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The Minister of Information lays foundation stone for ministry's Togdeer headquarters

The center is being reconstructed and to be operational for the first time in 33 years



By M.A.Egge
The Minister of the Ministry of Information, Culture and National Guidance Hon. Ali Hassan Mohamed (Ali Mareehaan), has at last officially laid the foundation stone for long needed center of the Ministry of Information in Burao, Togdeer region. The city had no information center given that its dilapidated building has

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The "One Somalia" perception is to the detriment of the regional security, says DFM Rooda Jama



By M.A. Egge
The Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Somaliland Hon. Rooda Jama Elmi has underscored the fact that Somaliland attaches

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Ministry conducts PAYE taxation training for income tax officials



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The Director General of the Ministry of Finance of Somaliland Mr. Hussein

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Interior minister receives the new United Nations Representative in Somaliland



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The Minister of Interior Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed received in his office the new representative of the United Nations office in Somaliland who arrived in the country.

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Chief Justice in crucial meeting with the justice sector

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The Chief Justice who is also the President of the Supreme Court of



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The Biden administration is propping up a sclerotic, untrustworthy regime in Somalia- J. Peter Pham



Why is the current administration so stubbornly bent on propping up a sclerotic, untrustworthy regime in Somalia with little legitimacy and even less effectiveness?

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Minister Buuhane lauds national schools extermination council for lending credence to the sector



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All three official political parties have set aside conflicts and geared for smooth elections, says UCID Chairman



By M.A. Egge
Somaliland's political parties, UCID, KULMIYE and WADDANI, held a tripartite meeting in Hargeisa, and the

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The Minister of Information lays foundation stone for ministry's Togdeer headquarters



professional needs will help in facilitating both public and private media correspondents of the region as a whole to go about their duties. He said, "Today we are at a wonderful developmental event, we are laying the foundation stone for the center of the Ministry of Information in Togdeer region, which will have a new modern building, consisting of 5 office rooms and a meeting hall. It will be a comprehensively well equipped information studio".

He continued, "For the last 33 years, this building has not been operational, it is dilapidated, and the Ministry of Information has had its regional headquarters in a two-roomed leased building in town, but now here we are building a modern building as our headquarters in the region".

not been in use for over three decades.

The groundbreaking ceremony this week was attended by the local regional and district administration officials, parliamentarians, civic councilors and other dignitaries and of course, the members of the

media fraternity operating in Burao. The new center will consist of 5 offices, a hall and a courtyard with a perimeter fence.

Upon laying the foundation stone, the minister noted that the new ultra modern building which would be fully furnished as per cues of

All three official political parties have set aside conflicts and geared for smooth elections, says UCID Chairman



meeting discussed the issues of preparation for the elections and how all stakeholders could have the same view on the ongoing activities and the draft items that need to be completed.

The meeting was attended by most of the leaders and officials from the three parties led by the Chairman of the KULMIYE Party, who is the Minister of Internal Affairs Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed, Chairman of the UCID Party Eng. Faisal Ali Warabe and Deputy Chairman of WADDANI party.

UCID party chairman Eng. Faisal Ali Warabe, who shared the points they discussed with the media, said that they agreed that the interests of the nation should be taken care of, that free and fair elections should be held, and that any disagreements that arise should not be discussed

in the media.

He said, "We have agreed to have a united front for the common good and interest of the nation, to have a smoothly clean, free and fair election, avoid conflicts and any disagreements that arise should not be passed on to the media but addressed through a standing ethical committee such that the populaces may not be divided or polarized".

He noted that they have had the understandings that hate speeches or malice should not be disseminated but they urged for sobriety.

In the same breath, the UCID chair said that the message they had for the nation was that conflicting and thorny differences has been addressed and put and set aside and that they have joined hands to pave for the best way forward.

The "One Somalia" perception is to the detriment of the regional security, says DFM Rooda Jama

great importance to the safety and protection of international trade goods passing through the Gulf of Aden, especially with precarious commodities such as oil and gas being ferried that ought to be insulated from piracy attacks and terrorism.

She warned that if the world neglects Somaliland, there will be negative consequences affecting the Horn of Africa region hence would be in peril of stability.

The deputy FM highlighted the fact in a post she wrote this week on her X (Twitter), criticizing what is perceived to be the idea of "One Somalia" which undermines the peaceful stability and democratic aspirations of Somaliland hence only shrouds its efforts and capabilities of pacifying its marines, to the detriment of the smooth traffic flow in the Bab el Mandab gulf of the Red Sea.

In the contrary, she noted, Somalia has time and again failed to contain the piracy and terrorism menace in its own backyard.

She gave the latest example of the most recent ship attacked in its



territories by its own people as an unabated trend that has been going on for the past 17 years without being curtailed or put in check.

