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Gov't re-initiates ethio telecom's partial privatization

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- The partial privatization process of ethio telecom is resuming and the government is giving Invitation for Expression of Interest to international investors to purchase 40 percent of the state-owned operator, the Ministry of Trade

disclosed.

During the media briefing on the invitation for expression of interest yesterday, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide noted that after a careful consideration of the market conditions and a very stable outlook of the country, the government is now ready to engage with prospective bidders to privatize

40 percent of Ethio telecom's share.

The government is re-initiating the process with the launching of the Expression of Interest that will permit interested companies to express their interest. The government will be supported in this transaction by

See Gov't re-initiates ... Page 3



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Kevin McCarthy

Ethiopia's friend Kevin McCarthy becomes next House Speaker

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDISABABA-The Republican Party won the American Congress on Tuesday with 218 votes and as a result, Kevin McCarthy, who is a friend of Ethiopia and helped pass HR128, was elected as the next

See Ethiopia's friend ... Page 3

CoHA living testimony to African solutions to African problems: Expert

• Lauds Ethiopia's pan-Africanist role
BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA- The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) that the government and TPLF concluded in South

See CoHA living ... Page 3

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA – U.N. World Food Program (WFP) aid convoys have entered Tigray via Gondar corridor for the first time since June 2021, WFP Ethiopia disclosed.

In its twitter message, WFP stated yesterday that critical relief food will now be delivered to communities ... in coming days. More relief food, nutrition, medical cargo will follow immediately via all routes possible

It was learnt first fifteen WFP aid trucks entered Tigray state .

WFP Ethiopia also announced test flight rotated safely into Shire yesterday and more flights are planned to transport humanitarian workers and critical nutrition as well as



medical supplies.

Mekelle also still needed for humanitarian

It, moreover, pointed out that Air access to

See WFP delivers ... Page 3

Developing mega projects for viable growth, change

Page 6

Pretoria peace deal: Strong manifestation of Africa's wisdom

Page 9

Incorporating private health sector to address unmet FP needs

Page 10



University calls for joint efforts in carrying out mega projects

BY MESERET BEHAILU

HOSAENA- Wachemo University said that concerted effort are required to effectively finalize the Abay Dam and other mega projects thereby meeting national interest in the years to come.

Speaking at a scientific forum Wachemo University President Habtamu Abebe (PhD) said that the forum would be of significantly useful in contributing a lot to the effort geared towards dealing with hostilities by the downstream countries and fighting against unfair global pressure on Ethiopia.

The Forum was organized in collaboration with alliance in Canada and Ministry of Water and Energy under the theme, "Impact of The higher Education Institutions and Diaspora community on The Development of Abay Dam and Ethiopia's Other Mega Projects of National Interest,"

As to the President, the grand Abay Dam is the development project which would potentially uplift millions of Ethiopians from poverty. Over 83 percent of Ethiopians have been living in rural areas fighting with darkness.

In this regard, the dam would generate huge electric power annually to get over 65 million people electrified, benefited out of social progress upon Dam completion.

"The Blue Nile has been benefitting Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt though Ethiopia is the source of 86 percent of water share. Many downstream countries, some westerners, and historical enemies of Ethiopia are not comfortable with Ethiopia's progress.

Specially, some western media and their administration have been disseminating fake news and biased approaches against Ethiopia. In this regard, diplomatic harassment is the serious one of which various nations had been accused like the government of Ethiopia and its people," he added.

Like the Diaspora Community, Higher education institutions have been playing a vital role in fighting against the biased diplomatic approach or wrong discourses about Ethiopia through public diplomacy center and research based schemes.

Forwarding idea at the forum, Water and Energy Minister, Habtamu Itefa (PhD) on his part said that Wachemo University is an exemplary institute, which has conducted a collaboration program in collaboration with the Diaspora community, the science and Research bodies and others, has been working hard to help assist the effort of the Ethiopian government boost national mega projects and ensure national interest.

The Minister further added that Abay Dam is a hydro power development project that is belied to ensure equitable and accessible utilization of water resource. Compared with the water source potential, Ethiopia has 45 GW, 10MW, and 5.2 KW per hour from hydropower, wind, and solar energies respectively.

Diaspora Community Representative in Canada, Getu Biftu (PhD) said that the Diaspora community in Canada has been contributing over 500,000 USD over the past two years. He added that the Diaspora community is continuing the finance contribution, knowledge transfer, keeping the national interest, as well as supporting the ongoing peace progress to make Ethiopia's ambition for prosperity.

Ethiopia inaugurates solar-powered mobile coding, robotics lab

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA-Huawei Ethiopia, in collaboration with an indigenous organization called 'iCog Anyone Can Code, inaugurated a solar-powered mobile coding and robotics lab named 'Digi Truck Ethiopia' here yesterday.

Speaking at the inauguration, Education Minister Prof. Birhanu Nega said that the creation of a mobile computer programming and robotic science lab in Ethiopia will provide ample opportunity to produce a technologically advanced generation.

The minister further highlighted that Ethiopia has set a goal to produce competent, competitive and entrepreneurial citizens in the sector by making digital technology accessible by 2025. "The mobile computer programming and robotic science technology that was graduated on today will give students across the country the opportunity to acquire technological knowledge and skills from an early age."

The Ministry of Education is working closely with many institutions engaged in the field, including the Chinese telecommunications and electronics manufacturer Huawei.

ICT and Digital Education Executive Director with the ministry, Zelalem Assefa (PhD) said that the lab will help Ethiopia to solve the human resource problem in the



field of computer programming and software and to produce entrepreneurs in the field.

For Bethlehem Dese, the founder and CEO of the indigenous organization 'iCog Anyone Can Code', technology, coding and robotics skills are becoming increasingly important.

Noting 'Dig Track Ethiopia' provides training in nine state capitals for seven years, the CEO noted that the organization has a goal to make mobile digital laboratories accessible to all areas. In the first round alone, the organization is planned to access more

than 3,500 primary school students.

Leo Lee, Vice President of Huawei North Africa; stated that 75,000 USD was spent into the recently graduated 'Dig Track Ethiopia' to make it accessible to students across the country in terms of encoding and robotics technology.

Mmore than two million Birr has been budgeted for the training provided by the mobile laboratory in nine states and it will strengthen the efforts to support the education sector with technology, the vice president remarked.

Community centered services bearing fruits

BY EPHREM ANDARGCHEW

ADDIS ABABA—Implementing various community centered projects like drinking water supply, education, health, and other related societal services is of significantly useful in improving the lives of many, so stated Plan International.

Speaking at a ceremony organized to hand over a range of projects to the community in the Oromo Special and North Shoa zones in the Amhara state, Plan International Ethiopia Country Office Wash Project Manager Wendosen Admasu said that the facilities built in 8 Werdas benefit over 167,000 people, who were displaced and affected by recurrent conflict in the region.

Plan International Ethiopia is working on drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities to help the communities benefit out of the services, and it handed over clean water supply, toilets, and shower facilities that are built in Ataye city and Debre Barhan city displaced camps.

"It built facilities at an outlay of 70 million financial supports secured from UNICEF. Besides, PIE has provided experts with various trainings and provides kits to investigate and ensure the quality of water. Furthermore, the organization installed 12 kilometers of clean water pipeline that covers three kebeles, and expands over 16 water points, and reservoirs in Ataye city. Hence, its work aims at covering the gaps



in areas that are not reached by the government," he added.

As to him, Ataye city Mayor Asfaw Derbe explained that water facilities are one of the infrastructures that have been highly affected by the conflict occurred in the city over the past 4 years.

Hence, Plan International Ethiopia has been running effective work in the water sector along with humanitarian organizations invited by the region and city to restore and install the damaged water infrastructures.

In addition to the construction of 12 kilometers of water pipelines, Plan International has played an important role in preparing water points, repairing the damaged ones, and setting up new lines.

Amhara State Finances Office Civic Organization Director, Azemeraw Techane said that many have been displaced and infrastructures including water facilities were destroyed and looted following the conflict broke out as a result of the recent political reform.

The involvement of Plan International Ethiopia has supported government's effort exerted towards expanding water supply and assisting the society, especially women and children when they have returned to their respective residences.

He further requested the organization to continue providing the region with clean water access, and sanitation and hygiene services.

