appreciating the indefinite humanitarian truce, Claude Jibidar said the WFP is accelerating its humanitarian works in all areas affected by the conflict and drought in Ethiopia.

In connection with that, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister requested the WFP to condemn the TPLF's aggressions against adjacent regions, which continued to threaten the encouraging humanitarian works.

The 133rd time in the world and 47th time in Ethiopia, May Day (International Workers' Day) will be celebrating today Sunday, May 1, 2022.



Photo: Tsehay Neguse



Chambalaalla (the Sidama People's New Year) celebrations in Hawassa.



Grand Iftar festive at the Meskel Sqaure

