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## The National Army and their American counterparts have negotiated a military training that will take place in Berbera

20 countries including our neighbor have been invited to the training next month



The National Army welcomed officers from the US CJTF-HOA based in Djibouti to Berbera on Friday and discussed the military training plan that would be held in the country in February. Twenty countries, including the

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### Mu'adin is the new Finance Ministry DG, Keysar is back in the diplomatic saddle

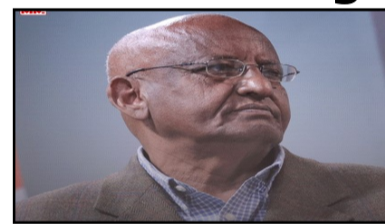


By M.A. Egge

The Head of State H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi has appointed Mr. Mohamed Hussein Osman, popularly known as Mu'adinka, to be the new Director General of the treasury at the Finance Ministry replacing Mohamed Abdi Gurhan

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### Prof. GEES urges the Fledgling of established Democracy and shunning of tribalism.



By M.A. Egge

Veteran respected politician and politician Professor Mohamed Said Gees has underscored the importance of a

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### GUURTI to join concerted efforts of stabilizing Lasanood security

By M.A. Egge

The Speaker of the Senate, the GUURTI, has directed the members to join the concerted efforts underway of bolstering the conciliatory dialogues of achieving lasting peace in



Lasanood.

Hon. Suleiman Adan underpinned the importance of having the Elders to blend in the conciliatory efforts as per the country's tradition in

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### The state declares oil extraction as it reveals Baha-damal site in Salahley as an oil source



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### MPs from Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle Affirm their Allegiance to a united Somaliland

By Guled A. Mahir

Members of the House of Representatives from Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle have confirmed their people loyalty to the cause of a united Somaliland. The MPs and councillors Lasanod, Hudun and



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### NEC wraps up the first phase of the Registration process



By Guled A. Mahir

The Chairman of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) Mr. Musa Hassan Yusuf who held a press briefing in his office in Hargeisa stated the first phase of the registration process had ended

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### Governor Closes meeting to discuss Central Bank 2023-2025 Strategic Plan and 2023 Action Plan



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### 16th jubilee of SAGALJET: an event that shared motivational public praise



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### Top government delegation and Sool traditional leadership fraternity in rapport over bolstering Lasanood security



By M.A. Egge

The delegation led by the interior minister Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed which has been in Lasanood in Sool for the past several days has had a crucial large meeting with the area's

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# The National Army and their American counterparts have negotiated a military training that will take place in Berbera

neighbouring nation of Somalia, will join as part of nation participants in the military training hosted by the Republic of Somaliland: it will take place in areas jointly explored by the National Army and the United States. On January 13, U.S. Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) personnel conducted a site survey visit to the port of Berbera. The visit comes in advance of the U.S.-led multinational military training exercise Justified Accord scheduled for February 2023. Justified Accord is designed to increase multinational cooperation in crisis response and



counterterrorism operations and prepare regional partners for UN and African Union-mandated missions. In addition to the port of Berbera, Justified Accord exercises will take place in Botswana, Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda with

the participation from 20 partner nations, including Somalia. The U.S. military routinely surveys potential operating locations to prepare for contingencies and exercise readiness or adjust force posture as directed.

# NEC wraps up the first phase of the Registration process

Addressing members of the press, he announced that the first phase of the registration process has been completed. He said all polling stations have returned their registration forms and other electoral materials to the electoral body headquarters in Hargeisa. He confirmed that the first phase was scheduled for 15 days from the date of commencement of the national voters registration exercise which started on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Somaliland National Electoral Commission boss said, "The second phase of the voters' registrations is to continue earnestly. The voter registration process was

slated to take 30 days, hence the second phase is due. I call upon all potential voters who haven't been registered to go to the polling stations and take their voters cards and national identification cards as soon as possible." He thanked all electoral staff who have been working across the country for their noble endeavour. The electoral body chief congratulated Somaliland citizens who have registered as voters for their patriotism. The electoral chief reminded Somaliland nationals who had reached the age for acquisition of national identity and voters card to register at the polling centers.

# MPs from Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle Affirm their Allegiance to a united Somaliland



Taleeh converged at Sool regional headquarters office and reiterated their allegiance to Somaliland. The legislators and councilors stated that the anti-Somaliland sentiments were funded by foes of the country with ulterior motives. Addressing a joint press conference in Sool governor's office their spokesman Hon. Ahmed Asowe sent condolences to the bereaved

families and relatives of people who have lost their lives over the years in Lasanood. The MPs released a 15-point memorandum. They urged the people of these three regions to let peace, security and harmonious existence reign supreme. The legislators and councilors affirmed that Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle regions are part and

parcel of the Republic of Somaliland jurisdiction. They thanked the government for taking responsibility of the deceased people. The government of Somaliland announced it will pay for the blood money (Diya) of people who lost their lives in Lasanood. "We unanimously urge the people to avoid any kind of violence and destruction of property in protests. We also ask the security forces not to use live ammunition to quell demonstrations to minimise loss of lives", the leaders stated. They said, "We are against calls by some people for removal of Somaliland Army personnel manning security at these volatile regions." They concurred on the importance of the army in securing the nation's borders from infiltration of Alshabab and other Somaliland enemies with clandestine motives of causing civil strife and fermenting insecurity .