U.S. Company, agriculture sector launch soil-enhancing product

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- An American-made environmental friendly and soil-enhancing product named Apex-10 was launched in partnership with U.S. Company Partners and Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector.

Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) of the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa Fiona Evans joined the Special Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture, Sileshi Getahun, and Girma Abera from the Agricultural Transformation Agency to launch Apex-10.

In a press release issued for *The Ethiopian Herald*, The American Company JSH International and Jigra Chemicals of Ethiopia which partnered to bring the organic fertilizer booster Apex-10



significantly reduces fertilizer consumption and improves water retention.

The American-made environmentally friendly and soil-enhancing product was

approved for commercial use in Ethiopia.

The launching follows the signing of an agreement between the two companies in September 2021, allowing the Ethiopian

company to have the exclusive right to distribute and sell JSH International's innovative product, Apex-10, in Ethiopia.

Speaking at the launching event, DCM Evans expressed her optimism that the initiative would bring significant benefits to Ethiopian smallholder farmers, commercial farmers, and the entire nation. She reiterated the U.S. commitment to fostering such linkages, which protect Ethiopian food security.

Apex-10 has been tested and used across Africa and the world and has been proven to reduce the need for fertilizer and water, while improving yields. This is especially important in the face of regional droughts, changing climates, and supply chain disruptions affecting the availability of both food and fertilizer, it was learnt.

Gov't...

Deloitte Consulting Ltd, which will be the transaction advisor representing the government, the minister added.

Finance State Minister Eyob Tekalign (PhD) said on the same briefing that this partial privatization of ethio telecom and initiation of the stakeholder consultation process for the third telecommunication operating license are part of the government's telecom sector transformation plan which is intended to create world class telecom industry and enhance the country's digital economy.

Ethiopian communication Authority Director General Balcha Reba noted in the same event that the stakeholder consultation process for the third telecommunications operating license will last for a month and all interested bidders can join the consultation process.

WFP delivers...

community to mount adequate response across the state.

Meanwhile, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) disclosed that the first convey of aid supplies has arrived in Mekelle, Tigray state on Tuesday.

"Our first convoy of aid supplies has arrived in Mekelle. Two trucks delivered medicines, emergency and first aid kits to support health facilities in Tigray to treat patients with conditions that need urgent care," ICRC tweeted.

Ethiopia's friend Kevin McCarthy...

Speaker of the House, Ethio American Civic Council announced.

HR.128 was endorsed in 2018 on the verge Ethiopia's sweeping reform. The bill condemned the use of excessive force by the then Ethiopian security forces and noted the reports of widespread human rights abuses.

In his twitter post, the Council Public Relations Head Amsalu Kassaw stated that a significant number of votes came from the Ethiopian and Eritrean Americans community. "McCarthy thanked for these votes and vow to fight for our cause and

interest together."

"We did what we could and thank you everyone in my community for supporting Republican candidates. They will be walking with us no matter what the outcomes of this election," Amsalu added.

By being civically engaged, Ethiopian and Eritrean Americans have made an impactful role of making the voice of their home countries to be heard. The defeat of Rep. Tom Malinowski, the arch enemy of Ethiopia who was the chief sponsor of H.R. 6600 shall remain as a shining example of the Diaspora's contribution. "The council

thanked Ethiopian and Eritrean Americans for participating in the U.S. 2022 mid-term election."

Kevin McCarthy is a member of the U.S. House, representing California's 23rd Congressional District. Kevin was first elected to Congress in 2006 and is a native of Bakersfield and a fourth-generation Kern County resident. In 2014, he was elected Republican Leader in the House, where he now leads Congress in fighting for individual liberty, an efficient and effective government, free markets, and a vibrant civil society, it was learned.

CoHA living testimony to African...

Africa is a living testimony for Africa's ability to solve its own problems without third parties' dictation, an international relations expert said.

Speaking to local media, International Relations Expert Eyob Belachew said that CoHA is an example for other African countries to solve their problems under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and curtailing third parties' ill-conceived involvement.

The expert further noted that the peace accord is the manifestation of the viability of a continental-led approach to resolve conflicts in negotiation and in a peaceful manner.

By the same token, Ethiopia has been achieving success in defending its benefits on the construction of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and to hinder the execution of the mega dam. Other African countries should replicate Ethiopia's success in resolving internal problems by African mechanisms thereby strengthening the AU's role to ensure a peaceful and prosperous continent.

"Starting from the Colonial era, Ethiopia has been making a noble contribution for Africa's freedom and dignity, achieving successful results in this regard. The country is also a venue for different continental summits including the first African Youth Summit which was held last week to nurture pan Africanist vision and sentiment among African youth."

The summit acknowledged the immense sacrifice African forefathers and mothers paid to liberate the continent from the yoke of colonialism and it is crucial to activate African youth to replicate such victory in repelling foreign intervention. By the same token, the summit was instrumental to enhance integration among African countries, Eyob stressed.



Eyob Belachew

Opinion

Food Self-Sufficiency: a declaration of true independence

BY GETACHEW MINAS/STEPHEN DEVEREUX

Food self-sufficiency is a declaration of true independence from donors of food aid. Lack of food creates suspicions and uncertainties about life on earth. It leads to dependency and submission to the providers of food aid. Such people are discouraged from making efforts to produce sufficient food for subsistence. Ethiopian farmers, for example, totally depended on low-input, low-output rain-fed agriculture which made them unproductive. They do not produce enough food to feed their families. The fragile natural resource base and climatic uncertainty did not allow for agricultural intensification. Inappropriate food aid interventions by Western donors added another layer of dependence, at both household and national levels.

Studies proposed a range of options for consideration by donors and government to redress chronic and transitory food insecurity. Proposals for immediate action included improved food aid “targeting” and safety nets programming. Medium-term interventions focused on recapitalization of household lacking assets and agricultural yield stabilization. Long-term strategies included diversification away from rainfall-dependent livelihoods. However, the greatest challenge is ensuring food security due to low technological base of agriculture, limited rural infrastructure and off-farm employment. This is compounded by neglect and inappropriate policies until recently. The food security strategy, whose implementation has begun, is meant to break the complex problems to close the food gap and ensure food security.

Food insecurity incorporates low food intake, irregular access to food, and vulnerability to agricultural failure. There is no guarantee to generate adequate food that is resilient against shocks. These shocks correspond broadly to chronic, cyclical and transitory food insecurity, and all are endemic in Ethiopia. The main triggers of transitory food insecurity in Ethiopia are drought and war. Also, seasonality is a major cause of cyclical food insecurity.

As Stephen Devereux observed the structural factors contributing to chronic food insecurity include poverty, fragile natural resource base, weak institutions, monopoly of grain markets, and unhelpful or inconsistent interventions. As a result, Ethiopia has become a food deficit country until recently. Food aid was delivered, indicating that chronic food insecurity afflicted millions of Ethiopians.

Studies show that the distinction between transitory and chronic food insecurity is increasingly blurred. A group of rural Ethiopians are subjected to all forms of food insecurity. They do not meet their food requirements even under normal weather conditions. They suffer from

hunger and malnutrition, and they are vulnerable to famine in years of low or erratic rainfall. The impact of repeated droughts on long term food insecurity is very well established. Recovery from food crises is disrupted by the next drought. Moreover, the threat of drought is unpredictable and severely inhibits investment in agriculture. Other factors also contributed to low performance and these are small landholdings that do not allow most farming households to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. Also, population increase reduces the size of landholdings which creates stress on fragile natural resources.

Among the factors that contribute to low agricultural production is soil fertility which is low and declining due to intensive cultivation and limited application of yield-enhancing inputs. Another factor that contributes to abnormally low yields is the recurrent drought with which farmers are confronted. These factors also caused limited off-farm employment opportunities and restricted diversification and migration options, leaving farmers trapped in increasingly unviable agriculture. Yet, the Ethiopian economy is mainly dependent on low productivity rain-fed agriculture sector. Thus, the structural transformation of agriculture is very important, using technological inputs that contribute to high yields. Given the inherent vulnerability of agriculture, its role in the economy must eventually be reduced by encouraging growth in the manufacturing and services sectors.

