

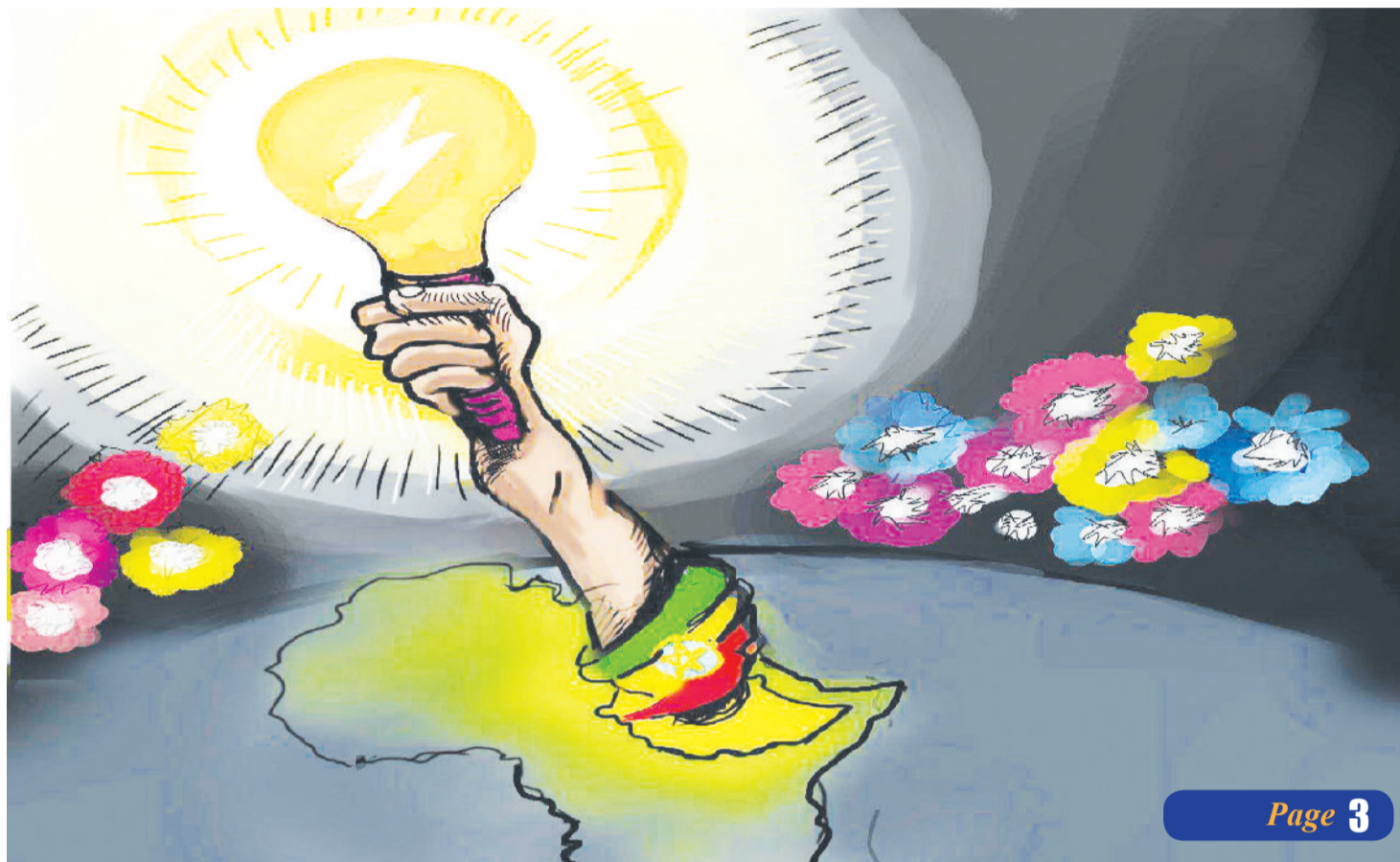


The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXVIII No 290 14 August 2022 - Nehase 8, 2014

Sunday Edition

Price Birr 10.00



Page 3

Athletes receive warm welcome, national award

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopian Athletes who registered astonishing victory at the World Athletics U20 Championships 2022 in Colombia, Cali have received national award and recognition.

The athletics delegation has received a warm welcome at Bole International airport on Friday.

During national award and recognition ceremony, House of Federation (HoF) Speaker Agegnehu Teshager said that Ethiopia and athletics sport is two sides of a coin.

“Awarding and recognizing the youth athletes is making the future athletes to be

See Athletes receive... page 4



Photo: Hadash Abreha

GERD showcases capacity to alleviate poverty: Haile Gebresilassie

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA—Legend Athlete Major Haile Gebresilassie stated that the development of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) is a clear manifestation of economic freedom and fair utilization of natural resources.

Passing his congratulatory message to all Ethiopians on second turbine power generation and third phase dam filling,

Major Athlete Haile said: “As it has been recurrently heralded, the development of the GERD would not negatively affect the downstream countries. If the GERD had negatively affected the countries, the first and second phase dam fillings would have affected them. However, it is said following a mere threat.”

The athlete further stressed that the achievement of the GERD signifies heartiest

See GERD showcases ... page 4



DERBA MIDROC CEMENT

OUR PRODUCTS

- > PPC 32.5N
- > OPC 42.5N
- > Premium OPC 52.5N
- > PPC PLUS 42.5N

We give Door To Door Service

Call Us at 8688 or

0111 26 26 27 0922 11 53 24/26
 0111 26 26 28 0922 72 74 48/49
 0111 26 26 29 0922 72 38 70
 0111 26 26 30 0922 72 38 72

Fax: 0111 26 23 45 & 0111 26 23 18
Ready for Tomorrow!

Visit Oromia
 Land of Diverse Beauty

Website: <https://www.visitoromia.org>
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/visitoromia/>
 Instagram: <https://instagram.com/VisitOromia>
 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VisitOromia>
 LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/visitoromia>
 YouTube: <https://YouTube.com/visitoromia>
 Pinterest: https://Pinterest.com/visit_ormia
 Telegram: https://t.me/visit_ormia

Oromia Tourism Commission
www.visitoromia.org

AGI CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE AFRICA
 Abyssinia Group of Industries

Manufacturer of Rebars, Angles, Channels, Flat Bars & Round Bars.
 Introducing cut & bend service for rebars .

Contact & Address
 Tel: +251 116 63 97 55/ 251 116 63 51 22/25
 Mob. : +251 962 009 072/ +251 949 440 868
 +251 911 45 9790
 E-mail:sales@agiethiopia.com
 4th Floor, Dabi Building, Bole road Addis Ababa Ethiopia



T-TPLF throws monkey wrench into peace talks : Scholar

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- From the very beginning, Terrorist TPLF has thrown a monkey wrench into the proposed peace-talks raising irrelevant issues as preconditions, said a political Science scholar.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Dire Dawa University Researcher and Political Science and International

See T-TPLF throws ... page 4

News

GERD's power generation proves Ethiopia's right to utilize Abay

• 3rd round filling demonstrates shining victory against all odds

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA- The commencement of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) second turbine power generation demonstrates Ethiopia's natural and legal right to utilize its own resources Abay river without harming the downstream countries, expert said.

Member of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPRs) and Nile Expert Mohammed Al-Arusi told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the commencement of electricity production from the second turbine of the GERD has demonstrated Ethiopia's natural and legal rights to use its own resource without foreign interventions.

Apart from generating power, the third round reservoir filling completion signifies the spirit of unity among Ethiopians and



achievement earned by the efforts of all Ethiopians, he said.

As to him, the successful completion of the GERD's third round filling creates huge happiness among all Ethiopians and renews

the spirit of unity among the peoples across the country and beyond.

In addition, it demonstrates the commitment of all Ethiopians' shining victory achieved over anti peace elements that are aimed at thwarting the construction of the project.

Congratulating the people of Ethiopia he stressed that the project will benefit Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan and the continent at all.

"Ethiopia and its people have only one interest regarding GERD which is fair and equitable use of its water resources without harming riparian countries. The project will have significant impact in changing the livelihoods of Ethiopians," he noted.

Accordingly, the completion of the third round filling demonstrates Ethiopia's commitment and capacity to complete the project despite all the challenges.



Gemechis Melaku

Ministry to strengthen unceasing foreign market linkage

BY TSEGAYE TILHAHUN

ADDIS ABABA—Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration said that it is working hard on strengthening sustainable market linkage with countries that buy Ethiopian products.

Ministry Foreign Trade Department Manager Gemechis Melaku told the Ethiopian Press Agency(EPA) that Ethiopia would work to strengthen trade relations with new and long-time trade partners that import Ethiopian goods.

Ethiopia has been promoting its products in new market destinations presenting in various expos, exhibitions and other means, and it has created market relations or linkage with new partners. Due emphasis has been given to strengthen market relations with new and longtime trade partner countries purchasing Ethiopian products, he added.

