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## Government warns of external interference in Lasanod traditional Leaders meeting

Government welcomes the traditional leaders meeting which does not contradict the existence of Somaliland's independence.



M. A. Egge

A government delegation that has been in the town of Lasanod for the restoration of the peace and held a press conference Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> January hence welcomed the meeting of the traditional leaders of the Lasanod

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## The Parliamentary Speaker holds mediation meetings in Lasaanod



Mohamoud Walaaleye

The Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon. Abdirisak Khalif Ahmed, held meetings with the government delegation and the 33 member delegates for the Lasanod issues. Hon. Abdirisak, in his meeting with

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## Foreign Ministry takes issue with American Ambassador's besmirch of Somaliland's integrity



By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Dr. Issa Keyd Mohamud, said over the week that there is no confusion that Berbera port is located in the

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## New Director General appointed Ministry of Finance takes over the helm



Mohamoud Walaaleye

The Minister of Finance Hon. Dr. Saad Ali Shire presided over on Saturday the change of guard at the helm from the former Director General Mohamed Abdi Gurhan to the new Director General

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## Minister of Information Meets with Leaders of Sool Region in Lasanod



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## The British Recognize the Importance of Stability and Security in Somaliland, says UK

By M.A. Egge

Minister of State for International Cooperation and Africa in the British government Mr. Andrew Mitchell said that the British government recognizes the importance of stability and security in the Republic of Somaliland and the region.

Mr. Mitchell, who was responding



to a question asked at the session of the British Parliament on Wednesday regarding the situation in Lasaanod, said that they are constantly working with international friends, the UN and the government of Somaliland to support stabilization efforts.

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## Lasanood youth cautions against undermining the peace and development of their city



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## NEC chair inspects ongoing registration of voter exercise in Togdeer & Sanaag



By M.A. Egge

The Chairman of the National Elections Commission, Mr. Musa Hassan Haji Yusuf, inspected over the week the voter registration exercises going on in

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## The Ministry of Investment received the Hamburg Port Company of Germany



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## Somaliland Teachers Association Holds First General Meeting



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The State Department's Disingenuous Defiance of Congress on Somalia



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## Government warns of external interference in Lasanod traditional Leaders meeting

community that will start in the town, and warned against any interferences.

The press release issued by the Minister of Internal Affairs reads as follows;

The government in consideration to its principles which are based on consultation and dialogue, and in consideration to the previous press release of January 15, which stated that the government of Somaliland is committed to resolving any issues that arise through dialogue in Sool region.

As a result, the government of Somaliland welcomes any traditional meeting to be held by the Sool community, which does not



contradict the existence of Somaliland's independence.

Anyone who belongs to other administrations, other governments, other political organizations, is

warned not to interfere in the situation in the Sool region and the traditional meeting of the community in the capital city of Lasanod. End.

## The British Recognize the Importance of Stability and Security in Somaliland, says UK

"We continue to closely monitor the situation, and we encourage all parties to calm the situation, to avoid another crisis, and to resolve the issue peacefully," said the Minister of State for International Cooperation and Africa in the British government. Mr. Andrew Mitchell.



## NEC chair inspects ongoing registration of voter exercise in Togdeer & Sanaag



Togdeer and Sanag regions.

He was accompanied by members of the election commission, Togdeer regional and Burao district administrations, and other officials. The registration exercise is in its second phase, and there are open sites scheduled to be open for up to 30 days.

In the Togdeer region, the registration is going on in 21 places, five of which are inside the city of

Burao. Those sites where all ab people are registering well.

The clerks at the centers briefed them on the procedural chores and tasks at hand.

The NEC chief appreciated the efforts going on and acknowledged that he witnessed large numbers of potential voters queuing up to register themselves.

He said, "We have a short time left.

Registration is going well in the region, especially in Burao. The number of people who registered is ample. We expect that the largest number of people who have ever registered will be realized in the whole country, we have put a lot of effort into it".

He appreciated also the harmonious setting and calmness as far as peaceful stability and security is concerned.

"We would also like to thank the governors of the regions of the country and the mayors of the municipalities of the country, who have worked with us beautifully. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Education, which has worked with us a lot for we have education and health facilities for the exercise.

"The message I am sending is that we have seven days left to register," hence wanted the time left to be used appropriately.

## Foreign Ministry takes issue with American Ambassador's besmirch of Somaliland's integrity

Republic of Somaliland, and Somaliland is not part of the collapsed government of Somalia. In a statement on his Twitter account, Dr. Issa underpinned the fact that there is no confusion that Berbera Port is located in the Republic of Somaliland, and Somaliland is not part of the collapsed government of Somalia. Meanwhile, a strong statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took issue with a statement written by the US Embassy in Somalia on US troops' visit to Berbera Port that besmirch and undermines Somaliland's integral sovereignty.

It decried, "It is unacceptable that Larry Andre, the US ambassador to Mogadishu, constantly avoids calling Somaliland by its proper name, describing it as a region of Somalia, even though he knows very well that Somaliland is not a region of Somalia".

"This is a violation of the dignity of Somaliland, 'To refer to Somaliland as a region of Somalia'", said the statement.

Somaliland is hosting the US Military Mission which is carrying out the mandated Military exercise.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs,



which questioned the purpose of Ambassador Andre's innuendo, however, underlined the fact that the Republic of Somaliland is always ready to cooperate with the United States.

## Minister of Information Meets with Leaders of Sool Region in Lasanod

The minister of information, culture and national guidance Hon. Suleiman Ali Koore, has met with the traditional elders, intellectuals and youth leaders of Sool region in Lasanod.