To ensure food self-sufficiency in Ethiopia, it is a precondition to study and understand causes of food insecurity in the country, some of which are mentioned earlier. Analysts of food insecurity in Ethiopia can be divided into two groups and these are the “physical ecology” and the “political economy” groups. The first one focuses on population growth, declining soil fertility and drought, and the latter one blames policy makers, weak markets and institutional failure. Both have some merit as partial explanations, but they are not sufficient. Economists think that a holistic “livelihoods” analysis is required to fully grasp the causes and effects of food insecurity. Studies reveal that poverty in rural Ethiopia is “not” only a result of drought but also of an increasing shortage of the barest assets needed for agricultural survival.

The shortage of inputs and drought are accompanied by high density of rural population through natural increase. The WB asserts that poor policies and institutional failures are the primary cause of under-capitalized and uncompetitive agriculture. Adverse resource endowments have also had some direct effects. According to Dessalegn Rahmato, the rural households who farm less than half a hectare or “starvation plots”, suffer

from inadequate plots to meet subsistence food needs even in good rainfall years. Ethiopia also suffers from structural as well as transitory food deficits, requiring substantial commercial and concessional imports in non-drought years and extremely high levels of food aid in drought years.

The percentage of population that needed food aid declined during bumper harvest while it increased during drought years. In other words, as crop production increases food aid requirements decrease. Studies reveal that in most countries food insecurity and poverty are separate, in Ethiopia there is an overlap between the two. As real GDP grows at a rate “lower” than the rate at which a given population grows then the per capita (GDP/Pop) grows negatively. As agricultural growth was negative in years of drought, it was insufficient to maintain per capita food consumption. Agricultural performance was weaker and more variable in Ethiopia; its economic growth was driven by industry and services sectors in the past decade, both starting from a very low base. The impact of this growth performance on poverty has been limited, and its effect on food security negligible.

Another indicator of the link between food insecurity and poverty is the poverty-line based on food consumption norm of 2,200 calories per day per adult male. Using this norm nearly half of the Ethiopian population was living in “food poverty.” A study of food consumption in rural Ethiopian households found that transfers of food aid from government, donors, NGOs, and households were the second most important source of food after production and purchases. People are food insecure not only because their food consumption level is low but also because their access to food is variable and unpredictable over time. However, these people have their own livelihood strategies to reduce food insecurity. The rural strategies include increasing the size of farm and raising farm yields, income diversification through off-farm economic activities, and migration.

Studies showed that the dominant livelihood activities in Ethiopia were located in the agriculture sector. This sector was also major source of vulnerability. Yet, it remained to be the only means of survival for most Ethiopians. Even by African standards, Ethiopia’s economy has been dominated by smallholder agriculture, which engaged the majority of the people. It has also been a major contributor to the GDP and export earnings of the country. Food production in Ethiopia was highly variable and unpredictable due mainly to erratic weather, which had triggered famines. A decline in rainfall below its long-term average caused droughts or reduced national food production. Some droughts were exacerbated by civil conflict, which undermined food production and

inhibited government operations. In fact, it stimulated donor responses to harvest failure.

Social conflicts, skirmishes, fights, battles and wars also diverted resources away from agriculture and other development programs. Recent conflicts between the current government and the TPLF has eroded government resources that could have been used for economic development and enhancement of the living standard of Ethiopians. Moreover, the sluggish response of donors to the current drought in Ethiopia has created immense problems to the victims. Both manmade and natural problems have led to a downward spiral of low and declining productivity. Similarly, an adverse combination of agro-climatic, demographic, economic and institutional constraints created shocks. Some observers argued that a rapid population growth has contributed to the continuous fall of per capita food production. This situation has been exacerbated by lack of modern technology and inputs for farmers engaged in traditional farming, which contributed to poverty, social conflict and disunity.

There is no visible economic problem in a farming society that is productive and food self-sufficient. It has marketable surplus of produces that guaranteed sufficient income. This also encourages the farming community to engage in social activities that promote unity among rural people. They contribute their skills during farming, land preparation, seed sowing, crop harvesting, storage and marketing, etc. The income generated from communal farms is shared among the farmers. The Ethiopian government is currently providing agricultural services that enhance productivity. It also encourages production of exportable farm products that generate foreign exchange with which agricultural machineries and tools are imported for modernizing and enhancing productivity. The wider use of this experience to other parts of Ethiopia would contribute to income generation and poverty reduction.

Such development contributes to the unity and strength of the country that would result in surplus food for consumption and export. This keeps food-aid at bay that would have subjugated the country to absolute dependence on the Western Whiteman. The inability of the people to feed themselves had been enhanced by food aid. The use of productive tech by farmers was obstructed by the addiction to food aid that left them idle. Currently, however, the Ethiopian government has encouraged farmers to use modern tech in their farms. This would definitely result in food self-sufficiency and unity in the country.

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

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Editorial

Maintaining peace pact, shared responsibility!

The Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between the Government of Ethiopia and the TPLF is a big historical feat that came as a result of a seamless effort and commitment. In the same manner, as the two-side took the right decision to prevail peace, they should also do their best to effectively maintain it to the last point of success.

The peace agreement indeed came as a surprise after taking a few extra days from the schedule. The people of Ethiopia as well as the entire world were eagerly waiting for the outcome of the peace-talks that eventually heralded a new dawn in Ethiopia. Most people, if not all, in Ethiopia have expressed their earnest support and satisfaction with the successful winding up of the peace talks.

Yet it is also important to make sure that the two sides need to work hard to protect the hard-won peace agreement from falling prone to the adverse efforts of those who aspire to fulfill their selfish interest.

After all, it is crystal clear that just like anywhere in the world the intervention of foreign forces is one of the aggravating factors. The case of the conflict in northern Ethiopia is no different. These forces lack an iota of humanity and want to prolong the conflict. Their internal and external agents as well only see the short-lived gains they could reap from the conflict. The latters are traitors that serve as Trojan houses for foreign troublemakers. The people of Ethiopia have clearly identified all the negative forces. These forces will never win. They will be ashamed of themselves sooner than later.

The progress of the implementation of the agreement so far is heartwarming.

Following the effective accomplishment of the talks in Nairobi, Kenya Field Marshal Birhanu Jula, ENDF Chief of the General

Staff, told the media that the agreement reached between the two sides is worthwhile. He further noted that there could be some entities from both sides that still strive to hamper the peace process. According to him, their ill wishes can never bear fruit as anti-peace forces can never triumph over peace lovers.

He said as long as the two sides always uphold their commitment to the peace agreement, the external forces and other misguided supporters' influence would always remain futile. Therefore, they have to remain as committed as thus far to the agreements they signed and respond to the people's deep thirst for peace.

More than anything, peace is very precious. It is even more precious when it is rescued after falling into a quagmire of conflict. The two sides that turned out to be partners in peace must acknowledge the achievements they obtained so far following the Pretoria agreement. For example, they have to look around all possible means to proceed further into realizing the remaining articles of the agreement they signed.

The government has shown due commitment to implementing the terms of the agreement so far. It is important to mention the effective entry of relief aid and medical supplies, as well as the unreserved efforts to repair the electric power supply and telecommunication facilities to Tigray, among others.

These measures of the government have undoubtedly built the confidence of those who believe in peace. Consequently, trust in peace and peaceful means would also prevail in the minds of everyone thereby laying the foundation for sustainable peace and stability.

Opinion

A just transition that leaves no one behind

BY STAFF REPORTER

Sharm El-Sheikh, 12 November 2022 (ECA)
- Director for Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management at the UN Economic Commission (ECA) for Africa, Jean-Paul Adam, has emphasized the need for additional financial resources to achieve Africa's just transition.

Mr Adam said Africa needs "a just energy transition that leaves no one behind, on Africa's terms, based on the resources that African countries have, and we need to build resilience in our economies by investing in agriculture, the blue economy and leveraging the opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area."

He was speaking during the Africa Day Technical Session on Implementing Climate Actions: Africa's Response for a Just Transition at COP27. The event, which took place on 12 November, brought together various stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences regarding the activities to address climate change on the continent.

The importance of such an Africa Day event at COP27 was articulated by Botswana's Deputy Permanent Secretary of Green Technology and Energy Security, Nchena Mothebe: "it provides us with a platform to deliberate key priorities for our continent, take stock of and showcase achievements in the global fight against climate change and



United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa



share experiences and challenges."