"Taking part in expos and exhibitions would bring market opportunities. It would help the country strengthen incessant market linkage with long time partners participating in international trade and create market linkage with new partners as well as selling their products with better price."

The country promoted its products engaging in various countries' trade expos especially in Dubai Gulf food, Dubai expo 2020, Nigeria, China's Shanghai and Changsha, and online sesame and coffee promotion activities over the just ended Ethiopian fiscal year, he noted.

Furthermore, several market opportunities have been created with above mentioned countries and participants of expos. For instance, a 46.26 million USD sale contract agreement has been reached with Dubai gulf food, and image building activities are done, too.

He said: "Various measures are taken to overcome export barriers and increase the volume of the export. Better results are expected in the future as trade barriers have been addressed as much as possible."



HIP launches women's new call center to avoid GBV at work

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Hawassa Industrial Park (HIP) stated that it has launched Workers' new call center in a collaboration with the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the BRIDGES Programme, Deutsche Gesellschaft für International (GIZ) in a bid to solve women sexual harassment and gender based violence at the working places.

In a press statement sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Hawassa Industrial Park workers' new call center is established to address workers' grievances in a prompt and confidential way and to provide appropriate referral support and advice to promote sound labor relations by supporting the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of workers.

EIC Deputy Commissioner Daniel Teressa

said that the call center will play significant role to enhance sustainable industrial relation via create strong collaboration with partners.

BRIDGES Program Team Leader Henok Tenna on his part said that the call center is very useful for safeguarding the workforce that is 90 percent of women and new industrial orientation.

Seconding the above idea, One ILO/Siraye Programme Head Kidist Chala said: "The workers' call center is an important step in giving the voice to the workers and to fight against sexual harassment and Gender-Based Violence."

"The grievance-handling room provides a safe and confidential environment for employees to seek assistance when they encounter problems or violations of their rights. It is essential in meeting obligations

under international human rights law and contributes to positive employee relations," said Acting Project Head and Component Manager, Sustainable Industrial Clusters (S.I.C.) Project, Yared Fekade.

According to the statement, HIP has a total of around 35,000 factory workers. Of these, over 80 percent of whom are women. Besides, the apparel sector currently employs more than 100,000 workers, 85-90 percent of whom are women sewers.

Moreover, the workers' call center will enhance transparency and accountability by providing accurate and timely information about labor laws, standards, and procedures to workers and employers in a simplified manner. It has also used to realize women's economic empowerment and productivity through avoiding harassment and gender based violence (GBV).

The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



General Manager

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

Advertisement and Dist.
Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew
email- workubelachew@press.et
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city
Woreda - 05, House No---
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu

Elizabeth Mengistu

Zekarias Woldemariam

Desta Geberhiwot

Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et

email: ethiopianherald@press.et

Fb/ /Ethiopian Press Agency/

The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

GERD will soon be of assistance to the Horn and beyond

Ethiopia officially announced the third successful completion of the filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in a national ceremony held last Friday. The filling has been carried out following the start of Ethiopia's traditional rainy season, and now the water has started gracefully flowing over the top of the dam. This was announced a day after the official inauguration of GERD's 2nd turbine electric power generation. Following this, President Sahle-Work described the event as historic and portrayal of Triumphant Ethiopia, adding, "GERD has a meaning that goes beyond generating and supplying power because it is the real depiction of the victorious Ethiopia."

Congratulating all Africans on this milestone, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that Ethiopia is working to ensure the benefits of the lower basin countries, saying, "Our Abbay River takes what it deserves while passing on what others deserve." Certainly, this was what Ethiopia has been doing since the outset. "The construction of the dam will never cause any harm to the lower riparian countries," assertion has repeatedly been underlined by the government of Ethiopia. Hence, GERD has undeniably ample benefits for the Horn and beyond.

Interestingly, the dam has a capacity to store large amounts of water that will be a resource to benefit all the three countries of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia during drought periods. In connection to this, the dam will also offer regulated flow of water which will help the downstream countries to better manage their respective reservoirs. Improving the efficiency of dams and water use optimization in the downstream nations, the GERD will further capture 90 percent of the sediment protecting irrigation canals and equipment from damages caused by sedimentation.

Though Egypt continues denying the dam's several benefits, GERD plays a significant role in regulating the flows of the Blue Nile that

manages flows arriving at the High Aswan Dam of Egypt. This surely reduces Aswan Dam's average annual evaporation losses. The question here could be 'Why Egypt overlooks these benefits due to regulated and increased flows?'

Furthermore, GERD has very significant contributions reducing the negative impacts of climate change across the globe. These days, the world is struggling with problems emanating from climate change. Recurrent floods, intense drought, storms, heat waves, rising sea levels and warming oceans that can directly harm animals and peoples are becoming more frequent. Fortunately, as it is a mega project that encourages a resilient green economy, the GERD has a tremendous role in curbing these impacts.

Nevertheless, it was unfortunate to see Egyptian officials who were obsessed with disseminating baseless information that the filling and operation of the dam will have significant economic, environmental and social repercussions. In doing this, they failed to appreciate the tremendous benefits the GERD brings for the people of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. It would be helpful to realize the marvelous benefits instead.

Favorably, in Sudan, as the GERD regulates water flow, it reduces the consequences of devastating floods and the effects of water shortage during drought and dry periods. Through the interconnected systems of Sudan and Ethiopia, there would be ample energy for Sudanese people. Besides this, there will be adequate and regular water flow in the river downstream throughout the year to enable reliable water supply for people, agriculture, and the ecology.

All in all, the GERD is the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa that has far-reaching benefits for the riparian countries. Despite the baseless information like the dam might cause some harm to lower riparian nations, it will soon reinforce economic integration across the Horn and beyond.

Opinion

Is there really a paradigm shift in US/Africa relations? Why the answer seems to be yes

BY STAFF REPORTER

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's whirlwind visit to three African countries is the second in less than 12 months.

In November 2021 he visited key U.S. regional partners Senegal, Kenya and Nigeria.

In South Africa – the first stop on this trip – Blinken unveiled the U.S Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, marking a remarkable paradigmatic shift in America's engagement with Africa.

Why do I call the new strategy a paradigmatic shift?

First, it sets a positive tone for US engagement with Africa. Previous US strategies began from the premise that Africa was not a strategic actor in the broad scheme of American foreign policy.

This strategy is different. It starts from the assumption that Africa is a core priority of US foreign policy.

This guiding assumption frames the fundamental commitment to working together toward common aspirations in the advancement of a shared agenda.

The tone is matched by the emphasis on African agency. And the ability of the continent to lead and participate effectively in decisions when it comes to economic, political and military engagements.

But, first some reflections on Blinken's three-country visit.

Significance of three-country stopovers

The visit to South Africa underscored US interest in re-engaging the South African government within the context of the US-South Africa Strategic Dialogue framework. This was crafted by the Barack Obama administration in 2010 to deepen the relationship between the two sides.

The dialogue provides a forum for both partners to review common aspirations and objectives while also addressing persisting disagreements. But it was

interrupted by the Donald Trump administration as well as the onset of the COVID-19 crisis.

South Africa is one of the few African countries with this kind of strategic partnership with the US. The forum therefore reinforces South Africa as an African actor that Washington takes seriously. This is despite differences which both partners should manage amicably.

Hopefully, the Blinken delegation may have had the opportunity to cautiously raise concerns about the instability and disarray in the governing African National Congress (ANC) coalition. This has had a detrimental impact on South Africa's stature in foreign policy. In Africa and globally.

In the DRC and Rwanda, Blinken will confront the unending conflicts in the region. These have decimated lives and communities, frustrated international and regional stabilisation efforts, and consigned the Great Lakes region to global marginality. This is despite its abundant resources.

Bilateral, regional, and international efforts to resolve the root cause of the problem – the antagonism between the DRC and Rwanda – have failed. They need the injection of US mediation to break the impasse.

The government of President Felix Tshisekedi has made decisive attempts to mend fences with Rwanda's President Paul Kagame. But the two are incapable of resolving their problems while conflict persists.

Kagame will not cease his relentless military adventures in the region if the DRC and its supporters cannot eliminate insurgent Hutu rebels implicated in the 1994 genocide.

In addition, neither the DRC government nor the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) seem able to marshal the resources to be able to pacify the eastern DRC sufficiently to address Kagame's concerns.

It is going to require US diplomatic dexterity and a sustained economic and political re-commitment to resolve this 30-year-old crisis. A start may be a US-led military force composed of new military contingents from various countries. This could be bolstered by a bold US commitment against authoritarian and autocratic regimes in the region.

But Blinken is bound to face opposition from some of the key players.

The paradigm shift

The strategy outlined by Blinken has four key objectives. These are fostering openness and open societies; delivering democratic and security dividends; advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity; and supporting conservation, climate adaptation and just energy transition (pp. 7-10).