An Indian merchant ship hijacked by Somali pirates earlier this month saw the Indian navy storm it and apprehend 35 Somali pirate who were immediately whisked off to Mumbai to stand trial.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs called on the world to recognize Somaliland to strengthen the fight against piracy and terrorism and for the Republic of Somaliland

to play a role in stabilizing the region in the Horn of Africa.

Hon. Rooda Jama urged the countries of the international community who are interested in the importance of the Bab el Mandab strip to change their policies and take steps to have an effective relationship based on mutual interest with the Republic of Somaliland and to ensure the recognition of its independence for the better of the future.

She warned that if the world neglects Somaliland, there will be negative consequences affecting the Horn of Africa region.

Interior minister receives the new United Nations Representative in Somaliland



The Minister of Internal Affairs JSL, Mr. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed had a meeting yesterday in his office with Nikolai Rogosaroff who is the new Representative of the United Nations

Office in the Republic of Somaliland.

The purpose of the meeting was to get to know each other.

The new representative was accompanied by his predecessor Simon Strachen.

The Minister of Interior was accompanied by the Mayor of Hargeisa Abdikarim Ahmed Mooge and Director General of the Ministry of Interior Mohamed Yusuf Ismail amongst other officials.

The United Nations supports Somaliland in terms of

development, and there is a strong relationship between Somaliland and the United Nations.

The new representative of the United Nations office in Somaliland is expected to start his work in Hargeisa, and he will hold various meetings with the country's officials to discuss the work ahead.

On his part, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Somaliland, Mohamed Kahin Ahmed, warmly welcomed the new representative of the United Nations office in Somaliland to the country

Ministry conducts PAYE taxation training for income tax officials



Osman (Mu'adinka) graced the commencement of a training session for officials of the income tax department, precisely on pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) taxes methodologies.

The two-day training got the participants appraised on the technical methodologies of taxing employees through PAYE system. The DG said that it was necessary to maintain such trainings and get

its knowledge even if it was imperative and warrants obtaining the skill from abroad.

He said that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are working together with the treasury department to secure the total number of employers and employees in the country hence have the ministry be privy to the contracts thereof for the sake of obtaining the PAYE taxes.

Chief Justice in crucial meeting with the justice sector



Somaliland, Hon. Adam Haji Ali Ahmed, held a crucial meeting to

bolster and strengthen the services that the diverse sectors of the judiciary and prosecution dispense. Apart from the Chief Justice and the Attorney General Abdirahman Jama Hayaan, Attorney General Abdisamad Omar Maal, the meeting was attended by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice, Ismail Suleiman Bowkah, Chairman of the Law Review Committee Mohamud Hussein Farah, judges of the Supreme Court, members of the Justice

Committee, the chairmen of the Court of Appeal of Maaroodi-jeh, the Regional Court of Maaroodi-jeh, the District Court of Hargeisa, some of the deputies of the Attorney General, the officials of the SOLLA Bar Association and the prosecutors and lawyers operating in the Maroodi-jeeh. Major issue on focus was the stepping up of the services especially on inter-departmental working relations and the general bolstering of the services for the nation.

Education minister in morale-boosting visit to girls' teacher training college



By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Education and Science Hon. Dr Ahmed Adan Buuhane visited the girls' teachers training college in a bid to boost their morale in asserting the importance of the course for the nation. He held a conference hall meeting with the students where the principal and the college's staff were present as he parleyed with them at length. The minister said that it was a

success for the ministry that 120 girls are specially trained as teachers, and that they hope in the future to meet the needs of female teachers in the country's schools. It is the first time that the Ministry of Education and Science has taken 120 girls to be trained as teachers, which are intended to educate and teach young students in primary schools in the country.

Minister Buuhane lauds national schools extermination council for lending credence to the sector

By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Education Hon. Dr. Ahmed Adan Buuhane has lauded the national examinations council for doing a tremendous job in seeing it that the caliber of the secondary school graduates is at par with acceptable international standards and is recognized. The minister gave the sentiments as he briefed the permanent Standing Committee of the Somaliland Senate led by in Hon. Dayib Hassan Ahmed. The minister stated that students who have completed their secondary schools examination were admitted to institutions of higher learning in all neighbouring countries as far as in the Sudan and beyond. He noted that the recognition and acknowledgment of the country's national schools' certificate is evidenced in even the US itself. He emphasized that such reputable fete is due to the diligence of the council charged with the task who



"should be in act lauded for the achievement" especially under the leadership of Chairman Daud Ahmed Farah. Hon. Buuhane revealed that they have already absorbed this year 120 women teachers into training for teachers' course and are currently in college in Daboloq. He further emphasized that the ministry would step up educational services to the marginal pastoral pupils and students whose families are largely nomadic. The ministered underscored the fact that arid boarding facilities are abundant hence the department

always supported it by supplying them with foodstuffs. He similarly disclosed that resuscitation of polytechnic centers is a main focus of the ministry. Saying that while one is already underway in Hargeisa, through the sponsorship of the GIZ hence about to be completed, the minister pointed out that the other one is in Burao facilitated by King Salmaan Foundation. He said that this year will see twenty thousand students sitting for the annual exams which will have its invigilation further fortified by local universities institutions.