Minister Suleiman was accompanied by the members of parliament and senate from the region.

The agenda of the meeting pertains the strengthening of security, peace and harmonious coexistence and implementation of development programs.

Minister of Information strolled through the main avenue of Lasaanod Town, he also sat at a local tea shop to chat with residents of the town.

The government spokesman urged the people he met in his quest to unite the populace and maintain peace and harmony.

Minister of Information was amongst a high-powered government delegation dispatched to Sool region to preach peace and harmony. They will also help in implementing development projects



## Lasanood youth cautions against undermining the peace and development of their city



By M.A. Egge

Members of the youth and intellectuals of the Sool region who held a press conference in Lasanood town called on the residents to stop the protests and violence and to protect the security and order hence avoiding harming or associated losses.

The youths said that they were saddened by the damage that happened in the city in terms of deaths and injuries.

They noted that the damage could have been avoided if they were wiser and well advised, and now it is necessary not to go back to inflaming another problem that may cause further damage.

They suggested to the community that the development of the city and the Sool region as a whole should not be overlooked and that any concerns raised by the community of the region should be presented in a peaceful manner.

"The city of Lasanod is ours, it belongs to us and we will not destroy our city and we will not cause

unnecessary problems", said the members of the academics in a press conference in a public space. They added, "May God have mercy on those who died and heal those who were injured. We say that our city cannot bear more losses, let's not destroy the prevalent security and development."

The young people, who were in large numbers, demonstrated to the people of Sool region the importance of security for life and development and warned them not to listen to the drums that are being played from without that want to weaken the country and the people of Somaliland.

The scholar pointed out that the conspiracy against the people of Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle regions is dangerous and not in anyone's interest, which they described as one that is being subjected against the people and their government, and then the conflict is used to create mayhem which is not only distracting and destructive but also and retrogressive.

# The Parliamentary Speaker holds mediation meetings in Lasaanod



the delegation of the Cabinet of Ministers led by the Minister of Internal Affairs discussed the situation in the city of Lasaanod. The efforts of the Representation chairman in connection with the

mediation of the conflict show how the government system in Somaliland works with laws and social norms. The meeting was also attended by the Minister of Defense Hon. Abdiqani Mohamud Aateeye (Farid), Minister of Transport and Road Development Hon. Abdirisac Ibrahim Farah, Minister of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Development Hon. Saeed Sulub Mohamed, Minister of Justice Hon. Suleiman Warsame Guled and Governor of Sool Mr. Abdikarim Adan Haji Diriyee.

# New Director General appointed Ministry of Finance takes over the helm

Mohamed Hussein Mu'adin. The event was attended by the Deputy Minister of Finance, the Governor of the Central Bank, various government officials and other guests. The director of the Department of Human Resources, Mohamed Ahmed Weirah, who spoke at the meeting, said that the former director was a very talented, hard-working and honest person and wished I will pray for him wherever he goes he wished him well. The Governor of the Central Bank, Eng. Ali Abdilahi Dahir, who spoke about it, said that the former director was a hardworking man who did a lot of work in the ministry and brought him to a good place. The Deputy Minister of Finance, Hon. Rooda Jama Elmi, said that the former director was a man with a good personality, honest, and an initiator of change for the better. The chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Mr. Khalid Jama Kodah, stated that he worked with



both the two directors and they are hard workers with good personalities. Former Director General Mohamed Abdi Gurhan who spoke about the things that happened during his four years in office said that the Ministry of Finance consists of 14 departments and has 122 offices throughout the country. Mr. Gurhan added that the total number of the ministry's staff is two thousand two hundred and fifty-five official employees work in the Ministry of Finance

The new Director General of the Ministry of Financial Development, Mohamed Hussein Osman (Mua'din), said that he has been in the public service for the last 41 years and has experience. Minister of Finance Dr Saad Ali shire, thanked and lauded the former director general, and welcomed the new director general. Dr. Saad praised the work of the former director general and described him as an honest man, and wished the new director general success in his position.

# The Ministry of Investment received the Hamburg Port Company of Germany



By M.A. Egge Director General of the Ministry of Investment Development and Industry Hon. Mohamed Osman Said received a delegation from a German company, Hamburg Port Co, in his office over the week. The delegation led by the Ambassador of in Germany Mustafa Yusuf Ismail consisted of Mr. Lars Greiner Head of Africa and Christine

Prieser, Head of Sales. Hamburg Port Company, a state-owned company, is said to have invested in more than 140 ports and airports around the world. DG Mohamed, briefed them on the extensive development of the Port and Free Zone of Berbera and the establishing of industrial zones,

especially the Hargeisa Industrial Zone. He also promised that the Republic of Somaliland is always ready and welcomes investment in the field of development. The German delegation is expected to inspect the Port of Berbera and the Free Zone during their stay in the country.

# Somaliland Teachers Association Holds First General Meeting



Teachers association of Somaliland has held its first meeting in a Hargeisa hotel. The highly anticipated meeting was graced by the director of labour in the ministry of labour and social services Mr. Muktar Yusuf Mohammed, director of ICT at the labour ministry Mr. Mohamed Jama Yusuf. Somaliland Teachers Association (Solta) leaders who spoke at meeting stated their agenda for

uplifting and development of Somaliland teachers welfare and education. Dawan deputy chairman Mr. Suleiman Abdi Ali Kalshale was also in attendance. Other important personalities include the executive chairman of Somaliland HIV/ Aids organisation (SOLNAC) Mr. Mohamed Haji Yassin and SONSAF chairman Mr. Anwar Abdirahman.