An innovative idea is the involvement of the US International Development Agency (USAID) on the education front. What's been tabled is that US academic institutions and the private sector provide online courses for African students. Subjects could include science, technology, engineering and Maths (STEM) (p.16).

The strategy also emphasises digital democracy, the centrality of cities, and incorporation of African American diaspora in US-Africa relations.

Beyond these, the four objectives capture the continuity of policies that past administrations have articulated.

The change prescribed in the strategy, therefore, is in tone rather than substance.

Third, sensitivities to race play a dominant role in the strategy, reflective of the convergence of Africanists and African Americans in the Biden administration and its Africa policy.

Throughout the document, there is mention of placing people of colour at the heart of US-Africa relations as well as

recognizing the historical and ongoing connections between addressing racial justice and equality in Sub-Saharan Africa and the United States (p.12).

Equally germane, the strategy acknowledges past criticisms of US training and support for African militaries that launch coups against civilian regimes and abuse human rights.

Finally, the strategy is cleverly articulated to undercut critics who often invoke US competition with China and Russia in Africa as the main driver of engagement with Africa. The strategy poignantly addresses this issue. It states:

the United States has an abiding interest in ensuring that the region remains open, and accessible to all, and that governments and publics are able to make their own choices, consistent with international obligations." (p.7).

Instead of being preachy and prescriptive with respect to African relations with other powers, the strategy presents African states with the enticing option of working with the US in the advancement of common values, mutual respect, democracy, and prosperity.

The strategy is a fresh beginning in US-Africa relations. But its outcomes will be judged on two factors. Will the Biden administration be able to negotiate implementation in the fractious US political process? And will African countries be able to seize opportunities that the strategy presents?

The December 2022 Africa-US summit in Washington will be an excellent opportunity to gauge responses to this strategy.

Source: *The Conversation*

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

News



MR. TALAL AL AZEEZI

HEAD · POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, & MEDIA AFFAIRS · UAE EMBASSY



H.E. KAJELLA MERDASA

MINISTER · FDRE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, SPORTS AND CULTURE



MS. CHIDO CLEOPATRA

SPECIAL ENVOY ON YOUTH · TO CHAIRPERSON & CABINET · AFRICAN UNION



DR. MESHESHA SHEWAREGA

COORDINATOR · AU CONTINENTAL VOLUNTEER PLATFORM · AUC



MS. EDLAM ABERA YEMERU

DIRECTOR · GENDER, POVERTY & SOCIAL POLICY · UNECA

Discussion accentuates African youth empowerment

BY MUSSA MUHAMMAD

ADDIS ABABA - The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) held a webinar discussion on African youth's empowerment and sustainable development goals with the representatives from Ethiopia and Africa.

The discussion aims to empower the innovations of young individuals, provide a platform for their recommendations, and encourage their full and meaningful participation in accelerating achievement of the sustainable development goals.

During the discussion, African Union (AU) Continental Volunteer Platform Coordinator Meshesha Shewarega (PhD) presented initial idea on Promoting Youth Participation, and

it's Policy Frameworks Interventions over the African continent youth.

AU Chairperson Special Envoy on Youth Chido Cleopatra said that the future generation is the major agents for change and advancing the 2030 sustainable development goals of the continent.

The development of youth-centered initiatives, particularly in tackling social, economic, and ecological challenges, and continues to work towards enhancing the capacities of new generations, she added.

According to her, the implementation on the youth empowerment and sustainable development agendas could make youth be the leader of the today and the future.

UAE Embassy in Ethiopia Head Political,

Economic, and Media Affairs Section Talal Al Azeezi said that the youth engagement in shaping the future initiatives and the UAE could play its part to support such efforts.

According to him, UAE has recognized the importance of the empowerment of youth, as well as enhancing their capacity to innovate and contribute towards sustainable growth has great role for the African development work.

In this regard, the UAE has developed multiple initiatives with the aim of engaging the young generation in policy-making processes, as well as encouraging the youth to drive governmental initiatives and express their views on political, cultural, and socio-economic issues, which is evident in the establishment of a youth council.

On her part, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Africa's Youth and Inclusive Development Director Edalm Yemeru said that countries should demonstrate commitment to reinforcing cooperation, collaboration, and communication between all youth development stakeholders.

"All stockholders should play its role within this framework to foster a more reliable institutional framework for youth-driven strategies," she said.

Accordingly, various embassies, ministries, and others have sought to reflect, and engage the commitment towards the development of youth-centered initiatives, particularly in tackling social, economic, political, and ecological challenges.

Athletes receive...

successful. Ethiopia continues winning its challenges like the athletes," he said.

Minister of Tourism and Culture Kejela Merdasa said that: "We Ethiopians are proud of athletes who registered remarkable victories and our victorious athletes are our future representative of prior hero athletes."

As to him, the victory is the result of efforts of the leadership, systems, teamwork and others.

On her part, Ethiopian Athletics Federation President Athlete Derartu Tulu said that this year

Ethiopian athletes have registered astonishing victories in World Athletics Championships U20 2022 in Colombia, Cali. The team achieved historic results at the 2022 U20 World Athletics Championships.

She praised the shining athletes who have brought Gold, Silver and bronze medals at the 2022 U20 World Athletics Championships in Colombia, Cali.

Delegation Team Leader Athlete Meselech Melkamu said that Ethiopian Athletes victory at World Athletics Champions 2022 in Oregon, U.S has

enabled them to get further medals in U20 in Colombia, Cali.

"The result is a new chapter or record for Ethiopia. This result encourages the morale of other youth athletes to compete and bring better results in the future. The warm welcoming further encourages athletes to be more competitive in any race in the world," she said.

Accordingly, Ethiopia becomes the leading gold medalist from Africa and ranked third in the world by winning 6 gold, 5 silver and 1 bronze medals at the championships.

T-TPLF throws...

Relations lecturer Surafel Getahun said that T-TPLF is disrupting the peace talks process using political and non-political prerequisites.

The T-TPLF's mouth piece has on several occasions accused the African Union (AU) Representative to the Horn of Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo of being partial to the peacetalks. Meanwhile, the terrorists have been inviting non-Africans to mediate the issue which is really reprehensible claim against AU, he opined.

"I see no interest to negotiate disputes from the T-TPLF-side. A negotiator must be devoted to mechanisms that could lead to peace. Contrary to this, T-TPLF officials are complicating the process with unwarranted preconditions and insisting on requesting the federal government to deliver basic services like telecom and banking service in the absence of trustworthy situation. On the other hand, they are claiming non-African mediators. Hence, I think they are undermining the peace talks," he stressed.

The AU is an extraordinary organization to deal with such disputes as it has been working on principle of African solutions to African problems, he added.

As to Surafel, basic services should not be taken as a part of the peace talks. There have been communities devoid of basic services in Amhara and Afar states yet. "The main obstacle to restore basic services has been administrative inabilities. And, terrorist TPLF is still a rebel force ruling Tigray, and it is difficult to restore banking and telecom services until tangible agreements are reached."

GERD showcases...

collaboration of all citizens of the country living home and abroad.

Appreciating the development works that have been undertaken by the reform administration through participating the general public, he called on all people and the government of the country to replicate their collaboration they have been exhibiting so far for the Project

at all development measures thereby helping Ethiopia enlist itself under the category of middle income countries.

Haile urged some citizens of the nation who are fond of being Trojan horses for Ethiopia's historical foes to refrain from their destructive act and futile attempts throwing against this great nation— Ethiopia—instead these people should bring their reservations

to be tabled on discussion providing the country with cardinal priority as the country is capable of resolving disparities itself.

He also called on all development agents to support the ongoing development initiatives in a bid to help the country continue making history and successfully achieve its development plans.

Opinion

Assisting the disabled is a human rights issue

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Ensuring people with disabilities to have access to the basic necessities of life is very crucial. Among these necessities is water. Both the disabled and able bodied persons have a natural right to have access to water without which they could not survive. In Ethiopia, however, the rural people had been denied access to purified water by the TPLF regime. The regime had been harsh even to the disabled persons who badly needed water for their sanitation. Studies show that over 17 percent of the population had some kind of disability. In other developing countries these persons used to be engaged in the planning and management of water in the area they lived in. In these countries, the concerned water authorities and donor agencies promoted community-led water, sanitation, and hygiene for the disabled citizens.

In Ethiopia, among water related undertakings are the sanitation and hygiene projects which have engaged people in several activities. Despite the least support of the TPLF regime for such projects in Amhara and Afar regions, some efforts have been made by donors to initiate water projects for persons with disability. They developed accessible school latrines for these persons. They also pioneered disability inclusive water points and sanitation areas. This has been a leading endeavor in empowering persons with disabilities to be part of the development process as equal partners. This activity seemed a minor one, but it has been a key enterprise in improving the livelihood of persons with disabilities. It has been truly argued that sometimes it is the “simplest” things that make the biggest difference.