Mr Mothebe was speaking on behalf of the Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism. This year's theme, he noted, "is both relevant and timely as Africa tries to position itself within the just transition narrative and space."

The session also provided opportunity for representatives from the Stockholm Environment Institute, and the African Risk Capacity Group and the East African Community Secretariate to share their work on building resilience against climate change and translating global policy into concrete action on the ground.

African Union's (AU) director for Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, Harsen Nyambe, underscored the AU's commitment to climate change issues, saying, "the Climate Change and Resilience Development Strategy was adopted this year and we also have climate commissions and other initiatives in place to coordinate issues of adaptation on the continent."

For his part, Ephraim Shitima, Chair of the African Group of Negotiators stressed the importance of taking each country's particular context into account when talking about the just transition because "because countries have different starting points."

The event was organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD). Estherine Fotabong who heads AUDA-NEPAD's Programme Implementation and Coordination Directorate said "we will continue to support Member States within the context of negotiations, but more importantly on the ground with Civil Society Organizations, with parliamentarians, to drive strategic programmes to help Africa adapt to the effects of climate change."

She also deplored the damage caused by droughts, floods, and how it impacts ordinary Africans, stating "that concerns us."

Other high-level speakers at the session included Didier Molisho, Chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Rural Economy and Environment of the Pan-African Parliament and Mithika Mwenda, the Executive Director of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance.

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

Business & Economy

Developing mega projects for viable growth, change

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Numerous development undertakings have been run at national level in Ethiopia since the advent of the recent reform. The case of the grand Abay Dam and its timely filling as well as the Gorgora, Wonchi and Koishamega projects is a case in point in this regard.

Undoubtedly, it is quite important to build and maintain infrastructure as it has become a critical and sometimes even lifesaving undertaking and the big infrastructure projects can also be socially, economically and even politically transformative.

All these megaprojects have been done as intended since it is almost impossible to think of meaningful change and progress in the nation without them and other eloquent projects. Even the hyper-efficient Abay Dam has been run rapidly keeping the national timetable disabling the delays it had faced around the construction outset.

Taking advantage of the celebration of tourism day in Benishangul Gumuz State capital, Assosa town, this writer had a stay with State Tourism Bureau Head, Jemal Umer Hojele to have a piece of information about the significance of constructing megaprojects, which include immensely financed undertakings like the Abay Dam, the aforesaid megaprojects such as Wonchi, high-speed rail lines, airports, seaports, information and communication technology (ICT) systems and other related aspects, helping the country come up with development and change as well as tourism sector promotion at nation level in general.

He said, "It is better I think big projects across the state or at national level shall involve a mix of private and government spending. For example, the newly commenced projects need to be run using a combined effort of national government, numerous local government, suppliers and end users following different environmental and health standards."

Ethiopia is rich in a number of tourist attraction sites, places where many more megaprojects can be constructed, and even plenty of suitable topographies for development and other earthshaking undertakings, he said.

"Obviously, each megaproject and the top ongoing mega projects in Ethiopia aim to transform the livelihoods of the millions in the part of the nation. Ethiopia is among East African countries that have been ranked to have a fertile land for construction business to flourish. The construction industry in the region is growing and offering a green market through the various ongoing mega projects," he said.

He further elucidated that the Abay Dam construction timely completion, within budget, scope and specified standard is a major task that needs to be well focused on in Ethiopia, indeed!

The government of Ethiopia has been implementing development policies and strategies over a long time to alleviate



poverty and ensure multifaceted progress across the nation. These efforts envisage transforming the country on a trajectory to become a middle-income economy within the shortest time possible. To this end, the country needs to register rapid and sustainable economic development as political stability and zeal for education has allowed this country to achieve high growth and development, he said.

As to Jemal, true, the government has identified the need for strengthened, reoriented and revitalized human resource development as a key to the success of socio-economic policies and strategies to spearhead development with knowledge. Among other things, he added, the government has also invested heavily in economic and social infrastructure. At the center of the country's strong economic and social performance has been the government's proactive and leading role in implementing megaprojects.

Effective governance, good organization, and coordination have powerful drivers of national transformation. The country has articulated a clear vision and aligned its objectives with national policy, he added.

As to him, the private sector has been playing a vital role in fostering transformation as solely managing megaprojects has been becoming a significant challenge. Here, the government has to be systematic enough and goes to great lengths to obtain secure project success, control demand, and keep operating expenses under scrupulous control.

He said, "Infrastructure is profoundly connected with—and drives—development, growth and prosperity. Even urban and transportation development are closely linked and should be coordinated as defining urban localities' infrastructure is a critical first step to bring about real change. Principally, coordination across government agencies and stakeholders can significantly reduce the time necessary to design and implement projects, peculiarly mega ones."

According to Jemal, good governance increases confidence in infrastructure

planning and programs and it begins with effective leadership and a clear vision. Besides, speeding up construction of mega projects is important support in growing domestic demand and stabilizing the country's economic foundations.

At the same time, he stated regional states in Ethiopia have also mounted efforts to enhance promotion mechanisms for numerous projects which are designated for priority implementation.

According to Jemal, the mega projects cover a number of key areas such as major national scientific infrastructure, state-of-the-art technology and modern rural construction. Furthermore, domestic economic performance and changing policy interventions also exert significant influence on project approval and long-term project development.

"The Abay Dam project situated in our state is indeed another cross-regional project in Ethiopia's pursuit of high-quality development through the optimization of water resources and the boosting of sustainable development," he added.

Bluntly speaking, many parts of Ethiopia are rich in resources, especially renewable energy, and have the potential to nurture development thereby meeting the long aspired mission of this great nation, Jemal said.

He added that the implementation of mega projects is conducive to promoting the green development and utilizing green energy, and continuously optimizing the energy efficiency in the country.

"In the next stage, I think Ethiopia should focus on improving the influence of the mega projects to drive the integrated and coordinated development and lucrative impetus," he opined.

Highlighting the experience of megaproject development in developed countries, where state governments tend to play a key role commissioning, sponsoring and regulating national development, Jemal underscored the significance of the combined effort of all.

Yes, he said mega projects are the sites where governance innovation is experimented upon, and most megaprojects are made viable and they can pass viability criteria.

Interestingly, he said, there is much room for improvements in megaproject decision-making by both states and the federal government. Following the recent reform in Ethiopia, good governance has been gaining a foothold even in mega projects management and in running a range of meaningful undertakings.

"Hence, we all are expected to well understand and fight together pessimist moves and strategic misrepresentations against mega projects forwarded from internal and external foes of the country so as to successfully achieve nationally set targets in general and that of states in particular," he added.

As to Jemal, megaprojects are large-scale, complex ventures that typically cost huge amount of money, take many years to develop and build, involve multiple public and private stakeholders, are transformational and have immense impact on thousands and millions of citizens of the country.

Megaprojects, therefore, are not just magnified versions of smaller projects. They are completely different breed of projects in terms of their level of aspiration, lead times, complexity, and stakeholder involvement. Consequently, they are also a very different type of project to manage, he added.

As learnt from Jemal, megaprojects are increasingly used as the preferred delivery model for goods and services across a range of businesses and sectors, including infrastructure, water and energy, information technology, industrial processing plants, mining and change programs like government administrative systems, banking, defense, intelligence, air and space exploration, big science, urban regeneration, and major events. Hence, developing mega projects is of paramount importance in bringing about viable growth and change.

Art & Culture

Does a narrative poem explode?

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

Terseness and ambiguity are the top virtues of evaluating a given poem is a gem. Often short poems are held dear if they explode while revealing secrets or mysteries. At times narrative poems display a similar tendency.

Before we analyze the following narrative poem could you reread it and tell where it explodes?

Fidele's Grassy Tomb

BY SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

The Squire sat propped in a pillowed chair,
His eyes were alive and clear of care,
But well he knew that the hour was come
To bid good-bye to his ancient home.

He looked on garden, wood, and hill,
He looked on the lake, sunny and still:
The last of earth that his eyes could see
Was the island church of Orchardleigh.

The last that his heart could understand
Was the touch of the tongue that licked his
hand:

“Bury the dog at my feet,” he said,
And his voice dropped, and the Squire was
dead.