# Governor Closes meeting to discuss Central Bank 2023-2025 Strategic Plan and 2023 Action Plan



By Goth Mohamed Goth The Chairman of the Somaliland Central Bank, Eng. Ali Abdillahi Dahir, presided over the closing of the meeting to prepare the Strategic Plan for the year 2023-2025 and the 2023 action plan of the Somaliland Central Bank. The meeting brought together government officials, economic stakeholders, various scholars, and Central Bank staff. The Director General of the Central Bank, Mukhtar Abdi Qule, said that the Central Bank will launch a Commercial Banking system which is expected to start operations this year, thus the proposed Open Commercial Banking in line with the Central Bank Framework

regulations. The Deputy Chairman of the Central Bank, Mr. Abdurahman Sheikh Hassan, speaking at the event noted that the central bank has young and experienced staff. The Chairman of the Central Bank, Eng. Ali Abdillahi Dahir, said that the plan of the Central Bank in the coming years will be reflected in the performance of the Bank's future leaders. He expressed his gratitude to colleagues across the Bank for their dedication to delivering the Bank's mission. "The plan of the central bank will not be one that we have on paper, but one that guides us and implements everything".

# Top government delegation and Sool traditional leadership fraternity in rapport over bolstering Lasanood security



traditional leadership fraternity in an effort of bolstering security and maintaining peaceful stability. The meeting chaired by the minister brought together Sool region traditional leaders, a cross-section of elders, intellectuals, and academics amongst other eminent personalities converge at the Sool regional headquarters for the consultations. It was likewise attended by several cabinet ministers, military commanders, MPs, and both Sool regional authorities and Lasanood district administration officials whereby extensive rapport took

place to strengthen the general security of the Lasanood and region as a whole. The Minister of Interior Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed was accompanied by the Minister of Information, Culture and Awareness Suleimanan Yusuf Ali Koore, the Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Development Hon. Said Sulub Mohamed, the Minister of Defense Abdiqani Hon. Mohamud Aateye Farid, the Minister of Justice Hon. Suleiman Warsame Guled, Minister of Youth and Sports Hon. Abdirashid Duale Qambi, Minister

of Transport and Road Development Hon. Abdirisq Ibrahim Farah. The Commander of the National Armed Forces Major General Nuh Ismail Tani and his police counterpart Major General Mohamed Aden Saqadi (Dabagale) were also in attendance. Present too were the Governor of Sool Region, Abdikarim Aden Haji Diriye, the Mayor of Lasanood District, MP Ahmed Ali Asowe, several senior government officials and sectional military commanders in the Sool region. They underpinned the imperativeness of working together to strengthen the security of Lasanood town and the whole of Sool region hence in cooperation such that development may be achieved. In general, the city of Lasanood is peaceful and calm with concerted efforts in place to bolster and maintain it

# 16th jubilee of SAGALJET: an event that shared motivational public praise



SAGALJET Company, which is celebrating its 16th jubilee, has been hailed by the Somaliland community and guests of honor for their achievements.

An event was held Friday evening in Hargeisa and attended by the heads of the company and all the employees of the company *Continued on page 3*

## Mu'adinka is the new Finance Ministry DG, Keysar is back in the diplomatic saddle



Ambassador Keyzar Abdillahi Mohamed to be the country's representative to the European Union (EU).

By thus, Mr. Mohamed Mu'adinka has been moved from the National services programme where he served in the same capacity.

The directives were contained in a press circular released by the Presidency on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023 that tersely specified the executive orders on the dismissal, transfer and appointment of the officials.

through a Presidential decree as per Art 90 of the constitution as regards Presidential Executive

Powers. On the same note, the President similarly appointed veteran

## GUURTI to join concerted efforts of stabilizing Lasanood security

achieving peaceful stability.

He at the same time moved for a 15 day recess in order for the MPs of the Upper House of the Parliament to. At the same time, also get involved with mobilizing the populaces to register themselves in large numbers in the exercise which is underway.

It was the 80<sup>th</sup> sessional seating which came after the elders had just

returned from a 45 day break.

The Speaker said that calm has to a large extent returned to the area following protest riots that claimed fatalities. They would bolster another national team led by interior minister Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed and several cabinet members who are already in Lasanood on pacification mission.



## Somaliland- Ethiopia relations: A viable pathway to catapult Horn Africa's economic integration Amb. Awad



peaceful and harmonious setting and called for the shunning of clannish tribalism and the fledgling of democracy as a precursor for progress, such that prosperity may be achieved.

The renowned Prof. Gees gave the sentiments at a national presser whereby he cautioned the media

fraternity against reporting in a manner that is divisive and urged them to stick to progressive and ethical dissemination that is constructive to the good of society. He pointed out malicious and divisive reporting only nurtures anger and enmity hence rendering a nation asunder instead of the required cohesive one.

In the same breath, Prof. Gees called for the shunning of tribalism and clannish tendencies saying that it was detrimental to the larger national aspirations and a bigger picture.

He noted that clan-based issues should be left to be catered for by the customary tenets through the

traditional leaders.

Saying that the nation had transitioned into democracy and many elections have so far been held, the electioneering processes established ought to be bolstered and made to fledge for tangible developmental progress and [prosperity may be achieved.

He appealed to the people to register in numbers so that the nation may aspire for a brighter future in charting their destinies justifiably.

He recalled that the country has come from far, rebuilt itself from ruins and that bickering and fighting should be left to history, hence has no room in the nation's aspirations.

## The state declares oil extraction as it reveals Baha-damal site in Salahley as an oil source

*The prospective oil investigation conducted in the Baha-Damal well establishes the revelation that there is oil in that well, announces Energy Minister Abdillahi*

By M. A. Egge

Somaliland government has now officially announced that there is indeed oil at Baha-damal in the Salahley district and that it would be drilled in due course.

The revelations were made by the energy minister Hon. Abdillahi Farah who disclosed the fact that the results of prospective investigations of the coveted commodity are positively established and that, officially, there was oil to be extracted.

The minister was addressing residents of the area while leading a delegation. He was flanked by his education colleague Hon. Ahmed Mohamed Toorno in a delegation that included Civil Aviation Head Mr.

Omar Sayid Abdillahi, several ministerial DGs and numerous parliamentarians.

