



Editorial

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Adwa: African victory and beyond

In Ethiopia, March 2 is a Red-Letter Day! On this date in 1889 Ethiopians from the four corners of the country converged in Adwa, Northern Ethiopia and, under the overall command of Emperor Menelik II and Empress Taitu, dealt a death blow to Imperial Italy's ambition to annex Ethiopia.

The meting out of a mortifying defeat on a modern army, by what an Italian historian once described as "ragtag fighters", sent shock waves through European capitals and stunned the world. Seldom have the annals of the Scramble for Africa recorded such acts of bravery, fearlessness, and confidence as that demonstrated by patriotic Ethiopians at the Battle of Adwa. Poorly trained and equipped Ethiopian forces were no match for Italy's highly honed and mechanised army, but nothing could scupper Ethiopians indomitable will never to fall prey to colonialism. In short, the battle was akin to the proverbial fight between David and Goliath albeit on a titanic scale.

The impact of the Victory of Adwa on the struggle for decolonisation cannot be over-emphasised. Former President of South Africa and veteran of the anti-apartheid movement, Thabo Mbeki, spoke at the 120th Anniversary of the Victory of Adwa as "The Victory of Africa and all Black people struggling for freedom and equality."

Adwa Day provides a golden opportunity to spur the patriotism of each and every Ethiopian who rededicate their unwavering support to ending poverty, in a newly revamped union of free, willing and equal nations, nationalities and peoples.

There exists in Ethiopia today a consensual agreement between Government and people that Ethiopia's number one enemy is poverty, which if left unconquered, threatens to scupper its very existence.



Emperor Menelik II and Empress Taitu

...121st anniversary commemorated

The 121st anniversary of the Victory of Adwa was commemorated in Adwa, Tigray Regional State, the very site where Ethiopians defeated the Italian invading army on 1st March 1896.

At the celebrations, President Mulatu Teshome said Adwa was a great victory which resonates with the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect as well as the value of striving for success, adding “it is a victory for all black people.”



Under the Democratic-Developmental State the government and people have carved out swathes of bespoke reforms and the dividends are tangible. Millions of people have been lifted out of poverty, 30 million youths are in school, access to primary healthcare improves year by year and average life expectancy is now 64. The establishment of universities and enrolment have increased many-fold.

A huge rise in infrastructure supports socio-economic development and promotes regional economic integration. This paves the way for the realization of Africa’s Agenda 2063.

He said “Our ancestors made huge sacrifices to safeguard the sovereignty of the country and pass it down to the existing generation.” He urged the younger generation to step up their engagement in the country’s ongoing development projects, and notably the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).



Adwa landscape

Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen handed over to President Mulatu Teshome and Speaker of the House of Federation, Yalew Abate, a torch which is dedicated to the campaign to raise funds for the GERD.

The campaign will begin on 26th March in Addis Ababa, and the torch will be carried across all the regional states and city administrations in the following 11 months.

On Adwa Day, Ethiopians renew their commitment to exercising their capabilities as agents of their socio-economic, political and cultural transformation. Adwa holds a significant share of the motivation of the people of Ethiopia in particular, and Africans in general, to stand up for freedom, equality and justice. Then Poverty will meet its Adwa!

Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen called on all Ethiopians to sustain the unity and participation evident during the battle of Adwa into supporting the construction of the renaissance dam.

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