Now the dog was a hound of the Danish
breed,

Staunch to love and strong at need:
He had dragged his master safe to shore
When the tide was ebbing at Elsinore.

From that day forth, as reason would,
He was named “Fidele,” and made it good:
When the last of the mourners left the door
Fidele was dead on the chantry floor.

They buried him there at his master's feet,
And all that heard of it deemed it meet:

The story went the round for years,
Till it came at last to the Bishop's ears.

Bishop of Bath and Wells was he,
Lord of the lords of Orchardleigh;
And he wrote to the Parson the strongest
screed

That Bishop may write or Parson read.

The sum of it was that a soulless hound
Was known to be buried in hallowed ground:

From scandal sore the Church to save
They must take the dog from his masters
grave.

The heir was far in a foreign land,
The Parson was wax to my Lord's
command:

He sent for the Sexton and bade him make
A lonely grave by the shore of the lake.

The Sexton sat by the water's brink
Where he used to sit when he used to think:
He reasoned slow, but he reasoned it out,
And his argument left him free from doubt.

“A Bishop,” he said, “is the top of his trade:
But there's others can give him a start with
the spade:

Yon dog, he carried the Squire ashore,
And a Christian couldn't ha' done no more.

The grave was dug; the mason came
And carved on stone Fidele's name;
But the dog that the Sexton laid inside
Was a dog that never had lived or died.

So the Parson was praised, and the scandal
stayed,

Till, a long time after, the church decayed,
And, laying the floor anew, they found
In the tomb of the Squire the bones of a
hound.

As for the Bishop of Bath and Wells
No more of him the story tells;
Doubtless he lived as a Prelate and Prince,
And died and was buried a century since.

And whether his view was right or wrong
Has little to do with this my song;
Something we owe him, you must allow;
And perhaps he has changed his mind by
now.

The Squire in the family chantry sleeps,
The marble still his memory keeps:
Remember, when the name you spell,
There rest Fidele's bones as well.

For the Sexton's grave you need not search,
'Tis a nameless mound by the island church:

An ignorant fellow, of humble lot—
But. He knew one thing that a Bishop did
not.

Among the main characters involved in this poem is found a loyal dog of Danish breed called Fidele' having an English equivalent term fiddle, which means a faithful to his owner; in this case the Squire. The Squire that has a deep emotional attachment to



the old and noticeably ailing dog, which once rescued his life dragging him out of an ebbing revert river, is sat on his pillow-propped-up-special chair (deathbed) that affords him a panoramic view of his surroundings presumably from his porch.

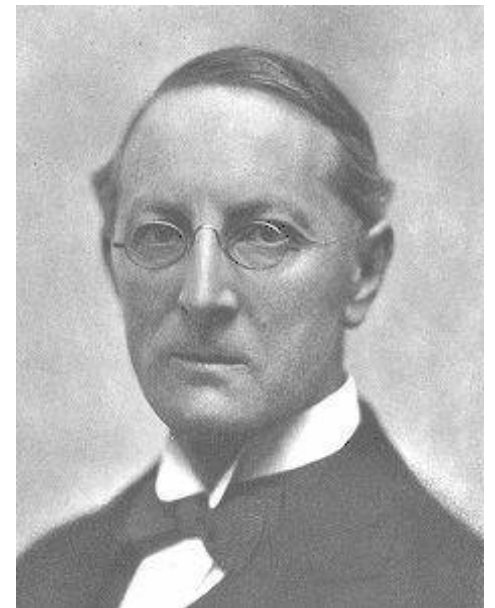
While the Squire was taking a last snapshot, the dog licked his fingers by way of expressing his unwavering affection and presence. At that point the Squire makes his desire clear the dog should be buried by his feet in the same tomb with him. Here, the Squire did predict that his and Fidele' death is drawing nigh. Mourners who heard the Squire's wish saw to things as they were ordered.

After the news circulated for some time a bishop hears about it and gets infuriated by how on earth a soulless animal (dog/Fidele') is buried in the church's cemetery. To spare the church a scandal the bishop decides he must act fast.

As such, in black and white, he orders the Parson to remove the skeleton of the dog. As the Heir, out of town, was not beside him the Parson had no means of dissuading the Bishop.

Following the order the Parson in his turn orders the Sexton (a priest) to dig an isolated grave by the riverside obviously for the dog. The Sexton sleeps over the matter and decided to do something a trick—let a mason bury a dog that was neither born (lived) nor died. It is here the poem explodes revealing a secret that he let buried no dog. But on the tomb he ordered the mason inscribe the name Fidele' to dupe the bishop and the like.

Thanks to the Sexton the loyal dog that showed faithfulness unmatched by any other Christian remained buried at the former burial ground by his master's feet in the church's cemetery. At the end the narrative poem once more explodes with a sarcasm layman— a Sexton (an ordinary priest whose job may be ringing bells) —



knows such a secret hidden from a man of letters— a bishop.

After a lot of water passed under the bridge, when the reconstruction of the dilapidated church began, the masons found the remains of the dog Fidele along with that of the Squire. The poet behests the masons “don't forget engraving here Fidele too lies' on the tomb.”

The poet at the end notes the bishop's outlook being right or not is not the objective of his narrative line but he thinks the bishop might himself have changed his view about the loyal dog that outperformed followers of the faith when it comes to fidelity.

The poet sarcastically notes the wise Sexton's grave is just a mountain of muds and the bishop serving his term had passed away and long forgotten.

Sir Henry John Newbolt, [CH](#) (6 June 1862 – 19 April 1938) was an English poet, novelist and historian.^[1] He also had a role as a government adviser with regard to the study of English in England. He is perhaps best remembered for his poems “Vitaī Lampada” and “Drake's Drum”.

Introversion

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

When I see my introversion

As a form of separation

That is when it will hurt

Because it feels like I am lost

But as I start to see

It in the purest form only

I can look to my self

Make sense of my life

And be a good friend to myself

With all the solo time I have

When I see extroverts out there

I don't feel the need to compare

Because both qualities are special

I don't make a good extrovert

But I am a great introvert.



The major take away from the premier's day in parliament

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

On Tuesday November 15, 2022 Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) was in parliament to answer questions and provide explanations in relation to the inaugural address the head of state had made in the opening of the House of Peoples Representatives and the House of Federation some weeks ago. The parliament was also expected to pass the motion in relation to this address of President SahleWork Zewde to the joint session of the Houses.

The premier began by receiving the questions parliamentarians had on that address and other national issues such as the economy, the inflationary cycle the country has been suffering from, the wide spread corruption that has been noted as a huge challenge to the society as well as the recently fixed peace deal with TPLF. As usual the premier received scores of questions from the MPs and answered those in one go in a long session of explanations and observations.

The main takes of his explanations were basically focused on three major issues. He talked at length about how the Ethiopian economy was doing despite the multiple challenges the country faced. He said it was doing fine even if there are several areas in which we all should do better, work harder. In this respect he said that all of our efforts are vain if we cannot curb corruption and abuse of power by authorities.

The other area he dwelt on at length is the peace deal with TPLF and Ethiopia's diplomatic ventures. He underlined that Ethiopia will always prefer peace to war and conflict adding any kind of peace deal is preferable to any kind of war. He remarked how war is deadly in any circumstance and is not good even when one was winning. In short we can say his areas of focus were the economy, corruption, the peace deal and what the government was engaged with in these areas of focus.

The first thing the premier did was present the numbers, the statistics regarding the performance of the economy even in time of various and multiple challenges such as the war in the north and various kinds of violence we experience in many areas of the country. Shene was specifically cited by the MPs and the atrocities it commits in certain parts of the country particularly in Welega.

The premier said the potential of the economy was enormous provided we worked harder and more. He cited the tourism sector that could be growing faster thanks to the various projects this government has undertaken and accomplished and the Gorgora Project as well as the Wenchi and Koisha projects have been mentioned besides what has been happening in the capital particularly mentioning what he intended to build a kind of modern city within the city. This he said

was fundamental for the creation of jobs not only in the construction of these projects but also in engaging in post construction work places for the tourism industry.