They were hilariously welcomed and received by the residents.

"I would like to first reveal the results of the prospective investigations that were carried out at the Baha-Damal oil well site and it is now official that there is indeed oil", said the minister happily.

He noted that the country has been searching for oil since 1956, "and the last one is the company that is with us now, which is responsible for the Bahadamal well". He pointed out that the same company has been prospecting also in the Saraar and Togdeer regions and their surroundings for the past 17 years.

He said that by God's grace, the Salahley one is now viable, hence would be extracted in due course this year.

He said that the efforts have, at last, become a reality.

Hon. Ahmed Mohamed Diriye who also addressed the residents described the fete as a historical moment for the country, and particularly for the area.

He underscored the fact that the commodity to be extracted was a natural resource to be shared nationally.

A lucky strike occurred a couple of months ago when a resident whose land was being drilled for water had oil gash out, and then the specimen was confirmed.

## 16th jubilee of SAGALJET: an event that shared motivational public praise

government officials and other guests all congratulated the employees who won the awards, and the company as a whole since its inception and the achievements it has achieved over the years.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Hon. Shukri H. Ismail Bandare, who spoke at the event, recalled the rebuilding of the country and re-establishment of the government of Somaliland from scratch to where the nation has reached at present and the progress that has been made so far.

Minister Shukri called on the employees of the company and their heads to expand their efforts.

Reporter Abdisalan Hereri, who made a speech, congratulated all the operators who won the awards, and said, "The company has been in existence for 16 years, and we are congratulating them 16 times." Apart from the efforts and history of the company, many speakers described it as an example of change and progress that is worth being put in journals of achievements.

The chairman of Sagal Jet Abdi Yusuf Aar who spoke at the award event said that the company

appreciated its workforce for their diligence.

While talking about the history of the company's work, Chairman Abdi said that SAGAL JET was the first private printing company that started in the country in 2007. In the years 2008 and 2009, however, he said, was difficult for printing companies to find designer professionals in the country.

He revealed not only is he interested in the work improvement of the employees but also has a great desire to improve their welfare, by sharing their joys or sorrows.

This is a rare leadership skill in this part of the world.

He thanked all the employees of Sagal Jet, and especially congratulated them for their awards' achievements.

Chairman Aar similarly raised the best staffer of the whole company in 2022 Zubeir Abdi Ali, and the girl who won in the cleaning and hygiene team Ikraan Mohamed Ahmed.

SAGALJET pens on its website: "Compliments to everyone who won tonight, everyone who attended tonight's event, thank you. Together we will work for the future by Allah's Will.

## Somaliland: United States HoA Joint Task Force Visits Berbera Ahead of Military Exercises



On January 13, U.S. Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) personnel conducted a site survey visit to the port of Berbera. The visit comes in advance of the U.S.-led multinational military training exercise Justified Accord scheduled for February 2023.

Justified Accord is designed to increase multinational cooperation in crisis response and counterterrorism operations and prepare regional partners for UN

and African Union-mandated missions. In addition to the port of Berbera, Justified Accord exercises will take place in Botswana, Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda with the participation from 20 partner nations, including Somalia.

The U.S. military routinely surveys potential operating locations to prepare for contingencies and exercise readiness or adjust force posture as directed.

Source: U.S. Embassy, Mogadishu

## Operation Atalanta, EUTM and EUCAP Somalia-Somaliland mandates extended for 2 years



The Council today renewed the mandates of its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions and operation in the Horn of Africa and Somalia. EUCAP Somalia (the EU civilian capacity building mission), EUTM Somalia (the EU military training mission), and Operation Atalanta (one of the EU's military maritime executive operations) will now run until 31 December 2024.

The decision was taken following the holistic strategic review of the CSDP deployment in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. The aim is to strengthen the EU's response to the changing security context and its role as a maritime security provider. Building on the successes of the fight against piracy off the coast of the Horn of Africa and Somalia, the overall mandate of Operation Atalanta has been consolidated. The operation now has increased capabilities to help implement the UN arms embargo against Somalia, counter drug trafficking, and support the fight against Al-Shabaab and its funding. This will allow the government of Somalia to make further progress. Operation Atalanta also continues its activities to deter, prevent and combat piracy and armed robbery at sea. The geographic range is even extended to the area north of the Red Sea. This will help to ensure freedom of navigation and protect World Food Program vessels and other vulnerable shipping to Somalia. Also, in the spirit of an integrated approach, the EU will be able to better support the building of a broader regional maritime security architecture.

In Somalia, EU CSDP action is being expanded to support the building of Somali security forces and institutions. They should gradually take over the security responsibilities of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), in accordance with the revised Somali Transition Plan. EUCAP Somalia and EUTM Somalia will support the development of Somali capacities and capabilities with strategic advice, guidance and training, along with support for equipment

from the EU-funded European Peace Facility.

EUCAP Somalia will link EU CSDP action on land and sea and will contribute to strengthening Somali maritime law enforcement capabilities at federal and regional level in Somaliland and Puntland. Efforts are also being made to develop a sustainable coast guard function (with Somali ownership). The mission will also assist Somalia in strengthening police capacity, including through the development of the Federal Darwish and the strengthening of Interpol's National Central Office in Mogadishu.

The missions and the operation will cooperate and coordinate their activities with the support of the EU Delegation in Mogadishu. This should strengthen the EU's integrated approach to support the Somali authorities. To reinforce the EU's core values, all activities of the missions and the operation will include aspects of international humanitarian law and human rights, prevent gender-based violence, protect children in armed conflict and advance the women, peace and security agenda .

### Background

Operation Atalanta was launched at the end of 2008 because of the increasing piracy in the western part of the Indian Ocean. Since then, the operation has greatly helped counter piracy and protect World Food Program (WFP) vessels, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), and other vulnerable international vessels. The operation operates within the limits of its mandate and develops options for combating illicit trafficking, an important source of income for criminals and terrorist organizations.