Ministry of ICT and GIZ partner to enhance technological innovation and support local startups



By Goth Mohamed Goth

In a significant development for the tech ecosystem in Somaliland, the Somaliland Innovation Zone under the Ministry of ICT recently hosted a delegation from the German development agency GIZ. The Ministry of Communication and Technology of Somaliland officials met with the GIZ Agency director of projects on Wednesday at the ministry headquarters. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange information on how to forge and enhance close working cooperation between the Ministry & the German Aid Agency in the areas of development programs and technology innovation, which is

necessary today in every aspect of development. Following fruitful discussions, both parties have agreed to collaborate closely on various technological aspects to foster innovation and growth in the region. The meeting marked a pivotal moment as key stakeholders from both organizations explored opportunities to leverage each other's strengths and expertise. The partnership aims to drive technological innovation, support local startups, and enhance the digital infrastructure in Somaliland.

Police chief meets with line international organization on cooperation



By M.A. Egge

The Chief Commander of the National Police Force Major General Mohamed Adan Saqadi, met with the General Command of the Police Force and the heads of the line international organization. The meeting between the police chief and the organizations was

attended by the leadership of the police training division, senior commanding officers and the head of international relations. The Somaliland police chief gave a detailed report on the activities of the police force, and urged them to always show their efforts and cooperation to the police forces, and

thanked them for responding to their calls. There was also a discussion about the acceleration and strengthening of cooperation between the agencies and the Somaliland Police Force, and how to bolster further the full support they always give.

Three Days Training for the National Insurance Agency employees Concludes

By Goth Mohamed Goth

On Wednesday, the Director General of the National Insurance Agency closed a three-day training for the employees of the National Insurance Agency.

The purpose of the training was to develop and improve the knowledge of National Insurance Agency employees on the Basics of Insurance and in the field of insurance management.

This training was in the presentation of knowledge and study methods facilitated by the Director of Human resources, Mr. Ahmed Nuuh Abdurrahman, Director of the Sustainability and Development of Insurance, Mr. Ahmed Abdi Kahin and the Director of Legal Affairs, Mr. Jawhar Abdurrahman Abdisalaan.



50 programs from the 2023 Somaliland Economic Forum Report to be implemented in 2024



By Goth Mohamed Goth

The Economic Committee of the Somaliland Government Cabinet, together with the Directors General of Ministries and Economic Institutions, held an important meeting at the Ministry of Energy and Minerals on Thursday. In the meeting, 50 projects selected from

the report of the Somaliland Economic Forum Conference II, which took place at the end of last year, were approved.

50 programs from the 2023 Somaliland Economic Forum Report got the green light for implementation in 2024.

It has been specially recognized that the acceleration and

implementation of these projects will be fruitful, with the General Directors being mandated to effectively manage the acceleration and implementation of these projects, in order to ensure continuous economic and social development.

This is a crucial step forward for Somaliland's economic growth and development.

The Consensus of the Parties Leads Somaliland to the Implementation of the Elections, says Chairman of SONSAP



By M.A. Egge

The chairman of the umbrella of civil society organizations, SONSAP, Mr. Anwar Abdirahman Warsame, welcomed the recent meetings held by Somaliland parties describing them as a positive way-forward.

He pointed out that the roundtable inter-party meetings were necessary to guide the country towards the elections for the presidency and political parties scheduled for November 24th at the end of this year 2024.

The chairman of SONSAP said this in a statement he issued and published on their Facebook website. It read as follows:-

"The meeting and the understanding reached by the national political parties in the last few days is one that reflects the interest of the nation and is based on the facts and circumstantial needs in Somaliland today, hence is an important step that will ultimately lead the country to

elections held on time.

"I once again congratulate the national political parties for showing patriotism and courage, underlining once again that the only way Somaliland can move forward is through dialogue, listening, persuasion and unity.

"I hope that the processes of the elections will be completed, so that the country can overcome the controversy of the elections that has been going on for a long time." End.

Over 58 mln people face food insecure in Greater Horn of Africa: report



Some 58.1 million people are acutely food insecure in the Greater Horn of Africa region, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) said in a joint report released on Tuesday. FAO and IGAD said out of the number, 30.5 million were from six of the eight IGAD member states namely Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The other 27.6 million people were from Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and

"High levels of acute food insecurity persisted in various parts of the region following El Nino-induced heavy rains and flooding during the 2023 October-December rainfall season, particularly in the Horn of Africa, compounded by ongoing conflicts, widespread displacement, and long-standing macroeconomic challenges," the institutions noted.

The bulk of those who are food insecure (23.4 million) are in DR Congo, followed by Sudan at 17.7 million and South Sudan at 4 million, according to FAO and IGAD.