# RECENT PROTESTS AND RIOTS IN LAS ANOD IS BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INFLUENCE RELATED INCITEMENT- Somaliland Societies in Europe & USA

Untitled



TO: European Union (EU), UK, USA and African Union (AU).

STATEMENT FROM:

- Somaliland Societies in Europe.(SSE),
- Somaliland Community in USA,
- Mobilizing Diaspora for Solutions (DMS),

WE HEREBY BELIEVE THAT THE RECENT PROTESTS AND RIOTS IN LAS ANOD CITY (LAASCAANOOD) OF SOMALILAND IS BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN-INFLUENCE RELATED INCITEMENT

1. Extremist groups and anti Somaliland were behind the calls for plotted assassinations and incitement of violence that encouraged recent protests and riots in Las Anod city of Somaliland. Expats originally from the city of Las Anod and living in Europe, America, Canada and Australia with different objectives are behind the protests and riots in the city. They are also engaged in war of propaganda and fabrications through social media to carry out violent activities against

peace and stability of Somaliland in the Horn of Africa endangering the peace and stability of the local people of Las Anod as well as the stability of the whole Horn region in Africa. There is belief of suspicion that expat organizers of the violent riots in Las Anod city are secretly funded by China to kick out Americans of the Horn of Africa and replace it with China. The organizers also collect money for their violent mission from the ordinary people residing respectively in their countries abroad.

2. The trouble makers, inciters and the perpetrators (Expatriates and those living in the city), who are also against African colonial borders to undermine Somaliland territorial integrity, is not the exclusive inhabitants of Sool, Sanaag and Ain as it claims but these regions are widely shared by most of the tribes of Somaliland people. The trouble makers are involved in violent activities that could easily attract terrorists to cause mayhem to the

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# The State Department's Disingenuous Defiance of Congress on Somalia

**Andre should remember: The State Department executes policy, but Congress crafts it- Michael Rubin**

On Dec. 23, U.S. President Joe Biden signed the Fiscal 2023 National Defense Authorization Act into law. Despite fierce lobbying from the State Department, Congress incorporated major elements of the Somaliland Partnership Act. Specifically, the Act requires the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense to submit an annual report to Congress detailing assistance, security assistance, and security initiatives in Somaliland. Further, it requires the State and Defense Departments to complete by June 2023 a feasibility study on enhanced security cooperation between Washington and Hargeisa. Congress overruled fierce State Department lobbying behind the scenes against provisions treating Somaliland as distinct from other Somalia federal member states.

The Somaliland provisions' bipartisan congressional support is a recognition both of reality on the ground and the fact that closer, distinct U.S. ties with Somaliland are a U.S. national interest. The State Department can pretend that Somalia is a unitary, functioning state and believe that Somaliland is just a federal state within it, but the reality is that Somaliland has been separate from the rest of Somalia for longer than it has been part of it. Not only is the political culture different — Somaliland has a much more mature democracy — but history also matters. The Isaaq clan that forms the majority of Somaliland's population suffered genocide at the hands of Siad Barre, Somalia's Cold War-era dictator. To demand Somalilanders subordinate themselves to Mogadishu is akin to saying Bosnians or Kosovars should trust their fate to Serbian nationalists in Belgrade.

## Aligning Interests

It is against this backdrop that the National Defense Authorization Act prescriptions make greater sense. Former U.S. Ambassador Donald Yamamoto and Larry Andre, Jr., his successor, might seek favor in Mogadishu by acting as the voice of Somali irredentism in order to ingratiate themselves to local elites who have never subjected themselves to elections. But they have only themselves to blame. By funneling all aid through Mogadishu and allowing decision-makers there to siphon it off and weaponize it, they reinforced the perception in Somaliland that subordinating themselves to Mogadishu would be suicide.

As the U.S. military surveys Berbera airport, one of the longest landing strips in Africa, and Somaliland's



nearby deepwater port, the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu continues with its passive aggressive resistance to developing ties with Somaliland. U.S. diplomats seldom travel to the region on their own, and usually do so only when forced to visit accompanying delegations. Security is no excuse: There has not been a terror attack in Somaliland in 15 years, whereas in Somalia they are a near-weekly occurrence. Hargeisa is so safe money changers leave stacks of cash unguarded while they take lunch. (My daughter visited without a problem when she was nine years old.) Mogadishu, meanwhile, remains among the most crime-ridden and insecure cities in the world.

Andre's animosity toward Somaliland's autonomy, and the State Department's previous one country, two systems approach leads him to deny reality. Consider his statement that "our countries' interests mostly coincide." When former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi went to Taiwan, Mogadishu sided with Beijing and condemned her trip. Even as the United States has poured billions of dollars into Mogadishu, the Somali leadership gives Beijing huge financial concessions. At the United Nations, Somalia votes with the United States only 20% of the time. That is equal to China, and a lesser percentage than its alignment with Russia (28%). Would Andre also say that U.S. and Russia's interests mostly coincide?

## Why the Ambassador's Priorities Are Wrong

Andre tries to base his resistance to Somaliland in both traditional diplomatic practice and U.S. law. He is wrong on both counts. He says, for example, that he is "the personal representative of United States President Joseph Biden to Somalia President Hasan Sheikh Mohamud." That technically may be true, but the job of the U.S. ambassador — especially in a country it considers a democracy — is to take a broader approach, and to meet with all political elements in

a country. While Andre is right that the voices of Somali citizens inform the U.S. embassy's views, he is wrong to subordinate the will of Congress to his own personal whims. Nor is it honest to suggest he hears Somali views when he treats Somaliland as a pariah without roaming the streets of Hargeisa, Berbera, Burau, or Boroma to actually listen to local views.