In addition, the operation has monitored fishing activities outside Somali territorial waters and has supported other CSDP missions of the EU and international organizations dedicated to maritime security and capability in the region. Solutions are being worked out to better support the Somali government in this regard with the

cooperation of Interpol.

Finally, Operation Atalanta will continue to cooperate with the like-minded military maritime operation Agenor.

The EU Operational Headquarters is located in Rota (Spain) and the Center for Maritime Security - Horn of Africa (MSCHOA) is located in Brest (France). The Operation Commander is Vice Admiral José María Núñez Torrente (Spanish Navy).

### EUCAP Somalia

EUCAP Somalia started operations as EUCAP Nestor in July 2012 and contributes to the establishment and build-up of maritime civilian law enforcement capacity in Somalia, including Somaliland.

EUCAP Somalia strengthens this capacity by supporting federal and regional authorities in drafting legislation, strengthening the maritime criminal justice chain and providing policy advice to the Ministry of Homeland Security and the police. The mission supports the deployment of coast guard and maritime policing functions in and around key Somali ports, and provides additional assistance for broader police development.

The mission headquarters is located in Mogadishu.

### EUTM Somalia

EUTM Somalia carries out its mandate according to 3 pillars: training, guidance and strategic advice to the Somali National Army. With this latest extension, the mission enters its 8th mandate since its launch in April 2010. Over the years, the EU Training Mission has refocused its tasks to support the internal development of specialized functions such as leadership, command and control, counter-improvised explosive devices , and logistics.

The Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) is responsible at the strategic level for the operational planning and execution of this mission. The Mission Headquarters is located in Mogadishu and the current Mission Force Commander is Brigadier General Roberto Viglietta (Italian Army).

## Amhara forces withdraw from Ethiopia's northern Tigray region

Mohammed Dhaysane

Saturday January 14, 2023

Ethiopia's Amhara regional forces have withdrawn in neighboring war-torn region of Tigray in accordance with the African Union-led peace agreement between the Federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebels, the army said on late Thursday.

The Amhara regional special forces have fought in support of federal troops during the two-year civil in Tigray.

"The Amhara regional special force, which was in a national mission along with the Army has withdrawn from the area, according to the deal," said the Ethiopian National Defense

army.

The withdrawal of the Amhara forces is seen as a key step towards implementing the peace agreement that ended a two year of civil war in Tigray region.

Since the peace agreement was announced, the government said much of the essential services have resumed in Tigray but millions of people in the region are in need humanitarian assistance.

The war between Ethiopian government forces and Tigray rebels erupted in November 2020 after the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) attacked federal army bases stationed in the northern



Force (ENDF) in a statement.

The Federal army said they have conducted lot of activities following the peace agreement that was signed in South Africa and Kenya.

"TPLF has handed over heavy weapons to our defense forces through African Union observers in the first round of Agula camp," the statement added.

Amhara regional special force, who withdrew Thursday, has been on national mission in Shire and the surrounding areas, according to the

region.

Hostilities subsided after the two sides signed agreements in Pretoria and Nairobi in November last year.

The Tigray conflict has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions more since November 2020.

A UN report released late last year placed the number of displaced people at 2.75 million, with some 12.5 million children said to be in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

## Kenya Set to Open Somaliland Office and Five More Foreign Missions Soon

Kenya is set to open seven new foreign missions in the latest reorganization of President William Ruto's government.

According to Executive Order No.1 of 2023 by President Ruto, the seven new missions will be based in Djibouti, Bern, Arusha, Goma, Jakarta and Hargeisa (Somaliland). The planned foreign missions in Arusha, Goma, and Bern will be second in Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Switzerland.

New missions in Djibouti, Indonesia (Jakarta), and Somaliland will be the first for Kenya in the respective countries, according to Foreign Affairs ministry data.

The six new foreign missions will bring the number of Kenyan missions to 66 from 60.

The diplomatic missions will increase Kenya's representation in foreign countries as the government seeks to double down on developing commercial, economic and cultural relations with other nations.

At the same time, the new missions emerge as Kenya increases its interests abroad, including the recent creation of a new State Department for Diaspora Affairs in the renamed Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs.

In other changes effected through the Executive order, the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA), Kenya Pipeline Company, Kenya Railways Corporation, and the Kenya Ports Authority have reverted to their parent ministries. In its case, NTSA had been moved to the Ministry of Interior, with the previous administration attributing cross-cutting functions touching on transport and security for the change.

### READ: Kenya warns UN on Somali flights abuse amid diplomatic tiff

The reorganization had been targeted at helping to establish a seamless and coordinated national transport and logistics network.

The transport ministry did not immediately respond to the U-turn even as it emerged that the move had created confusion resulting in depressed service delivery from the agency.

For their part, KPC, KRC, and KPA had been moved to the National Treasury under the then-established Kenya Transport and Logistics Network (KTLN).

The reorganization had been targeted at helping to establish a seamless and coordinated national transport and logistics network.

By KEPHA MUIRURI  
Business Daily

# It's Time to Get Serious About Eritrea- Michael Rubin

**Almost every U.S. administration pays lip service to Africa, but few sustain attention.**

"Africa's success and prosperity is essential to ensuring a better future for all of us," declared President Joe Biden at last month's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. Africa has many success stories and ready partners—Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Somaliland, and South Africa are all democracies. Biden is less picky. While he signaled at the summit that he would turn a blind eye to corruption and human rights violations, some countries remained beyond the pale. At the top of that list is Eritrea.