The food crisis in Sudan

Tanzania.

Why is BBC Somali Repetitively disseminating Stale News which Happened two months ago?

walac laga qabo hananka maamulka hawada ayaa
 14 Febraayo 2024
 Ilo ka tirsan ha'yadda duulista rayidka Soomaaliya ayaa BBC-da u sheegay in Soomaaliland ay qaaday dhawr tallaabo oo ay ka mid yihiin in ay shiday qalabka VHF oo ah mid loo isticmaalo in lagula xariiro diyaaradaha maraya hawada Soomaaliya kaas oo horey u yaallay magaalada Hargaysa.
 Inkasta oo qalabkaasi muddo yaallay garoonka magaalada Hargaysa, ayay sheegeysaa xogtu in uusan ahyan mid la isticmaalo waxaana diyaaradaha laga xariir jiray midka yaalla garoonka Aadan Cabdulle ee Muqdisho.
 Qalabka VHF ayaa Soomaaliland uu suurtagaliyay in ay xariir la sameeysay diyaarado marayay hawada Soomaaliya, oo ay ka mid yihiin diyaarada Qatar Airways iyo kuwa kale.
 Dhanka Hargeysa ayaa warar aan ka helayno



Guled. A. Mahir
 BBC Somali Service aired news about Somaliland Aiports Authority about one and half months ago. unfortunately, the said news organization has for the past fortnight repeatedly propagated the same stale news to tarnish Somaliland's reputation.

The BBC Somali Service posted on its Facebook page on 26th March 2024 at about 6:45 pm. This stale news was first published on 14th February 2024 for Somalia's federal government. News aired by BBC Somali about two months ago has continued

being uploaded on its social media handles to spread anti-Somaliland propaganda. Needless to say, BBC media services are unaware of their Somali Service lack of impartiality and have continuously spewed hatred and libelous news about Somaliland and its people.

Somaliland Aviation Authority says Emirates and Ethiopian Airlines Planes Nearly Collide Over Somali airspace



Somaliland Aviation Authority reports The Emirates UAE722 and Ethiopian Airline flight ETH690 barely missed a collision at 37,000 feet on March 24, 2024, at 12:43 AM East Africa Time. A harrowing near-miss occurred when Mogadishu Control gave both aircraft erroneous directives to meet at the same time & location. **The following statement was issued today by the Somaliland Aviation Authority** On the night of Sunday, March 24, 2024, around 12:43 in East Africa, an Emirates Airways flight UAE722 flying at an altitude of 37,000ft. and an Ethiopian Airlines

flight ETH690 at an altitude of 37,000ft almost collided. after Mogadishu Control gave these two planes the same time and place where they were meeting. A few minutes before the collision, the efforts made by the Somaliland Air Traffic Controllers and the pilot of the Ethiopian Airlines caused the pilot to quickly change his altitude and climb to 39000ft. Not only that, the air traffic controllers in Mogadishu (Mogadishu Controllers) regularly make mistakes like these, which are a threat to the safety of international flights.

The Republic of Somaliland is highly skilled in managing the planes flying in its airspace with enough service they need, while always correcting the mistakes made by Mogadishu, those mistakes can lead to huge disasters. We share with international agencies and the whole world that the stubbornness and lack of knowledge seen in the Mogadishu Tower is a threat to the safety of the air. Here you can listen to the controller in Mogadishu reprimanding and blaming the pilot, saying why did you take the order from someone else.

Over 58 mln people face food insecure in Greater Horn of Africa: report

worsened as armed conflict spilled over to new areas, including the south-east states, interrupting agricultural activities, such as main season harvesting and winter wheat growing," the institutions said. They noted that besides the food crisis, the Greater Horn of Africa region is grappling with multiple disease outbreaks, among them cholera, malaria, dengue and measles. The European Union said Tuesday it has provided an initial 185.6 million U.S. dollars to address humanitarian needs in the Greater Horn of Africa region. "People in the Horn of Africa are facing mounting humanitarian needs as the region is plagued by multiple conflicts, climate

extremes and economic shocks. Around 65 million are estimated to be in immediate need of assistance," the EU said in a statement. The Horn of Africa is expected to experience heavy rains between March and May, the latest forecast by IGAD's Climate Prediction Center shows, meaning the food crisis may continue in some countries due to flooding. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, at least 479 people were killed, and more than 5.2 million people were affected by El Nino-induced floods between October and December 2023 in Kenya, Somalia, Uganda, Burundi and Ethiopia.