He further states, "Before we undertake programs anywhere in Somalia...we first coordinate with the Federal Government of Somalia." Here, he embraces an idea both the State Department and Congress have previously identified as poor diplomatic practice. Prior to the Arab Spring, for example, the

U.S. ambassador to Egypt used to vet all embassy programs through then-Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Congress concluded such actions undermined both the letter and spirit of U.S. law. It reinforced Mubarak's dictatorship and eviscerated democratization efforts.

Andre ends the explanation of his position by pointing to the 2012 Somali constitution and the 1961 Vienna Convention. This is disingenuous for three reasons. First, the provisional constitution sought popular elections, something Somaliland has undertaken eight times but Somalia still resists. Second, the U.S. does not allow the constitution of the People's Republic of China to define America's diplomatic interests, so why should it do so with Somalia? Third, it flies in the face of precedent, not only in Somalia, where U.S. policy previously embraced Somaliland's separate status, but also with Taiwan, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, and Iraqi Kurdistan, all of which the State Department engages directly with dedicated institutes, offices, or consulates, regardless of the views of revanchists and autocrats in Beijing,

Damascus, or Baghdad. In none of these cases does the United States confuse representation with recognition of independence. Rather, it sees engagement as responsible diplomacy and understands that democratic, local representation matters.

Andre should remember: The State Department executes policy, but Congress crafts it. He should not treat the peoples of Somalia and Somaliland as fools by erasing precedents. Andre repeats the error of his predecessor and indulges the worst instincts of some Mogadishu-based politicians. Those instincts run against U.S. national security interests.

Now a 1945 Contributing Editor, Dr. Michael Rubin is a Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). Dr. Rubin is the author, coauthor, and coeditor of several books exploring diplomacy, Iranian history, Arab culture, Kurdish studies, and Shi'ite politics, including "Seven Pillars: What Really Causes Instability in the Middle East?" (AEI Press, 2019); "Kurdistan Rising" (AEI Press, 2016); "Dancing with the Devil: The Perils of Engaging Rogue Regimes" (Encounter Books, 2014); and "Eternal Iran: Continuity and Chaos" (Palgrave, 2005).

## RECENT PROTESTS AND RIOTS IN LAS ANOD IS BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN INFLUENCE RELATED INCITEMENT- Somaliland Societies in Europe & USA

Untitled



region and to the strategic-maritime of the Red Sea to disrupt global smooth, peaceful navigation.

3. We clearly state that there is no tribal borders or tribal states in Africa or even in the Third World. The borders of Somalia, Somaliland and Djibouti are based on land and have internationally equal status and legitimacy because they were all colonially-drawn borders like the rest of African countries. Therefore, anyone or group who opposes Somaliland colonial borders is denying the legitimacy of all African colonial borders which define the territory, people, independence and the recognition under international of each African country, for instance

the borders between Somalia and Ethiopia and the borders between Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Somaliland withdrew from the thirty-year long devastating, disastrous union with Somalia (1960-1990) on May 18, 1991 and reclaimed its independence achieved on June 26, 1960 from the United Kingdom based on Somaliland British Protectorate borders.

Hence, Somaliland independence does not violate the principles of African colonial borders and is in Accordance with African Union Conference Declaration issued in Cairo of Egypt on July 12-17, 1964 to respect and recognize African

Colonial Borders to keep peace and stability of post-independence in Africa.

a) We request and call on the government of the Republic of Somaliland to listen to and do something about the concerns of the people of Las Anod area, while the first priority is always the security of citizens and the protection of Somaliland's sovereignty;

b) We urge European Union (EU), UK, USA, Canada, Australia, GCC and the African Union to curb those expats collecting money for calling for violence and assassinations in Las Anod city of Somaliland to main peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

Long Live Somaliland

## Long Live Somaliland Hargeisa mayor efforts are realizing progress



The current ongoing works to upgrade the infrastructure of the Municipality of Hargeisa has been made possible by the new policies and style of leadership adopted by Mayor Cllr. Abdikarim Ahmed Mooge and his team. The year-long changes at the Municipality of Hargeisa have initiated many changes under the

leadership of the Mayor seeing tangible progress. The staffers at the Town Hall are the same but it is the leadership style that has made the difference such that tangible development has been realized. The Mayor with the support of the Deputy Mayor and the executive secretary, both of whom are known

for their hard work and diligence not to mention councilor Yassin Omer the Head of Social Affairs department which oversees the health and transport departments respectively Hargeisa Municipality. Cllr. Omar is also a role model worth emulating.  
By Abdirahman Guun

## Information ministry unveils its 2023 Annual Plan

By M.A. Egge

The Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Cultural Information and Awareness Hon. Said Hassan Habbane opened a meeting to evaluate the plan for the year that ended in 2022 and the setting of the new plan for the year 2023 of the Ministry.



While elaborating on the issue, he said, "When a nation takes action, of course, it must have a plan. Development has to be articulate and I commend the officials sitting here for their commitment to this task".

As concerns the challenges in the sector he noted, "We need to reflect back such that we make corrections hence diversify while stepping up diligence".

The Director General Mr. Abdikarim Aden Adde on his part pointed out that reflecting back on the past year's operations discerns in evaluating what areas needed addressing, to be strengthened or stepped up as plans of 2023 are put in place.