The premier noted despite the fact that there were the challenges to the security of the country that emerged due to the war in the north and insurgencies that sprout here and there, the economy has not stopped nor relented because the country is big and it is endowed with so much potential that there are several factors that have played in favour of the growth of the economy.

The premier said the GDP of Ethiopia has grown by 6.5 per cent last year and is expected to grow by 7.5 per cent now that the country can focus more on the economy rather than on war efforts. The premier noted even a few days of peace have been useful to change the dynamics of the economy because wars are destructive and distract us from the trajectory of development. Reconstruction and rehabilitation of the affected has already begun without wasting time.

Regarding the growth of the economy he cited some numbers of the World Bank which puts the Ethiopian economy the biggest in East Africa and the third largest in Sub-Saharan Africa. He cited the main growth was experienced in the agriculture sector where the potential of the country remains enormous. Talking about the plantation of wheat using irrigation and various kinds of fruits and vegetables he said these recent developments show that Ethiopia can do away with imports of wheat and rather begin to export shortly saving millions in foreign currency. He talked about millions of quintals of wheat that have been harvested and continue to be harvested shortly while rice as well has also been discovered as another asset for the country now being produced in large quantities. This premier said will contribute largely to the efforts the country has been undertaking towards food self-sufficiency and even engage in producing even for export purposes. He talked about the lack of network and logistics in putting for sale at the right market of fruits where there is immense potential and if those problems are solved there will be a lot to talk about when it comes to export.

The premier also highlighted some of the best performances of the economy regarding the financial sector and how banks have been expanding. He talked about the service sector where Ethiopian Air Lines has been taking the lion's share of the dividends that have helped the service sector expand by leaps and bounds while Ethio telecom has registered immense progress during the past few years with millions of new customers joining the service and helping the body attain new heights not only because of the effectiveness of the service but also because this service has joined the financial sector with telebirr being used by millions of customers of transacting using this new

system.

The advanced technological developments have thus served the country gain in many respects.

Talking about the respect of the rule of law and the challenges people face in having their rights respected he said we needed to make progress and expressly made reference to the legal machinery of the country mentioning the judiciary as part of the huge problem many complain about. The premier mentioned the prosecutors of the country, the police and the judges in this area. He said there are definitely those who are honest and law abiding professionals in the sector, faithful to the professional ethics of the vocation but these he said are considered by their relatives and friends as fools or naïve who do not take advantage of their position. This has constituted a real challenge to our fight against illegality and corruption.

There should be a fight for a total change in our attitude and manage to stigmatize those who abuse their power for personal benefits and even violate the law for the same purpose. This has been a huge challenge for years and continues to be one that we have not been able to overcome. He said it was time that the parliament and the executive acted more vigorously to solve this problem. As long as there are such practices of abuse of power, corruption and violations of laws, growth in the economy will be stifled and overrun to levels of insignificance. This is a huge problem we must all work together to solve, the premier warned.

Talking about questions that refer to the war in the north and how the government was about to implement the peace deal the premier began by asserting that all sorts of wars are destructive and we must take every opportunity to distance ourselves from conflicts and work for any kind of peace deal because in the end any kind of peace is better than any kind of conflict.

The Pretoria Peace deal is hence a huge success and accomplishment for Ethiopia because it was what we were insisting on for years even before the beginning of the hostilities in the northern war. Today it is time to talk about how we feed all those who have been affected by the protracted violence, reconstruct the devastation the violence has resulted and rehabilitate those who were evicted of their natural habitats. The premier said the Ethiopian national defense forces are doing exactly what they used to do in the prewar epochs not thinking of revenge, forgetting the days in which they were attacked and working for the reconstruction of the economy of the Tigray region. The premier said the people of Tigray deserve to be assisted and be put in conditions of conducting their lives as in prewar days and if it is not the federal government which should do this who will take care of them, he asked. Hence there

is a huge responsibility and commitment on the part of the federal government to address various issues in the war torn region forgetting whatever has happened during the past couple of years, the premier underlined. It is time to look forward and embark on a new phase of development as the integrity and sovereignty of the country has been guaranteed thanks to the Pretoria peace. He thanked all those who took part or facilitated the deal fixed in South Africa. He thanked South Africa, Kenya, the AU and EU as well as the US for their support in the deal. He also thanked former president of Nigeria Olesgun Obasanjo as well as former president of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta for their active involvement in the peace deal in line with the principle 'African solution for African problem'.

Ethiopia is a country with immense potential and the issue is how to use it and come out of poverty and aid dependency. Avoiding wars and conflicts is fundamental and dismissing corrupt practices is another one that creates major obstacle to any form of economic growth. The premier mentioned some of the measures his administration has been taking to halt inflation that has been a world phenomenon he said and added that he was optimistic that with the growth of the economy under all aspects and the collection of more foreign currency with the expansion of homemade products rather than rely on imported goods particularly those that are not considered basic by the society such as liquors, artificial hair and cosmetic products, and soaps etc. which could be substituted by domestically produced merchandizes, inflation could be reduced. When we fill the gap between supply and demand the inflationary tendency is bound to abate, the premier said.

Specifically asked about how the government was to address the security issue of the country due to Shene's activities the premier said this is a body that has no objectives, no vision and no purpose other than killing innocent people and burning down villages. It is an organization that has no command and control mechanism and is divided and even fights between its own ranks and files. Even those who try to make use of their activities and support them in various modes are perplexed about what they are doing. Hence the premier said we are confident that they will not survive for long because they cannot have approval of the people nor attract new followers. He said we will continue to fight and neutralize them but if they put down their arms and are ready to talk based on the laws of the country, we are ready to do so. We have repeatedly underlined that we do not pose preconditions for peace provided the sovereignty and integrity of the country are guaranteed and the constitutional order is respected.

Law & Politics

Pretoria peace deal: Strong manifestation of Africa's wisdom

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The African Union (AU) has been going to the ends of the earth to bring the federal government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) to the negotiating table in the face of repeated attempts by some foreign entities to downplay its role.

The continental bloc's effort, however, paid off lately with the Ethiopian government and TPLF signing a landmark agreement in Pretoria, South Africa, and Kenya respectively.

AU has helped the parties to reach a millstone deal without the interference of external entities showing African wisdom and solution to the continent's pressing problem.

Nobody had expected the peace deal would bear fruits and turn out to be the talk of the wider international community in the shortest possible time. Some of them had been expressing a lack of confidence in the AU-led peace talks. However, in the fullness of time on the heels of the firm commitment and determination of the bloc, the peace deal ended up accomplishing the sought-after goal.

Albeit some entities spared no effort to thwart the peace process by downplaying the role of the AU, all their efforts went for a burton through the concerted efforts of peace-loving Ethiopians.

Right from the beginning, the government of Ethiopia has been over and over again expressing its readiness for peace talks under the auspices of the African Union. As the federal government knows the fact that peace can be achieved only through the mediation of the AU, it has been sticking to the AU-led peace deal despite some entities had been coming up with a wide spectrum of preconditions and lame reasons with the purpose of giving a lower profile to the peace process.

From setting up a high-level committee to taking other constructive measures, the federal government has played a paramount role in burying the hatchet and allowing the past unpleasant things to be forgotten. Aside from announcing a humanitarian truce and giving the green light to unrestricted access to humanitarian relief, the incumbent has gone to the ends of the earth to make the peace process a success.

In spite of the fact that some entities know the unvarnished truth concerning the government's effort to make peace happen, they have been engaged in besmirching the positive moves of the government under the veil of a diverse range of poor reasons. After passing through many challenges, the intended target has been achieved as the government always gives prominence to the catchall phrase African solution to African problems.



AFRICAN UNION

In the same way, the incumbent is dedicated to implementing all possible procedures to get to the bottom of any problem in a way that makes certain sustainable peace through AU. While on the subject, as all resolutions on the topic of African nations have been made by a few reckless world powers, Africans in a number of instances have been confronting quite a lot of catastrophes that give a bad name to the continent of Africa.

As things stand at present, AU is turning out to be stronger and stronger in defending African sovereignty more than ever before. The Africa Union (AU) has become stronger in defending African sovereignty by promoting African solutions to African problems, the independent American journalist Ann Garrison said.

It is to be recalled that the Government of Ethiopia and TPLF have signed a peace agreement last week after the peace talks conducted under the auspices of the African Union.