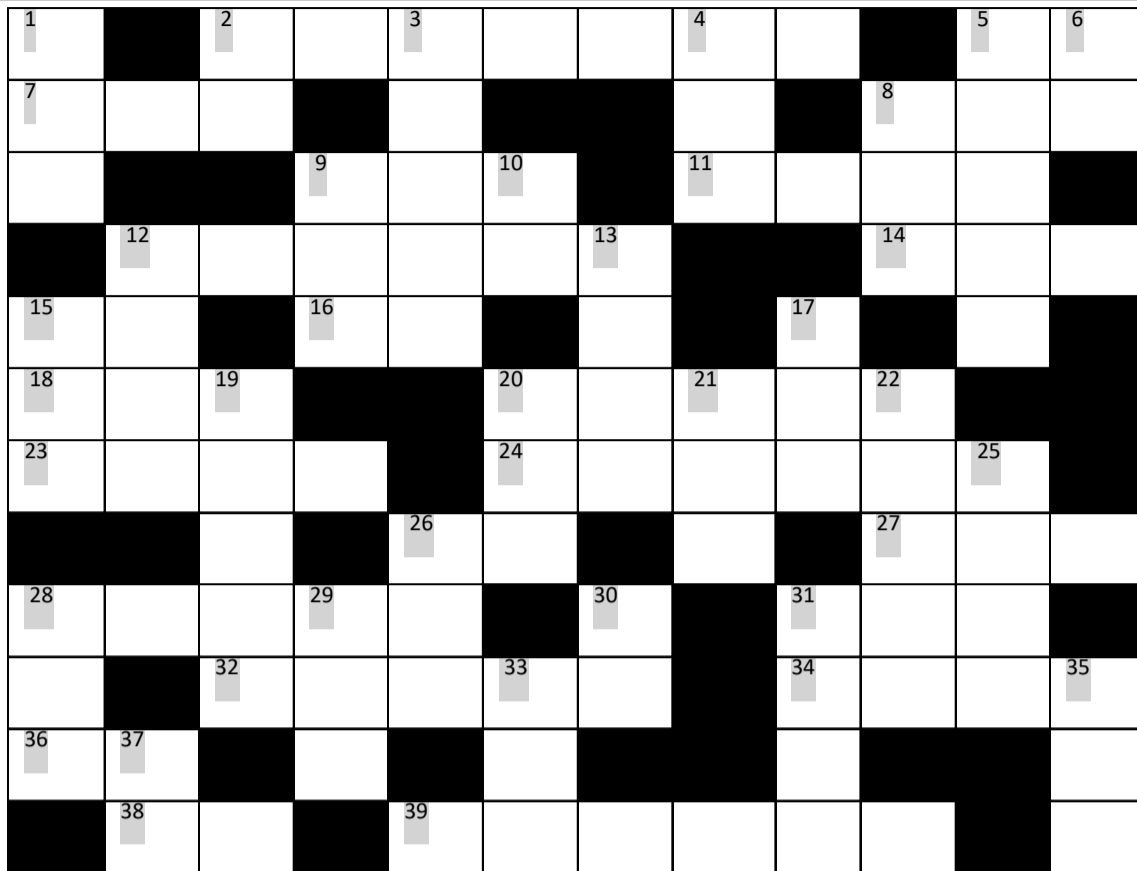
At least six killed in al-Shabab attack in Kenya's border region



At least six Kenyans were killed Friday when al-Shabab terrorists raided a border town, police and government officials said. The police reported that one person sustained a serious bullet wound when the militants launched the attack in Dhobley town in Garissa County near the Kenya-Somalia border. The victims, Kenyans from the Meru region, were targeted because of their perceived religious affiliations during the

morning attack, said Ali Manduku, a local county commissioner. "All six are Kenyans who have been doing business along the borderline," Manduku said on the phone. Witnesses said they were all shot at close range. The al-Shabab group sought to assert its authority along the border region between Kenya and Somalia. Police have increased their operations in the area, thwarting dozens of planned attacks.