Evaluation of a water and sanitation projects have shown that disabled persons could improve quality of life when given proper and relevant training. For example, after training, a family member went home and installed a guiding rope from the house to the toilet in the garden for a “blind” person. This made him an independent person who could use the latrine. He became happy as he did not need a guide to take him to the toilet. Basic solutions like this and improved designs for water points are just some of the activities of water projects. This gives Ethiopians with disabilities greater independence and access to facilities. The contribution of the project has been the “inclusion” of persons with disabilities in water and sanitation hygiene (WASH) projects. They were involved in planning and management of projects thereby tackling prejudice against them.

Water projects aimed at accelerating rural WASH service delivery by employing the community-managed project, CMP, approach. Promoting community empowerment, transparency and ownership, CMP involved community-led management of project implementation, finance and procurement from beginning to end. Ethiopians with disabilities must

be part of the development process if the vision of universal access to water is to be achieved. But, such projects had not been supported by the TPLF regime though the projects had been designed to encourage “disability inclusion” by increasing awareness of experts and stakeholders. During the TPLF era, the disabled persons had been denied the benefits of such projects and had been expelled from their camp, Jegnoch Amba at Debrezeit, which had been reserved for them by the former military regime.

Currently, the disabled are encouraged to be involved in the planning, programming, implementation and maintenance of projects. The number of disabled people involved in project implementation increased from time to time. Those people with upgraded water supply had their lives improved. They became part of the solution to their problems. It was pointed out that working with persons with disabilities and their associations was “not” only right but effective. Through training and other activities, persons with disabilities have shown that they were the best experts on how to achieve “inclusion.” They also have acquired skills on how to achieve practical solutions. Thus, the ablebodied persons have to learn more from people with disability.

Both the concerned government agency and NGOs jointly issued a guideline on supporting training materials that ensured inclusion of disabled persons. The guideline also warranted direct involvement of persons with disabilities in project design and implementation of activities. It included detailed responsibilities of all stakeholders at different levels. It also provided information on accessible water technology solutions. It was pointed out that the approach to disability inclusion has been a practical “guide” for water, sanitation and hygiene projects. The collaboration with persons with disabilities and their associations at all levels have been critical to the success of these projects, but such association had not been tolerated by the TPLF regime, unless it was located in its place of origin.

Having persons with disabilities as both trainers and trainees were productive, being active on WASH committees inspired participants through experience sharing. Persons with disability felt strongly about aiding other persons through joint work. Studies show that persons with disabilities have commitment to working fully through the existing government structures without creating a parallel system. The disabled people were happy with the role of donors that influenced different government agencies to ensure their inclusion in projects that concerned them. At present, the impressive performance of disabled persons in local water, sanitation and hygiene committees has contributed to attitudinal change within communities.

There was a need to mainstream disability inclusion in the communities. Traditionally,

WASH projects focused more on technical issues and hardware, often to the detriment of “social” prejudice. This made mainstreaming disability inclusion across the entire project more necessary. The project at Federal level provided every opportunity to address the rights of persons with disabilities. The concerned government agency for the project activities was a key player in bringing communities together to discuss progress and challenges. The agency was closely involved in awareness-raising events that were organized for administrative officials at all levels. Several staffs have participated in the project for disability inclusion events.

Training programs have been conducted in schools on sanitation, hygiene and other needs of disabled students. In regions where it operated, the project has supported units where a focal person dealt with disability inclusion. Gender and micro and small enterprise experts have organized training programs on inclusion for those who supported the implementation of activities. Most administrative units have been key elements in ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in WASH projects. They were involved in the planning and implementation of rural “piped” water schemes serving thousands of households of the disabled persons. The cost of extending the pipe system to these households was low but has made a huge difference to the quality of life for those families.

Lessons learnt were that people with disabilities had often been “forgotten” by the TPLF regime. They were also discriminated against. A few of the successful disabled persons have succeeded in inspiring and encouraging others. The biggest challenge has been “lack” of recognition by other communities of the importance of the work performed on disability inclusion. But as the impacts have slowly been felt, there was a late realization of the possibility to do better and even excel. Those people who were able bodied did not feel the sufferings of the disabled persons in their communities. They also did not want to use goods and services produced by the people with disabilities. This reflected that there was a strong need for creating awareness on the needs of the disabled people at the local levels. Attitudinal change toward people with disabilities was of the essence.

Considering the challenges faced, the placement of persons with disabilities at the center of attention was a key success. The key lesson was that disability “inclusion” efforts have gained recognition, but not by all. Some people now take disability issues into account in their work. While it has been important to have focal institutions and persons at the Federal and regional levels, ensuring disability inclusion should be understood as everyone’s responsibility. Mainstreaming the issue of disability inclusion within the economic sectors prevented the tradition of sidelining the disabled persons. It brought the issue to the

center of attention rather than treating it as a marginal component. The project for the disabled should achieve “universal” access to all disabled persons.

As repeatedly asserted, poverty cannot be eliminated without the support of universal access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene. Currently, the Ethiopian government has made progress in increasing the access of these basic services to all the people. In this endeavor water, sanitation and hygiene projects have the objective of supporting better access to these services. This is done with a focus on integrated, resilient and inclusive systems. This strategy ensures sustainable universal access to everyone everywhere in the near future. Institutions engaged in accessing water to the rural people, should have technical experience and competence. They have to inform policy makers on water development program that plays a critical role in the implementation of rural and urban sanitation and hygiene.

Water, sanitation and hygiene program and its projects may draw on global and regional expertise and resources. They may exploit access to knowledge in the field and achieve collective impact. Ethiopia has a strong program in the sector with clear objectives and strategies. Development partners are in support of these strategies and provide resources required for the program. The building blocks to reach universal access to water are in place and are supported by government and donor programs. However, some challenges of the program have remained unresolved. Achieving access to the poorest, the disabled and most marginalized groups is still a strong challenge.

Sustaining rapid progress towards universal access of water is achieved through strengthening the implementation of related programs and projects. Planning for resilience in the face of changing climatic patterns in Ethiopia is of the essence. As indicated earlier, water programs and projects for the country will have to address the challenges faced in realizing the vision for growth and development. It is reported that donors supporting water projects in the country have identified strategies and programs that resemble and vibrate in consonance with the needs of Ethiopia. Unlike the TPLF junta, the current government focuses on innovating, demonstrating and partnering with stakeholders and the poor people to enable the implementation of water programs and projects in a sustainable manner. Cross-cutting programs related to water have to be designed to ensure resilience to climate change. They should also achieve access to water by all Ethiopians.

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Commercial banks' superb role for nation's economic growth

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Ethiopia's banking industry is superficially supporting Ethiopia's economy. However, the country is encountered with different natural and human made snags. And of course, this sector has been growing and developing significantly by all dimensions. According to documents from the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), currently, there are 30 Banks in Ethiopia. While the one is Ethiopian Development Bank, the rest 29 are Commercial banks (one public and 28 private).

Additionally, there are 40 microfinance institutions, 18 insurance companies, one re-insurance company, six capital goods finance (lease companies) and eight payment instrument issuers /system operators/ in Ethiopia. Accordingly, these financial institutions are playing significant role for the national economic growth.

On top of that, Yinager Desie (PhD), governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia revealed that the share of banks was high for the recorded economic growth in the last fiscal year. According to him, the country's banks played a significant role in encouraging growth of the country's economy amid complex problems in the last financial year.

Despite the economy of the world including Ethiopia's was severely tested due to different challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, security problems, drought and the war between Russia and Ukraine, the Governor avowed that Ethiopia has registered positive economic performance.

While reporting Banks' 2021/22 fiscal year annual performance, Yinager further noted that it was an admirable and prideful result that Ethiopia's economy has shown encouraging growth although it was a year that the economy of some countries was going downhill. According to him, the banking sector's reform activity in the past four years has saved the financing sector from failures.

Noting that agriculture, investment and service sectors have played the lion's share in the recorded economic growth, he said that the role of banks in providing financial services for the successfulness of these and other development sectors was very high.

The Governor further pointed out that it was able to earn more than 4.2 billion USD from export trade alone through increasing the export products in the fiscal year coupled with the tireless efforts of the Prime Minister and everyone to overcome the shortage of foreign exchange. Growth has also been recorded in terms of remittance services and foreign direct investment, he added.

"Cognizant of the fact that the time demands to digitalize the banking services, Ethiopian banks are seemingly working in helping the country to achieve its goal in creating digital Ethiopia by 2025. Accordingly, currently, there are more than 43 million mobile



Share of banks was high for the Ethiopia's economic growth, says Yinager Desie (PhD)

banking service customers of whom 23 million are registered in telebirr".

Mentioning that the electronic and digital market and financing activity were dormant for the past decades, the Governor pointed out that during the past four years massive changes have been appeared in digitalizing the financial sector. He also illustrated that 1.16 trillion Birr transaction was made and 24.4 billion Birr was transferred through mobile banking by the last fiscal year.