## Eritrea's Thirty Years of Failure

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of Eritrea's independence. There was optimism when Eritrea won independence. After years of fighting culminated in the defeat of Ethiopia's Marxist dictatorship, Eritrean leader Isaias Afwerki and Ethiopian interim president Meles Zenawi agreed to a peaceful divorce. Both countries disappointed as their leaders sought to consolidate dictatorship. Zenawi transformed Ethiopia into an authoritarian state, while Isaias preferred a totalitarian model. Today, Freedom House ranks Eritrea lower than even North Korea on its civil liberty index.

Three decades of Isaias' mismanagement have left Eritrea a failure. Eritrean per capita income hovers around \$50 per month. Absent remittances from the many Eritreans who fled to North America, Europe, or the Middle East, Eritrean income would fall by half, below even South Sudan's. Eritrea's capital, Asmara, is among the world's most beautiful cities, and the country sits aside one of its most important waterways. With competent management, Eritrea might have transformed itself into a regional Dubai. Instead, under Isaias, Eritrea has become a modern-day slave state under the guise of mandatory, indefinite conscription.

Eritreans have no freedom of speech and little religious freedom. The Eritrean embassy in Washington's attacks on the United States Holocaust Museum are merely par for the course. The Isaias regime recognizes only four religions—Sunni Islamism, Orthodox Christianity, Roman Catholicism, and evangelical Lutheranism—and it places strict restrictions on even their freedoms. The regime forbids any religious practice among

those conscripted into the military, for example. While Western media and politicians have criticized China for imprisoning Hong Kong cardinal emeritus Joseph Zen, Isaias has done the same in Asmara, only releasing the city's bishop days ago after two months of detention on charges that were never released. Eritrea, however, is not only a human rights tragedy—it's a security threat.

## How Eritrea Destabilizes the Region

It is one thing to condemn your compatriots to misery; it is another thing to spread it. While Biden was willing to rehabilitate Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed, a man responsible for the deliberate starvation of hundreds of thousands of Tigrayans, he ignores that Isaias, as Abiy's partner and mentor, is not a signatory to Ethiopia's tenuous ceasefire. The Eritrean Army continues to treat Tigray as the Russian Army treats eastern Ukraine. The killing of World Health Organization director Tedros Adhanom's uncle by Eritrean troops made headlines, but it is a story repeated thousands of times over against lesser-known Tigrayans. That Abiy allows such Eritrean actions on Ethiopian territory shows his insincerity, impotence, and collaboration. Ethiopian nationalists talk big, but Abiy has subordinated 118 million Ethiopians to 6 million Eritreans. Isaias is not content to put only Ethiopia under his thumb. Recently, he also sponsored unrest in Djibouti and sought to interfere in the tense situation in Sudan. Indeed, his axis with former Somali leader Mohamed Farmaajo destabilized Somalia. At one time, he also considered attacking Somaliland in order to gain a port on the Red Sea. Isaias grows more erratic every year. Eritrean foreign and military policy has become the African equivalent of George Orwell's *1984*: there will always be a conflict, though Isaias' allies and adversaries may change on a dime depending on his mood or latest paranoid conspiracy.

## Washington Needs a Coherent Strategy

Eritrea's embassy in Washington is a den of organized crime whose main victims are the Eritrean diaspora. This should be a national security and law enforcement concern for American citizens. The United Nations Security Council and U.S.

law prohibit the imposition of Eritrea's tax on former citizens regardless of their current citizenship status. While the United States also taxes expatriates—a bad policy—the situations are not analogous. The White House doesn't assert its authority on those who have forfeited U.S. citizenship, nor does it threaten to retaliate against the family members of those who resist extortion. Simply put, if Eritrean envoys insist on acting as Mafiosi rather than diplomats, it is time to close the Eritrean embassy. The State Department should be under no obligation to perpetuate the illusion of the Eritrean regime's legitimacy.

Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), long the chairman or ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights, has been at the forefront of efforts to nudge and coerce Eritrea toward a more responsible direction. Against the backdrop of Eritrea's rape and pillaging of Tigray, Smith proposed a number of specific sanctions to target Eritrean regime revenue. None of these should be controversial. Four months later, Biden ordered the Treasury and State Departments to identify sanctions targets and declared a national emergency over Tigray. The Treasury Department ultimately sanctioned a number of entities identified by Smith: the Eritrean Defense Force; the ruling People's Front for Democracy and Justice; Eritrean National Security director Abraha Kassa Nemariam; the Hidri Trust, which controls most Isaias-held businesses, and its day-to-day manager, Hagos Ghebrehwet Kidan; and the Red Sea Trading Corporation. Biden could go further. Smith identified other revenue producers, like the Bisha Mine, where Isaias allegedly used conscripts as slaves. The Treasury Department might also re-designate Presidential Advisor Yemane Gebreab, perhaps the most influential man in Eritrea after Isaias.

## Sanctions Aren't Enough

Military academies teach the DIME Model, which states that every coherent strategy should have diplomatic, informational, military, and economic components. To date, the United States has largely limited its efforts to sanctions. There are two problems with a sanctions-

only strategy. First, Isaias cares nothing about the Eritrean people. Second, bilateral and international trade with Eritrea is minimal, so the outside world has limited financial leverage.

The State Department has long lacked a diplomatic strategy to accompany sporadic U.S. sanctions. Both Israel and the United Arab Emirates have traded cash for access to Eritrea's military facilities or territory in order to run regional counter-terror operations. Eritrea, however, is not indispensable. The Berbera Airport in democratic Somaliland would bring the same geographical advantages as Eritrea's Assab Air Base without the baggage that subsidizing Isaias brings. Rather than compartmentalize the Eritrea problem to a single desk or regional bureau, Secretary of State Antony Blinken should pressure each Eritrean partner to abandon the Isaias regime. Such a diplomatic campaign might be difficult, but the dividends would be great. African states would welcome the opportunity to have the Isaias threat reduced. Additionally, seeing American leadership in practice rather than only in rhetoric would enhance America's regional credibility. The United States also lags behind in its information strategy. Isaias' rule depends in part on his ability to cut Eritreans off from the outside world. Reporters Without Borders ranks Eritrea's media freedom as the second worst in the world. Voice of America broadcasts in Tigrigna, but for only thirty minutes per day. Many of the programs are anodyne and steer clear of political news. If Washington is serious about Isaias' pariah status, it is time to sharpen news broadcasts, give more space to opposition voices, and broadcast to Eritrea for longer periods.