He said that in essence when a plan is set, a future is charted, hence every institution ought to have it for administrative purposes such that objectives may be adhered to and be timely implemented hence achieve progress.

## Activists in regional court to stop GMO 'madness' in Kenya

Ugandan activists have petitioned the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) over Kenya's decision to allow unrestricted use, importation and cultivation of genetically modified organism (GMOs), citing potential risks to the region.

In a petition filed at the Court's Kampala offices on Friday, lobbyists from Slow Food International and Centre for Food and Adequate Living Rights, asked the court to block Kenya from implementing what they called an illegality against the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.

In October last year, the Cabinet in Kenya lifted a 10-year ban on GMOs which had been restricted for open cultivation and importation, making it the second country in Africa to do so.

Regional counterparts like Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda are, however, taking bold steps towards eliminating GMOs with Kampala twice shelving a parliamentary Act on the subject. Kenya said the move was to curb prevailing hunger blamed on drought that has so far affected about three million citizens.

The Kenyan government said the decision was informed by various technical and expert reports from regulatory bodies like its National Biosafety Authority and the World Health Organisation.

Others are the United States of America's Foods and Drugs Administration, the European Food Safety Authority and the Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Already, the Kenya Agricultural and

Livestock Organisation is growing GMO crops like cassava and maize.

Now there is growing unease that given the trade volumes and social interconnectivity between Nairobi and its neighbours, GMOs could definitely trickle across Kenya's borders.

"We want the court to order Kenya to back off this GMO madness. GMOs create an open monopoly resulting in the economic exploitation of smallholder farmers amid the already crippling economic environment," David Kabanda, the Executive Director of the Centre for Food and Adequate Living Rights said.

"The African charter on human and people's rights restricts States parties from embracing all forms of

## US airstrike in Gal'ad kills 30 Al Shabaab fighters

Mogadishu (HOL) - The U.S. military killed 30 members of Shabaab, Al Qaeda's branch in East Africa, in an airstrike in support of a Somali military in central Somalia. US Africa Command (AFRICOM) said the drone strikes were requested by Somalia's federal government and occurred near Gal'ad, 265km north of Mogadishu, as SNA soldiers were repelling an Al Shabaab attack on a military compound.

"The combined actions by partner forces on the ground and the collective self-defense strike is estimated to have resulted in three destroyed vehicles and approximately thirty al-Shabaab

leveraging U.S. and partner efforts to support effective governance, promote stabilization and economic development, and resolve ongoing conflicts."

Somalia's federal government said that more than 100 Al Shabaab fighters were killed after they attacked a Somali National Army base in the newly-liberated Gal'ad district. It added that seven soldiers – including a deputy commander from the U.S.-trained Danab brigade – were killed in the "intense attack" but said it successfully repelled the Al Shabaab attack.

In a statement, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack, claiming



terrorists killed." "Given the remote location of the fighting, the command assesses that no civilians were injured or killed."

U.S. Africa Command said that they and Somalia's federal government "take great measures to prevent civilian casualties" and that they "remain committed" to opposing al-Shabab, which they described as "the largest and most deadly al-Qaeda network in the world."

"The U.S. is one of several countries providing support to the Federal Government of Somalia in its ongoing campaign to disrupt, degrade and defeat terrorist groups. Rooting out extremism ultimately requires intervention beyond traditional military means,

it had "miraculously overrun the U.S.-trained forces" in the town and killed over 150 fighters.

It is common for the government and Al Shabaab to give different death tolls for the same attack.

Saturday's strike is the latest U.S. drone strike targeting Al Shabaab fighters. In June 2022, the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) carried out an air attack in Somalia, killing five al-Shabab fighters. Another air attack in July killed two militants. A month later, AFRICOM launched at least five air strikes that purportedly killed 17 Al Shabaab militants. AFRICOM announced in September that it had killed 27 fighters in a strike. The US. military confirmed two more Al Shabaab fighters during a strike in late October.