THT Puzzle



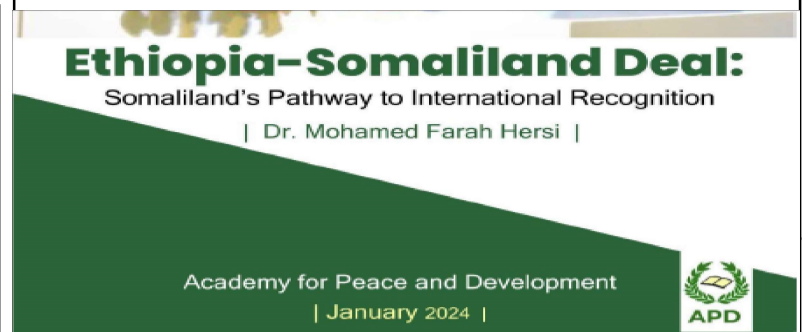
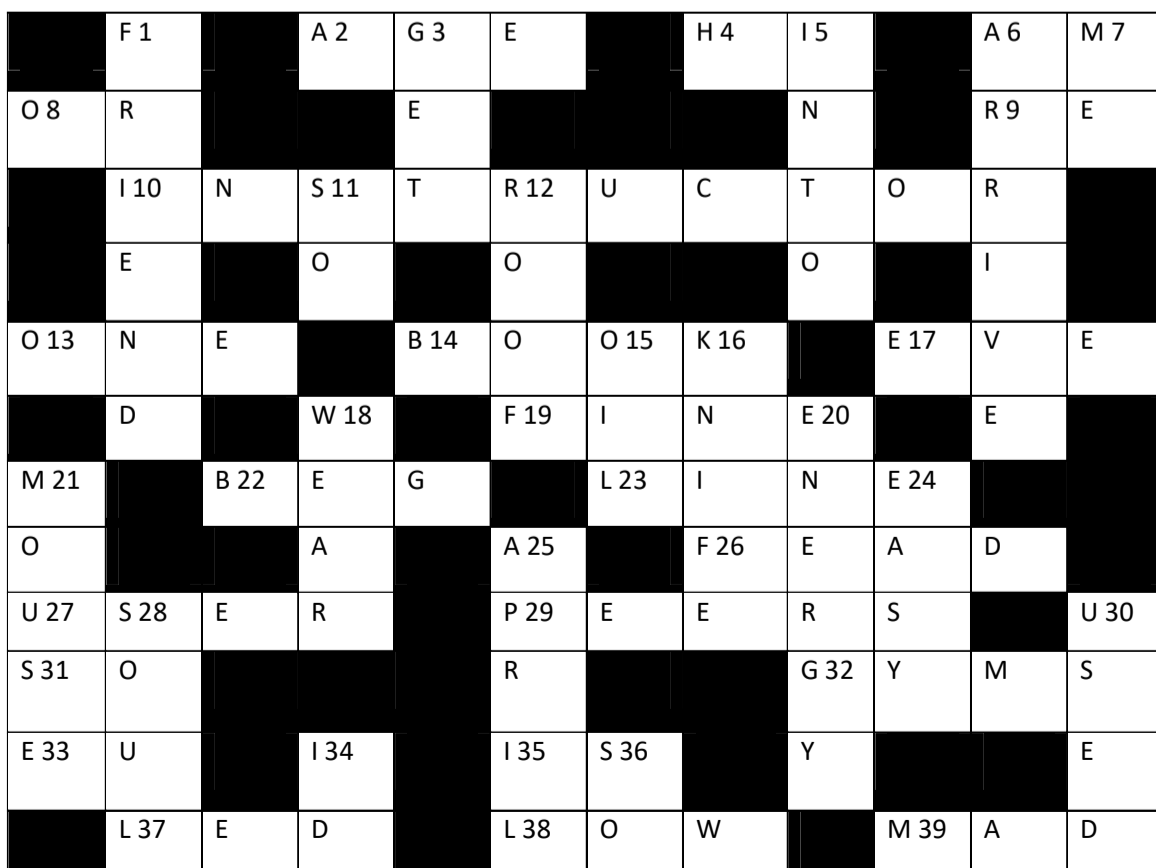
DOWN

- 1 Atmosphere
- 2 identification
- 3 Additional
- 4 Instantly
- 5 Entire
- 6 Proceeding
- 8 Be seated
- 9 Saying
- 10 power systems opposite of AC
- 12 Space
- 13 Alarm uses cars or lorries
- 15 A well known Islamic boxer
- 17 Place something
- 19 Creation
- 20 Firearm
- 21 Lubricant
- 22 Peacetime
- 25 Insult
- 26 Personal or private
- 28 Increase addition
- 29 Cereal
- 30 Remain
- 31 Zone
- 33 Container
- 35 Attempt
- 37 on time

ACROSS

- 1 immediate
- 5 toward
- 7 Child
- 8 Youngster
- 9 Unhappy
- 11 Postponement
- 12 Look for/ explore
- 14 knock or touch point
- 15 By the side of
- 16 pronoun
- 18 Rule
- 20 Assembly
- 23 Steely
- 24 Combined
- 26 Scheduled or preposition place or time
- 27 Assistance
- 28 Permit
- 31 Donkey
- 32 Disco
- 34 Time out
- 36 Perform or ensuring
- 39 Twelve-monthly

Previous Answer



(Part 09)

At the regional level, alliances may realign, with Somaliland, Ethiopia, and the UAE forming a bloc against a possible alliance between Somalia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Egypt. Within such a regional formation, Somaliland's role as a viable, credible and important geopolitical actor will become more visible, providing it with an opportunity to be granted a voice at certain regional organizations, both in the Arab world and Africa. It is possible that Somaliland may be granted an observer status at the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the AU, allowing it to participate in discussions regarding the future of the Horn of Africa's regional dynamics, including by helping to negotiate regional governance and security architecture able to manage political change in a peaceful and mutually prosperous manner.