The United States also lacks a military strategy. With the exception of Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, who does not regularly have Biden's ear, Biden's national security team hails almost entirely from the Ivy League and the State Department. Few, if any, members of Biden's team have any experience with the military. The rhetoric about "forever wars" and the administration's ignorance of deterrence are symptomatic of a tendency to downplay military components of U.S. strategy. The U.S. military

should never directly involve itself in Eritrea, but a more robust military presence in the Horn of Africa would amplify diplomacy by signaling investment in regional security. This is yet one more reason why the State Department's hostility toward rotating American forces through Somaliland is so counterproductive.

## The End Game in Eritrea

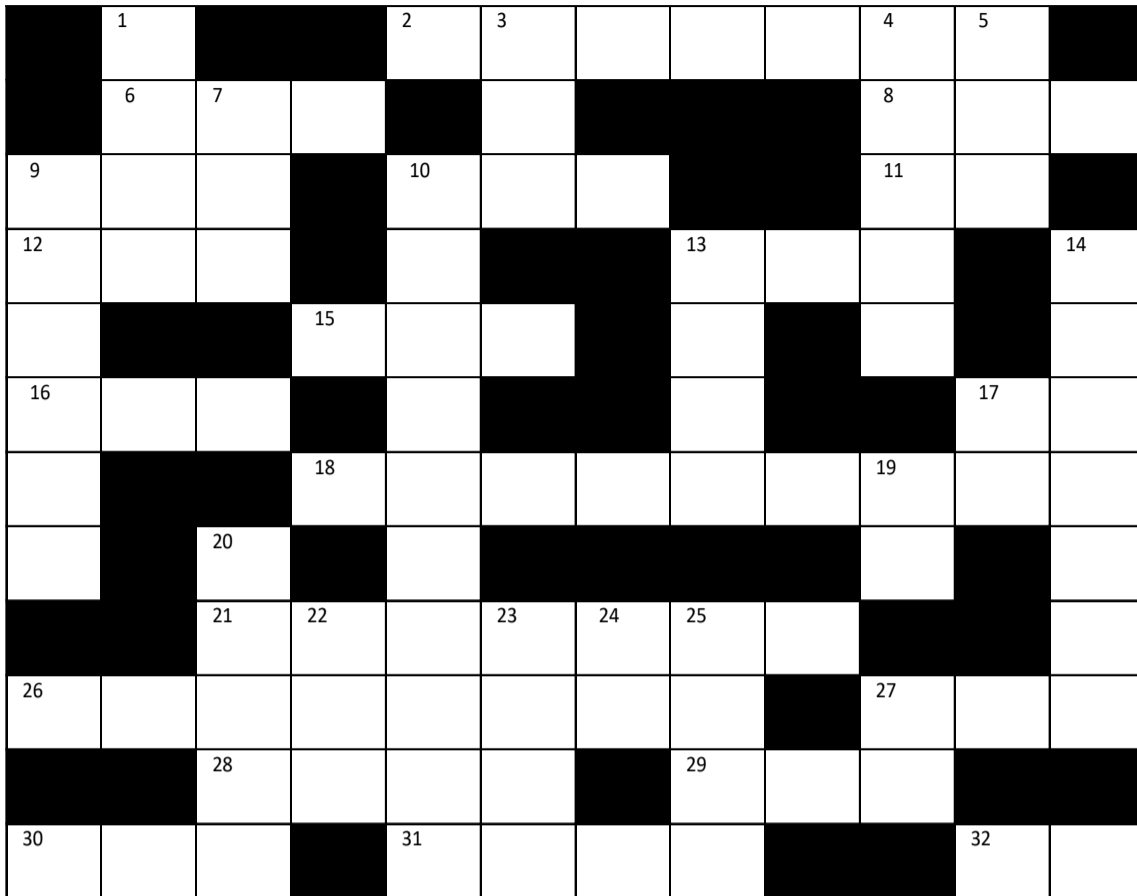
Almost every U.S. administration pays lip service to Africa, but few sustain attention. Biden is no different, despite the fanfare of last month's summit. Compounding the strategic neglect is U.S. foreign policy's traditional reactive nature. For three decades, this has meant kicking Eritrea policy down the road. But that road now ends. Isaias is increasingly erratic. Simultaneously, he is in the twilight of his rule. Even if rumors of Isaias' poor health are false, at seventy-six years old, his life expectancy is limited.

The United States must plan for Eritrea's transition upon Isaias' death. It would be a human tragedy if Isaias' son or any of the Eritrean dictator's top lieutenants succeeded him. That will occur, however, if the State Department and the National Security Council do not plan now. Isaias' greed, incompetence, and selfishness have condemned millions of Eritreans to misery. Eritreans are thirty years behind where they might otherwise be, but it still is possible to catch up. For a fraction of the \$500 million the Biden administration seeks to spend funding the Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza, for example, Biden could develop a Marshall Plan for a post-Isaias Eritrea that could enable one of the world's most reclusive states to join the international community in earnest. To do nothing, however, would condemn Eritreans to suffer and provide an opening for Russia, China, or other reactionary states to expand and cement their Red Sea foothold. It is time to get serious about the Eritrea problem. The decisions made by Biden's team today will have an outsized impact on democracy, economics, and security in Eritrea and the broader Horn of Africa and Red Sea regions.