A contributing editor at Black Agenda and host of the listener-funded Grayzone Pacifica Radio; Ann Garrison told ENA that the Africa Union has become stronger and stronger in defending African sovereignty.

Appreciating the efforts of the AU to bring a peaceful solution to the conflict in northern Ethiopia, the American journalist described the peace agreement reached between the government and TPLF as a great achievement for an African solution to African problems.

"I think the AU has been admirable from the very beginning in defending African solutions to African problems. They never wavered. The current African members in the UN Security Council were also faithful in defending Ethiopian sovereignty throughout the past two years."

Also "the African Union several times spoke to the Security Council in defense

of African solutions to African problems and Ethiopia's sovereignty. I have seen the African Union becoming stronger and stronger in defending African sovereignty over some years."

The journalist stressed the need for the African Union to be self-sufficient in terms of finance in its efforts to address African problems without any external influences.

"I know there is some discussion about finding a way to get the African Union away from its western financial support as it gets a significant amount of financial support from the West and therefore influences. But there is a discussion about getting away from that and it is a great idea."

Garrison also noted that the peace agreement will help Ethiopia to overcome foreign pressures, citing the bills of sanctions against Ethiopia by US officials. Since the peace agreement has been negotiated, "it is unlikely that these bills will pass."

According to the American journalist, Ethiopia has done a great job in this whole process of defending its sovereignty noting that the peace agreement is a great exercise for the nation's sovereignty.

"I am glad that Ethiopia is taking the issues of accountability and justice into its own hands. This is Ethiopians agreement that is also being implemented by Ethiopians themselves."

The peace agreement will pave the ways for Ethiopia to properly utilize its resources for economic development, she noted, adding that wars consume a great deal of national wealth.

"I am really sad about how much Ethiopia has lost in this war. Wars are very expensive. I remember a hearing by the chair of the National Dialogue Commission speaking on one of your broadcast outlets. He said we are losing everything to this war. Our resources and our young people, that the

war is over is great. But there has been a terrific loss."

Garrison pointed out that the government needs to solicit international resources for the construction and rehabilitation of war-torn areas as part of the peace deal taking into account the sovereignty and national integrity of the country.

The government is working to ensure that the AU-led peace accord would be implemented per agreed terms, the Government Communication Services said.

In a statement, the GCS indicated the fact that Ethiopia is exerting efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to most of the Tigray region which is under ENDF command.

It further stated as basic services are slowly being restored in some areas. In other areas, a conducive environment is being created to repair damages to basic service infrastructure caused by rebel fighters. Side by side to these efforts, the commanders of the ENDF and the TPLF have discussed detailed plans for the disarmament of TPLF fighters, according to the statement.

Discussions have culminated with an agreement on the plans for disarmament and entry of the ENDF into Mekelle according, to outlined in the peace agreement. The Government urges that all parties involved in the implementation of the plan fulfill their obligations under the agreement.

It is to be recalled that the head of the Ethiopian delegation for the peace talks and The PM's National Security Advisor Redwan Hussein tweeted: "70 % of Tigray is under ENDF. Aid is flowing like no other time." He added that even in the areas not held by ENDF, 35 trucks of food and 3 trucks of medicine arrived shire, and flights are allowed. Redwan also indicated that services are being reconnected.

Briefing the international community in Addis Ababa about the peace deal lately, National Security Adviser to Prime Minister, Amb. Redwan said the deal is the most significant aspect of the whole peace process, which is an indicator of 'African solutions for African problems,' principle.

"We are calling upon pan Africanism and respect for African values, because we are communal society. That's how we manage conflicts and then governments are parts of the community."

Ambassador Redwan said, "Leading the deal by African Union has proved that Africans have and adequate wisdom to deal with their problems as we are rich in both wisdom and resource, we are good at consulting one another too. So the fact that we don't have immediate resource to utilize it doesn't mean that we are void of ideas and wisdom. Now we have practically shown that 'an African solution to African problems' is being virtually functional."

Women in Focus



Incorporating private health sector to address unmet FP needs

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Family Planning (FP) is a lifesaving intervention which has substantial health, social and economic consequences. Contraceptive has many benefits; of which ensuring couples to achieve the desired family size and reducing infant/perinatal and maternal mortality are the major ones.

It also helps to reduce pregnancy and birth-related complications as it provides adequate time for a mother to recover from the previous pregnancy sufferings. Not only that, but it also decreases the risk of HIV transmission and prevents unintended pregnancies as well as, reinforces people's right to determine the number and spacing of their children.

Nonetheless, studies indicated that over 214 million women of reproductive age in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy are not using a modern contraceptive method.

A study was conducted with the collaboration of HANZ Consulting and the Ministry of Health to examine, analyze and understand the role and possible potential of the private sector in expanding access to family planning service in the country.

With the funding from Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, an evaluation study was conducted to understand key factors within the health system and larger context that, if unlocked, could unleash the potential of private health sector.

This national study revealed that the private sector has a huge potential to mobilize innovative strategies including self-care and

direct-to-customers in the family planning services.

At the launching of the strategic assessment, it was also stated that innovative strategies are the promising ways to overcome barriers to address women and adolescent girls contraceptive needs in urban areas.

Maternal and Child Health Director with the Ministry of Health (MoH) Dr. Meseret Zelalem noted that the 2019 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) showed that only 12 percent of married women used the private health sector for modern family planning compared to 87 percent who used public health facilities.

As to her, reasons for not using contraception are said to include limited choice of methods, fear or experience of side-effects, cultural or religious opposition, and poor quality of available services, user and health worker bias, gender-based barriers, among others.

Similarly, in many countries, the numbers of trained health workers are not sufficient to address the need for contraception. Even where contraceptive services are available, certain population groups, including young people, poorer segments of the population, unmarried, sexually active individuals, and/or people in rural settings, may face challenges to accessing contraception, she stressed.

The Government of Ethiopia's health policy frameworks and plans recognize the role of the private sector. However, translation of the plans has been hindered due to lack of specific strategies on how, why and where to engage the private sector.

Sources indicate that the Ministry of Health's (MoH) coordination with the private sector, and the participation of the private sector in policy initiation, formulation and decision-making processes, is currently minimal.

The regulatory practice is also said to rely more on state-dominated approaches and less on other actors, such as professional associations.

The private sector is affected by weak institutional capacity and fragmentation, and is constrained by competitive outlooks. Regulatory standards in Ethiopia do not recognize the role of pharmacies and drug stores to serve as a source of FP provision, it was stated.

Access to resources by the private sector is constrained by multiple factors. Available data from the Master Facility register (as of July 2022) indicates that private health facilities are typically distributed in urban settings. Analysis of per capita distribution shows that Addis Ababa has the highest density (44 percent), followed by Gambella (32 percent), Harari (2996) and Dire Dawa (16 percent)

With regard to financing mechanism, private health facilities depend on out-of-pocket (OOP) payments, which create unpredictable revenue streams for private health providers and which can exacerbate catastrophic expenditures for some users.

The study further revealed that adolescent girls, literate and urban women tend to use the private health sector for family planning services. Similarly, women in Gambella, Afar and Harari states also visit the private health sector seeking similar service.

According to the Director, in the year 2000, only eight percent of women used modern family planning yet, the number has risen to 41 percent due to the effort exerted in expanding health centers, providing adequate training for professionals as well as fulfilling necessary facilities.

Despite such progress, among girls and women (15-49 age) who use contraceptives, one out of five has unmet needs regarding family planning. "This is where the private sector fits in through using innovative technologies to reach out to this segment of the people."

Apart from minimizing the rate of unplanned pregnancy, family planning by itself is said to avert 30 to 40 percent of preventable maternal and 10 percent child mortality rate. Founder and CEO of HANZ Consulting Zelalem Adugna said on his part that obtaining family planning has tremendously shown an increment over the past 20 years which is from 8 to 41 percent.

In order to enhance this number, tech-enabled, home grown responsive and sustainable solutions are highly needed. Thus, private sector social enterprise can play a role in technology-enabled innovations that overcome barriers by developing digital technologies and platforms that provide tailored information to increase health literacy, Zelalem elaborated. "These innovations can help reach people in a different socioeconomic status, demographic backgrounds and contraceptive needs."