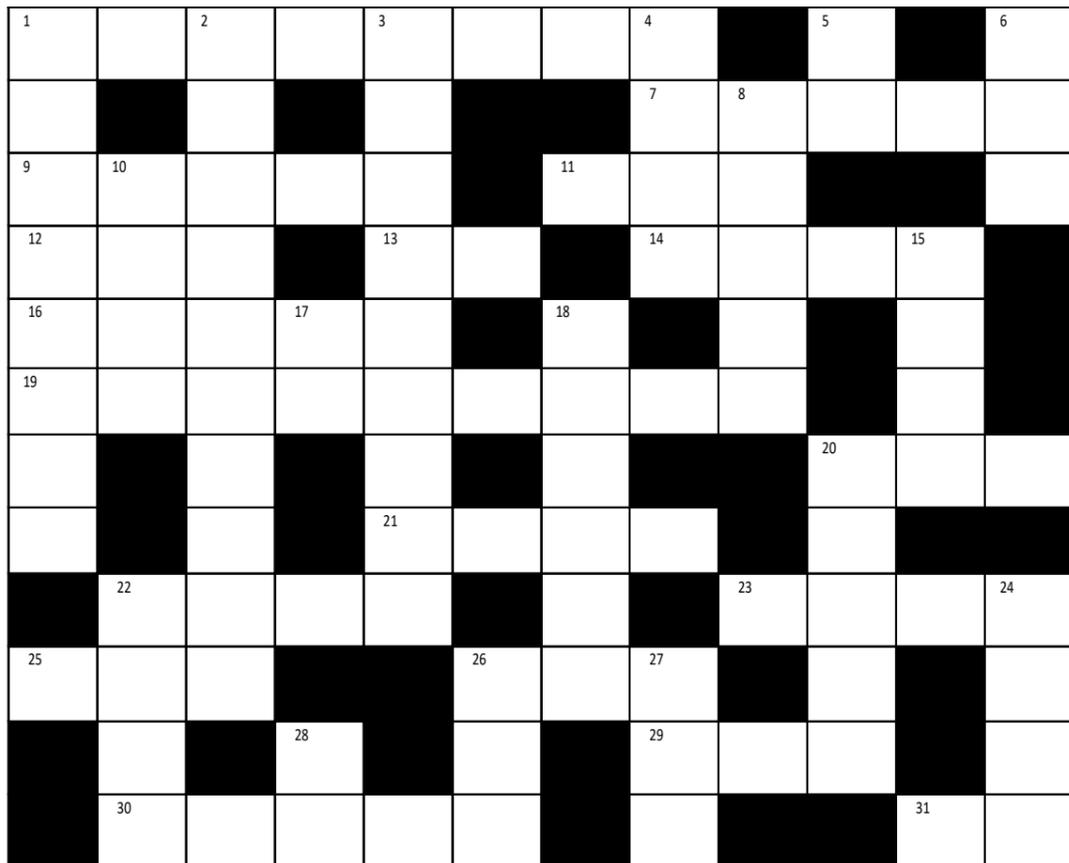


foreign economic exploitation particularly those practiced by international monopolies so as to

enable their people to fully benefit from the advantages derived from national resources."

# THT Buzzle

By: Abdillahi Said



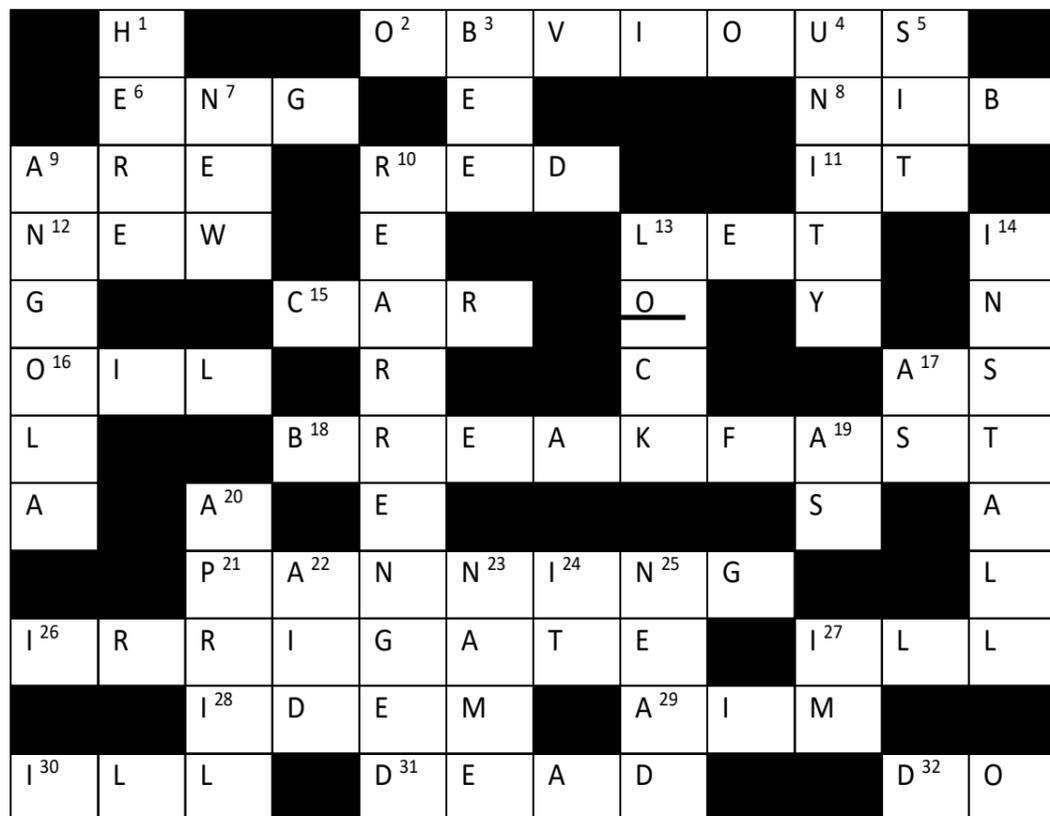
**DOWN**

- 1 resource
- 2 details
- 3 an insect with two pairs
- 4 in-group/ ethnicity
- 5 or else
- 6 systems
- 8 along with
- 10 naturals
- 15 newscast
- 17 Rejection
- 18 Indicator
- 22 Death mask
- 24 simplicities
- 26 Horse family
- 27 Record sheet/recording
- 28 Preposition

**ACROSS**

- 1 State
- 7 Huge/substantial
- 9 cyclones
- 11 calculations of math
- 12 away
- 13 On the way to
- 14 Name
- 16 bladder store
- 19 Filming record
- 20 Make use of
- 21 Country
- 22 Numerous
- 23 Clean
- 25 Soft food restaurant
- 26 Altogether
- 29 Lubricant
- 30 Emperors
- 31 be there.

## Previous Answer



## Dentists warn of permanent damage from clear braces ordered online



Dentists have told the BBC that demand for Instagram smiles has left people with damage from wearing clear braces or "aligners" ordered online.