By Michael Rubin  
*The National Interest*

# THT Buzzle

By: Abdillahi Said



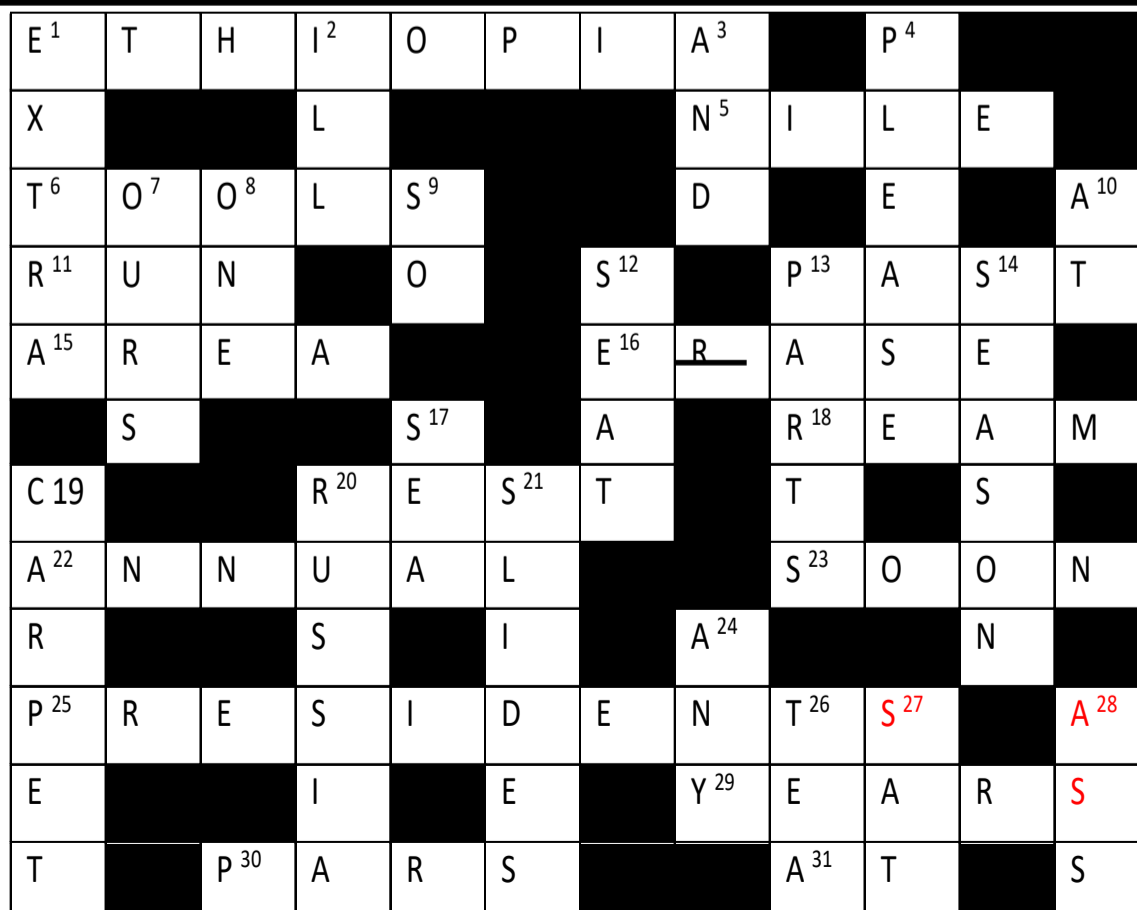
**DOWN**

- 1 Now/ at this time
- 3 honey maker insects
- 4 harmony/utility
- 5 be seated
- 7 innovative
- 10 reorganized
- 13 mops/ key lock
- 14 establishes
- 17 by way of
- 19 by way of
- 20 Apr.one of the months
- 22 assistances
- 23 designations
- 24 pronouns
- 25 essential

**ACROSS**

- 2 clear
- 6 short forms of engineer.
- 8 points
- 9 remain
- 10 colors
- 11 preposition
- 12 original
- 13 lease acceptance
- 15 carriages/ transport
- 16 grease/ gas
- 17 by way of
- 18 breakfast
- 21 panning
- 26 irrigate
- 27 ill
- 28 idem
- 29 aim

## Previous Answer



## China Covid: New year optimism sees hopes of moving beyond virus

When you arrive in China now the officials in head-to-toe protective clothing are gone. There are no buses with special plastic dividers waiting to take you to centralised quarantine. The main reminder that Covid is still around is that people are wearing masks.

It feels weird.

You still need a PCR test before flying and arriving passengers fill in a health declaration form, accessible via phone apps. This then generates a temporary QR code. You scan the code when you come through the airport and then, after clearing immigration, simply walk out and into China.

As a journalist, I had to wait for an hour for special clearance to enter. During that time I and another waiting reporter had a long chat with one of the immigration police. It was the first day they didn't have to wear the "da bai" (big white) protective gear over their uniforms or face shields or shoe covers. Was it a relief?

Yeah, it actually wasn't that bad," he said.

Chinese New Year is fast approaching but this officer said he would not be heading back to his hometown to ring in the Year of the Rabbit. There would be too much work for the immigration police over the coming weeks making sure that the new travel systems were in place and operating, he said.

Getting rid of most zero-Covid travel restrictions before the Spring Festival has meant that many who have not been able to visit friends and relatives in China are rushing to buy plane and train tickets in time. Then there are the Chinese citizens who haven't been able to go overseas for years - they too are making plans again. Most observers expect international tourists will soon be allowed back in.

The speed of the change in China's Covid approach has been breathtaking.

What seems to have triggered this dramatic about-face were the protests against China's zero-Covid policy late last year.