The study, which took ten months, excluded Afar and Tigray states due to the conflict in the northern part of Ethiopia.

Treating war trauma, reconstructing communities' social fabric

BY STAFF REPORTER

It is a commonplace knowledge that armed conflict always yields catastrophic impacts and its consequences are across-the-board on human beings, the environment and nations' socioeconomic developments. Ranging from death, disability, and wartime sexual violence to temporary and/or long lasting physical and emotional traumas, armed conflicts affect people adversely and cause them unexpected life altering consequences.

The war that took place in the northern part of the country for close to two years has disrupted the peace and security of those people residing in war-torn areas and jeopardized their lives. It has disrupted the social fabric of a lot of people, compelled them to flee their places, and caused them severe psychological traumas, aside from the huge social and economic burden it creates on the country.

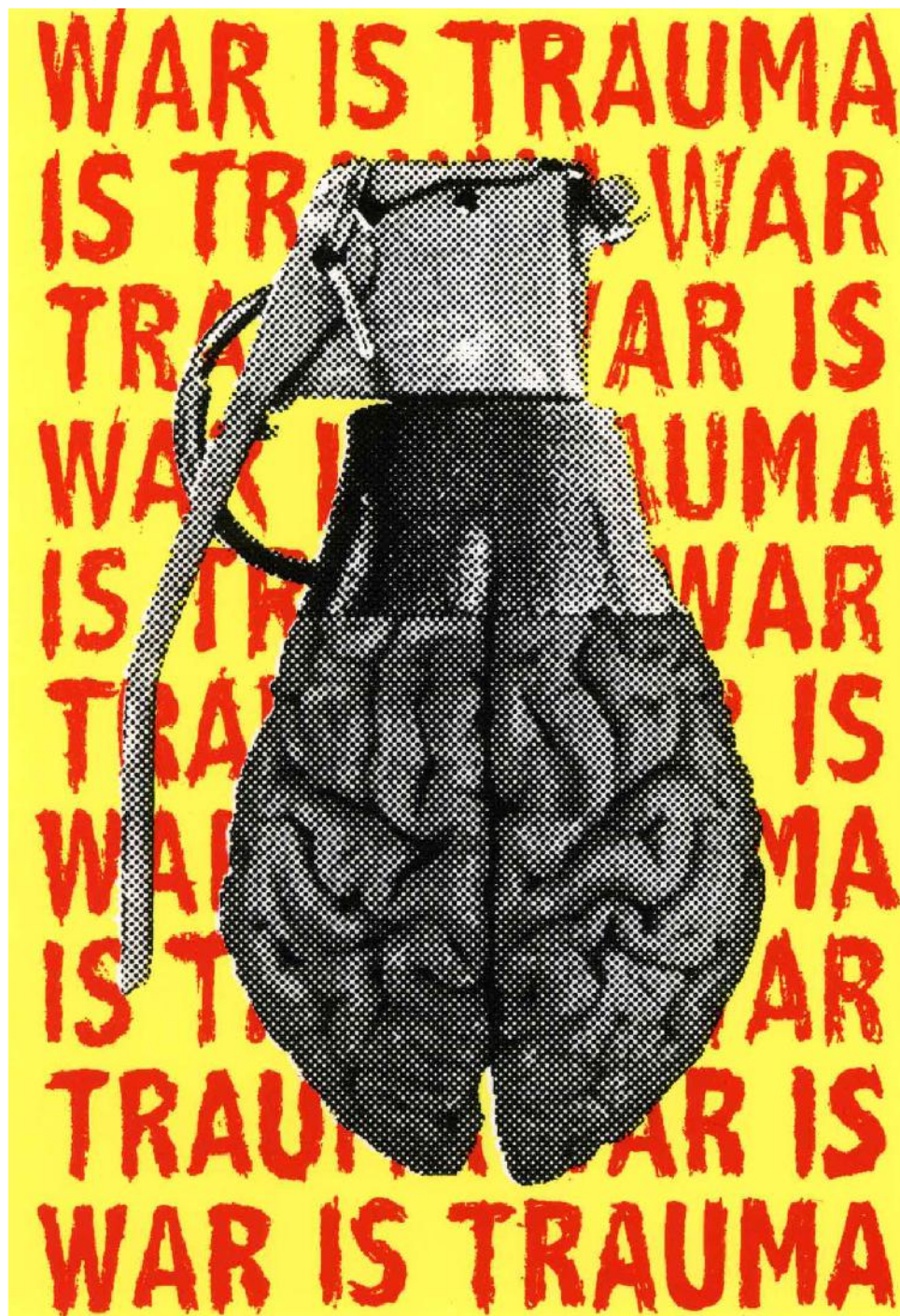
According to Ermias Kiros, a Psychologist, the two-year-long conflict occurred in the northern part of the country has hurt the psychological makeup of many people and distorted their lives. The psychological well-being of those people who were injured in the war should be treated accordingly.

Ermias, who has been offering psychological treatment for victims residing in the areas where the war has taken place and conducted an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency, said that the war has made many people disoriented, and threatened their sense of meaningful existence.

Quite a few people have lost their healthy feeling; and many are still in bad memory. Several people can dream of dead bodies when they cover their eyes. They may be entangle with series of distressing incidents and overhear perplexing and disturbing sounds when they are trying to sleep. Even today, they could not detach themselves from the sound they heard at that time, he added.

According to Ermias, the war has jeopardized the way they see themselves and the society. It has left them with some type of psychological traumas and mental disorders. Women who were gang raped and lost their families do not only miss their families but also themselves. Thus, understanding and accepting the psychological trauma that the war has created on them, a well-organized campaign that can provide victims some level of treatment and comfort should be arranged.

Mentioning global experience and the findings of various researches that people often falling into depression after a war, the Psychologist said that however if things get



worse, life becomes meaningless to them, they suffer a lot, would reach to the point they lose their mental health; and finally end up at committing suicide.

When such things happen, the effect is wide-ranging. Not only the victims themselves but also families suffer a lot and social interaction will be disrupted. The worst, it will not end up there, (harming the one with psychological disorder) but it will pass down to the generations, called 'Transgenerational Trauma'.

To curb 'Transgenerational Trauma'- a trauma that passes to subsequent generations and people find themselves showing the symptoms of trauma without having experienced the trauma themselves, it is necessary to work hard to make mental health care accessible for all, he remarked.

If not, a mother who underwent bad moments and developing distorted thoughts as a result of the war will pass on the disorder to their children. Owing to this war is not just a one-time incident

but an event its impacts extends to the next generation. This, in turn, brings about devastating consequences to the country in the long run.

Saying that he has been providing voluntary service for people displaced and affected due to the war in Mekele, Kombolcha, Dessie, Haik and Gondar areas, he said as any of the war-torn places across the world, the conflict break out in the northern part of the country has affected the psychological makeup of the people.

Therefore, not to let the war blemish the healthy interaction of the communities, to maintain and restore the social fabric of the society, works should be carried out in advance.

"A person is a person through his real mind. If he/she loses his eyes, life goes on. Even his/her hand or leg is amputated, life continues. However, if his mind is affected and disturbed, the consequence is distressing. Not only the life of that person, but also at society level," he said.

It is clear that mental health is the most important aspect and an element that is decisive to overcome the challenges that Ethiopia is in at this particular time. The Psychologist said that while he was working with the community, he saw people who have lost hope.

He also witnessed children who pleaded their parents not to go out of their houses fearing not to lose them, and children ageing from 11, 12 and 13 years old; but who tend to be restless; and bedwetting owing to the psychological trauma caused by the war.

Recalling that an amazing work has been done through campaign to encourage mothers to give birth in health facilities, he said that in the same manner, making mental health an agenda and supporting health centers and hospitals to have space for psychiatric treatments is pivotal to register meaningful achievement on the matter. Making mental healthcare accessible and working aggressively in this regard is crucial.

According to him, unless the required attention is given to the problem, the situation will get worsen and the future will be more frightening than now.

As to the estimation by the WHO, in the situations of armed conflicts throughout the world, 10 percent of the people who experience traumatic events will have serious mental health problems and another 10 percent will develop behavior that will hinder their ability to function effectively. The most common conditions are depression, anxiety and psychosomatic problems such as insomnia, or back and stomach aches.