6.2 Scenario II: Somalia and its Allies Win the Diplomatic War

Under this scenario, the international consensus tips in Somalia's favor, with Arab countries being particularly influential in backing Somalia's conception of its territorial integrity. Without either the backing or tacit acceptance of the United States, European Union, United Kingdom, China, and Saudi to the contents of the Ethio-Somaliland MoU, it is unlikely that the deal will be implemented. In this event, Ethiopia may be forced to reconsider its position and withdraw from the deal, further isolating Somaliland.

However, while international actors have long subordinated the issue of Somaliland's status to its state building and anti-AS missions in Somalia, attitudes are starting to change. Not only is patience and financial support for Somalia's stalled efforts at self-governance running out, but there is also a growing recognition of the importance of the Red Sea, which has shifted the locus of gravity ever more towards Somaliland. As such, with the exception of those global powers who explicitly fear a strong Ethiopia, such as Egypt, it is likely that most of the international community will follow the lead of Ethiopia, and thus pursue a solution to the Ethiopia-Somalia dispute that accommodates its desire to access the sea through Somaliland, even if it means taking Somaliland's independence claims seriously.

6.3 Scenario III: Internal Disagreements between Ethiopia and Somaliland Undermine the MoU

Even if Ethiopia and Somaliland are able to navigate external resistance to the MoU, the two parties to the agreement also face internal hurdles that could potentially obstruct a successful outcome. On the one hand, it seems that distance still remains between the two parties over what the recent MoU means for the Berbera port, and whether any commercial port made under full Ethiopian control might cut into Ethiopia's usage of Berbera port. Additionally, much will depend on the seriousness with which Ethiopia carries out its pledge to support Somaliland's recognition, which is a much more uncertain and complicated process than the building of commercial and military infrastructure. Third, much will depend upon the financial support that Ethiopia is able to obtain for carrying out this significant investment in infrastructure. Lastly, domestic politics in each country will also play a significant factor, with the various antagonisms between Abiy

Ahmed's government and the Tigrayan and Amhara communities serving as a constant source of instability and distraction, while Somaliland has seen opposition to the deal among certain constituencies and political groupings, even if the general atmosphere is one of overwhelming hopeful expectation regarding the potential for international recognition.

7. The Way Forward

In light of the above analysis, the following main recommendations can help guide the implementation of the MoU between Somaliland and Ethiopia.

Adherence to the agreed stipulations the MoU: The primary objective of the MoU is to provide sea access to Ethiopia through lease arrangements while acknowledging Somaliland's sovereignty. The two vital national interests of Ethiopia and Somaliland remain unchanged, and diplomatic engagement aimed at dialogue with Somalia will not alter these dynamics. As such, any diplomatic engagement by the parties and the international community in the aftermath of the agreement is not to alter the content, but to build such an agreement into a new governance framework for regional integration, one that recognizes Somaliland as an equal partner and which reinforces Ethiopia as a key maritime player. Furthermore, it is crucial for both parties to conduct the process transparently and the final

To be continue next week

The Biden administration is propping up a sclerotic, untrustworthy regime in Somalia- J. Peter Pham

Writing in this forum, Tibor P. Nagy, Jr. and Joshua Meservey made an eloquent case for why the agreement granting Ethiopia—the world's most populous landlocked country—naval access on Somaliland's 740-kilometer coastline "has the potential to benefit the entire Horn of Africa region, Egypt, and the security of the Red Sea." If such is the case, why are some of the harshest criticisms of the deal coming from the U.S. government, with National Security Council director of strategic communications John Kirby describing the White House as "troubled" by it? The Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs also reiterated the State Department's support for "Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Alas, the case is another example of the foreign policy bureaucracy entrenching policy that is not only decidedly not in America's interests but also appears hopelessly detached from any political realism. Realpolitik must start with the facts. Somaliland was a British Protectorate that became independent on June 26, 1960 and received immediate recognition from three dozen states, including a congratulatory message from U.S. Secretary of State Christian Herter. Five days later, the former Italian colony-cum-trust territory of Somalia received independence, and the two newly independent countries attempted a union that was so botched that it might have qualified for farce if the subsequent human toll had not made it tragic. As even the African Union Commission has acknowledged on two separate occasions, "The fact that the union between Somaliland and Somalia was never ratified and also malfunctioned when it went into action from 1960 to 1990 makes Somaliland's search for recognition historically unique and self-justified in African political history. Objectively viewed, the case should not be linked to 'opening a Pandora's box'" [italics in the original].

Since the de facto breakup between Somaliland and Somalia more than three decades ago, the two have gone along very different paths. Somaliland has largely succeeded in maintaining peace and security in its claimed territory and establishing a stable government based on one-person-one-vote elections. Unusual for the region, Somaliland's incumbent presidents have been defeated at the polls, and the political opposition now holds the majority of seats in the legislature. Somalia, on the other hand, has undergone extended periods where its territory has been a haven for pirates and terrorists. Its so-called government can best be



described as coopted, and the last election even approximating a "free and fair" contest with universal suffrage took place in 1969.