Moreover, 197.5 billion Birr cash was withdrew using ATMs, adding, he said the number of mobile banking users and ATMs has reached 16.3 million and 6,902 respectively. Noting that there was a problem of theft, fraud and smuggling in the sector, Yinager Desie said that the government has been taking various measures to address the problem, starting with changing the currency, and in this regard, he urged all banks to take due care.

The Governor also said the banks should make tireless efforts to make the country's economic growth more sustainable. And he stated that the government will work with determination to make digital services availability to the 67 million mobile users in the country.

While presenting his paper entitled with "Growth and Development Performance of the Banking System", NBE's Bank Supervision Director, Frezer Ayalew, on his part said that the high level supervision and follow up over the financial institution has played significant role for the economic growth.

For him, the total assets of banks have increased by 92 percent during the last 4 years. As a result, the total assets of banks increased from 1.3 trillion in June 2019 to 2.5 trillion Birr in June 2022. At the same time, banks' loans, including bonds has been increased by 73 percent during the mentioned period and reached 1.65 trillion Birr.

According to his paper, the Ethiopian

Development Bank has been able to reduce the amount of non-performing loans over the years. In the recently ended Ethiopian fiscal year, it was able to decrease from the 40 percent to 24.28 percent due to major changes and management activities taken in the past four years. This improvement has been also seen for the last four consecutive years.

He also illustrated that, the rate of non-performing loans in the June 2020 was 34 percent and the rate was down to below 30 percent in June 2021.

Banking sector related reform activities have brought significant role or good performance of the banking sector. Amendment of banking business legal framework, capital market proclamation, issuance of movable collateral Registry system and issuance of deposit insurance regulation are amongst the others, he added.

Solomon Damtew, NBE's Payment and Settlement Director for his part said that the number of payment agents was increased by 800 percent in just the last one year. In the 2021/22 fiscal year, the number of agents has been reached to 156,876, and in 2020/21, this number was around 15,000. It has been stated that the launch of Tele-Birr has a noteworthy role for the significant growth. Therefore, most of the agents are Tele-Birr agents, he announced.

As to him, establishment of the National Digital Payments Strategy (NDPS) has also brought pivotal role in registering successful result in building digital economy. The NDPS for 2021-2024 is a central component of that journey. In this sense, this strategy is a roadmap through which the NBE will transform the payment ecosystem and help build a cash-lite and more financially inclusive economy.

Congratulating commercial banks for their attractive performance, particularly Bank of Oromia for its award received from The European Society for Quality Research (ESQR), the Governor pledged them to

make themselves ready to compute with international banks.

Teferi Mekonen, Chief Executive Officer of Oromia Bank for his part said such international recognition exemplifies the Bank's transformational efforts and commitment to providing excellent customer service. As to him, his bank will also go hand in hand with the theme of the Central Bank for Nation's economic development.

He further revealed that the award has a big role in the respect of the country, adding, he said that the Bank of Oromia has become an exemplary for many banks of this country. The reform activity made by the government during the past four years helped them to bring this success, he noted.

"Allowing transformation of Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) into banks, broadening definition of Finance Institution (FI) and including Non-Bank players in the ecosystem, raising minimum paid up capital into Birr 5 billion as well as drafting /issuance of various directives are among the reform activities that helps us to move forward," Teferi said.

According to the NBE's Governor, strengthening advance preparation for opening banking sector, enhancing supervisory and industry capacity, functionality of deposit insurance fund, enhancing the role of banks in ECX coupled with expanding access to finance mainly credit to underserved population and pro-growth oriented sectors are the way forward that they have planned to do so far in the forthcoming periods.

Apart from the aforementioned activities they have a plan to exhaustively working on enhancing consumer protection, enhancing digitalization as well as strengthening IT supervision and IT security, he mentioned.

Although there has been great success in the field of digital payments and finance in the past four years, building a cashless economy will require a lot of hard work and dedication from the national bank and the sector's actors for the coming years, he stated.

Planet Earth

GERD puts a brick in the efforts of climate change mitigation

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Environmental problems and climate change effects such as land degradation, flooding, soil erosion, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and so on have been forcing the world to stand together. Currently, building a green and climate-resilient economy based on renewable energy has been given due attention and applauded.

Because the effect of climate change significantly impacted the planet. It has been also causing extreme weather events like tropical storms, wildfires, severe droughts, and heat waves, decreasing crop production, causing disruption to animals' natural habitats, and so on.

Studies and Reports have repeatedly shown that the emission of carbon is the main perpetrator that causes global warming. The Environmental Protection Agency has listed sectors that cause carbon dioxide emissions which include transportation, electricity production, industry, commercial and residential, agriculture, and land use.

Currently, electricity production creates carbon emissions that threaten the livelihood of the planet, animals, and humans. Hence, carbon emissions have far-ranging environmental and health effects including extreme weather, food supply disruptions, and increased wildfires. Therefore, the world calls for a united voice and action more than ever in order to limit the toxic carbon emission into the atmosphere.

Taking the negative impact of climate change and Africa's huge energy potential for renewable energy into consideration, AU has planned to achieve access to renewable electricity energy in the continent by 2030 in line with the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goal Number 7.

According to AU Infrastructure Commission Commissioner Amani Abou-Zeid (Ph.D.) said that energy deficit has become a bottleneck for Africans to come out of poverty. Therefore, member states, by avoiding environmental pollution electricity production activities, should develop electricity from renewable energy to fulfill the energy demand of the people.

It is true that many African countries including Ethiopia have been suffering from acute energy shortages which cause deforestation of the forest resources of the continent. Africa, in spite of all the available potential, the energy sector is still in its infancy stage. A significant number of the population lives without access to electricity. Ethiopia, as part of the continent, has one of the lowest electricity



Ethiopia's initiative to produce energy from renewable sources is an important initiative not only for linking environmental protection with economic growth and development but also to put a brick in the efforts of climate change mitigation

consumption per capita in Africa.

In order to tackle the energy shortage in the country, Ethiopia has been constructing a hydroelectricity dam. Especially, the construction of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), apart from solving access to electricity problems in Ethiopia, has come up with environmental protection lessons for Africans. It is also an indication of the effective use of natural resources for national development.

Bahir Dar University Political Science and International Relations Assistant Professor Yayew Genet told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the (GERD) is an exemplary project for Africa's renaissance as it is a great tool to lift Ethiopia out of poverty without harming others by exploiting natural resources on its own capacity.

Haramaya University Economics lecturer Firzer Tilahun told the Ethiopian Press Agency that using renewable energy has both environmental and economic benefits. So, it is significant to comprehend the value of renewable energy for this planet since every development issue links to sustainable energy.

Ethiopian Ministry of Water and Energy Minister Dr. Engineer Habtamu said that Ethiopia with various stakeholders has made efforts to promote environmentally friendly and clean renewable energy sources across the country.

The country wants to develop a green hydro energy sector as it has planned to apply green hydrogen technology to mitigate climate change, save energy, and shift from fossil fuel energy consumption to green energy.

When Ethiopia develops its water energy from dams considering neighboring countries and other interests based on the international agreement, a win-win tie can be consolidated. Ethiopia's selling and sharing energy with its neighbors like Djibouti, South Sudan, and Kenya has an environmental impact. In this way Ethiopia is benefiting the world by producing electricity from renewable energy, he said.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed during the announcement of the successful completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam's third filling said that the people of Ethiopians have put everything into the realization of the completion of the dam.

Ethiopia, either individually or collectively, has made various efforts to mitigate climate change. These efforts are imperative to counter climate change and pave the way for economic growth in line with protecting and conserving the environment.

Because protecting the environment is one of Ethiopia's key development goals since it is a determinant of human health and a healthy ecosystem that supports the biodiversity of the country.

Hence, the achievement recorded in terms of GERD, Green Legacy initiative, green transportation program via electricity vehicles, and so on will continue to be repeated in all sectors. Indeed, Ethiopia's initiative to produce energy from renewable sources is an important initiative not only for linking environmental protection with economic growth and development but also to put a brick in the efforts of climate change mitigation.

Art & Culture

From Art to Heart

“There is nothing we can’t do if we support each other”

BY KFLEYESUS ABEBE

Artists in the developed world have huge influence or as some call it they have “soft power” to create political change or contribute for betterment of socioeconomic conditions of people. In recent times, it’s become common to see artists with their popularity and resources participating in humanitarian works or activating about things that affect their respective countries or the world at large. American actor Leonardo DiCaprio’s environmental activism, Emma Watson’s women rights activism, humanitarian work of Angelina Jolie, Bono’s advocacy and campaigning against poverty and preventable disease are some of notable examples of hollywood actors’ impact in America and across the world.

