



## **GURSUM COMMUNITY IN DIASPORA NEWS RELEASE**

**The Fugnanbira Community Group Association**

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**Gursum Community Professionals, residing in Addis to take initiatives of Natural Resource Development of their hometown region of Eastern Ethiopia.**

**The meeting organizer Eyob Meherette, GM of Nyala Insurance, said: Gursum Community in Addis is to take initiatives to lead of Mt. Kundudo Action Project (KAP) and beyond, announced at the conference held in Addis on Friday March 28, 2008 at Nyala Conference Hall.**

"The participants of the conference found the project very encouraging and an important mission towards the development of the region's natural resources, also expressed that the Mt. Kundudo project is moving in the right direction and is confident for positive result. The conference was held in Addis upon the return of the Italian research team in search of the missing wild horses and to discuss an action plan with the Gursum community and authorities to protect them and promote their values for tourism." said the meeting organizer and the son of Gursum **Ato Eyob Meherette**.

The conference attendees were around 30 Gursum Natives in Addis along other dignitaries. Amongst the most credited, **Dr. Tilahun Mamo, geologist** and the son of Gursum, a well known professor at AA University and his team. Also present at the conference as a guest of honor, Hon. **Dr. Fikru Deksisa**, the Oromia Region Natural Resource head and several professionals from AAU as well.

Gursum Community in Addis assured its commitment to take initiatives towards the development of the entire Gursum region and beyond. On top of the Kundudo Action, measures and steps were discussed to save some endangered pearls of Eastern Hararge region in Ethiopia offering a developed and complete tourism route as an economic alternative. The Extended East project will include the route of one the oldest and rich original city of Harar, the Dakhata valley, the Rock Paintings on Mount Stinico, other caves & tombs still to be explored under the Kundudo and its old mosque magic horse populated top. To develop the route, Prof. Marco is preparing a document for the Presidencies of Harari and Oromia Region, to include a similar action research on the Kuni Muktar Mountain Nyala reserve, suggestions on the preservation of the Awash Park and on measures to avoid degradation of the originality of Harar itself.



Photo by: Gianni Astrolli & Alberto Vascon/ One of the old Harar Gate & Dakhata Valley

The Oromia and the Harari State administrations also are playing a leading role in assisting the team towards this development endeavor to smooth operation and success.

**Professor Marco Viganó on his part said:**

“Ato. Birhanu Asfaw, of Gursum native and who was instrumental in gathering the conference members to lead the Kundudo Action Group, created in Addis on the evening of Friday March 28th Conference. Ato Berhanu took initiatives of coordination with the local administrator to pursue the required conservation and development action in the area:

-As soon the rain season begins and the grazing land improves “Basra”, the single feral horse found on top of the mountain, will be joined by the rest of the pack.

-All necessary arrangement will be made in collaboration with the local administration to protect the horses. Cows overgrazing and effectively damaging the area will be relocated alternative grazing field.

The second mission trip by the team managed to succeed in discovering four members of the Wild horse pack whilst more are being tracked by the local administration through the financial support of Gursum Community in the Diaspora, The Fugnanbira Community Group Assn. (FBCGA).



*Photo Jonathan Pinna, Mar.2008*

Great effort was exerted from the authorities and Gursum community at large including Diaspora as well as at the local home front including local elders.

Prof. Marco also credits Gursum Community Diaspora’s the FBCGA leadership, Meftuh Shash in particular, for his tireless effort and playing a pivotal role in this project and networking with native professionals, other groups, Harari Interest Advocacy Group International (HIAGI), local authorities and communities at home for the smooth operation that led to success. These two Diaspora Community groups were instrumental in this endeavor.

“This should set an exemplary to encourage other Ethiopian Communities in Diaspora to play active role in such development endeavors in various regions of their native country of Ethiopia.” said the Italian research team leader Prof. Marco.

He also noted, still more work need to be done to achieve the desired result of the project which encompass the entire eastern part of Ethiopia, and expressed he is optimistic that with such great community and local authorities effort full success is within reach.

### ***New Discovery:***

On an indication from Mr. Meftuh Shash, Professor Marco and his team also visited a couple of caves on the Stinico Tarara West and East fronts. The west one, overlooking Fugnán Bira itself is known to locals to bear ancient paintings, partly ruined or scratched by time and possibly locals.

Amongst other finds there, small obsidian scratches, pieces of pottery, above all a painting, presumably not noted so far, in a small inner recess of the cave.

It depicts a reptile-god attacking a prey or a similar reptile. Images and news of the discovery are being circulated by the team, to obtain specific archeological professionals' support for the third, July 2008 mission. The FBCGA Rep knowledgeable to these caves will also participate in this mission.



Photo Jonathan Pinna, inner room at the Stinico West cave.

### **Gursum Community Diaspora Celebrates the Discovery:**

The Fugnánbira Community Group Association delighted at the discovery of the only Wild Horses pack known to be alive in East Africa and congratulated the team for their efforts upon receiving the news. "We will exert our effort in our capacity for the conservation attempt led by prof. Marco, as we gather the group of feral horses, which at present the most endangered on the planet." Said Meftuh Shash, V.P. of the FBCGA based in Toronto, Canada.

**In a letter sent to The Harari Chief Administrator His Excellency Murad Abdulhadi, the Deputy Chief Hon. Reggassa Kafale, and also the conference organizers and participants, the FBCGA V.P. Meftuh Shash said:**

"As a community our joint effort shall continue in our capacity in such endeavor. We highly appreciated and grateful fore your hospitality and also organized community team effort displayed by Gursumes and we hope this may set an exemplary to other regions of our county Ethiopia".

The local Professionals of Gursum natives have established an Action Group Volunteering organization to provide the continuous support to the region in collaboration with Gursum natives living in Diaspora as well as local stakeholders.

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