One man said aligners weakened his front teeth, leaving him unable to bite into an apple.

Smile Direct Club, the largest company selling clear aligners remotely, says they straighten teeth faster and cheaper than traditional braces.

Its aligners have been successful for the majority of users, it says.

But some dentists and orthodontists believe customers of so-called remote dentistry are unaware of harm that can be caused by aligners if not fitted by a dentist in person.

Jamie, a father from Glasgow, turned to Smile Direct Club (SDC) after being quoted £4,000-£6,000 for straightening his teeth.

The US-based remote orthodontics company was offering clear aligners for about £1,800 without the need to see a dentist in person.

According to SDC, its platform has improved access to oral care and "has enabled successful treatment for more than 1.8 million people". The "overwhelming majority" of users have had an "excellent experience".

Wobbly teeth

But Jamie now says he would never do it again.

"I can't bite into an apple because I can't trust that my front teeth are strong enough any more," he says.

Before starting treatment he was sent a DIY impression kit to take his own teeth moulds. The other option, a 3D scan of his mouth done in an Smile Direct Club shop, was unavailable because of lockdown.

Within weeks he'd received a six-month course of aligners, with the name of the dentist overseeing him labelled on the box.

But after six months, he posted on Reddit: "One of my front teeth has become wobbly, my enamel feels all funny, like the aligners have rubbed some of it off, the aligners have made my gum recede making it agony."

SDC styles itself as a disruptor to the "bricks-and-mortar" dental industry. It argues many dentists and orthodontists offer Invisalign - a

popular brand of clear braces - as a product, and therefore compete with SDC.

Some positive testimonials by SDC users on YouTube say they were put off by Invisalign's cost and the longer length of treatment offered. One customer who used SDC to correct minor teeth crowding said that the treatment "worked really well" and improved her appearance and confidence.

But, Jamie isn't alone. Hundreds of SDC users around the world have shared negative experiences on social media and dozens of users and dentists we spoke to detailed issues ranging from aligners fitting poorly to permanent nerve damage and tooth loss.

Dentist Dr Victoria Sampson says users may underestimate the force aligners put on teeth. If decay or gum disease is missed in a physical check-up, people risk losing some of their teeth.

She says she has treated someone who lost their front tooth after using the aligners because they moved her teeth too quickly, skewing her bite. The roots of the patient's teeth were too short to withstand the pressure from aligners, which would have been picked up in an X-ray.

According to UK dental associations, 3D scans and DIY teeth moulds used in remote orthodontics are not sufficient for approving aligners.

"You want to create a beautiful smile, but you also want to create a healthy smile," says Dr Anjali Patel at the British Orthodontic Society. The results could be "disastrous" if the teeth aren't monitored properly.

The British Dental Association's Dr Eddie Crouch is concerned SDC customers are being left to decide whether to go ahead with treatment without the right information.

The BBC showed Dr Crouch three SDC plans - a 3D interactive image of teeth that maps how they could move during treatment - presented to potential customers. He said two showed visible signs of gum disease, meaning the aligners could "loosen the teeth sufficiently

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Compiled by: Yusuf Omar Hindi

## Dentists warn of permanent damage from clear braces ordered online



to cause tooth loss". The third plan, if accepted, he said, could leave that person with an unstable bite.

SDC says it is the user's "responsibility to see a dentist" and receive a clean bill of health for their teeth and gums within six months of starting treatment. Potential risks for patients, including nerve damage, gum disease and tooth loss are also listed.

However, patients don't have to provide proof they have seen a dentist, and under contracts they sign are fully responsible for damage.

SDC says its affiliated dentists and orthodontists are entirely responsible and accountable for the treatment they provide. There is no clinical evidence an office visit is necessary for the same level of care, it adds.

However, customers expecting the same level of care as those getting traditional braces "aren't fully informed of what they're buying into," says Dr Anjali Patel.

Few orthodontists would provide an assessment for remote treatment they don't oversee: "You have no control over what's going to happen next".

Non-disclosure contracts Some of the users we spoke to who experienced damage have been asked to sign non-disclosure agreements to receive full or partial refunds.

Patients are requested to sign a confidentiality clause when they seek refunds outside of their refund policy, which is in line with standard industry practices, SDC says.

The General Dental Council (GDC), responsible for regulating UK dentists, says there is no effective substitute for an in person clinical examination, which should take place before treatment is prescribed. It urges consumers to consult its **guidelines**.

However, Dr Crouch of the BDA believes such guidelines are insufficient compared with "rules and regulation to protect patients". Otherwise, dentists will be left picking up the pieces when "patients have undergone wholly inappropriate treatment".

The UK's health watchdog, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) announced last summer any company providing remote orthodontic services will have to register with it.

Nearly two years on from his first

treatment plan Jamie has stopped wearing his Smile Direct Club aligners.

He was persuaded to try a fresh 3D scan for better-fitting new aligners, but that didn't work for him, he says. After months of negotiation he has received a full refund, but not without signing a contract that prohibits him from "creating a negative impression" of SDC's "business reputation".

"It's my naivety, I should have known that [plan] was far too quick."

In traditional dentistry, train-track braces and clear aligners are fitted by dentists and orthodontists themselves, or a trained orthodontic therapist, after an in-person consultation.

The health of the hard and soft tissues of the mouth, the teeth and gums, and whether the roots of the teeth can sustain movement, are some of the factors dentists consider. X-rays are instrumental in this process.