Expecting the same here in Ethiopia might be too much given the public stereotype against art, and art works are not paying off as artists in the developed world. Being an artist itself was a challenge. Parents don’t encourage children to be artists due to entrenched beliefs or seeing the life struggle of some artists. So, most artists in Ethiopia must have gone against family and society restrictions to be an artist. Accordingly, Art and artistic expressions in Ethiopia are still at an infant stage. Artists’ influence at the same time has been limited for quite a time.

Things seem to be changing now: public perspective on art and artists is changing, art is becoming paying off and artists’ influence is also growing. Seizing this moment of change, some actors and actresses are contributing share for alleviation of socioeconomic problems fellow Ethiopians face. Among artists that are very known for using their fame to the wellbeing and benefit of society, Actress Meseret Mebrate and Actor Solomon Bogale come on the frontline.

Meseret Mebrate began her career when she was just 18. Since then she has become a familiar face on television appearing on TV commercials, feature films and drama series. *Gudifecha* was among movies she earned massive recognition and admiration by. Drama series *Dana* expanded her fan base as she finally became No1 by public voting to win an award for her incredible acting talent.

Meseret didn’t waste this popularity. She used it actively to raise awareness on the plight of children with coronary ailments and mobilize Ethiopians living inside and abroad to support Cardiac center Ethiopia. As Addis Standard reports, the center receives from 10 to 12 children with heart conditions from all over the country on a daily basis. So, they have thousands of children on their waiting list. To upscale their service and reach as many children as possible, the center has been looking for financial and technical support. Therefore, the center’s Goodwill Ambassador Meseret



Mebrate has been making efforts including going abroad and raising funds.

Meseret’s journey to the United States shows the rising influence of Ethiopian artists. She was accorded a warm welcome as fans took the opportunity to show their love and respect for the artist. Meseret is loved for her artistic performance but her effort of helping children made her very much adored. Public relation officer of Cardiac Center Ethiopia Nahom Sintayehu in his interview with Addis Standard told of the success of her visit. “She has been promoting the center countrywide and abroad. During her recent travels to the United States, Meseret raised 6,000,000 ETB and linked medical and non-medical professionals with the center to provide material support in a sustainable way.”

Another notable philanthropist and artist is Solomon Bogale. Solomon has proven his potential in acting at early ages. He is now among dominant Ethiopian actors performing in major amharic feature movies such as *The 11th Hour* (2007), *Sost Maezen* (2013,) *Abay vs. Vegas* (2010) and other 22 films. He also starred in major drama series such as *Kebebelosh* and *Sew le Sew*. He is now acting on very popular drama “*Eregnaye*”.

Solomon is also known for being very affectionate and generous to people. He once sold out his car to help people ailing with kidney problems. He sustained his charity work organizing a team of artists who are friends to him and know what he intended to do. He initiated the foundation of Hibret Lebege Ethiopian’s Charity Association in June 2015. The association’s blog puts the foundation history of the association as follows:

“It inception was much impacted by the personal initiative took by the renowned artist Solomon Bogale to sell in auction his private vehicle to rescue the life of



however, realized that such a support mechanism could not address the problem of the people suffering from the same problems, rather need for an organized effort through formal association.”

Thanks to Solomon, the 8 years old child Alazar Degefe survived after being diagnosed with congenital and kidney problems in Germany. Tigist Kifle, a 38 years old female patient with severe heart disease has also been diagnosed in India with the support of Solomon.

Other patents beginning from six month to forty years with kidney problems and other related ailments have been saved by direct support of Solomon or by people who respond to Solomon’s call.

Witnessing the agony of children and disadvantaged people in general, Solomon along with his friends continued to invest time and energy for this noble cause. Notable actors and cinematographers such as Yegerem Dejene, Samson Taddese, Biniam Worku, Sisay Bekele and others maintained cooperation with Solomon and realized Hibret Lebege Ethiopian’s Charity Association. Solomon envisioned construction of a referral hospital and providing quality and affordable health services to people. He is very optimist. He said, “There is nothing we can’t do if we support each other”

TV personalities like Seifu Fantahun, Comedian Eshetu Melese and others seem to follow this example as they have already dedicated time for philanthropic purposes. It is expected Ethiopian artists influence, popularity and benefit from the sector to grow. Simultaneously, it is fair to assume they would give back to their fans and the people in a number of ways. They would use their popularity, connection and resources for positive purposes like shaping society through their awakening art works and mobilizing society to help each other and reach to the needy.

It is expected Ethiopian artists influence, popularity and benefit from the sector to grow. Simultaneously, it is fair to assume they would give back to their fans and the people in a number of ways. They would use their popularity, connection and resources for positive purposes...

two chronically sick Ethiopians, Alazar Degefe and Tigist Kifle who were suffering from kidney failure and heart problem respectively. Solomon and his friends

Society

Reassuring Ethiopia's greatness through collaboration

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Being an Ethiopian is a belief that circulates within the blood stream of every Ethiopian; both residing at home and across the world. It is a force that brings together all nation nationalities and peoples of the country into the center. It is because of this reason Ethiopians are symbol of unity and icon of heroism for all Africans. It is because of this strong force; they never ever lost hope; and bow down before their enemies. This is the true identity of Ethiopians from Adwa to GERD.

The inevitable victory Ethiopians won during the Battle of Adwa is still a force that energized the new generation to struggle for sovereignty and unity. The type of the war or the purpose of the enemies might have differences; but the struggle is still the same. The enemy that faced Ethiopia in times of Adwa had a goal of colonizing Ethiopia; and was filled by the spirit of chauvinism. The nation had faced the same enemies throughout its time. Both internal and external forces have attempted to destroy the strong force that glues Ethiopians together, however, none of them achieve their goal. Ethiopianism is an irrevocable national honor and a unique feature of all nations, nationalities and people of the land. The fascist Italy had once used the divide and rule policy to create enmity in Ethiopia. However, its effort turned unproductive for the reason of Ethiopians' unity. The same strategy has been executed by T-PLF to elongate its power though all was in vain. Using its mean strategies, the TPLF had tried all its best to creating enmity among the people.

The same strategies have also been exercised by Ethiopia's enemies- both local and external enemies - to cripple Ethiopia's effort from building the GERD but, it has failed owing to the concerted hands of



Ethiopians.

Ethiopia and Ethiopianism are in common solidarity. It is a will to sacrifice one's interest for the sake of others. This is the secret behind the success and victory of Ethiopia for centuries. This strong Ethiopian sentiment has kept its momentum in this generation as well. The GERD, which is a sign and seal of Ethiopia unity, is a true manifestation in this respect. The Dam, which is nearing to its completion, has now started generating power in its two turbines. As it was indicated last Thursday by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Demeke Mekonnen, the achievements so far registered in the construction of GERD through withstanding any kinds of manmade pressures demonstrates the strong collaboration and endurance of the Ethiopian.

Indeed, the achievement that is registered in the GERD is a true demonstration of strong collaboration and endurance among Ethiopians. This courage was within the blood of our forefathers. If it was not because of their dedication and endurance, the name Ethiopia would have been included among those colonized nations. If it was not because of the collaboration among different nations, nationalities and people of Ethiopia, there would have not been any historical legacy Ethiopians would deliver to the next generation.

The GERD, which was launched some years ago, is not simply a hydroelectric power plant. It is also an emblem of unity, fairness and a project that the fingerprint of all Ethiopians marked to fight poverty.

Creating a peaceful environment and living in harmony with neighbors is the other

manifestation of Ethiopianism. Due to the strong cultural attachments, sharing is the other side of Ethiopians. No matter what their economic background is, Ethiopians are raised by their parents to share what they have with those in need. This is witnessed in diplomatic areas as well. As a land of diversity, Ethiopia always promotes peaceful relationships with its neighbors. While it builds the Dam, it has also a great desire to share its natural resources with the riparian countries.

As it was indicated by President Sahlework Zewde the achievements that are witnessed in the GERD will further strengthen the diplomatic cooperation with downstream countries. According to her, the third filling of the Dam signifies not only generating electric power; it also confirms the greatness of the nation. The GERD is a true manifestation of "It is Possible" spirit.

Standing in solidarity to address social determinants

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Though Ethiopia and Ethiopians are tasted by many sided challenges that stem from ill intentions of some groups, and nations as well as natural disasters, Ethiopians remained united and showing solidarity to each other in a bid to fend off the impact and increase the resilience among the communities.

Needless to say that unity makes communities strong because it brings people together, reduces conflicts and encourages them to share their time and help each other when needed.

With this same goal, various private and government organization are showing solidarity and established alliance to support people. As a result, they can play vital role in cutting short the impacts. As the saying goes "United we stand divided we fall" the response they made proved that

we all should share hard times to showing solidarity to others who are in need.

As part of this effort, Global Alliance for the Rights of Ethiopians (GARE) is responding to the calls of Ethiopians found in various disaster conditions and is lending a helping hand.