Given this context, there is no scenario remotely moored to reality under which the 5.7 million people in Somaliland—the majority of whom were born after Somaliland proclaimed its renewed independence in 1991 and have never lived under the "administration" of Somalia—would conceivably opt for a new union. Mogadishu's claim to legitimacy could only be brought about by force, unleashing the conflict and bloodshed critics of the Ethiopia-Somaliland deal wish to avoid.

In fact, between the collapse of the Siad Barre dictatorship in early 1991 and the second term of the Obama administration, the United States did not recognize any government of Somalia until 2013. In 2010, a brief before the U.S. Supreme Court by then-Solicitor General Elena Kagan even went as far as to specify that while the United States supported "the efforts of the TFG [Transitional Federal Government] to establish a viable central government," it "does not recognize the TFG as the sovereign government of Somalia." Although the legal brief did not delve into detail, there were well-grounded strategic and international legal reasons for the United States' position.

First, sovereignty carries with it not only rights but also obligations, many of which, notwithstanding the Obama administration's 2013 facile recognition, the unelected regime in Mogadishu still struggles to meet in any meaningful sense. The Chief of the General Staff of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, Field Marshal Berhanu Jula, underscored this point in an Addis Standard interview: "the Ethiopian military controls around 60 percent of Somalia's land mass," enabling the so-called government to stay in Mogadishu, and that "if the Ethiopian Army were to withdraw,

[he] doubted that the federal government would remain."

Second, while recognition of the ineffectual regime in Mogadishu adds little to the fight against terrorism, without it, the United States and other allies in the effort would have a freer hand.

Third, the extent to which the Mogadishu regime and its forces are themselves penetrated by terrorists and other extremists is a subject deserving separate treatment. Somalia's cabinet includes ministers like Mukhtar Robow (aka Abu Mansur), onetime deputy leader of the Al Qaeda-linked Al-Shabaab terrorist group (he left after losing a power struggle but has never renounced his ideological commitments) who once had a \$5 million bounty on his head now rescinded at Mogadishu's request. The security forces have also repeatedly proven susceptible to penetration and even cooptation by extremists. This past weekend's attack by Al Shabaab gunmen on the SYL hotel in the most heavily fortified part of Mogadishu, close to the presidential compound, once again raised uncomfortable questions about the extent to which the regime's security apparatus has been compromised.

Beyond its effectiveness, there is ample reason to be concerned about the Mogadishu regime's diplomatic allegiances. While the representative of Somalia voted with the overwhelming majority of the United Nations General Assembly in 2022 to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, barely one year later, then-Foreign Minister Abshir Omar Jama traveled to Moscow to sign several agreements strengthening bilateral cooperation with Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov, who promised to help "meet the material needs of the Somali army," notwithstanding the UN arms embargo still in force on the country. China also considers the Mogadishu regime to be a key ally,

especially given Somaliland's strong ties with Taiwan, and Somalia's president, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, has been quoted by the Chinese Foreign Ministry as pledging that, "Somalia firmly adheres to the one-China policy, and will continue to stand firmly with China and support China in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

All of this begs the question of why the current administration is so stubbornly bent on propping up a sclerotic, untrustworthy regime in Somalia with little legitimacy and even less effectiveness. Better relations with Ethiopia and Somaliland would contribute to regional security and prosperity. Pulitzer-winning theater critic Walter Kerr once memorably dismissed an upstart actor as "suffering from delusions of adequacy." Regrettably, the same can be said about the Washington bureaucracy's dogged insistence on "one Somalia" when such an entity has not existed for more than three decades—a period now longer than the unhappy cohabitation between the former British Somaliland and Italian Somalia. Unfortunately, in the real world—where terrorism, conflict, and famine loom large over the Horn of Africa—such fantasies exact an all-too-heavy toll.

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Indian Navy says it intercepted hijacked vessel near Somalia



India's navy said Friday it intercepted a fishing vessel in the Arabian Sea after a suspected hijacking, its latest anti-piracy operation after a spate of regional attacks on shipping.

Two Indian vessels had approached the Iranian-flagged FV Al Kamar 786 around 165 kilometers (103 miles) southwest of the Yemeni island of Socotra, not far from the eastern tip of Somalia.

An operation was "currently underway by the Indian Navy towards rescue of hijacked FV & its crew," the navy said in a statement posted on X, formerly Twitter.

The statement added that nine armed pirates were believed to have taken over the vessel. It did not say how many crew members

were aboard.

India's navy has been deployed continuously off Somalia since 2008.

It stepped up anti-piracy efforts last year following a surge in maritime assaults, including in the Arabian Sea and by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels in the Red Sea.

This month, the Indian navy rescued 19 crew members off the Maltese-flagged cargo ship MV Ruen, which had been hijacked by Somali pirates in December.

On Saturday, it brought 35 Somali nationals accused of the hijacking to Mumbai aboard the warship INS Kolkata, which had led the rescue operation, to face a piracy trial in an Indian court.