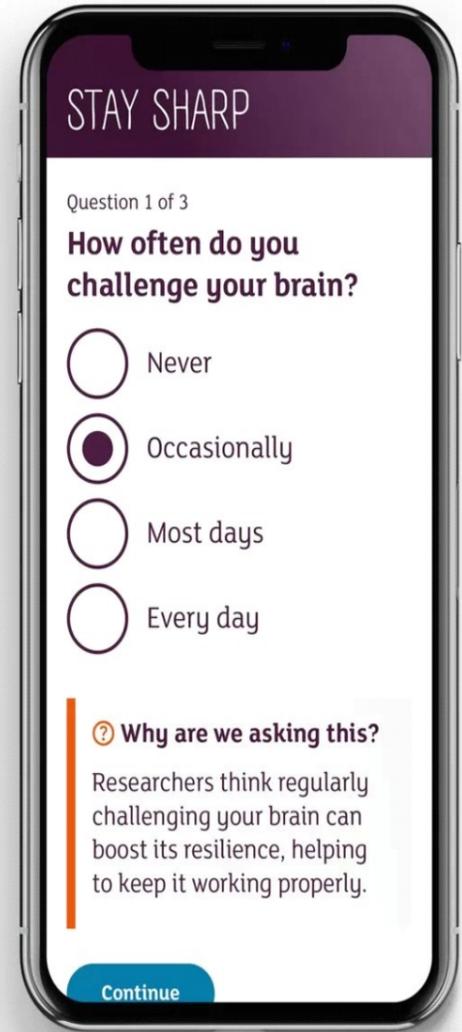
Once someone starts wearing braces, regular appointments allow dentists to monitor how teeth are moving and to spot and address complications.

SDC's website says users will "have regular virtual check-ins" with a UK-registered dentist "remotely from beginning to end" - but Jamie says he was not once connected to the dentist overseeing him or told to see a dentist about his issues.

Customer service eventually put him in touch with a "dental expert" via web chat, who said the issues were normal and would subside. It's unclear what qualifications are required for this role.

Dental disruptor Jamie was encouraged to continue wearing the aligners.

## Dementia: Brain check-up tool aims to cut risk at any age



People of all ages are being encouraged to do more to look after their brains to try to reduce their dementia risk.

A new brain check-up tool from Alzheimer's Research UK offers tips on staying sharp, keeping active and connecting with others.

Getting regular hearing checks in your 40s and 50s is one way to prevent social isolation, it says.

But most cases of dementia cannot be prevented, so early detection and better treatments are still vital.

Research suggests there are 12 risk factors for dementia which, if modified, could stop four in 10 people developing memory loss, confusion and communication problems.

Advice based on these risk factors

is to stop smoking, do regular exercise, cut back on alcohol and challenge your brain - and it is never too early or too late to start doing it, experts say.

Anyone can take the brain check, which has been based on the latest research, to find out how to lower their individual chances of dementia.

But it is particularly aimed at adults aged 40-50 because this is seen to be an important window for taking action to look after brain health.

Prof Jonathan Schott, chief medical officer at the charity, said it would "provide a practical and easy means to allow people to take action to reduce their risk of dementia".

But he said only a third of people realised that was possible, which needed changing.

## Covid: Half a million people missed out on heart drugs

During the pandemic, nearly half a million people in the UK missed out on starting medication to help prevent heart attacks and strokes, a new study suggests.

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) team looked at prescribing data for the first 18 months after Covid hit.

Some 491,000 people - 27,000 a month - appear to have missed out on blood pressure pills.

And 316,000 did not get treatment to lower their cholesterol.

The team says more needs to be done to make sure that anyone who needs treatment gets it.

During the pandemic, normal NHS services were severely disrupted.

For example, there was a reduction in diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of high blood pressure, and other heart and circulation disease risk factors.

Although the NHS took action, including providing more than 220,000 blood pressure monitors for people to use at home, data shows two million fewer people in England were recorded as having controlled hypertension in 2021 compared to the previous year.

The BHF researchers analysed 1.32

billion records of routinely dispensed prescriptions in England, Scotland and Wales, from April 2018 to July 2021.

Lead investigator Prof Reecha Sofat, who is based at the University of Liverpool, said the findings, published in the journal Nature Medicine, highlight the impact Covid has had on other important health conditions: "Despite the incredible work done by NHS staff, our data show that we're still not identifying people with cardiovascular risk factors at the same rate as we were before the pandemic."

She said it was more than just a blip, and it would take time to catch up.

"The NHS has already taken important and positive steps towards identifying people with high blood pressure as early as possible.

"However, we need this focus to be sustained in the long term to prevent any increase in heart attacks and strokes which will add to a healthcare system already under extreme pressure."

Dr Sonya Babu-Narayan, Associate Medical Director at the British Heart Foundation and consultant cardiologist, said: "Yet again we're seeing clear evidence of the major disruption to healthcare people in the UK experienced

during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"But it's not too late to limit the damage. These findings demonstrate how getting heart healthcare back on track can curb the additional strain that untreated risk factors - such as high blood pressure - would otherwise place on the NHS."

Heart risk factors Some factors - like older age - are unavoidable, but others can be managed:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Physical activity
- Adam Toms was 47 when he suffered a stroke in 2015. He had undiagnosed and untreated high blood pressure.
- Now 54 and living in north-west London, Mr Toms said: "You can appear completely healthy, and it can just happen. then you've got a whole lot of adaptations to make. I was never ill but then bang, everything changed - my whole world changed.
- "My father and my brother had high blood pressure. The connection wasn't made.
- "I always associated a stroke with somebody who is 70, 75 plus.

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