Recently, the delegation of GARE has visited Yeab Kidney Transplant and Dialysis Center opened at Menelik II Hospital,

Speaking on the occasion, GARE's President Betru Gebregezabihir said as a civil association organization, the organization has been responding to various humanitarian needs in Ethiopia.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, GARE has raised over one million USD by bringing together the Ethiopian Diaspora residing in various parts of the world, he said.

The donation aimed at boosting Ethiopia's response capability to fend off the COVID-19 pandemic, he said, adding the recent visit to Yeab Kidney Transplant and Dialysis Center targets at looking at ways to open similar health facilities in various areas of Ethiopia including Bahir Dar and Gonder towns.

According to him, Yeab Kidney Transplant and Dialysis Center, which was built in the premises of Menelik II Hospital, and inaugurated in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, complies with international standards in the provision of dialysis service.

As to him, such health facilities need to be open in various places across Ethiopia; however, as the facility requires huge capital, it demands the concerted hands of the diaspora community.

Once Amaha Mekonnen, GARE Ethiopia

Support Groups Chairperson said: "As a civil association organization, Global Alliance for Rights of Ethiopians has been responding to various humanitarian needs in Ethiopia.

The organization, including in times of COVID-19 pandemic, it has offered donation to displaced people. Likewise, it is helping people in areas of health, and food security among others.

After visiting the health center, GARE has vowed to continue support to address various humanitarian and non-humanitarian needs of the country.

In the visiting program, members of the Dallas Task Force and supporters were present.

GARE is an organization established by the Diaspora group to respond to the calls of people and provide the necessary support for those who are in need.

Law & Politics

Light at the end of tunnel

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Before reaching the current millstone, the full journey of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has been accompanied by a diverse range of confrontations on the grounds that the downstream nations have been coming up with layers of factious stories that do not reflect the prevailing actuality on the ground.

As the downstream nations have been plotting intrigues time and time again to perpetuate what they called historical water share, Ethiopia turned out to be victorious over its arch enemies. For the sake of truth, the journey was full of opportunities and obstacles, positive and negative effects, good periods and bad periods, and other unforgettable challenges. To put it in a nutshell, attaining the desired goal was not a walk in the park or low-hanging fruit.

No matter how hard Ethiopia's arch foes attempted to halt the construction of the flagship project and turn the table on Ethiopia, the latter turned out to be victorious over the downstream nations sooner rather than later. Needless to say, the successful construction of the dam managed to dry the tears of Ethiopians that have been full of remorse.

In times gone by, Ethiopians on many occasions have been conveying their remorse making use of poems, songs, stories, and other writes up. However, through the passage of time, through the concerted efforts of Ethiopians and the commitment of the incumbent, the long-awaited dreams of the population as a whole embarked on bearing fruit against all odds by creating a brand new chapter of hope for Ethiopia and the continent of Africa.

It is an undeniable fact that apart from connecting millions of Ethiopians that have been living in the blackout to the power grid, Africans will largely benefit from the dam beyond a shadow of a doubt.

As Ethiopia's advertisers have been working with the now discredited international media outlets and other major internal and external actors around the clock to thwart the construction of the game changer project, they failed to attain the desired goal as a consequence of the concerted efforts of Ethiopians residing at home and abroad.

Notwithstanding the fact that Ethiopia familiarized the international community with the fact that it has been utilizing the Nile River devoid of causing any harm to the downstream nations, the looked-for aim has not been achieved as one would expect in view of the fact that they have not been in the position to lend their ears.

In the fullness of time, having passed through many highs and lows Ethiopia ended up generating electricity from the game changer project.

In earlier times, in the aftermath of the conspiracies of the terrorist TPLF group, the flagship project had been getting sidetracked and getting off track. However, when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power, he set in motion getting the dam back on track in a little while. As a matter of fact, on the heels of the commitment and hard work of the incumbent, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has



been reaching the desired destination at the earliest possible time.

Despite westerners' layers of conspiracies and continuous unwarranted foreign pressure, the government's unreserved efforts managed to bear fruit in the shortest possible time. Other than that the population as a whole has contributed a huge amount of money to the construction of the colossal dam taking part in a range of fundraising activities.

There were cacophonies from downstream nations and the international community and despite Ethiopia's unreserved effort to utilize the Nile River equitably and reasonably devoid of instigating any significant harm to downstream nations by applying the fundamental principle that has been acknowledged internationally.

Following the commencement of the second turbine electric generation, a number of experts, scholars, influential people, and others have been expressing their happiness.

Commenting on the second turbine of GERD's unit 9 power production, Water Researcher and PhD Candidate at Florida International University Mekdelawit Deribe said that the commencement of the production of power with a capacity of 270 MW of electricity is a big milestone for Ethiopia.

"The first turbine went operational a few months back and now the second turbine is commenced and the two turbines together installed capacity total potential to produce energy is 375 megawatts each that's 750 megawatts total."

"The energy generated by the two turbines is huge that is more than most of the dams that we already have in Ethiopia, Tekeze, Gibe I and II dams. It is more than all the other smaller dams except Gilgel Gibe III. Most of the dams that are operational in Ethiopia are producing less power than the two turbines and for Ethiopia it is going to be monumental," she said.

In Ethiopia, the quality of life is low and energy consumption is low too. Every person uses around 100 kilowatt-hours of energy per year and this is a very low number as compared to developed countries or even developing countries, as to her.

"As a country we have around 40 percent energy access and our energy usage is around 100 Kilowatt- hours per capital which is far from Egypt's annual per capital of 1,500 per year. The impact of these two turbines in changing the quality of lives of the society is going to be far reaching and the project is very transformational," she indicated.

Apart from changing the livelihood of those Ethiopians who are in abject poverty, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) will help neighboring countries obtain electricity with affordable prices, so said Fekahmed Negash (Eng.), a well-known water expert speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Fekahmed noted that when the construction of the GERD is fully completed, the electricity generated from the dam is expected to play an important role in meeting the ever-increasing demand for power in Ethiopia and other countries.

As to him, revenue from electricity export would make a significant contribution to the country's economic growth. Fekahmed also explained that by meeting the electric power needs of the manufacturing industries and other businesses, it would boost Ethiopia's development and create improvements in living standards of a given family.

Although the lower riparian countries of the Nile (Abbey) River have been working to maintain their previous hydro-hegemony status quo, Ethiopians are building the mega dam using their sovereign right as the river is found under the sovereign territory of Ethiopia, he further stated.

The lower riparian countries, particularly Egypt, have also been opposing the construction of the dam and working to disrupt the filling of the dam's reservoir, he said adding, that they have repeatedly been seen taking the issue to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) pretending as the issue is an international threat.

However, it is very clear that the water that Ethiopia now holds in the dam does not affect the lower riparian countries and it works in consultation with these countries. And, they should not be threatened at all, since the main purpose of the dam is to generate power,

according to him.

"Recently, Egypt sent a letter to the UNSC opposing Ethiopia's third-round filling of the dam, and I believe that the Council would refer the issue to the African Union as usual," Fekahmed also indicated.

Delivering their congratulatory messages on the inauguration ceremony of power generation from the second turbine of the GERD, the administrators said that the performance of the dam is the result of commitment of government officials and unity among peoples of the country towards GERD.

Gambella State Chief Administrator Umed Ujulu said that the power-generating launching of the second turbine of the dam manifests the capability of the Ethiopian people to do anything if they collaborate.

On his part, Dire-Dawa City Administration Mayor Kedir Jawar said that this is a great win for all Ethiopian people and called upon all fellow citizens continue their contributions to finalize the construction of the dam.

He vowed that his administration will continue its coordination activities towards the work of the dam. Harari People State Chief Administrator Ordin Bedri also appreciated the effort of reform government and the Ethiopian people saying that it is great victory for the country.

He stressed that though the GERD project has encountered with internal and external challenges the country has enabled to generate the power from the second turbine through paying great sacrifices.

Afar State Chief Administrator Awel Arba said that power generating of the dam has more social, political and economic interpretation adding that the issue of the GERD is not only generating power but also it is the issue of sovereignty.

Expressing his happiness towards the performance of the dam, he said that it is the second Adwa victory at which Ethiopians have reflected their unity and love for their country. He said that it is great happiness for Ethiopian people and friends of Ethiopia.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Gossip-mongering as a Weapon!

"I'm on your side." Just like that! The guy drops out of nowhere and...what was that he said?

"I beg your pardon...."

"I said I'm on your side." The guy's serious, isn't he? No the prank thug they are abusing so much these days!

"What side? What the hell are you talking about?" For all you know you haven't been into anything which calls for taking sides for as far back as you can go down the memory lane.

"I was told that you had a falling out with one of your best friends." Oh no! No! No! What's going on here! Whoever is trying to make an issue out of that incident won't probably go anywhere near Heaven. I'll make sure of that! Yes, I will. Don't think I'm praying for nothing; hmm... What's getting into people these days! They call a very minor every-day incident some fallout! All this time you thought it was a little misunderstanding that happens between friends now and then and now they have elevated it to a falling out!