Discontent had been building for a long time, but once demonstrators started chanting publicly that leader Xi Jinping should resign and the Communist Party give up power, that was more than even this country's all-powerful government could bear.

The end of mass-testing, city-wide lockdowns and centralised quarantine sent Covid flying through the Chinese population.

Big city hospitals were soon being swamped. Social media is full of images of hospital corridors packed with elderly patients on oxygen support.

The real death toll is unknown. China's health officials announced

that they would not be counting deaths from other causes among the Covid statistics, even if coronavirus indirectly caused a patient to die by triggering other health problems.

As a result, the official death toll is being ridiculed by Chinese people. One woman told the BBC about the death of her mother-in-law. Her story paints a picture of a funeral system under huge strain, suggesting the Covid death toll is considerable.

First it was impossible to get an ambulance to rush her mother-in-law to hospital, she said. Then after she died her body was at one point stored on the floor in a room full of corpses.

She said she had been told that Beijing had temporarily transformed a cold storage site so that it could accommodate bodies.

It took more than a week for her family to get a slot at the crematorium for a funeral service and when we spoke to her they were still waiting for the cemetery to give them a location to place the urn containing her mother-in-law's remains.

It is hard to convey the paradoxical mood in China right now.

There are those who have lost loved ones or have had a bad dose of Covid - but there is also considerable joy because the country is re-opening. Government officials say many provinces and cities have passed the peak of infections.

The new year mass migration has already started. You see people wheeling their luggage in the direction of the train stations, carrying gifts for their families. Tens of millions of people have already travelled with an estimated two billion trips expected.

In Beijing's Jianguomen district, a 53-year-old woman working in a little shop selling nuts told us she had not been home for the new year since the Covid crisis began.

"I can't wait to go home. I've been working hard all year," she said. "I want to see my parents who are getting old. My kids are there too. They're all looking forward to my return. We can have a family reunion and ring in the new year together!" She says she feels guilty for being away from home for so long. Her 84-year-old father and 77-year-old mother have both caught the virus and recovered, as has she. So she said they could get on with normal life now.

A few doors down is a noodle restaurant and a couple in their 50s who work there are on their break. Their boss still hasn't told them whether they can have time off to travel back to their hometown in the eastern Anhui province.

They hadn't been home in three years ether. "We've lost a lot of money during the Covid crisis yet rent

Continue on page 7

Compiled by: Yusuf Omar Hindi

# Covid cases in China touch 900 million - study



**Some 900 million people in China have been infected with the coronavirus as of 11 January, according to a study by Peking University.**

The report estimates that 64% of the country's population has the virus. It ranks Gansu province, where 91% of the people are reported to be infected, at the top, followed by Yunnan (84%) and Qinghai (80%). A top Chinese epidemiologist has also warned that cases will surge in rural China over the lunar new year. The peak of China's Covid wave is expected to last two to three months, added Zeng Guang, ex-head of the Chinese Center for Disease Control.

Hundreds of millions of Chinese are travelling to their hometowns - many for the first time since the pandemic began - ahead of the lunar new year on 23 January.

China has stopped providing daily Covid statistics since abandoning zero-Covid.

But hospitals in big cities - where healthcare facilities are better and more easily accessible - have become crowded with Covid patients as the virus has spread through the country.

Speaking at an event earlier this month, Mr Zeng said it was "time to focus on the rural areas", in remarks reported in the Caixin news outlet. Many elderly, sick and disabled in the countryside were already being

left behind in terms of Covid treatment, he added.

China's central Henan province is the only province to have given details of infection rates - earlier this month a health official there said nearly 90% of the population had had Covid, with similar rates seen in urban and rural areas.

However government officials say many provinces and cities have passed the peak of infections.

The Lunar New Year holidays in China, which officially start from 21 January, involves the world's largest annual migration of people.

Some two billion trips are expected to be made in total and tens of millions of people have already

travelled.

Last month, China abruptly abandoned its zero Covid policies. It also reopened its borders on Sunday.

Official data shows five or fewer deaths a day over the past month, numbers which are inconsistent with the long queues seen at funeral homes and reports of deaths on social media.

In December Chinese officials said they planned to issue monthly rather than daily updates on the Covid situation in the country.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said China, which stopped reporting Covid fatalities from Tuesday, was heavily under-reporting Covid deaths.

In response, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin stressed again at a regular press briefing on Thursday that Beijing has been sharing Covid data in "a timely, open and transparent manner in accordance with the law", having held technical exchanges with the WHO over the past month.

International health experts have predicted at least a million Covid-related deaths in China this year. Beijing has officially reported just over 5,000 deaths since the pandemic began, one of the lowest death rates in the world.



## China Covid: New year optimism sees hopes of moving beyond virus

remains the same. So we just keep working."

Don't they want to go home this year? "Of course, we'd love to but we don't have the money," they say together. The woman explains that their restaurant being forced to close for dine-in services for months on end hit them hard financially.

Have their parents, aged in their 80s and 90s, caught Covid?

"They must have got it," the man says. "There were no test kits in our hometown but they felt unwell, got a fever and coughed a lot. Took some medicine and recovered."

Outside the restaurant a mother with her six-year-old son tells us they won't be leaving Beijing any time soon. Though they've had Covid they say they're worried about catching it again in a second wave of infections.

Further along the road there is a man with his son who have a completely different attitude.

They're in Beijing on holiday. Neither of them have caught Covid yet but they say they're not worried. The father says his grandparents have already recovered from the virus

back in their hometown in Zhengzhou, in central Henan province, and that they will be heading there soon for the Spring Festival.

Images of rabbits are going up everywhere. They look cute and happy and seem to embody the optimism which is now spreading. It has been a tough few years in China but you'll hear people saying that during the Year of the Rabbit things are going to be so much better.

And who can blame them for looking forward to better times?

SOMALILAND  
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DOUBLE HAPPINESS

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