"Who said we've all fall out?"

"Well they told me that was what he was saying." What! This can't be happening. Now sometimes emotions push us dangerously close to the edge of the cliff. Watch out! You're about to conclude something just by listening to what some fellow is telling you; and nothing would be more dangerous. Many relationships have fallen on the wayside because spur-of-the-

moment actions. Now this guy's telling you something he said he heard and he isn't first hand witness.

Are our social interactions these days really changing negatively as much as we think they are? Well that's difficult, wouldn't you say? I'll tell you why I brought this issue up. Almost exactly the same scenario took place recently. It was between a guy and his fiancé-in waiting. Someone goes and tells her that her guy was saying all things about her. The vilest thing of it all was that the person has been studying some darker corners of her life she thought no one knew, except her guy. But this guy brings it up and tells her many people heard the story from her guy. Now the sad thing here is there was absolutely nothing whatsoever that would take the two of them this far into disagreement or anything near to that. I can tell you the guy who is one soul fast approaching middle age was a complete wreck hearing what has been going on. The devilish thing of this gossip was that he said not a word to anybody concerning his fiancé or their relationships! She to being in her mid-thirties should have known better. I mean if age doesn't teach you to try to see all sides of the issue before you decide anything what would.

Very unfortunate that she took what she was told in its entirety. She didn't try to go a little deeper into the hows and whys or pick up the phone, call her and ask him what the hell he was doing dragging her name all over town. She didn't do that. A couple of

days later the word was out that the whole thing was a carefully planned mission to get back at her guy over something only the parties involved are aware of. Attempts to bring her back her senses have so far failed. She would have none of it. In fact she is so hurt deep inside she is telling the peacemakers not to raise the issue ever or risk losing her friendship. The case is still on. But at the risk of jumping into the pool without noticing the sharks I can tell you all the signs are it was a lost case. She has started seeing another person!

Look, you might say such things happen day-to-day and there was nothing to be surprised about what was said earlier. But this is not about single cases. This is not only about soon-to-be-married couples splitting. It's about some very destructive trend. Of course such things should have remained strictly personal business. The more noses poking in the uglier things get. That's what's happening in the case I told you about.

I must have told you about this. In the old days there was this woman in one of the older hamlets in the city who was rumored to be a sorcerer. The stories flung around were so well crafted and articulated even the most rational of people would say "And I thought she was the sweetest woman in this village!" After she passes away you'd have thought her teenage daughter who tried her best to keep her distance from all the mess would have it good; for a time that was what happened. But not for long; the rumors started circulating that she had inherited not only her mother's broken furniture but her

'craft' too. (That, too, must be some sort of craft, wouldn't you say? I mean this sorcery thing. But the girl acted fast and left the village and went to the edges of the city. The last heard about her was that she relocated across the ocean, married and has children. Had she remained in the village I can tell you she would have got things worse than her mother did. She just couldn't have stood it. No one ever produced her mother was really what they claimed she was; not the slightest of signs!

Now we seem to be talking about these things over and again. Because these days be it in politics, commerce, academia or you name it in almost every sector of life such things are more visible than most of us would have liked to admit. And the scary part is that rumors just don't start and spread just like that. We hear they are well thought out with detailed execution blueprint. And I'm not talking about the social media here. I'm talking about what actually is happening in the places we live, work and what have you.

Of course in comparison with the population those involved in such behaviors might not be that many. But it is not about only numbers. It is the offence they bring on people and their families. And as I told you when all those highly educated and supposedly rational people get involved in such primitive destructive behaviors like rumor-mongering you know that we really are in tough waters.

It's sad; but there are many who use gossip-mongering as a weapon!

Maybe, just maybe, we may not be that smart!

A couple of weeks back a few of us friends went to one of the biggest malls in town. Those things, I mean malls, could really have that festive atmosphere with all the glittering lights, the immaculately clean floors, the well-dressed people and all the modern day merchandise flashing in scores of windows. Of course the glitter and all lasts until you are forced to dig deep into your pockets to buy something you really need. If there really is anything like nerves of steel this is where they'd become handy. Especially the ease with which the shopkeepers tell you the prices leaves you wondering, "Due to these kids think all of us have golden-plated pockets! Hey guys if we told with what the pockets of most of us were plated with your young hearts would've missed quite a few beats!

"Is this jacket locally made?"

"No, they are Turkish. (Even our dubbed films are Turkish these days!) We don't carry local products." Really? And how do you expect me to react to that! Take of my watch and put it on your wrist!

"Can you tell me the price?"

"Six thousand five hundred;" What! Is that in Italian Lire or something? For that kind of money I'd buy myself two suits made of the

best material! Of course that's not going to happen anytime soon. But I'm a disgruntled customer and mine wouldn't be your idea of a happy face.

So the few of us I was telling you about were going in and out of shops just to survey the price of things around town. I usually go to those places when I really have something to purchase. If you have the money go and buy whatever you want. If you don't window-shop! That was what we were doing and reality hit us real hard. "You guys are in the wrong place with the wrong pockets. Just to tip you, haven't you heard of the Sunday market far from the center of town? You'd feel perfectly at home in those places." I had this friend, now on the other side of the Mediterranean, who bought his dresses for the Sunday 'heavy discount' markets and one considered to be one of the best dressed guys around. The second-hand, they might even be the fifth-hand, clothes look so fresh and new if anyone knows your secret that person must be a regular customer of those places.

Yes, the shopkeepers in those places were full of smiles; you know that 'plastic smile' which is over before you know it has even started! You're pardoned to suspect we're up to something. "These drumheads are trying to

fry me. Well they don't know what's coming their way." Say you've been asked a thousand birr for the product. Their air of finality sounds like they were delivering some ruling at some high-stakes Nuremberg or some trial. "That's it. Take it or leave it." Oh so that's what you think. You goons don't know who you're dealing with. I'll make you beg me on all your fours.

You start leaving and at the door you turn back; "Nine ninety five and that's all I can give you. And you're walking out the door when you hear the shrill vice of the girl "Ok take it!" Aha! How about that! You beat them black and blue in their own game. They were trying to squeeze out every last cent from your pockets. And what do you do? You slash a massive fifty-birr and tell them in your own way, "Take it or leave it" I can tell you when you get back home you look like some fellow who has just been told by his doctors, "You've the highest IQ ever recorded."

"What is all that big smile about?"

"I just conned a couple of traders at that big mall."

"And what did you do? Buy something for half the price?"

"No they asked a thousand and refused to reduce even one birr. And you know what I did; I forced them to deduct fifty birr."

"You're happy because of the fifty birr?"

"It's not about the money you moron. It is about not being easily conned."

You're so all over yourself you fail to grasp the sarcasm printed on their every square inch of skin. Just then someone comes with the same product and the bag had the name of the very shop from which you bought.

"So you bought it for nine hundred and fifty..."

"What do you mean nine hundred and fifty?"

"I mean nine hundred and fifty birr."

"What! Are you out of your mind? What do you think I'm to throw away that much money, a psychopath or something? I got it for five hundred."

Just then you feel what it must have felt when there is some earthquake or something moving the earth under peoples' feet. That's what you feel. So you're not as smart as you thought you were! Don't worry, there are many of us who aren't as smart as we think we are and yet we act as if we created smartness itself!

Maybe, just maybe, we may not be that smart!

In Pictures

Ethiopia's green growth, pan African mega projects



Right-to-left: PM Abiy Ahmed, President Sahlework Zowde, Deputy PM and FM Demeke Mekonnen attending the inaugural event of the second turbine power generation at the GERD project, Guba Woreda, Beni Shangul Gumuz Regional State.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), a mega project that has been shaping Ethiopia to a new horizon is currently nearing completion while it has been generating power from its two power units. The reservoir filling in the Africa's mega dam has also been completed successfully over the week.

"A fascinating milestone and great news for the investment community, Ethiopia is marching towards sustainable energy generation that supports fast domestic industrialization strides and regional economic integration," the Ethiopian Investment Commission stated in a short press release following the developments of the GERD.



A wheat field in the Oromia regional state developing by mechanized cluster farming, among the government's top reform agendas on the agriculture sector is expected to replace the import of wheat and other food items through which it is also expected to save the large amount of hard currency moving to purchasing those food items. Ethiopia is set to export wheat in two years' time. Source (Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's official Facebook page).



The award and recognition program of the Ethiopian athletics delegation, which finished third in the 19th World Under-20 Athletics Championship held in Cali, Colombia, is underway at Skylight Hotel. The Minister of Culture and Sports Kejela Merdasa, President of the Ethiopian Athletics Federation Commander Athlete Derartu Tulu, the leaders of the federation and invited guests were present at the event. The athlete's team and delegation has been arrived in Addis Ababa Friday evening and went around selected main roads in Addis Ababa to express their happiness with the people.